

## EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

Guidance notes are available to support the completion of this Report and are available at <http://learning.cf.ac.uk/quality/review/external-examiners/reports/>.

	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Angela Piccini		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University of Bristol		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report	MSc in Science, Media and Communication		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2015/16	Date of Report:	21 December 2016

For completion by External Examiner in the spaces provided. Please extend spaces where necessary. **Please note this Form will be published online and should not make any reference to any individual students or members of staff.**

### 1. Programme Structure

It is my understanding that the programme structure is currently under revision with the secondment of programme director, [REDACTED], to Museum of Wales. Although I was not sent an overview of the programme structure on appointment, I have been able to research the programme on line and navigate the structure as communicated to potentially interested students.

The structure of the course seems to present a mix of optionality with core research methods. It is coherent while addressing the needs of a mixed student cohort.

### 2. Academic Standards

The materials that I have seen range from unit information on Blackboard to student coursework and 1 student dissertation. Although the materials that I've seen have been limited, they do seem to maintain the threshold academic standards. Moreover, the samples of student work that I've seen meet the academic standards and the achievements of students are comparable with those in other UK higher education institutions of which the External Examiner has experience.

### 3. The Assessment Process

Looking at the spread of marks across the 3 modules and considering the samples I have read, I can confirm both the quality of the students' work and the assessment

practices of teachers on the units. It's clear that criteria are being applied consistently, as evidenced by the similar marks that students achieve across the different units.

The course modules appear to be stimulating and to generate some original and thoughtful work from students. The best examples are of very high standards, indeed. I wonder if students on the MSc might consider whether some form of online student journal might be a useful way of testing out their ideas about the public communication of science and technology. This is clearly an excellent programme that could grow with the right kinds of industry partnerships in Wales.

### **Introduction to Science, Technology and Society**

There were 2 essay assessment events associated with this module

### **Visitor Studies**

There were 2 assessment events associated with this module: an essay and a written report. The marking on this unit seems appropriate and some very good work was produced.

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

N/A

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

I have greatly enjoyed the opportunity to work with Cardiff on this programme. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] has been particularly friendly and has answered my questions when they've arisen. However, there have been some communication gaps between the different offices responsible for managing the External Examiner's workflow. I was not sent programme structure documentation at the start of my term and had to discover this myself. I was also not kept informed of the change in Programme Director or the changes to the programme structure. This has made understanding the structure and relationships across the Blackboard site a little difficult at times. In terms of Exam Board meetings, I couldn't attend the June meeting but was asked to come to the November meeting. However, when I arrived in Cardiff, it was very difficult to find the meeting due to uncommunicated room changes. When the meeting began I was told that it was unusual for an External Examiner to attend the year-end meeting. I found this odd given that the academic year-end Exam Board meeting is the most important External Examiner meeting in my institution. The brevity of the meeting and the fact that the programme I'm signed up to examine didn't feature (I hadn't been informed of this in advance) meant that I was uncertain about my role in that meeting.

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

Given the limited access I've had to the programme and its outputs, it is difficult to comment on noteworthy practice.

In terms of enhancement, my one recommendation is to consider expanding the dissertation module to include practice-based and placement-focused options. With

the potentially vocational thrust of the programme, it would be useful to present a mix of discursive and practical activities to students.

For reference, the programme director may wish to consult:

<http://www.bris.ac.uk/unit-programme-catalogue/UnitDetails.jsa;jsessionid=07F70FB549794AF50A67A2247F2337EB.nAC10040C2063?ayrCode=16%2F17&unitCode=DRAMM3019>

<http://www.bris.ac.uk/unit-programme-catalogue/UnitDetails.jsa;jsessionid=07F70FB549794AF50A67A2247F2337EB.nAC10040C2063?ayrCode=16%2F17&unitCode=DRAMM3018>

## 7. Comments on the Examination of Master’s Dissertations (External Examiners for postgraduate Master’s Programmes only, see also 9.23-9.29 below)

I found it a little challenging to make the link between the dissertation, which was using quantitative methods to analyse qualitative data, and the programme as a whole. Despite the First Class quality of the dissertation, its media and communications content was difficult to identify. However, I’ve not been sent the ILOs or aims and objectives of the programme as a whole so it may be that the dissertation meets these. Aside from those comments, I must commend the assessment of the work by the two examiners. Feedback was detailed, fair and useful and the mark matched the assessment criteria and the marks.

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

N/A

## 9. Annual Report Checklist

Please include appropriate comments within Sections 1-8 above for any answer of ‘No’.

		Yes (Y)	No (N)	N/A (N/A)
<b>Programme/Course Information</b>				
9.1	Did you receive sufficient information about the Programme and its contents, learning outcomes and assessments?		x	
9.2	Were you asked to comment on any changes to the assessment of the Programme?		x	
<b>Draft Examination Question Papers</b>				
9.3	Were you asked to approve all examination papers contributing to the final award?			x
9.4	Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate?			x
9.5	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?			x
<b>Marking Examination Scripts</b>				

		Yes (Y)	No (N)	N/A (N/A)
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?			x
9.7	Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate?			x
9.8	Were the scripts marked in such a way as to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?			x
9.9	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the internal examiners?			x
9.10	In your judgement, did you have the opportunity to examine a sufficient cross-section of candidates' work contributing to the final assessment?			x
<b>Coursework and Practical Assessments</b>				
9.11	Was the choice of subjects for coursework and / or practical assessments appropriate?	x		
9.12	Were you afforded access to an appropriate sample of coursework and / or practical assessments?	x		
9.13	Was the method and general standard of assessment appropriate?	x		
9.14	Is sufficient feedback provided to students on their assessed work?	x		
<b>Clinical Examinations (if applicable)</b>				
9.15	Were satisfactory arrangements made for the conduct of clinical assessments?			x
<b>Sampling of Work</b>				
9.16	Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work?	x		
<b>Examining Board Meeting</b>				
9.17	Were you able to attend the Examining Board meeting?	x		
9.18	Was the Examining Board conducted properly, in accordance with established procedures and to your satisfaction?	x		
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?		x	
<b>Joint Examining Board Meeting (if applicable)</b>				
9.20	Did you attend a Composite Examining Board, i.e. one convened to consider the award of Joint Honours degrees?			x
9.21	If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees?			x
9.22	Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules?			x
<b>Examination of Master's Dissertations (if applicable)</b>				

		Yes (Y)	No (N)	N/A (N/A)
9.23	Did you receive a sufficient number of Dissertations to be able to assess whether the internal marking and classifications were appropriate and consistent?	x		
9.24	Was the sample in accordance with the University's sampling guidelines (guidelines provided below)?	x		
9.25	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the Internal Examiners?	x		
9.26	Were you able to attend the Master's Degree (Dissertation) Stage Examining Board?	x		
9.27	If so, was the Examining Board conducted properly and in accordance with established procedures?	x		
9.28	Were the schemes for marking and classification correctly applied?	x		
9.29	Were the standards of the awards recommended appropriate?	x		

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:

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

### **SAMPLING OF TAUGHT MASTER'S DISSERTATIONS BY EXTERNAL EXAMINERS**

External Examiners shall be expected to see prescribed numbers and ranges of Dissertations, but not to mark them, on the following basis:

At least 10% of Dissertations for a postgraduate taught Master's Programme, or a minimum of 10 (whichever is the higher figure) must be seen by the External Examiner(s). Where the total number is less than 10, all Dissertations must be seen by the External Examiner(s) #.

Dissertations seen by External Examiners should include examples from across the whole range of achievement (i.e. Pass with Distinction, Pass, Fail).

External Examiners will retain the right to see other Dissertations at random.

# Where more than one External Examiner is appointed on a Programme, at least 10% of Dissertations, or a minimum of 10 (whichever is the higher figure), should be seen collectively by the External Examiners.