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

	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Ruth Reed		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	Green Planning Studio Limited		
Programme and / or Modules Covered by this Report	PGDip Architecture: Professional Practice		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2019/20	Date of Report:	19/11/20

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

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)

The blended course structure of distance learning and short courses integrates well into students’ full-time working lives. The level of input and support for students is very high. The switch to on-line tutorials from March due to COVID restrictions has not affected students achieving their learning outcomes. The impact of furlough on professional experience had very limited impact on student’s practical experience as it came at the end of the recording period. I was not made aware of any impact of the industrial action on teaching and learning outcomes.

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

The module marks are an accurate reflection of the standards achieved, and the award classification reflects academic attainment on the Diploma programme.

Students who could not complete academic submissions on time due to COVID restrictions were granted extensions and where this was no longer feasible allowed to defer without penalty. The pass standards remained the same as previous years.

The course content and student submissions remain at a very high standard this year and meet the requirements of the ARB/RIBA prescription/validation criteria.

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

The marks for academic papers were consistent across the modules.

The interviews were conducted by Collaborate with an expanded timetable to run in series over 3 days rather than the 3 examining pairs running in parallel over one. I sampled 2 interviews for each examining pair. This enabled a careful protocol to manage the entry and exit of students and examiners that worked well. The longer programme reduced fatigue for the examiners and the spacing of the interviews allowed adequate preparation and de-briefing between the pairs. The professional examiners adapted well to on-line interviews and there was only one technical hitch that I was aware of, poor sound quality for one student, but he was clear enough for all parties to understand and communicate adequately. The student was not put at any disadvantage as a consequence. The examiners made it clear that if he was struggling he could end the interview and reschedule but that was not necessary. The standard of interviews was high and the examiners engaged well with the students through the medium.

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](#).]

There were no matters arising from my first report.

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)

It was not possible to meet the students because of COVID restrictions but I received all the submissions for every student to review in plenty of time and was very well briefed and informed by the programme team.

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

The students and staff switched to-online interaction with little issue. The course is suitable to adapt to remote teaching and support from the academic staff. Interaction between the students themselves has continued via video meetings and continues to reinforce learning through shared experience.

The professional examiners are to be commended for their rapid adjustment to on-line oral examinations.

In 20/21 consideration will have to be given to the reduced opportunities for students to gain a wide range of practical experience due to the impacts of COVID and Brexit on the construction industry which could reduce the professions workload and increase the number of students on furlough. The course may be able to adapt to meet these impacts through opportunities to defer without penalty or increased substitution of theoretical exploration of issues in place of actual experience, although the latter should be approached with caution as the learning outcomes of the ARB/RIBA validation criteria should be maintained.

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

9. Issues for Response

1. A summary of the impact of COVID and Brexit on practical experience opportunities for students in the 20/21 cohort and the course's adaptations to support the students.
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- 3.
- 4.
- 5.