



## EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Dr Michael Higgins		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University of Strathclyde, Glasgow		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report:	BA in Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies / Journalism and Culture / Journalism and Communications / Media and Communications		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2014-15	Date of Report:	14 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

I serve as external examiner on several related degree programmes, and it seems to me that these accompany one another effectively, while retaining their own key points of distinction. The teaching and management team are clearly on top of programme structure, and are alert to the need to offer student choice as the degree progresses.

### 2. Academic Standards

There is an inevitable variety, but overall the quality of academic work is very high and in keeping with the standards of an internationally-leading institution. It is obvious that students exploit the expertise of the teaching staff, and engage enthusiastically with the subject. It is also pleasing to see that work at the higher end is well-compensated, although it is conceivable that work of the very highest standards could be rewarded still further.

### 3. The Assessment Process

Moderation is carried out diligently, and is evidenced by an accompanying form detailing the numbers of assessments moderated and providing comments. The feedback tends to be detailed and extremely constructive.

Differences do occasionally emerge in the marking of dissertations, but the procedure for resolving these differences is clear and robust.

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

This is my first year as external.

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

Although the formal induction day had to be cancelled, I took the opportunity to visit the campus meet colleagues from Student Experience and Academic Management and programme management, which was productive and worthwhile.

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

As well as emphasising again the quality of teaching and assessment overall, there are a number of aspects of good practice I'd like to draw attention to:

It is good to see teaching on classes distributed across lecturing and professorial staff from level 1 onwards. This is certain to enhance the student experience considerably.

There are a number of innovative assessments across the programmes, and I will take future opportunities to highlight others, but, for now, I point to the "news analysis assignment" in MC3589 is an outstanding example in which creativity, originality and rigour are demanded of students (who respond appropriately).

Across the programmes, the criteria laid out in the assessment sheets are unusually vivid and discursive, using a range of creatively-composed criteria designed to capture those qualities that often distinguish outstanding work, yet are difficult to articulate.

#### **7. Appointment Overview (for retiring External Examiners only)**

## 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)
<b>Programme/Course Information</b>				
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
<b>Draft Examination Question Papers</b>				
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		
<b>Marking Examination Scripts</b>				
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		
<b>Coursework and Practical Assessments</b>				
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		
<b>Clinical Examinations (if applicable)</b>				
8.15	Were satisfactory arrangements made for the conduct of clinical assessments?			x
<b>Sampling of Work</b>				
8.16	Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work?	x		
<b>Examining Board Meeting</b>				

		<b>Yes (Y)</b>	<b>No (N)</b>	<b>N/A (N/A)</b>
8.17	Were you able to attend the Examining Board meeting?	<b>x</b>		
8.18	Was the Examining Board conducted properly, in accordance with established procedures and to your satisfaction?	<b>x</b>		
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		
<b>Joint Examining Board Meeting (if applicable)</b>				
8.20	Did you attend a Composite Examining Board, i.e. one convened to consider the award of Joint Honours degrees?		<b>x</b>	
8.21	If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees?			<b>x</b>
8.22	Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules?			<b>x</b>

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:

Clive Brown, Registry Officer, Registry & Academic Services, Cardiff University,  
McKenzie House, 30-36 Newport Road, Cardiff, CF24 0DE