

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:	Sociology
Subject(s):	
Programme(s) / Module(s):	MA Gender Studies
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MA

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?

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 intended learning outcomes and aims were both appropriate commensurate with the award. Furthermore, standards were very appropriate for the award under consideration.

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 structure and design of the assessment methods and marking arrangements were very appropriate in respect of the aims and outcomes. The quality of teaching/assessment methods was excellent.

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.*

The academic standards were high, and student performance was comparable to those at other institutions. The cohort performed well overall, with a range of marks in evidence.

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. 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.

Good practice was apparent in the depth of constructive feedback given to students to help them improve, especially from first markers.

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.

As commented on last year, the staff remain at the forefront of their field in the area of gender, and the curriculum still reflected this in terms of the relevance of the modules on offer. This could be seen both in relation to current issues in society, and in the key debates and research questions which inform gender and feminist theory more widely.

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

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?**

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

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?**

Yes

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

Overall, teaching and assessment on the course were thorough and the staff remain committed to the students and to the programme. As I relayed at the examination board, I would like to see more consistent advice given to students on referencing, It was good to see marks being awarded over 80 still, and the work in question was worthy of such a high grade. Given the international appeal of the programme, some students had issues around English not being their first language, and it needs to be ensured such students have support. Lastly, given the integration of the Centre into Sociology, care needs to be taken to ensure the Centre and the MA programme retain their individual identity.



17th December 2012

Dear

I am writing on behalf of the School to acknowledge receipt of your external examiners report for 2011/12 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 Gender Studies programmes and the overall quality of the work of our students. I will share your comments on to the programme team. In order to ensure that consistent advice is given to students in relation to referencing the School has introduced an Academic Integrity Test that all PG students take prior to commencing their studies. The Gender Studies team will also make sure that all students are aware of the language support available in the University. The School is also home to the internationally renowned Centre for Disability Studies, which offers distinctive taught postgraduate programmes and we are confident that we can follow this model in relation to the integration of Gender Studies into the School.

Once again, may I thank you for your valuable contribution to the work of the School.

Yours sincerely
Alv

Head of School
Sociology and Social Policy