



## EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

Guidance notes are available to support the completion of this Report and are available at <http://learning.cf.ac.uk/quality/review/external-examiners/reports/>.

	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Alistair Warren		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University of Sheffield		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report	Bioscience (Biomedical)		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2015-16	Date of Report:	June 2016

For completion by External Examiner in the spaces provided. Please extend spaces where necessary. **Please note this Form will be published online and should not make any reference to any individual students or members of staff.**

### 1. Programme Structure

The current programme follows a traditional format where students undertake a set of core modules followed by optional choices; assessment is an appropriate mixture of course work and unseen examinations. We heard that the structure is due to change next session with fewer, larger modules (each module worth 40 credits) at Level 2. This approach appears to have some advantages, not least that students have more opportunity for synoptic learning and the overall workload for staff should decrease. The current structure appears to require duplication of Level 1 lectures amounting to around 250 hours of 'extra' staff load each session.

The recent introduction of an integrated masters follows the pattern elsewhere while the Professional Training Year is more extensive than at other similar institutions with which I am familiar. This is a positive response to the needs of both employers and graduates and deserves to be made a stronger marketing feature of the Cardiff programmes.

### 2. Academic Standards

Standards are good and in-line with equivalent institutions. Benchmark standards are met; student expectations and workload all seem appropriate.

### 3. The Assessment Process

There is a good range of assessment methods, which are applied rigorously and fairly. The scrutiny process appears reliable and feedback comments are helpful. There are occasional examples of where the criteria used do not match the score

awarded, but in all cases that I saw the mark was appropriate. While marking is fair, it is sometimes a little harsh at the lower end of the scale. Moderation/ scrutiny was generally clear and in most cases there was clear evidence of the process being followed.

Project marking was also clear with feedback that matched the scores awarded. There was evidence that checks for plagiarism were applied and used. I found Learning Central easy to use and helpful when viewing projects as well as some other work, but it could be streamlined with a more consistent format.

I noted that late submission is penalised with a score of zero. While this is no doubt aimed at encouraging students to submit on time, many institutions apply a graded scale for late submission with a fixed percentage penalty for each day late; I encourage consideration of such a practice at Cardiff.

Locating all Externals together in the base room worked well. However I was surprised not to have early access to a comprehensive spread sheet of marks from all components for each student. This is, in my view, a very effective way to facilitate scrutiny of marks by Externals. Staff were very helpful and informative in offering explanations of the data provided, but a consolidated spread sheet should be provided on the first day, ideally electronically and with filters to allow sorting by degree programme.

The Examination Board was conducted fairly, diligently and with obvious care by all staff involved. However I would question whether some of the detailed business would be better done in pre-meetings with the final Examination Board being focused on final outcomes.

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

N/A – 1<sup>st</sup> year.

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

Although I could not attend the formal induction event, I received Power points and other documentation that were perfectly adequate.

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

I found reports of the Professional Training Year very informative and this component, while not unique, is implemented well at Cardiff.

The changes outlined as part of BioScience 2020 sound exciting and interesting; I look forward to seeing their implementation in due course

**7. Comments on the Examination of Master's Dissertations (External Examiners for postgraduate Master's Programmes only, see also 9.23-9.29 below)**

N/A.

**8. Appointment Overview (for retiring External Examiners only)**

N/A.

## 9. Annual Report Checklist

Please include appropriate comments within Sections 1-8 above for any answer of 'No'.

		Yes (Y)	No (N)	N/A (N/A)
<b>Programme/Course Information</b>				
9.1	Did you receive sufficient information about the Programme and its contents, learning outcomes and assessments?	Y		
9.2	Were you asked to comment on any changes to the assessment of the Programme?	Y		
<b>Draft Examination Question Papers</b>				
9.3	Were you asked to approve all examination papers contributing to the final award?	Y		
9.4	Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate?	Y		
9.5	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?	Y		
<b>Marking Examination Scripts</b>				
9.6	Did you receive a sufficient number of scripts to be able to assess whether the internal marking and classifications were appropriate and consistent?	Y		
9.7	Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate?	Y		
9.8	Were the scripts marked in such a way as to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?	Y		
9.9	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the internal examiners?	Y		
9.10	In your judgement, did you have the opportunity to examine a sufficient cross-section of candidates' work contributing to the final assessment?	Y		
<b>Coursework and Practical Assessments</b>				
9.11	Was the choice of subjects for coursework and / or practical assessments appropriate?	Y		
9.12	Were you afforded access to an appropriate sample of coursework and / or practical assessments?	Y		
9.13	Was the method and general standard of assessment appropriate?	Y		
9.14	Is sufficient feedback provided to students on their assessed work?	Y		
<b>Clinical Examinations (if applicable)</b>				
9.15	Were satisfactory arrangements made for the conduct of clinical assessments?			NA
<b>Sampling of Work</b>				
9.16	Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work?	Y		
<b>Examining Board Meeting</b>				
9.17	Were you able to attend the Examining Board meeting?	Y		
9.18	Was the Examining Board conducted properly, in accordance with established procedures and to your satisfaction?	Y		

		Yes (Y)	No (N)	N/A (N/A)
9.19	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		
<b>Joint Examining Board Meeting (if applicable)</b>				
9.20	Did you attend a Composite Examining Board, i.e. one convened to consider the award of Joint Honours degrees?	Y		
9.21	If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees?	Y		
9.22	Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules?	Y		
<b>Examination of Master's Dissertations (if applicable)</b>				
9.23	Did you receive a sufficient number of Dissertations to be able to assess whether the internal marking and classifications were appropriate and consistent?			N/A
9.24	Was the sample in accordance with the University's sampling guidelines (guidelines provided below)?			N/A
9.25	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the Internal Examiners?			N/A
9.26	Were you able to attend the Master's Degree (Dissertation) Stage Examining Board?			N/A
9.27	If so, was the Examining Board conducted properly and in accordance with established procedures?			N/A
9.28	Were the schemes for marking and classification correctly applied?			N/A
9.29	Were the standards of the awards recommended appropriate?			N/A

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:

External Examiners, Registry, Cardiff University, McKenzie House, 30-36 Newport Road, Cardiff, CF24 0DE

#### **SAMPLING OF TAUGHT MASTER'S DISSERTATIONS BY EXTERNAL EXAMINERS**

External Examiners shall be expected to see prescribed numbers and ranges of Dissertations, but not to mark them, on the following basis:

At least 10% of Dissertations for a postgraduate taught Master's Programme, or a minimum of 10 (whichever is the higher figure) must be seen by the External Examiner(s). Where the total number is less than 10, all Dissertations must be seen by the External Examiner(s) #.

Dissertations seen by External Examiners should include examples from across the whole range of achievement (i.e. Pass with Distinction, Pass, Fail).

External Examiners will retain the right to see other Dissertations at random.

- # Where more than one External Examiner is appointed on a Programme, at least 10% of Dissertations, or a minimum of 10 (whichever is the higher figure), should be seen collectively by the External Examiners.