



EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Professor Graham Meikle		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University of Westminster		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report:	MA Digital Media and Society		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2014/15	Date of Report:	5 July 2015

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

This is, of course, the first year that the MA in Digital Media and Society has run, and I would like to start by commending JOMEC for expanding into this area, and for achieving such a successful first year so far. The cohort of five students is modest, but I am confident that this will expand over the next few years. The programme makes exemplary use of teaching informed by original research in both core and option modules, and this should be a significant plus in recruiting students for future years. The structure of the two research methods modules illustrates best practice here, with its use of specialist researchers for its production workshops. The content of all modules is comprehensive and, taken together, I see no major gaps in provision for the course.

2. Academic Standards

I read a sample of work from all modules that students on the degree took this year and I was able to read all the work by all students on two core modules 'Understanding Digital Media' and 'Citizen Journalism and Digital Publics'. I was very impressed by the evidence of engagement with the course concepts that the students demonstrate in this work, and with the wide-ranging and appropriate literature upon which they draw. The students have clearly been motivated in their classes to engage thoroughly with the literature. Feedback is consistently constructive, formative and detailed, and there is excellent evidence of detailed and strong second-marking. I am happy to endorse all the marks that I saw.

3. The Assessment Process

I note that the assignments on the core modules are mainly traditional written essays, and I would encourage the course team to think about ways in which they might diversify and expand the range of assessment tasks. The digital storytelling option in the 'Citizen Media' module is an excellent example of an approach that brings networked digital media into the classroom as learning and teaching spaces, not just as objects of written analysis. There may well be further such avenues that the team could consider for future sessions, and this seems to me important for a degree exploring this particular area.

4. Year-on-Year Comments

N/A

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

I was provided with the course handbook and departmental materials in advance, and was able to meet with the course leader and another senior member of the course team for discussion before the Exam Board.

6. Noteworthy Practice and Enhancement

Reading lists on all modules are very up-to-date. I was impressed with the approach on the citizen journalism module of making almost all the required readings very recent journal articles. With that said, I did wonder if some of the reading lists on some other modules might overwhelm some students. Two modules (one core, one option) offer more than a page of suggested readings for each week's lecture, with relatively little in the way of a core of essential readings to anchor the module overall, and I think it might help some learners if these suggestions were made a little more targeted and concise; otherwise, there is a risk that providing so much detail becomes disabling for the learner who is not best placed to judge where to start.

7. Appointment Overview (for retiring External Examiners only)

N/A

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?	X		
8.2	Were you asked to comment on any changes to the assessment of the Programme?			X
Draft Examination Question Papers				
8.3	Were you asked to approve all examination papers contributing to the final award?			X
8.4	Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate?			X
8.5	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?			X
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?			X
8.7	Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate?			X
8.8	Were the scripts marked in such a way as to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?			X
8.9	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the internal examiners?			X
8.10	In your judgement, did you have the opportunity to examine a sufficient cross-section of candidates' work contributing to the final assessment?			X
Coursework and Practical Assessments				
8.11	Was the choice of subjects for coursework and / or practical assessments appropriate?	X		
8.12	Were you afforded access to an appropriate sample of coursework and / or practical assessments?	X		
8.13	Was the method and general standard of assessment appropriate?	X		
8.14	Is sufficient feedback provided to students on their assessed work?	X		
Clinical Examinations (if applicable)				
8.15	Were satisfactory arrangements made for the conduct of clinical assessments?			X
Sampling of Work				
8.16	Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work?	X		
Examining Board Meeting				

		Yes (Y)	No (N)	N/A (N/A)
8.17	Were you able to attend the Examining Board meeting?	X		
8.18	Was the Examining Board conducted properly, in accordance with established procedures and to your satisfaction?	X		
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?	X		
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?			X
8.21	If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees?			X
8.22	Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules?			X

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

ExternalExaminers@cf.ac.uk

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Clive Brown, Registry Officer, Registry & Academic Services, Cardiff University,
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