

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:	Leeds University Business School
Subject(s):	
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Modules in industrial relations, human resource management and related subjects.
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	BA Human Resource Management

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.

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

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.*

The intended learning outcomes, structure and content of modules and standards applied when marking were appropriate for an undergraduate degree in management or human resource management.

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.*

Assessment methods were generally well designed and appropriate for the subjects being taught. Students experienced a range of assessment methods as part of the degree programme. Systems and processes for marking were rigorous and appropriate, with clear evidence of second marking and moderation where appropriate. There were examples of outstanding work among students at the top end, and a good proportion of students achieved marks of 2:1 level or better, suggesting that teaching and learning methods were appropriate.

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.*

Students were given adequate opportunities to demonstrate achievement in relation to programme aims and learning outcomes. The student performance was on a par with that in other Universities where I have experience as an examiner (<<>>). At the top end, performance was very good, although there was also a small tail of very weak students.

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

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.

As this is my first year as external examiner, I am unable to comment.

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.

There was strong evidence of research informing teaching throughout the curriculum.

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

N/A

The Examination/Assessment Process

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 provided to me was sufficient.

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.

Yes.

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?

Yes, the nature and level of questions was generally appropriate. I had a number of relatively minor suggestions, all were acted on.

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?

Yes.

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

Yes.

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 were satisfactory. The Board of Examiners operated effectively and I was satisfied with the recommendations (I was able to attend the board).

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

This is one area where I felt improvements in processes and procedures would be helpful. Mitigating circumstances were considered by subject boards. Although I saw no evidence that subject boards were adopting different standards and approaches when considering mitigating circumstances, under present arrangements, it would be possible for different subject boards to take different approaches with the result that there could be inconsistencies and unfairness in the way that students with mitigating circumstances are treated. I would strongly recommend that subject boards should defer recommendations on students who have mitigating circumstances to the full school exam board so that these decisions can be taken in a consistent manner.

Other comments

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

N/A

Leeds University Business School

Maurice Keyworth Building
University of Leeds
Leeds LS2 9JT



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Monday 3 September 2012

Dear

Reference: External Examination Report 2011-12

Thank you for your report as external examiner for the academic year 2011-12 in respect of the Management programmes.

I am delighted to note that you feel the systems and processes for marking are rigorous and appropriate.

With regards to your comment about mitigating circumstances being considered at subject boards which may result in adopting different standards across the School, I can confirm that all mitigating circumstances are also considered at a pre-board meeting. This meeting takes place in the week prior to the subject and examination boards and involves the programme directors for each of Division. At this meeting all of the mitigating circumstances are considered to ensure that such cases are treated equitably in the subject boards the following week.

We are considering ways to improve the experience of being an external examiner in the School and we are considering inviting our externals to the School on the day before the Examination Board to allow you dedicated time to consult the scripts and marks. We would of course cover your expenses and accommodation costs for this and would appreciate your comments on whether you feel this would be a sensible proposal. We hope that it will help to alleviate some of the issues with the tight turn around experienced this year.

On behalf of the Division may I again thank you for your suggestions and for you positive comments on our modules, our programmes, and our examining. We greatly appreciate the assistance you have given to us, and I look forward to meeting you once more at this year's examination board.

Yours sincerely

Dean, Leeds University Business School