

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

PART A: GENERAL INFORMATION*Subject area and awards being examined:*

School of:	Subject(s):
Programme(s) / Module(s):	awards: (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc.)
LLB, LLM	LAW

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.

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.

I have been an external examiner for 5 years and I have attended all the degree examination boards except for the last one (June 2011). The quality of the assessment and examining process was high when I commenced my time as an external examiner at Leeds but the best qualities I met in my time with the Law School were (a) a willingness on the part of the academic staff to engage fully with me as an external examiner in seeking to meet the highest standards in the whole assessment procedures and processes; (b) excellent internal standards of marking and moderation in accordance with clearly established criteria; (c) an appropriate blend in the methods of assessment of skills and knowledge and (d) an engagement with all the dimensions of the marking scale.

I should also like to mention the administrative staff who ensured that I was fully apprised of, for example, when the scripts would arrive and all other essential aspects of examining.

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.*

Everything was appropriately commensurate

- 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.*

I was pleased by the close consideration given to the appropriate methods of assessment for the different modules in terms of the balance of skills and knowledge.

- 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

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

- 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.

- 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 curriculum at Leeds' Law School continues to blend very effectively research-led teaching and teaching / learning led by developments in pedagogic understanding.

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

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?**

I was not able to attend the Board of Examiners and therefore I cannot comment on this aspect for 2010-11. With regard to all other aspects, the administrative arrangements were excellent.

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

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.

11 October 2011

Dear <<<>>>

I am writing to formally acknowledge receipt of your external examiner's report for the 2010-11 academic year and to thank you for the very kind and supportive comments you made particularly in regard to the examinations process. Your appreciation of the work of the support staff in particular will be passed to them.

This was, of course, your last year as an external examiner at Leeds. During that time you have made many very helpful suggestions as to how we might improve learning and teaching at Leeds, specifically the quality and transparency of our assessment processes. I thank you very much on behalf of the School and the University for your dedication to the task and wish you the very best in your retirement

Yours sincerely,

Head of School

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

PART A: GENERAL INFORMATION*Subject area and awards being examined:*

School of: Law	Subject(s): Law
Programme(s) / Module(s): LLB/Advanced legal research and law reform	awards: (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc.) LLB/BA

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.

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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?

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.

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.*

Both the learning outcomes and the standards for the module for which I was external examiner were appropriate. The module fits into a coherent programme.

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 module Advanced Research Methods and Law Reform has a very interesting assessment method, and is one of the few I have seen on an LLB which really makes students engage with legal research. It enables students who engage with the module to really stretch themselves and achieve some excellent marks. It is clear from some assessments and the student feedback which has been provided that some students still fail to understand the "point" of the module and do not engage. I would encourage the module team, however, to continue to develop the module as it develops students' critical skills which I am sure strengthens their final year 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.*

There overall marks achieved for the programme were generally what I would expect from an LLB. There were perhaps a slightly disappointingly low number of 1st class degrees awarded and I would encourage internal examiners to use the full range of marks at the top end of the scale.

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. 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 is my first year. See comments above on the strengths of the module for which I have particular oversight.

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 module enables students to become particularly engaged with legal research and assist in the preparation of dissertations in the final year.

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 I had a clear guidance on my role.

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 I was provided with extensive details in relation to the module.

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, the whole process was very efficiently and satisfactorily dealt with.

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

As far as I could tell – as these matters are all dealt with before the main exam board it is difficult to comment on how they operate in practice.

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.

11 October 2011

Dear <<<>>>

I am writing to formally acknowledge receipt of your external examiner's report for the 2010-11 academic year and to thank you for the supportive comments you made in regard to the Advanced Legal Research and Law Reform module. As you will be aware this is a module that has received a degree of student resistance but is one that the module team have worked hard to redesign and make more clearly appropriate and relevant for a law graduate at a research led institution. Your report clearly points to the enhanced skills the module provides to students as they enter their final year, and such comments are very helpful to us as we are currently undergoing a review of the undergraduate curriculum. It is our intention to retain ALRLR as a compulsory module, possibly even increasing its credit weighting. Such a move would only be countenanced with the support of the external examiner that the module was appropriate.

Your report comments that a broader use of the first class range of marks should be utilised. This is another very helpful comment and we are currently rewriting our marking criteria to illustrate more clearly the difference between the 70-80 and 80-90 classifications. Through being clear in our use of the criteria it is hoped that a broader range of marks will follow, but, whatever the outcome, the issue will certainly be kept under review.

To reiterate, the School of Law values very much the advice you offer with regard to how our processes may be improved and I look forward to your valuable input in 2011-12.

Yours sincerely

Head of School

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

PART A: GENERAL INFORMATION*Subject area and awards being examined:*

School of: LAW	Subject(s): Company Law, Introduction to Company Law, Insurance and Risk Management, Employment Law, Discrimination Law, LAW 3320 (dissertations)
Programme(s) / Module(s): LAW - LLB	awards: (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc.)

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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.

No: the LLB is a very well programme, with many aspects of best practice clearly visible.

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 (year 2)

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 (year 2)

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 ILOs are appropriate for the programme and the module; modules are carefully structured and designed and cover imaginative and timely material; ILOs are clear. The standards 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 – the programme meets these expectations and the delivery of the programme provides a number of elements of best practice, in my experience.

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 appropriate. An imaginative and effective series of assessments are used – examinations, dissertations, long essays, problem-based take home exams. All of these expose students to a range of assessments and assess a range of skills.

The marking and classification arrangements are robust, fair, and transparent. I would commend the Department in particular on the very high quality of feedback to students and related delivery methods, the helpful comments noted on scripts, and the evident care taken in monitoring grade profiles, and responding accordingly (clear from cover letters on scripts).

Student performance is very strong and points to the excellent quality of teaching, learning and assessment methods. The top (first class) scripts were of the very highest quality, and in some cases exceptional. The weakest scripts were typically scripts which were very poor indeed but not reflective of teaching generally, and their limited number does not suggest any difficulty with teaching, learning, 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.*

It is difficult to comment on this, but it seemed to me that students had all necessary opportunities to demonstrate their achievement of aims and ILOs, given the fairness and quality of exam papers, the choice of questions, and the wide variety of other assessment methods. The practice in many modules of assessing by means of an essay and an examination also gives students considerable opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of aims and ILOs.

I was most impressed by the quality of the students. The dissertations in particular point to the very high quality of the students and their ability to grapple with complex questions, engage in rigorous research, and produce clear and well-argued positions. Examination performance is similarly strong, with students grappling well with fair but testing questions and displaying strong analytical skills.

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. 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.

Generally (not particular to this year): the very high standard of communication to students in terms of, for example, guidance on assessment to students; the very high quality of feedback forms.

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 examination papers make clear that teaching is closely informed by research – with topics covering the most timely topics currently at issue in the different subjects.

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 – very effective and helpful transmission of all necessary information. I found the examinations team most helpful and I would comment <<<>>> in particular for the speed and efficiency with which he responded to any queries I had. I also felt that any concerns I might have had (I did not) would have been dealt with very effectively and openly.

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 – all necessary information provided.

10. Was sufficient assessed/examination work made available to enable you to have confidence in your evaluation of the standard of student work?

Yes – a good spread of assessment was made available. I would highly commend the department on the quality of the very informative cover letters sent with scripts and the overall grade profiles sent for subjects

11. Were the administrative arrangements satisfactory for the whole process, including the operation of the Board of Examiners?

This is an extremely well run process – I would like to commend the examinations team in the highest terms. I was not able to attend the Board of Examiners this year.

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

Yes – it seemed to me from the paperwork that all appropriate arrangements were in place.

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.

N.A

Other Comments

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

This is an exceptionally well run examinations process and the standard of communication with students and of feedback seemed to me to be of the very highest.

11 October 2011

Dear <<>>

I am writing to formally acknowledge receipt of your external examiner's report for the 2010-11 academic year and to thank you for the very kind and supportive comments you made. Your appreciation of the work of the examinations team and named individuals in particular will be passed to them.

The School has worked hard to improve the quality of the information on assessments and marking that we provide to students and also the post assessment feedback. Given that students do not have obvious comparisons to make with other institutions and, further, are not students for very long, it is sometimes difficult to measure the 'success' of these initiatives on student feedback alone. Your very positive comments on these issues (allied to those of other external examiners) are very heartening and certainly provide us with the impetus to continue these initiatives.

I hope that the 2011-12 academic year will be equally successful and I look forward to your valuable comments.

Yours sincerely,

Head of School