

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:

Sociology & Social Policy

Subject(s):

Programme(s) / Module(s):

Social and Political Thought, International Social Transformation, Social & Public Policy, Social Research, Racism and Ethnicity Studies

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

PGCert, PGDip, 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

N/A

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

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.*

All programmes/courses had appropriate 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 ILOs were commensurate with similar programmes at other institutions and meet national benchmarking.

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 are entirely appropriate and assessment criteria are consistently applied. Students benefit from imaginative and rigorous assessment and staff provide relevant and informative feedback. A particular strength of some of the courses is that they enable students to tailor their assessments to wider PhD work.

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 standard of student work is commensurate with similar institutions and is of the standard required by national benchmarking. A couple of the pieces of work I moderated were of an exceptional quality – and indeed I think one has been recommended for publication!

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.

This is my first year in post and therefore I am unable to comment on any changes to the programmes from last year. I would, however, identify the excellent quality of feedback by examiners as an area of good practice.

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.

Impressive combination of theoretically-rigorous and research-informed teaching. Students benefit from staff expertise and current research projects.

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

I was provided with a mentor shortly after my appointment, but I have not been in contact with <> other than to introduce myself.

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, the material provided in the External Examiner's Handbook was sufficient.

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, all relevant documentation was sent 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?

No. All of the courses I am responsible for are coursework-based. I was provided with details of the assignments via the course handbooks, which I received alongside the samples of scripts. I did not take up my appointment until the end of January 2013.

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 copies of all distinctions and all fails, as well as a representative sample of other work.

Yes, the scripts were generally clearly marked and annotated.

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

Yes, the choice of subjects for dissertations was appropriate.

Yes, the method and standard of assessment was 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?

Yes, the administrative arrangements were satisfactory. The administrative staff were helpful and supportive, and responded swiftly to any queries I had. My only concern was the rather late delivery of some of the Semester 2 scripts.

Yes, I attended the meeting, which was conducted to my satisfaction.

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

Yes, special circumstances were handled sensitively and fairly.

Other comments

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

Standards of scholarship, assessment and student care were consistently high, making my job as external examiner a pleasant one. Thanks to the whole team, especially the administrative staff.

School of Sociology and Social Policy

The University of Leeds
Leeds LS2 9JT



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

7th January 2014

Dear :

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your External Examiner's report for the 2012/13 academic year and to thank you for your valuable contribution to the work of the School.

The School is encouraged by your positive comments, particularly in relation to the high standard of the students' work and the commitment of the staff. We are pleased that you noted that our students are able to engage in theoretically informed research and indeed that our students benefit from the research culture in the school. In future we will endeavour to speed up our internal processes to enable you to receive scripts in a more timely manner.

I hope you have enjoyed your first months with us as an external examiner and may I thank you, once again, for your work on behalf of the School. Your contribution is appreciated by the whole School and we look forward to working with you in the forthcoming year.

Yours sincerely,

Head of School