

Guidance notes are available to support the completion of this Report via the Cardiff University Intranet [here](#) and from ExternalExaminers@cardiff.ac.uk.

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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Dr Christopher John		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	Imperial College London		
Programme and / or Modules Covered by this Report	BSc Medical Pharmacology and BSc (Intercalated) Pharmacology		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2018-19	Date of Report:	29 th July 2019

Please complete all information in the spaces provided and submit within **six weeks** of the Examining Board (the dissertation stage Examining Board in the case of postgraduate Master's programmes).

Please note this form will be published online and should not make any reference to any individual students or members of staff in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (2018).

Please extend spaces where necessary.

1. Programme Structure (curriculum design, programme structure and level, methods of teaching and learning)

This is now my third year, so many of my comments on programme structure remain the same. A broad range of pharmacology topics are covered during the first two years of the three year programme to give students good understanding of the breadth of pharmacology as a subject. The third year is a lot more focused on specific areas of pharmacology that build on material taught during Years 1 & 2 and largely focus on the expertise of the staff delivering the course. There is a clear focus on the application of pharmacology within research throughout the course which should help those students wishing to pursue a research career. This is a definite strength of the programme.

The intercalated programme shares a large number of modules with Year 3 of the BSc Medical Pharmacology. There do seem to be more optional modules available to the medics.

The staff utilise a range of teaching methods within the programme and there does seem to be a real effort made to allow students to develop as many relevant skills as possible.

2. Academic Standards (comparability with other UK HEIs, achievement of students, any PSRB requirements)

Both programmes are comparable with other UK HEI programmes – including those at Imperial College.

3. The Assessment Process (enabling achievement of aims and learning outcomes; stretch of assessment; comparability of standards between modules of the same level)

My continuing view of the assessment process for these programmes is as follows:

Strengths:

1. Excellent in course assessment portfolio designed to develop a range of skills
2. Exam papers demonstrate many aspects of excellent practice – they are clearly mapped to learning outcomes, usually very good detail within model answers, the single best answer questions are very well written (not something I have consistently found at other institutions) and the inclusion of essay questions remains a real strength of the exam process as it allows depth of knowledge to be tested.
3. Level of feedback provided to the students is excellent – very well organised by Carmen. Even the final year students receive detailed feedback on their work. I hope the students appreciate the efforts made in this regard.
4. Any assessment issues are always discussed with me and my opinion is valued.

To improve:

1. One suggestion I made after my first year was to include more data interpretation within the exams to ensure you are testing a broader range of skills. This has not been taken up as yet, although I am told that there is a greater focus on data interpretation within the teaching sessions.
2. The exam papers are a real mix of formats. It would be ideal if a more consistent approach was taken to exam paper structure. I suspect it is a little confusing for students to know what to expect from any exam.

Overall, grades awarded were appropriate and it was good to see some excellent work produced by the students under examination conditions.

4. **Examination of Master's Dissertations (if applicable)** (sample of dissertations received, appropriateness of marking schemes, standard of internal marking, classification of awards)

[Where possible please complete this section following the dissertation examining board determining the final award.]

5. Year-on-Year Comments

[Previous External Examiner Reports are available from the Cardiff University Website [here](#).]

The course leads have responded to previous feedback and modified the course to address issues e.g. incorporation of more basic pharmacology concepts into final year modules to ensure students revisit these core concepts.

As noted above, could do with some more data interpretation type questions during the exams process.

6. **Preparation for the role of External Examiner (for new External Examiners only)** (appropriateness of briefing provided by the programme team and supporting information, visits to School, ability to meet with students, arrangements for accessing work to review)

N/A

7. **Noteworthy Practice and Enhancement** (good and innovative practice in learning, teaching and assessment; opportunities for enhancement of learning opportunities)

The course provides a varied curriculum and outside of the lecture content there are some well thought out in course assessment that helps students develop good critical skills. The individual exam papers are well put together and show many elements of excellent practice.

It would be good to include more team based elements to the assessment.

8. **Appointment Overview (for retiring External Examiners only)** (significant changes in standards, programme/discipline developments, implementation of recommendations, further areas of work)

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)
Programme/Course information				
9.1	Did you receive sufficient information about the Programme and its contents, learning outcomes and assessments?	Y		
9.2	Were you asked to comment on any changes to the assessment of the Programme?	Y		
Commenting on draft examination question papers				
9.3	Were you asked to approve all examination papers contributing to the final award?	Y		
9.4	Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate?	Y		
9.5	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?	Y		
Examination scripts				
9.6	Did you receive a sufficient number of scripts to be able to assess whether the internal marking and classifications were appropriate and consistent?	Y		
9.7	Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate?	Y		
9.8	Were the scripts marked in such a way as to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?	Y		
9.9	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the internal examiners?	Y		
9.10	In your judgement, did you have the opportunity to examine a sufficient cross-section of candidates' work contributing to the final assessment?	Y		
Coursework and practical assessments				
9.11	Was the choice of subjects for coursework and / or practical assessments appropriate?	Y		
9.12	Were you afforded access to an appropriate sample of coursework and / or practical assessments?	Y		
9.13	Was the method and general standard of assessment appropriate?	Y		
9.14	Is sufficient feedback provided to students on their assessed work?	Y		
Clinical examinations (if applicable)				
9.15	Were satisfactory arrangements made for the conduct of clinical assessments?			NA
Sampling of work				
9.16	Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work?	Y		

Examining board meeting				
9.17	Were you able to attend the Examining Board meeting?	Y		
9.18	Was the Examining Board conducted properly, in accordance with established procedures and to your satisfaction?	Y		
9.19	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)				
9.20	Did you attend a Composite Examining Board, i.e. one convened to consider the award of Joint Honours degrees?		N	
9.21	If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees?			NA
9.22	Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules?			NA

Please return this Report, **in a Microsoft Word format**, by email to:
externalexaminers@cardiff.ac.uk

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

External Examiners, Registry, Cardiff University, McKenzie House, 30-36 Newport Road, Cardiff, CF24 0DE

