

**The University of Leeds**  
**EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT**  
ACADEMIC YEAR: 2011– 2012

**Part A: General Information****Subject area and awards being examined**

Faculty / School of:	School of Modern Languages and Cultures
Subject(s):	Italian
Programme(s) / Module(s):	FLTU
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	

**Completed report**

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

In my view there are no areas that require urgent attention before the programme is offered again, but I am aware some changes are proposed for the next academic year about which I expect to receive information in September 2012.

**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?*

I was not provided with copies, but they were made available for viewing on the day of the Board of Examiners' meeting.

**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.*

I found the programmes well structured and both the structure and the content of the programmes were appropriate to the Intended Learning Outcomes.  
The standards were appropriate for the award element under consideration.

**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.*

I can confirm that the programmes are comparable to similar programmes at other institutions of which I have experience and also against national benchmarks and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

**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.*

I found that the range of assessment methods used was excellent. Formative and summative modes are well balanced and students are required to develop and demonstrate a large number of skills. The design and structure of the assessment methods were, therefore, entirely appropriate to the ILOs.  
Marking was consistent, fair and appropriate in all modules.  
The quality and organization of the language teaching was excellent as demonstrated by the impressive overall standards of the students' performance. I found good examples of effective practice in teaching and assessment such as the use of self-reflective portfolios requiring students to think about their learning experience and learning strategies.

**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.*

I found the standard of written and oral work good on the whole and sometimes very good. Activities were designed in a way that would enhance the students' learning experience. A wide range of skills have been tested and students were given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the Aims and ILOs.  
The spread of marks was typical of language courses with a few at the top of the range, a few at the pass range with the vast majority in the middle. As one would expect, there was individual strength and weakness from student to student, but there were no group trends.

**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. Please comment on 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.*

N/A (This is my first year as external examiner).

**7. Please comment on 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.*

N/A

## For Examiners involved in mentoring arrangements

**8. If you have acted as a mentor to a new External Examiner or have received mentor support please comment here on the arrangements**

I have received prompt mentor support when needed and the arrangements were good.

**9. 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.*

The material I received regarding my role, powers and responsibilities was adequate and detailed. I was encouraged to request additional information if needed.

**10. 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, marking criteria?**

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

I received all the documentation relating to the programmes for which I have responsibility. This included the External Examiner Handbook, Programme Specifications, Student Handbook and Tutor Handbook. The documentation was appropriate and very detailed.

**11. Were you provided with all draft examination papers/assessments? Was the nature and level of the questions appropriate? If not, were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?**

I was provided with all draft examination papers. The exams were well structured, the nature of the questions was appropriate and reflected the topics as reported in the Scheme of Work; also the level of difficulty reflected the relative levels of the Common European Framework.

**12. Was sufficient assessed / examined work made available to enable you to have confidence in your evaluation of the standard of student work? Were the scripts clearly marked/annotated?**

All the assessed and examined work was made available and I was able to read a large sample of work which enabled me to evaluate the standard of the students' work properly. Each script was clearly marked and included a very detailed formative feedback.

**13. Was the choice of subjects for dissertations appropriate? Was the method and standard of assessment appropriate?**

N/A

**14. Were the administrative arrangements satisfactory for the whole process, including the operation of the Board of Examiners? Were you able to attend the meeting? Were you satisfied with the recommendations of the Board?**

The administrative arrangements and the operation of the Board of Examiners were very good. I was able to attend the meeting which was conducted scrupulously and I was satisfied with the recommendations given.

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

Yes.

**Other comments**

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

I would like to thank <<>> for her recommendation and <<>> for inviting me to undertake the role of external examiner for Italian at the Language Centre of such a prestigious university.

I would also like to thank the administrative staff for their kindness, promptness and efficiency. Everything worked smoothly and my overall reactions in my first year as external have been very positive.

## Response to External Examiner's report FLTU Italian modules 2011-12

We very much appreciate <<>> feedback on the FLTU Italian modules and thank <> for the time and care <> has taken in examining the various aspects of the modules. <<>> is the first external examiner to be appointed for these modules for a number of years and this explains why no previous reports are available.

### Plan of action:

(<<>>, <<>>)

Feedback	Action	Who	Timeframe
Details of changes requested	Confirmation that details of changes to the module and the pilot will be forwarded in Sept 2012 together with relevant documentation	<>	Sept 2012
We welcome the feedback that the modules are well organised, well structured and appropriate to the ILOs and that the standards are appropriate	To maintain this high level	<>	2012-13
We are pleased that the range of assessment methods are found to be "excellent"	To maintain this high level despite changes to the assessment for the next academic year	<>	2012-13
It is gratifying for the marking to be acknowledged as consistent, fair and appropriate	To maintain this  To work more closely with colleagues in Italian	<>  <>	Sept 2012
It is pleasing to see the link made between the quality and organisation of the teaching and the "impressive" student performance	To maintain this high level	<>	2012-13

<>

FLTU, Director  
26.7.12