

The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT
ACADEMIC YEAR: 2012– 2013

Part A: General Information**Subject area and awards being examined**

Faculty / School of:

Law

Subject(s):

CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROCESSES
THEORIES OF CRIME JUSTICE AND CONTROL
FORENSIC PROCESS AND THE LAW
CRIMINAL JUSTICE POLICIES, PERSPRCTIVES AND RESEARCH
GLOBALISATION AND CRIME
RESEARCHING CRIME AND JUSTICE
DISSERTATIONS

Programme(s) / Module(s):

Criminology and Criminal Justice

Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):

MA

Name and home Institution / affiliation of Examiner**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

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?

No

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 covers contemporary substantive concerns in criminal justice as well as core teaching in theoretical and methodological areas relevant to the field. The ILOs in each of the modules I reviewed were appropriate to a postgraduate taught programme. Learning outcomes were clearly specified, modules were appropriately structured and the content was up to date.

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 consistent with Level 7 national standards in higher education. The programme provided a systematic understanding of knowledge and a critical awareness of current problems within the field of criminal justice.

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 modules were examined by assessed essays that were of an appropriate length and directed to questions that were challenging and sufficiently broad to avoid formulaic answers. The dissertation provided an opportunity for self-directed learning and original thought. I was particularly impressed by the module *Researching Crime and Justice*. Specifically by the clarity and comprehensiveness of the syllabus and of the targeted process of assessment. The questions at each stage of assessment were engaging and designed to enable students to reflect on their theoretical understanding and then apply it in practice to a substantive research exercise. It is a model of good practice in this field and the teaching team should be congratulated.

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.*

Students generally demonstrated a systematic understanding of complex issues and an ability to apply their knowledge and communicate their conclusions clearly.

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

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.

Very much a research-led programme across the different modules. See comments under 3 above.

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.

Yes.

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?

I don't recall receiving draft questions

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. I received papers across the range of marks. Comments on scripts were clearly marked.

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?

Administrative arrangements were entirely satisfactory. I attended the Board of Examiners which was entirely satisfactory.

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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21 February 2014

Dear <>

Thank you for your recent report relating to our MA programmes in Criminal Justice and Criminology. We are very pleased to hear that we made such a good impression in your first year with us and hope we can continue to do so. I have shared your report, with its many positive comments, with the teaching team. We were particularly encouraged by your feedback on the research training we offer and our commitment to research-led teaching.

You raised the issue of draft questions in your report. These are sent to external examiners for confirmation at the beginning of each semester. We hope that by the time they have been through our internal scrutiny procedures they do not look like draft questions but you are very welcome to offer comments. Since you joined us in November 2012, in 2012-13 the semester one questions were sent to your predecessor.

You will receive more information from the School shortly but are currently awaiting final approval of a new programme (MA Criminal Justice and Criminology), which will replace the existing programmes from September 2014 entry. We are confident that this will make our programmes more attractive to potential students and build upon the strengths you identify in your report. We look forward to hearing your feedback in due course.

Yours sincerely

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