



EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Martin Iddon		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University of Leeds		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report:	Music (Performance & Composition)		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2013/14	Date of Report:	16 June 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 programme which I have examined has remained reasonably consistent over three years. However it is beginning to change in the direction, particularly, of having a reduced, more focussed number of assessments, a process which is gradually rolling out across the programme and should bring both greater efficiency and improved student attainment.

2. Academic Standards

Standards at Cardiff are comparable to those at similar institutions, which is to say they are very strong!

3. The Assessment Process

The assessment process is fundamentally extremely rigorous, and great care and attention is shown to individual students *even where* it may not seem that the mark is particularly significant. This seems to be extremely laudable. I have some minor suggestions, which reiterate what I said in the exam board:

1. Many performances (especially by singers) seem to include a wider variety of periods/styles than are strictly required by the rubric and, in many cases, a more tightly focussed programme might help play to performers strengths rather more.

2. I wonder whether it's time to consider having performances very slightly earlier and recording them properly to allow the external examiner to sample (and to concentrate on any more complex cases) rather than acting, more or less, as a third examiner. I've really enjoyed doing it, but it does mean that it's quite hard to balance assessment of performance against composition.
3. Introduction of the concert attendance element for second-year composition seems (if only a little) to be skewing marks up where the actual quality of the *compositional* work doesn't deserve it. I think it's a solid basic idea, though, so wonder whether this could be fixed by a small change: integrating it with the existing and effective listening logs. This would have the benefit of introducing some reflective element into concert attendance too, which would help make pedagogical sense of it while still allowing it to perform its useful practical function.

Notwithstanding those suggestions (and they are only that!), things seem to be running extremely well and efficiently at Cardiff, a tribute to the hard work of staff.

4. Year-on-Year Comments

I'd only note that my earlier concerns about over-assessment are being dealt with by changes in assessment across the programme, although inevitably this will take several years to roll out.

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

n/a

6. Noteworthy Practice and Enhancement

All three of the suggestions above come from conversations I had during the days I spent at Cardiff this year. It's clear that there is continuous reflection on the programme and its assessment from all staff involved with its delivery and a genuine desire to get it absolutely right.

7. Appointment Overview (for retiring External Examiners only)

The undergraduate programme at Cardiff remains in rude health, so far as I can see. That I'm focussing on tweaks suggests, I think, that basically the programme is being well managed and well developed in sensible ways. It's been a pleasure to spend some time with it!

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

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