

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

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

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| School of: ELSS | Subject(s): Disability Studies | |
| Programme(s) / Module(s): All 2010/11 | awards: (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc.) | MA (inc distance learning) |

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.

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 ^{SSP006}

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.*

MA Disability Studies' aims, structure, content and ILOs are fully commensurate with the award and with other comparable level provision elsewhere in the UK

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.*

Assessment methods were well designed and fit for purpose. Marking of modules was well organised, indeed seamless. Comments from 1st and 2nd markers were congruent and well pitched by level.

The direct link between student performance and staff input for any course is difficult to unravel causally. However I am fully convinced that both learning and assessment match the highest standards of pedagogy and support anywhere in the UK. Much work is of a good standard and many pieces of work were marked at distinction level. There has to be a quality input here from staff.

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.*

As above, most good, some very good and a small tail of students who are scraping through-this latter is attributable to extraneous non-academic factors or due to English not being the first language of the student enrolled on the MA. Each student's performance was examined very carefully. Personal factors limiting grades were well understood and articulated.

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.

n/a

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.

Research plays a key part in the dissertation module, with some outstanding, innovative and critical/analytical empirical work carefully supported by robust literature and methodological underpinnings.

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.*

Comprehensive access, timely yet flexible delivery of samples.

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.*

Very coherent

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

Indeed yes.

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

More than satisfactory. I would like to express my gratitude to the administrative staff for their very fulsome and professional support of my external examining.

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

A pre-meeting was held, as external I was not part of that process-this I think is routine. I was made aware of medical issues where they had impinged on progress of certain students. Staff need to maintain a vigilance around those students who are taking temporary leave of absence [a small number of students are intercalating-but within their maximum duration of study period]..

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.

I wish to commend the programme team for continued successful delivery of a tightly focused, challenging, internationally credible and leading edge MA. I have enjoyed my second year of tenure.



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

18th November 2011

Dear

I am writing on behalf of the School to acknowledge receipt of your external examiners report for 2010/11 and to thank you for your welcome contribution to the work of the School.

I would also like to thank you for your positive comments on our MA Disability Study programmes and the quality of the work of our students. The programme team is particularly encouraged that you noted the high standard of the students' work and for your commendation for the very high standard of our programmes. I would like to assure you that we will continue to maintain these standards.

As mentioned at the exam board we are hoping to hold a single board next year to cover all our taught postgraduate programmes and we hope this will improve our quality assurance process further.

May I once again thank you for your much valued contribution and say how much the whole team has enjoyed working with you.

Yours sincerely,