

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:	Law
Subject(s):	<i>Law</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	English Legal System (LLM and LAW1040), English Law: System, Context & Methods (LAW1045), Policing I (LAW5110M), Policing II (LAW5215M), Policing (LAW3160), Principles of Criminal Law (LAW1140), Evidence (LAW3100), Dissertations.
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	LLB, LLM

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

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.*

I believe the programme aims and ILO's were commensurate for the award. I had the opportunity of looking at both the programme and module awards and I believe that they are appropriate for the awards and also comparable to those in other institutions. I have no concerns about any of the aims and ILOs

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 undergraduate aims and ILOs are certainly in line with the national benchmarks for law. They are also comparable to other institutions that I am aware of. In terms of the LLM programme I can confirm that these are appropriate and were comparable to other LLM provision that I am aware of in comparable institutions.

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 were good and it was clear that a student undertaking the assessments in the modules that I examined would be able to demonstrate that they met the learning outcomes for each of the modules. I saw drafts of assessments and am happy to confirm that I think they were of the right standard and structure.

From seeing the student performance I have no concerns as to the quality of the teaching, learning & assessment methods which I believe are very high.

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 were clearly able to demonstrate their achievement. I paid particular attention to the border grades and also the pass/fail students. It was very clear why the students who failed achieved the marks that they did and that this was linked inextricably to the fact that they had not met the ILOs of a particular module.

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.

N/A (First report)

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.

It is clear that the research undertaken by the Law School has an influence on the content of the modules and the way in which the assessments are designed.

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

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.*

I thought the material that was given to me was excellent and I was fully briefed on how the University of Leeds reaches its decisions, and what its marking processes are. I thought the induction arrangements have been excellent.

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. I was fully briefed about all aspects of my role and was given sufficient material and was also confident that should I wish anything else it would be given to me.

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. The samples given to me were excellent. I particularly commend the approach of sending all fails and firsts. I paid particular attention to the differences between the grades and was able to do this through the sample provided.

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

Yes. I was extremely impressed with the quality of some of the dissertations and some of the topics that were chosen. Some of the dissertations I saw involved extremely challenging topics but it was clear that the students were prepared for this and had received appropriate academic support throughout the module.

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 excellent. The board was conducted in a very professional manner and each member of the board was fully involved with decisions, including where there was any discretion. The external examiners were fully involved in the examination board and were encouraged to intervene where they thought it necessary.

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

Yes but at the same time it was clear that the arrangements took into account proper concerns about confidentiality.

Other comments

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

This was my first examination board at the University of Leeds and I have been very impressed with the way that everything has been handled. I am an experienced external examiner but the conduct of the examination arrangements and the administration surrounding my role has been excellent and probably the best of all universities I have attended.

I particularly commend the Law School for its dedication in using the full range of marks. There was only one module where I had any doubt whether the full-range was being used but in general I was extremely happy with the marks awarded. There are some excellent students at the University of Leeds and it is important that strong performances are reflected in the marks awarded. I am delighted that they were.

I also wish to commend the quality of the feedback that is given to students. I think there is some excellent examples of high-quality feedback that will allow students to understand the mark that they have been given and what they could do to improve performance. I saw examples of feedback that did this not only in respect of the lower end marks but also the upper-end and this is to be strongly commended. It is good to see that a first-class mark just does not receive feedback the equivalent of 'well-done' but also shows how further improvements can be made.

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2 October 2012

Dear <>

I am writing to formally acknowledge receipt of your external examiner's report for the 2011-12 academic year and to thank you for the comments you made. We are encouraged that we have made a good first impression and hope we can continue to do so over the next two to three years. I would also like to thank you for attending our examinations board at what is a very busy time of the year.

Thank you also for your comments in relation to how you have found the administrative process attached to external examining at Leeds. We work hard to ensure our examiners are provided with as smooth an administrative experience as possible so that you are able to concentrate your attention to the assessments themselves.

Again, many thanks for your contribution to our assessment processes.

Yours sincerely,

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Head of School

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:	Law
Subject(s):	Law
Programme(s) / Module(s):	LAW 2270 Land Law LAW3120 Jurisprudence LAW3131 Law and Environment I LAW3135 Law and Environment II LAW3240 Equity and Trusts LAW5370M European Environmental Law LAW 5730M Land Law LAW5760M Equity and Trusts LAW5810M Pollution Control LAW3225 Dissertation LAW3320 Long dissertation
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	LLB; LLM; BA Legal Studies

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

Although I was well briefed by the University on my appointment, I found the amount of assessments I was sent in my first year quite overwhelming. This has diminished in subsequent years but it is still quite daunting. Having said that, I've been perfectly happy with the standard and thoroughness of marking, and the range and coverage of assessments. Initially, I was concerned as to the practice of awarding a minimum mark of 20% but I can now see the rationale behind it. This was the first year I was able to attend the final exam board and I was impressed by the efficient and professional way in which it was conducted. The School of Law's Learning & Teaching Support Coordinator has been very helpful in giving plenty of advance notice as to the timings of assessments and examination boards.

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, ILOs, structure and content of the modules for which I acted as external examiner were all appropriate and the standards commensurate with the level of 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 objectives of the programmes are in line with those of similar programmes with which I am familiar, fulfilling the requirements of the QAAHE Framework for HE Qualifications, the Law subject benchmark statement and the requirements of the JASB.

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.*

A range of assessment methods was used giving students good opportunities for progression and successful completion. Many of them produced work of a very high standard, indicating that they will have been taught well and provided with sufficient information about what was required for their assessments.

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.*

Assessments appeared to be sufficiently representative of the syllabus topics and designed in such a way as to test appropriate levels of learning. Some of the dissertations were particularly impressive, demonstrating a sophisticated grasp of the law and its implications. The academic standard demonstrated by the better students compares favourably with those from other good UK law schools. The students' literacy and subject-based understanding is generally sound.

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.

I was not aware of any specific enhancements to the programmes since last year but this is by no means a criticism. It is clear that the Law School attracts high calibre students who are effectively taught and who perform accordingly.

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.

Most of the assessments I saw - examinations scripts as well as courseworks - showed evidence of wider reading by students, e.g. articles in academic journals. This was apparent even in relation to recent legal developments which formed the subject-matter of, e.g. the Land Law exams.

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.*

I did not need to request any further information.

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.*

The material with which I was provided (including answer outlines to examination questions) was exemplary.

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?

I was provided with all draft examination papers and coursework questions, all of which were appropriate.

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?

(More than) sufficient work was made available to me. The internal examiners appeared to have applied appropriate standards consistently and fairly. The comments made by internal markers on the examination scripts were useful in helping me to appreciate why a particular mark had been awarded. Most scripts were clearly marked but not all were annotated. All internal markers should be urged to include a line of comment at the end of each answer.

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

The dissertation subjects were appropriate.

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 administration of the assessment process was very efficient. I attended the meeting of the Board of Examiners and was satisfied with the Board's recommendations.

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

Yes.

Other comments

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

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10 October 2012

Dear <>

I am writing to formally acknowledge receipt of your external examiner's report for the 2011-12 academic year and to thank you for the comments you made. The School of Law values very much both the supportive comments and advice you offer with regard to how our processes may be improved. I would also like to thank you for attending our examinations board at what is a very busy time of the year.

In regard to your previous experience at Leeds we have worked hard to appoint further external examiners to share the burden of external examining more widely (and evenly) and continue to try to ensure this is the case. We have also tried to explain with greater clarity how the 20-90 marking scale at Leeds operates. This can be a rather confusing system at first blush but it is good to know we were able to explain it sufficiently that you could recognise its rationale. It is a system that we are familiar with but it is of course very important that we are able to clearly explain it and justify it.

Thank you also for your comments in relation to how you have found the administrative process attached to external examining at Leeds. We work hard to ensure our examiners are provided with as smooth an administrative experience as possible so that you are able to concentrate your attention to the assessments themselves.

I note that the examination scripts you received were not all annotated. We do try to ensure this so the issue will be followed up by the Director of Student Education. We are currently reviewing our undergraduate programmes and our assessment feedback will be reviewed as part of this process. Your comments about feedback in previous reports as well as in your recent report will certainly form a valuable part of that discussion.

Again, many thanks for your contribution to our assessment processes.

Yours sincerely

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Head of School