

The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT
ACADEMIC YEAR: 2010-11

Programme of Study

School of:	School of Education
Programme of Study	Doctor of Education MSc Research Methods

Please comment in the box below on both the taught and research elements of the programme of study:

- Did you receive appropriate documentation relating to the programme of study?
- Were the administrative arrangements satisfactory?
- Was the standard of student performance comparable to that in other UK higher education institutions with which you are familiar?
- Was the structure and content of the programme appropriate?
- Did you meet with any students on the programme¹?
- Comments on the academic standards of the programme and of candidates' work
- Matters for further consideration by the programme team

1. Documentation reviewed

I have seen three lots of work this year:

March 2011: 8 assignments

August 2011: 11 assignments

October 2011: 2 critical studies (MSc Res Methods dissertations)

These covered the following modules:

Module EDUC 5025M: 8

Module EDUC 5028M: 5

Module EDUC5031M: 4

Module EDUC5029M: 4

Critical study: 2

2. Administrative arrangements

The administrative arrangements were excellent: I received work when I expected it; I was informed of boards in good time; and had valuable feedback on the response to my report of last year. I attended the Board in June, and had an opportunity to meet tutors and students.

3. Standards

I agree with the marks, based on the M-level criteria. The assignments are challenging and the students, especially the MSc Research Methods students, and in general they rise to the challenge.

The markers manage band boundaries well, and the marksheet evidence indicates careful consideration of marks in the 68-70 borderline. In all cases I agreed with the final view of the markers.

¹ Not required in all cases

The feedback of the markers is appropriate and detailed – like the marks, it indicates the seriousness of the shortcomings in the weaker assignments. I was pleased to receive marked assignments with constructive, formative comments, but the legibility of these may be a problem: I suggest that the tutors liaise with students on the legibility of these.

I provided detailed comments on the assignments read to the programme teams – these are included in the submission of this report for any stakeholders who may not have seen them.

4. Structure and Content

The structure and content of the programme are appropriate. In the past I commented on the limited attention to research design issues, and the incorporation of context specific issues in assessments. This has now improved across the board: though there are lapses in weaker assignments, many assignments have sound, clear designs, informed by specific needs and disciplinary traditions.

5. Meeting with students

I met one student (MSc Research Methods) in June, His account of the learning experience was generally positive.

6. Academic standards

(See 3 above)

7. Matters for consideration

- i) Explore with students if there are legibility issues with hand-written textual comments.
- ii) Consider making greater use of the 80%+ band for 'outstanding' work.
- iii) Continue to monitor the quality of EdD students on modules as the quality of their work is generally lower, and while appropriate at Level 7, may not be approaching Level 8, as one would expect in EdD coursework.
- iv) Continue to encourage submission of draft assignments, and monitor the take-up of this and the value in terms of raised quality of final submitted versions.
- v) Continue there could be more attention to and justification of aspects of analysis which should inform decisions about data collection.

Please continue onto another page if appropriate.

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.

There are no matters for urgent attention

OTHER COMMENTS

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

As this is my final external examiner's report, I would like to comment on how the provision has developed over four years. I think the integration of EdD, MPhil and MSc Res Meth students into shared modules has been a useful development, providing a collaborative learning context for small programmes. The challenges of teaching Masters and Doctoral students (Levels 7 & 8) have been discussed and addressed as different levels, and it has been particularly interesting for me to participate in and contribute to these. Programme managers and tutors have been responsive to discussions and suggests on many issues, and I feel these have led to improvements in assignment design and focus.

I would like to thank all those who helped me over my period as External Examiner, particularly <<<>>>. I wish

them all well for the future.

Signed:

Date: 30 Dec 2011

Name:

Please complete and return this form to the following address:

Research Degrees and Scholarships Office
University of Leeds
LEEDS LS2 9JT

Or by e-mail to:

From:
Sent: 21 February 2012 12:30
To:
Subject: FW: Doctor of Education (EdD)
Attachments: Ext Examiner Report - EdD.doc

-----Original Message-----

From:
Sent: 21 February 2012 11:17
To:
Subject: FW: Doctor of Education (EdD)

Dear

Please find attached the external examiner's report for the EdD programme 2010/11 together with the comments from the School. The PGR Tutor has confirmed that this is the School's formal response.

Best wishes

-----Original Message-----

From:
Sent: 27 January 2012 14:15
To:
Cc:
Subject: Re: Doctor of Education (EdD)

The majority of the comments from (as External Examiner) were very positive indeed:

As this is my final external examiner's report, I would like to comment on how the provision has developed over four years. I think the integration of EdD, MPhil and MSc Res Meth students in to shared modules has been a useful development, providing a collaborative learning context for small programmes. The challenges of teaching Masters and Doctoral students (Levels 7 & 8) have been discussed and addressed as different levels, and it has been particularly interesting for me to participate in and contribute to these. Programme managers and tutors have been responsive to discussions and suggests on many issues, and I feel these have led to improvements in assignment design and focus.

However, did include some matters for consideration:

- i) Explore with students if there are legibility issues with hand-written textual comments.
- ii) Consider making greater use of the 80%+ band for 'outstanding' work.
- iii) Continue to monitor the quality of EdD students on modules as the quality of their work is generally lower, and while appropriate at Level 7, may not be approaching Level 8, as one would expect in EdD coursework.
- iv) Continue to encourage submission of draft assignments, and monitor the take-up of this and the value in terms of raised quality of final submitted versions.
- v) Continue there could be more attention to and justification of aspects of analysis which should inform decisions about data collection.

These comments will be shared with the Research Methods teams and I am certain they will be given due consideration in the following academic sessions.

Regards.