

The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT
ACADEMIC YEAR: 2010– 2011

PART A: GENERAL INFORMATION*Subject area and awards being examined:*

School of: Faculty of Arts	Subject(s): Chinese Studies
Programme(s) / Module(s): Chinese Studies	awards: (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc.) BA

The completed report should be attached to an e-mail and sent as soon as possible, and no later than 6 weeks after the relevant meeting of the Board of Examiners, to exexadmin@leeds.ac.uk.

Alternatively you can post your report to:

**Head of Academic Quality and Standards,
Academic Quality and Standards Team,
Room 12:81, EC Stoner Building,
The University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT**

PART B: COMMENTS FOR THE INSTITUTION ON THE EXAMINATION PROCESS AND STANDARDS***Matters for Urgent Attention***

If there are any areas which you think require urgent attention before the programme is offered again please note them in this box.

None

Only applicable in first year of appointment

Were you provided with copies of previous relevant External Examiners' reports and the response of the School to these?

Yes.

For Examiners completing their term of appointment

Please comment on your experience of the programme(s) over the period of your appointment, remarking in particular on changes from year to year and the progressive development and enhancement of the learning and teaching provision, on standards achieved, on marking and assessment and the procedures of the School.

N/A

Standards

1. Please indicate the extent to which the programme aims and intended learning outcomes (ILOs) were commensurate with the level of the award?

- *The appropriateness of the intended learning outcomes for the programme(s)/modules and of the structure and content of the programme(s);*
- *The extent to which standards are appropriate for the award or award element under consideration.*

Programme aims and ILOs are both clearly stated and are commensurate with level of the award.

2. Did the aims and ILOs meet the expectations of the national subject benchmark (where relevant)?

- *The comparability of the programme(s) with similar programme(s) at other institutions and against national benchmarks and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.*

Yes.

3. Please comment on the assessment methods and the appropriateness of these to the ILOs?

- *The design and structure of the assessment methods, and the arrangements for the marking of modules and the classification of awards;*
- *The quality of teaching, learning and assessment methods that may be indicated by student performance.*

The assessment for the individual modules and the overall expectations are appropriate and, from what I have seen of the examinations, rigorously tested.

Also, the feedback provided for module essays and the UG dissertation was generally of high quality, with detailed, thoughtful comments obviously written for that individual student and not 'cut and pasted' from some generic list. For the essay forms, the combination of such individual feedback, along with rank indicators (tick boxes for various categories) was very easy to read.

4. Were students given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the aims and ILOs?

- *The academic standards demonstrated by the students and, where possible, their performance in relation to students on comparable courses;*
- *The strengths and weaknesses of the students as a cohort.*

Yes.

5. For Examiners responsible for programmes that include clinical practice components, please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum

N/A

6. The nature and effectiveness of enhancements to the programme(s) and modules since the previous year

It would be particularly helpful if you could also identify areas of good practice which are worthy of wider dissemination.

The Chinese section has an excellent range of modules for students studying both the language and also culture, society, and history. This breadth of the programme is obviously due to a strong commitment to ample staffing in as many areas of expertise as possible.

It is my understanding that some of the PG language teaching is either new or substantially revised (modules EAST5910M and EAST5920M Chinese for Research 1 & 2). I found these papers to be both thoughtful and challenging.

7. The influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching

This may include examples of curriculum design informed by current research in the subject; practice informed by research; students undertaking research.

The most obvious area where research and teaching overlaps is the UG dissertation module, where students receive quality one-on-one tuition from an advisor in their specialist subject area.

The Examination Process

8. **The University and its Schools provide guidance for External Examiners as to their roles, powers and responsibilities. Please indicate whether this material was sufficient for you to act effectively as an External Examiner?**

- *Whether external examiners have sufficient access to the material needed to make the required judgements and whether they are encouraged to request additional information.*

Yes.

9. **Did you receive appropriate documentation relating to the programmes and/or parts of programmes for which you have responsibility, e.g. programme specifications or module handbooks?**

- *The coherence of the policies and procedures relating to external examiners and whether they match the explicit roles they are asked to perform.*

Yes.

10. **Was sufficient assessed/examination work made available to enable you to have confidence in your evaluation of the standard of student work?**

Yes.

11. **Were the administrative arrangements satisfactory for the whole process, including the operation of the Board of Examiners?**

Yes.

12. **Were appropriate procedures in place to give due consideration to mitigating circumstances and medical evidence?**

Yes.

For Examiners involved in Mentoring Arrangements

If you have acted as a mentor to a new external examiner or have received mentor support please comment here on the arrangements.

I was provided with a mentor, who contacted me and offered help, but this was largely unnecessary due to the efficiency and helpfulness of the examinations officer for the department, Ruru Li.

Other Comments

Please use this box if you wish to make any further comments not covered elsewhere on the form.

Overall an impressive programme, run by dedicated staff and with some truly outstanding students.

My one recommendation for next year is that, in cases where the first and second marker disagree widely on a mark, there should be some attempt by the two markers to discuss the difference and arrive at a consensus prior to sending the papers to the external. I received two dissertations where the marks varied by more than 10 points, and there was no evidence that the two markers had consulted prior to sending them to me.

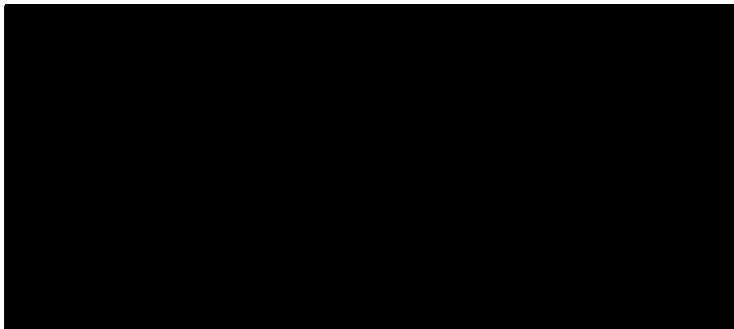
Also, the requirement to use Chinese-language source materials for the dissertation should be strengthened, and all advisors should ensure that their advisees are aware of this.

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UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS



13 July 2011

Dear 

I am writing to thank you for the work you have undertaken this year as external examiner for Modern Chinese Studies, and for submitting your report so promptly.

I note that you were satisfied with the structure and content of the programmes, and the administrative procedures involved in the assessment process. I am pleased to see that you were impressed with the breadth of the programme, the strong commitment of staff and the outstanding achievements of our students.

Your report raised two important issues which the Subject area/School will address in a timely manner:

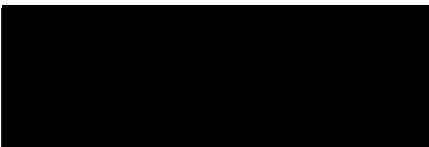
1) in cases where the first and second marker disagree widely on a mark, there should be some attempt by the two markers to discuss the difference and arrive at a consensus prior to sending the papers to the external.

We will revisit this procedure for next year and also ask for guidance from the School's Learning and Teaching Committee.

2) the requirement to use Chinese-language source materials for the dissertation should be strengthened, and all advisors should ensure that their advisees are aware of this.

We will make sure that this is pointed out more explicitly by the dissertation module tutor and supervisors.

Many thanks again for all your hard work. We look forward to working with you again in the forthcoming academic year.



Kind regards,

