



## EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Stephanie Holt		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University of Dublin, Trinity College		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report:	MSc in Post-Qualifying Social Work		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2015-2016	Date of Report:	29-11-2016

For completion by External Examiner in the spaces provided. Please extend spaces where necessary. **Please note this Form will be published online.**

### 1. Programme Structure

The structure of the programme achieves a dual purpose – that of supporting social workers who are working full-time, to engage in postgraduate and post-qualifying study, whilst simultaneously supporting best professional practice, in particular focusing on the importance of their reflective practice. In doing so, this PG programme is providing a practical response to the shortcomings in social work practice highlighted in many child abuse enquiries in many jurisdictions.

### 2. Academic Standards

Through all assessment processes, the standard of student work reflected that which would be expected of a PG programme in general, and this standard is in line more specifically with other similar Post-Qualifying Social Work programmes that I am familiar with. I reviewed a sufficient range of papers across the entire band of marks, within which were number of excellent assignments that were a pleasure to review. The higher achieving students were able to draw on an extensive literature base and provide an impressive and independent critique of same.

### 3. The Assessment Process

The combination of assessment types involving both written assessment and observation of practice, is clear evidence of both appropriate yet rigorous and fair

assessment. Marking was internally consistent both across markers and within and across marking bands. Learning outcomes at course and modular level were clearly linked to assessment type, reflecting course content appropriately.

#### **4. Year-on-Year Comments**

All comments and suggestions from the previous two years have been reflected in my communication with the teaching staff.

#### **5. Preparation / Induction Activity (for new External Examiners only)**

N/A.

#### **6. Noteworthy Practice and Enhancement**

##### *General Feedback and Observations*

As per previous years, I thoroughly enjoy reading the assignments for the **Enabling Practice Module**, in particular the portfolios which in the main reflected the rigour of the course content and assessment modes. The students are very well supported and are rigorously assessed, with a most welcome emphasis on reflective best practice. The aim of the module as broken down into the learning outcomes is clearly reflected in the sample of students work examined. It was particularly clear how the students were supported with very clear and detailed feedback and how this support and feedback contributed to incremental development from one assignment to the next.

#### **7. Comments on the Examination of Master's Dissertations**

Similar to my own Departments experience of full-time professionals engaging in Master's Dissertation completion, the four dissertations I reviewed over the last three years reflected a range of minor to more major issues including structural weaknesses, lack of analytic depth and at times, lack of understanding of how their work contributed to the broader knowledge base. This is not necessarily a criticism of the School, rather reflective of the difficulty engaging full-time professionals in Postgraduate research, a difficulty many faculties experience. The students are supported very well and given every opportunity to complete the work. As such I did wonder, given the small numbers completing the MSc, if staff effort in investing in these projects was accurately reflected in outcomes. Perhaps only running the MSc every two years might make for a better return on faculty investment of academic time.

#### **8. Appointment Overview (for retiring External Examiners only)**

N/A.

## 9. Annual Report Checklist

Please include appropriate comments within Sections 1-7 above for any answer of 'No'.

		Yes (Y)	No (N)	N/A (N/A)
<b>Programme/Course Information</b>				
8.1	Did you receive sufficient information about the Programme and its contents, learning outcomes and assessments?	Y		
8.2	Were you asked to comment on any changes to the assessment of the Programme?		N	
<b>Draft Examination Question Papers</b>				
8.3	Were you asked to approve all examination papers contributing to the final award?			N/A
8.4	Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate?			N/A
8.5	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?			N/A
<b>Marking Examination Scripts</b>				
8.6	Did you receive a sufficient number of scripts to be able to assess whether the internal marking and classifications were appropriate and consistent?			N/A
8.7	Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate?			N/A
8.8	Were the scripts marked in such a way as to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?			N/A
8.9	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the internal examiners?			N/A
8.10	In your judgement, did you have the opportunity to examine a sufficient cross-section of candidates' work contributing to the final assessment?			N/A
<b>Coursework and Practical Assessments</b>				
8.11	Was the choice of subjects for coursework and / or practical assessments appropriate?	Y		
8.12	Were you afforded access to an appropriate sample of coursework and / or practical assessments?	Y		
8.13	Was the method and general standard of assessment appropriate?	Y		
8.14	Is sufficient feedback provided to students on their assessed work?	Y		
<b>Clinical Examinations (if applicable)</b>				
8.15	Were satisfactory arrangements made for the conduct of clinical assessments?			N/A
<b>Sampling of Work</b>				
8.16	Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work?	Y		
<b>Examining Board Meeting</b>				

		<b>Yes (Y)</b>	<b>No (N)</b>	<b>N/A (N/A)</b>
8.17	Were you able to attend the Examining Board meeting?		<b>N</b>	
8.18	Was the Examining Board conducted properly, in accordance with established procedures and to your satisfaction?			<b>N/A</b>
8.19	Cardiff University recognises the productive contribution of External Examiners to the assessment process and, in particular, to the work of the Examining Board. Have you had adequate opportunities to discuss the Programme and any outstanding concerns with the Examining Board or its officers?	<b>Y</b>		
<b>Joint Examining Board Meeting (if applicable)</b>				
8.20	Did you attend a Composite Examining Board, i.e. one convened to consider the award of Joint Honours degrees?			<b>N/A</b>
8.21	If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees?			<b>N/A</b>
8.22	Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules?			<b>N/A</b>

Please return this Report, preferably in a Microsoft Word format, by email to:

[ExternalExaminers@cf.ac.uk](mailto:ExternalExaminers@cf.ac.uk)

Your fee and expenses claim form and receipts, should be sent electronically to the above email address or in hard copy to:

Clive Brown, Registry Officer, Registry & Academic Services, Cardiff University,  
McKenzie House, 30-36 Newport Road, Cardiff, CF24 0DE