

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:	LUBS
Subject(s):	<i>Economics</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	MA Economics and MA Economics and Finance
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MA

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?

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 aims and the learning outcomes of the programme are in line with the structure of the MA economics; also the standards employed by members of staff contributing to the programmes 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 Aims and the ILOs of the programme are perfectly in line with those of equivalent programmes offered by Economics Departments 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 are consistent with the learning outcomes and the procedures for the award of marks are rather robust.

Quality of teaching is good across the board. The Econometrics module seems to be in good shape and there is consistency between the marks of the coursework and the exam's marks.

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 students have a variety of opportunities to show their achievements.

The cohort seems rather good in most exams although some students seem to find difficult some topics in Microeconomics.

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. 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.

I would like to commend the procedures around the moderations of exams.

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 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.

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

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, I was,

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?

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?

Yes. The only problem I had was with the exam papers for the resits which were sent to me far too close to the examination date (August). I would suggest that these get sent to me with the other exam papers during the academic year.

This year I did not attend the meeting because of conflicting schedule.

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

Not applicable.

Other comments

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

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Friday, 08 March 2013

Dear <>

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 comment on the difficulties that some students seem to have encountered with some of the exam questions for the Microeconomics module, the module leader has offered the following response: "The students performed a little better on some questions than others. This is likely to reflect over-reliance on the textual contents of practice essays based on last year's exam paper. The questions where they fell down were ones where the focus of the question had moved more substantially. I will warn the students about this next year, and take steps to avoid a repeat."

With regard to your remark on the resit exam papers having been sent to you for scrutiny too close to the examination date in August, I am pleased to report that it is now our standard practice to request module leaders to submit simultaneously the main exam paper for January/May examinations and the corresponding resit exam paper for August examinations. In future, therefore, you will receive resit exam papers to scrutinise well in advance of the examination date in August.

We trust these measures will adequately address the issues you have 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