



EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Professor Simon Parson		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University of Aberdeen		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report:	Final year composite exam board – all BSc programmes (biomedical, biomolecular, and biological degrees)		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2014-2015	Date of Report:	

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

General: there is good opportunity for choice within each degree programme and also good opportunities to move between degree programmes after year 1.

Anatomy module choice: The Head and Neck course will move to 3rd year for 2015-16, after a year's absence from the 2nd year curriculum, to ensure that students do not take it in both 2nd and 3rd year. This will increase the gross anatomy content of the 'Anatomy' final year, and is appreciated.

Staffing: A further appointment of junior academic staff has been made to strengthen 'Anatomy' teaching.

2. Academic Standards

Students: I was unfortunately, once again unable to meet with students this academic year.

Marking criteria: The full range of marks are used throughout continually assessed components, with evidence that the highest grades are achievable. But, I still failed to find usage of marks including and above 90% in examination answers. I continue to encourage markers to agree on what is possible under examination conditions and to mark accordingly.

Module equity: Module average grades are now falling within the Schools acceptable limits. Modules are equitable, with comparable average grades and numbers of first class students.

3. The Assessment Process

Material available to external: This year, we were provided with detailed mark spreadsheets ahead of our visits. This had been requested, and was a very helpful addition for us, and was appreciated. I also was able to access student projects electronically, which greatly assisted my task.

Examination board: I was unfortunately unable to attend the Board this year, therefore I was not able to view as wide a range of material, especially examination papers as I would have preferred. However, I was sent a good range of electronic material, including final year projects which I was able to read and review. I passed my comments to my co-examiner Prof Deuchars, who raised them on my behalf at the Board.

4. Year-on-Year Comments

Module equity: Marks on BI3316 have now come into line with other modules.

Availability of marks for scrutiny: Marks were made available to us sooner and in a readily readable format, which enabled quick and accurate comparison across and between modules.

Penalties: The guidance for hardcopy and electronic submission has been tightened up, and a general move to electronic only submission is in process.

Mark range: I still see no examples of marks above 88% in subjectively marked examination answers, and I continue to encourage use of these marks to reward what is possible to produce under examination conditions. Higher marks are awarded in coursework, but often this is objectively marked.

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

N/A

6. Noteworthy Practice and Enhancement

Marking: The proformas used for marking projects is very useful and promotes consistency of marking and feedback to students. It is especially useful when individual items are highlighted and not simply a whole section i.e. everything in the 61-70 section. Further, I wholeheartedly approve of the 2, 5, 8 mark choices available within each grade to indicate lower, middle and upper in each grade and to avoid borderline marks.

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?	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