

The University of Leeds

EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2012– 2013

Part A: General Information

Subject area and awards being examined

Faculty / School of:

LUBS / Business School

Subject(s):

ACC & FIN

Programme(s) / Module(s):

LUBS1035	Foundations of Finance
LUBS1915	Intro to Financial Accounting
LUBS1925	Intro to Management Accounting
LUBS2055	Academic and Management Skills
LUBS2200	Business Finance 2
LUBS2235	Intro to Financial Accounting
LUBS3110	Capital Market Theory
LUBS3130	Leadership & Performance Mgt
LUBS3140	Behavioural Finance
LUBS3150	Int Banking & Finance
LUBS3160	Financial Derivatives
LUBS3620	International Business Finance

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.

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

No

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?

n/a

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

Over the last four years the accounting and finance programme at LUBS has been subject to a thorough review and as a result the range of modules offered has been enhanced significantly. In terms of procedures, the marking process has continued to be carried out fairly and consistently across modules and there is evidence of very high quality work at the top end. Second marking and moderation are performed appropriately and feedback is given to students even for failed examinations. Module handbooks are very informative and carefully prepared. Lecturers always respond promptly and effectively to any comments and suggestions. They have always taken prompt actions and provided me with detailed replies and explanations. It is notable

the administrative effort in preparing and presenting samples of exams and coursework that are always accompanied by detailed statistics of student performance both for the current and the previous academic year. Overall, my experience as external examiner over my period of appointment at LUBS has been very positive.

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 structure, Intended Learning Outcomes and aims of the programme were appropriate for the award. The standards appeared adequate for 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.*

The aims and Intended Learning Outcomes were comparable with similar ones run at other UK higher education institutions and against the national subject benchmarks.

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 properly designed and appeared to reflect well the objectives and learning outcomes of the programme. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment appeared good as indicated by student performance.

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 opportunity to demonstrate their achievements of the aims and ILOs.

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.

This academic year staff has continued to ensure that moderation of scripts is done appropriately and that students receive adequate feedback on their work. The quality of some examiners commentary (e.g. LUBS2200) on the main exams is impressive.

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.

Students are often required as part of their assessment to carry out some individual research as part of their assignments and/or for preparation of reports and presentations in front of the class.

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.*

Yes

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

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?**

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?**

Yes. Unfortunately this year I was unable to attend the meeting.

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

Other comments

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

30 August 2013

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Reference: External Examination Report 2012-13

Dear <>,

Thank you for your report as external examiner for the academic year 2012-13 in respect of the BSc Accounting and Finance programme.

I am pleased to note that you regard the marking process as being fair and consistent, and that our marking and moderation procedures are performed appropriately. We note also that you regard our module handbooks as informative and carefully prepared. We have put a great deal of effort into improving the quality of our feedback processes so we particularly appreciate your comments about the quality of our feedback on students work with some examples where you report our examiners commentary as being 'impressive'. We will endeavour to share this best practice.

With regard to your positive comments concerning our working relationship, we regard our external examiners as partners so the fact that you thought we were able to respond promptly and effectively to your comments and provided detailed replies and explanations where necessary is very gratifying. Of course, we are all extremely grateful to <>, <> and the rest of the UG Office team in providing administrative support and providing samples of exams and coursework as well as all the relevant statistics. I'm pleased you found it helpful.

In response to feedback from previous years, we invited External Examiners to the Business School on the day prior to Exam Board in an attempt to allow examiners dedicated time to scrutinise assessed coursework and exam scripts. I know you were unable to attend this year, but you might be interested to know that the feedback we have received in relation to this new approach has been very positive.

On behalf of the Accounting and Finance division, may I again thank you again for your suggestions and for your comments on our modules, our programmes, and our examining. As this is your last year with us as an external examiner please accept my thanks for being such a valuable "critical friend" of our degree programmes over the last four years. We especially appreciate your valuable input as we have developed our finance modules as part of our UG programme review and am glad you have found the experience 'very positive' and share our view that as a result the programme has been 'enhanced significantly'. We greatly appreciate all the assistance you have given to us, and I hope you will stay in contact with the Accounting and Finance division here at Leeds.

Yours sincerely

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Dean, Leeds University Business School

The University of Leeds

EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2012– 2013

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

Faculty / School of:

LUBS / Business School

Subject(s):

ACC & FIN

Programme(s) / Module(s):

LUBS0040	Introductory Account & Finance
LUBS1045	Personal Tutorials for A&F
LUBS1230	Financial Accounting
LUBS1235	Intro Financial Accounting
LUBS1245	Intro Management Accounting
LUBS1250	Management Accounting
LUBS2210	Financial Accounting 2
LUBS2220	Management Accounting 2
LUBS2245	Intro to Management Accounting
LUBS2250	The Football Business
LUBS3470	Financial Accounting Theory
LUBS3540	Auditing & Information Systems
LUBS3550	Auditing & Assurance Services
LUBS3690	Principles of Taxation
LUBS3865	Financial Analysis
LUBS3880	Corporate Governance

Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):

Completed report

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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?

N/A

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.*

The learning outcomes for the programme / modules and content are appropriate for 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 methods are rigorous and appropriate for the ILOs of each module. Students' performance reflected the quality of teaching and assessment methods.

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 a variety of assessment methods to demonstrate their achievement of the aims and ILOs, such as numerical, analytical and essays.

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.

The programme has undergone change by introducing new/revised methods with emphasis on students' employability and to get exemption from professional bodies.

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.

The coursework involves reading research articles and the staff's research interest and professional experiences are integrated in the learning.

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.*

All necessary materials are provided.

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, all draft exam papers/assessments have been provided and they are of appropriate standard.

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?

Sufficient sample provided in evaluating the standard of student work and the scripts have clear audit trail.

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?

Yes, the whole process was conducted satisfactorily. I attended the meeting and recommendations of the Board flows rules and procedures.

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

Yes, all cases were treated fairly based on appropriate procedures and following the rules.

Other comments

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

Overall, the marking was consistent and fair and the audit trail was clear. However, I've noticed that when a script is second marked and awarded with different marks evidence of agreement between the markers was not clear. I suggest a word of "Agreed" next to the agreed final mark signed / initialled by at least one of the two markers to be sufficient.

For 2nd year modules, I have seen a mark difference in performance this year compared to last year. There are less students getting As and 1* (dropped from 65% to 45%) and more students getting 3rds. I've looked to the exam papers for these modules and they are of a similar standard to last year hence I'm wondering whether, this is due to a week cohort of students or some other reasons; perhaps poorer attendance. This is to reflect on the reasons at to be better prepared for next year.

30 August 2013

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Reference: External Examination Report 2012-13

Dear <>,

Thank you for your report as external examiner for the academic year 2012-13 in respect of the Accounting & Finance programme.

I am pleased to note that you found the learning outcomes appropriate and you appreciate the variety of 'rigorous' assessment methods which have allowed students to demonstrate their learning achievements. As you know, we are developing our accounting modules as part of our UG programme review so we also appreciate your supportive comments about improving our students' employability skills. As a research led institution, we are very pleased to note that our research interests and professional experience are integrated into the student learning experience.

With regard to your comment about providing a proper audit trail to document final marks where there are differences between first and second marking, we are developing a formal protocol on our 'check marking' processes and will ensure that recommendations regarding providing sufficient evidence of agreement are included in that document. We note also your comments about the dip in performance across all three of our core second year modules this year. I know you discussed this in some detail with the programme team when you were here, and although the reasons for this are not entirely clear, this will be addressed as part of a programme-wide initiative to provide additional student support where necessary early next semester.

In response to feedback from previous years, we invited External Examiners to the Business School on the day prior to Exam Board in an attempt to allow examiners dedicated time to scrutinise assessed coursework and exam scripts. I know you appreciated this new approach and the feedback we have received from others has also been very positive.

On behalf of the Division may I again thank you for your suggestions and for your 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 next year's examination board.

Yours sincerely

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Dean, Leeds University Business School