



EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

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For completion by External Examiner:			
Name of External Examiner:	JAYNIE BYE		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	JAYNIE BYE LTD		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report:	MA/DIPLOMA IN JOURNALISM (MAGAZINE)		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2012/13	Date of Report:	01.07.13

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

Overall, I feel that the programme structure is excellent and covers a broad spectrum. The indication is that students are given a thorough grounding in essential disciplines, but there is also sufficient flexibility to allow some students the opportunity to shine in what appear to be personal areas of interest for them.

On a recent visit to do a workshop with the students, I was shown the coursework produced by the students in their groups and I was extremely impressed by the high standard of the magazines they produced, the originality of the ideas and, while creating these, the efforts made by the course leaders to replicate as much as possible the environment of a working magazine office.

It's clear from spending any time with the School that the teaching of this course is a labour of love that is tackled with great passion and integrity.

2. Academic Standards

Academic standards are high and, while a minority of students don't appear to have made the best of the opportunities provided by the course, the expectation of good performance is obvious.

3. The Assessment Process

I thought that the briefs for each module were clear and extremely well-explained. The marking criteria for each of the modules is clear and broad enough to encourage a fair assessment of the students' efforts.

Overall, there was excellent feedback on the marking grids but I felt strongly that the modules which had an overall summary comment on the front sheet, which succinctly justified the mark given, were far clearer and, I feel, potentially less open to challenge. Perhaps this could be adopted as a standard procedure.

PRODUCTION EXAM

The students all chose fairly safe industry magazines (Press Gazette; InPublishing; theJournalist) which raised a question for me: was there scope to be slightly bolder or were they encouraged to stay within certain boundaries?

Overall, I was disappointed, that at MA level, the standard of subbing accuracy was not higher with many students. From a graduate employer viewpoint, a lack of attention to detail, poor grammar and spelling (it's/its) is an irritation. Students were, however, marked down pretty severely for these inaccuracies, demonstrating the commitment of the staff to emphasise rigour in this area.

INTERVIEW EXAM

The assignment seems suitably chall and fair, providing, as it does, exactly the same subject and interview content for each student and accurately recreating a press conference Q&A session. It's probably pretty daunting for the students to know that they will be competing so directly with their fellow students.

I found the marking to be fair and consistent, with precise, clear and helpful comments.

NEWS EXAM

Good choice of source press releases. Beyond testing the more rigid news story structure, the extension of the news release into a follow-up feature is a great test of students creativity.

This was one of the modules where I think the students would have benefited from an overall summary line on the marking grid.

FEATURE EXAM

There were excellent, constructive summing-up comments on the marking grid which really help to fully explain this extremely thoroughly-examined set of papers and fairly-allocated set of marks.

The Jelly Test is a surprisingly useful index.

The one fail in the batch, frankly, deserved it.

INSIDE THE INDUSTRY

I felt quite strongly that the students would have benefited from more commentary and explanation of the marks given. Many had just ticks and no commentary or justification.

I received only five of these to review and the standard and treatment of the task was pretty diverse so to give a truly considered response to the fairness of the marking, I would have liked to have seen at least double that amount.

MAGAZINE CONCEPT/FEATURE SERIES

Again, excellent comments from the examiner.

For me, this was the most baffling module in terms of the effort that had been put in by the students and, as a result, I felt it quite challe to fairly assess. There seemed to be a much bigger gulf here between a submission that received a mark in the mid-50s and one in the mid-60s, than submissions in other modules with a 20-mark gap. For example, a student who got a mark in the 50s had not completed most of the set tasks. Another student who got a mark in the 60s had clearly put in an immense amount of effort.

Although the briefing document seemed clear, some of the students didn't follow it well, leading me to wonder, at MA level, why? Others in the group, displayed a much more thorough grounding in the more strategic considerations of a magazine launch that it felt almost as if they had been on a different course to some of their peers.

Overall, I think the challenge set is extremely appropriate to the aims of the course, but I am confused by the differences in student approach and effort.

4. Year-on-Year Comments

N/A

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

6. Noteworthy Practice and Enhancement

Since this is such a vocational field of post-graduate study, it was very pleasing to see that, in the Inside The Industry module, the students were tasked with giving detailed feedback on their placements.

The brand statement section of the magazine concept/feature series module is also a good indication that the course tackles a more strategic view of journalism, which I would expect to see at MA level.

If there is room to expand the scope of the course a little, I would be encouraged to see a little more focus on the 'business' of publishing, with, perhaps, students given a basic grounding in the workings of a magazine P&L; the importance of researching and getting into the minds of your audience; and more on the opportunities created by an understanding of marketing to your audience, and even a little more on brand creation, development and ownership.

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)	
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?				N
Draft Examination Question Papers					
8.3	Were you asked to approve all examination papers contributing to the final award?				N
8.4	Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate?				N
8.5	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?				N
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?			Y except in one case (see main comme nts	
8.7	Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate?			Y	
8.8	Were the scripts marked in such a way as to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?			Y	
8.9	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the internal examiners?			Y	
8.10	In your judgement, did you have the opportunity to examine a sufficient cross-section of candidates' work contributing to the final assessment?			Y	
Coursework and Practical Assessments					
8.11	Was the choice of subjects for coursework and / or practical assessments appropriate?				N/A
8.12	Were you afforded access to an appropriate sample of coursework and / or practical assessments?				N/A

	Yes (Y)	No (N)	N/A (N/A)	
8.13	Was the method and general standard of assessment appropriate?			N/A
8.14	Is sufficient feedback provided to students on their assessed work?			N/A
Clinical Examinations (if applicable)				
8.15	Were satisfactory arrangements made for the conduct of clinical assessments?			N/A
Sampling of Work				
8.16	Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work?		Y	
Examining Board Meeting				
8.17	Were you able to attend the Examining Board meeting?		Y	
8.18	Was the Examining Board conducted properly, in accordance with established procedures and to your satisfaction?		Y	
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?			N/A
8.21	If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees?			N/A
8.22	Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules?			N/A

Please return this Report, preferably in a Microsoft Word format, by email to:

ExternalExaminers@cf.ac.uk

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