

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

PART A: GENERAL INFORMATION

Subject area and awards being examined:

School of: LUBS	Subject(s): Economics
Programme(s) / Module(s): Masters	awards: (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc.) MA

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?

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 programme aims and learning outcomes are in line with the structure of the MA economics; also the standards employed by members of staff employed by the programme are appropriate for the award of the degree.

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. The MA economics is perfectly comparable with an MA in Economics awarded by an Economics department in the UK.

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 used across the programme are consistent with the learning outcomes and the procedures for the award of marks are rather robust. In particular I want to highlight the strength of the procedure to resolve differences between first and second markers.

Quality of teaching is good across the board. I would like to praise the Microeconomics module for the performance of the students and the evident effort that the lecturer is putting in teaching.

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. The programme uses a variety of assessment methods and students have got a variety of opportunities to show the achievement of the learning outcomes.

The cohort seems rather good in most exams although there is a lot of "intra-module" variability in their performance in the two econometric modules.

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

Not applicable

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.

Not applicable

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 programme in itself is a mixture of modules that teach standard material and modules that cover current research in the field. This is particularly evident in the Macroeconomics module and Comparative Economics module.

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, it was.

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.

Other Comments

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

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22 January 2012

Dear Prof. Sena,

Thank you very much for your report and for having served as an External Examiner on our programmes again this year. Your favourable comments about the learning outcomes, research-influenced curriculum, quality of teaching, assessment methods and marking procedures on our programmes, and about the administrative arrangements at Leeds University Business School, are much appreciated.

With regard to your remark on the intra-module variability of the cohort's performance in the two econometrics modules, I can confirm that an extensive review of these modules, both in terms of intended learning outcomes and assessment methods, has been undertaken during the 2010/11 session and it has been fully implemented in the current 2011/12 session. We trust this will address the issue you raised.

With many thanks on behalf of the entire Programme Team and my best regards,

Yours sincerely,

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Dean, Leeds University Business School

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