



EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Dr Shelley Parr		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	The University of Southampton, Faculty of Medicine		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report:	BDS		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	Year 1	Date of Report:	14/6/16

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

As in previous years, the structure of the programme is current and coherent and is appropriate for the stated aims and learning outcomes.

The programme leadership team clearly really care about the programme and are continually reviewing and refining it to make an excellent learning experience.

I am told they plan to purchase and implement purpose made exams software that will enable even closer mapping of the assessments to the GDS requirements as well as more analysis and standard setting of the assessments. This sounds like a great development.

2. Academic Standards

I was given access to work from all students including both their examination papers and coursework so that I could sample work from across the range of students and assessments. I focused on the physiology questions mostly and looked at papers from a sample of failed students, borderline pass and highly scoring students. I was very happy that the standards were appropriate in accordance with the QAA FHEQ and similar to those programmes for which I am familiar now (medical programmes) and those that I have been familiar with in the past (dental programmes).

The only information that was not provided that would have been helpful/interesting to see were copies of the portfolios that the students complete. We were however reassured of the process for marking these and have no concerns regarding the assessment of this component.

I was invited to attend the student presentations, but I was unable to attend on the date that it took place this year.

3. The Assessment Process

The assessment is very thorough and rigorous, and appropriate in line with learning outcomes of the programme and University Policies.

I have commented before that the essays within the examinations rarely score in excess of 80%, and I was pleased to see this year a few more essays that were marked higher than this suggesting staff have been encouraged to us the full range. I am aware that the marking criteria used are school wide and so may not be easy to change, but I would recommend that school consider reviewing whether the assessment criteria for within exams essays are reviewed to consider whether the requirements for 80+ are realistic given the examination conditions and type of questions set.

The students are very thoroughly assessed and the all of the questions are well written and assess knowledge that is relevant to dentistry. However, I would recommend that staff are encouraged to develop questions which test application of knowledge and focus on the core things these students need to know as there are a significant number of questions in which I feel quite a lot of very detailed knowledge is being tested. Although difficult questions are good to discriminate between the adequate and outstanding students learning, I do not feel that some details are core for a dental student to know. If the team move to standard setting this may help staff feel more confident about setting a greater proportion of questions they may otherwise perceive as too easy.

4. Year-on-Year Comments

The standard of assessment processes was very high as in previous years and the team are very clearly well organised and very much on top of the programme. I have never raised any serious concerns, and any comments I have raised have been considered and acted on (or not) appropriately. The BDS team continue to be very open and honest about their course, willing to discuss all aspects and clearly chosen their assessment and teaching methods carefully with well thought out rationales behind all decisions. It is particularly useful that statistics are provided for all assessment elements for multiple previous years so that there is oversight of any patterns etc.

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

NA

6. Noteworthy Practice and Enhancement

The academic review process in which students of concern are identified, provided with feedback and monitored from early on in the course is excellent practice.

Within the assessments, the makers have clearly made significant effort to make it very clear how they had come about the mark they awarded by use of the marking criteria (highlighting sentences within each of the mark ranges to show which were relevant) and providing comments within the script to provide examples of misunderstandings, inaccurate or missing information. This is really helpful to me as the external examiner but will also provide excellent resource for feedback to the students. I have just started external examining elsewhere and it is notably different and highlights the good practice of the BDS course at Cardiff.

7. Appointment Overview (for retiring External Examiners only)

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as the external for the BDS programme and have consistently been impressed with the design of the programme, robustness of the processes, and commitment, enthusiasm and skills of the staff involved. Consideration of using standard setting methods for the examination is something that I would encourage the team to take forwards, but I appreciate this is not common practice within HE apart from in medical programmes for whom the GMC make this a requirement.

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?			NA
Draft Examination Question Papers				
8.3	Were you asked to approve all examination papers contributing to the final award?	Y		
8.4	Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate?	Y		
8.5	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?	Y		
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		
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?	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?			NA
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?	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?			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