



EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

The completion of this Report is supported by *Annual Report Form – Guidance to External Examiners*. The Guidance and this Form are available at: <http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/regis/ifs/exex/rep/index.html>. Fee information and claim forms are available at: <http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/regis/ifs/exex/fees/index.html>.

| | | | |
|---|---|-----------------|-------------|
| | For completion by External Examiner: | | |
| Name of External Examiner: | Joanna van Heyningen | | |
| Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner: | none | | |
| Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report: | BSc Architecture <i>BSc in Architectural Studies</i> | | |
| Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report: | 2013-14 | Date of Report: | 07.07. 2014 |

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 BSc is well organised, with each of 7 units offering a genuine choice of programme and teaching style to the students. Inevitably, some units were stronger than others.

2. Academic Standards

Solid. From the limited examples we were able to examine in detail, I felt that the work of at least one student could have been marked higher for design. Conversely, in a couple of cases the lowest marked students could have been given a lower mark without failing. In other words, I would strongly encourage a continuation of the process of stretching the marking at both ends, which appears to have started last year.

In general I felt that presentation standards were good, but that too much emphasis was placed on creating attractive images using photoshop to produce texture, rather than the proper examination of a proposition in plan and section which would be proper for a BSc student.

3. The Assessment Process

I felt that the staff at Cardiff had worked scrupulously in their internal marking of the BSc, and were talented and dedicated people. However, I felt that there were flaws in the process imposed by the university, as follows:

- The weighting of BSc marks by 30% from the 2nd year seemed to me to distort the marking - mostly downwards as far as I could see. Students at this stage in their lives can and do change, and they should be given the opportunity for marked improvements in their work to be recognised in their BSc marking.
- By being denied the opportunity to moderate marks, I felt that I was being asked to validate rather than to examine. Whilst comments we made to the staff towards the end of the period were clearly listened to with great interest, it was immensely frustrating to see only three representative projects from each unit, and to be unable to moderate the marks of an individual without thereby moderating those of all students with the same mark.
- I strongly recommend to the university that all the students in the third year are seen by the external examiners, who can then form their own opinions and, in discussion with the staff, consider moderating some marks, not just for the sake of individual students but also for the sake of the reputation of the school.
- If the university were to choose to continue current practice, then I would suggest that the external examiners require only one full day to complete their work (and only one night in a hotel).
- It was frustrating to meet the unit teachers before seeing the work of their units, rather than after. This meant we did not have the opportunity to pass on and discuss our comments on the students' work and on their teaching. It is quite understandable that there should be only one meeting, but I recommend that its timing should change.

4. Year-on-Year Comments

It seemed to me that the first and second year work was appropriate, and that it prepared its students for the BSc properly.

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

I was not able to attend the induction day. But my previous experience of external examining and of validation coupled with a helpful attitude from all staff meant that I did not feel that I was disadvantaged by this.

6. Noteworthy Practice and Enhancement

No comments so far.

7. Appointment Overview (for retiring External Examiners only)

8. 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) |
|--|---|------------|-----------|--------------|
| Programme/Course Information | | | | |
| 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/A |
| Draft Examination Question Papers | | | | |
| 8.3 | Were you asked to approve all examination papers contributing to the final award? | | N | |
| 8.4 | Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate? | Y | | |
| 8.5 | Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments? | Y | | |
| Marking Examination Scripts | | | | |
| 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? | Y | | |
| 8.7 | Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate? | Y | | |
| 8.8 | Were the scripts marked in such a way as to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks? | Y | | |
| 8.9 | Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the internal examiners? | Y | | |
| 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 | |
| Coursework and Practical Assessments | | | | |
| 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? | | | N/A |
| Clinical Examinations (if applicable) | | | | |
| 8.15 | Were satisfactory arrangements made for the conduct of clinical assessments? | | | |
| Sampling of Work | | | | |
| 8.16 | Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work? | Y | | |
| Examining Board Meeting | | | | |

| | | Yes (Y) | No (N) | N/A (N/A) |
|--|---|------------|-----------|--------------|
| 8.17 | Were you able to attend the Examining Board meeting? | Y | | |
| 8.18 | Was the Examining Board conducted properly, in accordance with established procedures and to your satisfaction? | Y | | |
| 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? | Y | | |
| Joint Examining Board Meeting (if applicable) | | | | |
| 8.20 | Did you attend a Composite Examining Board, i.e. one convened to consider the award of Joint Honours degrees? | | | |
| 8.21 | If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees? | | | |
| 8.22 | Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules? | | | |

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

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