



EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Dr Jessica Davies		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	The Open University		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report:	Certificate of Higher Education (Humanities)		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2014-15	Date of Report:	14.09.15

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 structure and content of the programme continue to be appropriate and varied. This year saw the extension of the provision of pathways, the most recent addition being in Media and Journalism studies. This pathway works in similar ways and with the same learning design and assessment structure as those offered in History and English.

2. Academic Standards

The standards set for attainment are entirely appropriate and quality assurance systems remain highly effective; as in 2014, the internal moderators' reports on each subject strand and their remarks on sample assignments were once again invaluable to me in gauging student performance and the effectiveness of assessment processes.

3. The Assessment Process

I am very pleased to see that my recommendation, concerning the extension of the word allowance for final assignments, has been implemented – at least in English literature. I think this will make for stronger final submissions, and better reflect the analytical skills the students acquire during the course of the module

4. Year-on-Year Comments

- (i) Following my recommendation that Pathway handbooks be standardised, each Pathway now has a handbook which follows the 'Exploring the Past' model. There are still some modules where a handbook is missing, however, so there remains a degree of inconsistency in terms of information provided for students: for example, Music ('The story of music in five genres'), Philosophy and the nineteenth-century Literature and Literature and culture modules each produced a model handbook, while another music history module had little in the way of coursework guidance or information available. Likewise Scriptwriting Online appears to have no module handbook. At the very least a week by week schedule and assignment questions should be provided for the students at the start.

- (ii) I was sent a very detailed and helpful report on a pilot using Turnitin for Students on the history pathway. It was clear that this was found to be neither helpful nor practicable for adult learners. Turnitin is not especially reliable or easy to use, and reports are often difficult to interpret. Students need ongoing assistance when using it as a tool for identifying plagiarism; it does not work effectively or meaningfully if it is simply passed to the student to use. I share the view that this pilot should not be followed up or 'rolled out' to future students. Instead I would suggest that students make use of the excellent facilities available to them in the Learning Resource Centre. Module tutors should also issue standard guidance on plagiarism in their module handbooks, and in fact, most already do.

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

6. Noteworthy Practice and Enhancement

The 'Group glossary' produced by one of the philosophy tutors for CE5023 is to be commended as an imaginative example of collaborative learning. This prompted some discussion between myself and the Humanities Co-ordinator about the feasibility and desirability of incorporating an online component on a few modules, as a way of extending the range of skills students develop; for example in digital humanities and collaborative working.

One of the possibilities is the setting up of a wiki for students to work on collaboratively. I suggested this might work well on one of the media, history/archaeology or creative writing modules, as a way of learning to build a collective analysis/critique of an object, a piece of writing or work of art. The Humanities Co-ordinator made the very useful suggestion of incorporating a wiki as a way of producing the glossary on CE5023, the philosophy module mentioned above. I think this is an excellent idea, though we are both mindful of the potential increase in tutor workload. The idea would need to be discussed with the tutor concerned.

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?	Y		
8.2	Were you asked to comment on any changes to the assessment of the Programme?	Y		
Draft Examination Question Papers				
8.3	Were you asked to approve all examination papers contributing to the final award?			NA
8.4	Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate?			NA
8.5	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?			NA
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?			NA
8.7	Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate?			NA
8.8	Were the scripts marked in such a way as to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?			NA
8.9	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the internal examiners?			NA
8.10	In your judgement, did you have the opportunity to examine a sufficient cross-section of candidates' work contributing to the final assessment?			NA
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?	Y		
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?		N	
8.18	Was the Examining Board conducted properly, in accordance with established procedures and to your satisfaction?			
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?			NA
8.21	If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees?			NA
8.22	Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules?			NA

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