

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.)
Engineering Project Management	MSc(Eng)
International Construction Management and Engineering	MSc(Eng)

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

- 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.*

Overall the teaching and learning undertaken by staff and students meet the standards and ILOs as stated

- 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, I believe in comparison with other HEIs and the required standards the work at Leeds meets to benchmarks as required

- 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 assessments are sent to me before they are used, the comments I have made are read and auctioned with feedback of these sent to me.

I spoke with some students (more comments later) they were content with the assessment methods, I also consider that the range and creativity within assessments to be of a high standard.

- 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 is some team work as you would expect on a PM course, but individual students have the chance to demonstrate their level of understanding, the research dissertation is one such good example. Some reconsideration about the timing of assessments might provide a chance for even better results.

- 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.
Comments made in previous year were implemented either in the same year or the next.

- 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.

Content of the topics are contemporary, indicating keeping up to date with current research outputs. The research that students undertake are one clear way to differentiate good from very good students.

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.*

Sets of work are sent to me as and when they take place, I also get the chance to conduct a random search of a range of work prior to the exam board, staff also include me in their discussions of work that may for example be on the borderline of pass/fail etc.

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.*

I believe I have the information in order to know what is required of me by when and within current frameworks.

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, very good.

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

The 'system' of how Leeds conducts mitigation was explained and in the board the staff appear to know their students and students given any benefit of doubt.

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.

I have the chance to meet students and I ask them what they would like Leeds to Stop, Start and what should be Kept in relation to their courses. During the feedback at the board I present the key findings for staff to consider. The number of students I meet are low so making any sweeping generalisation would be unsafe, at the same time I think they are interesting and worth at least discussion at the Course team meetings. Key findings from the Stop, Start, Keep are :

Stop: Group assessment, Less exams (i.e. more assignments)

Start: More presentations, 24hr access to study room, more open book exams, increase 4 to5 day teaching

Keep : Group work (interesting when they asked for less group assessments) comment sounds as if team work liked but to be individually assessed. , case studies, industry links.

Plagiarism The policy on this looks sound and clear penalties are published for those caught.



28 February 2012

Dear

External Examiner's Report

Thank you for your detailed and comprehensive report on our MSc(Eng) ICME and EPM courses. We are glad that you found most aspects of the course to be running in a satisfactory manner, however, please find comments below on some of the issues you highlighted in your report.

- Students raised issues about the nature and types of exams and assignments. We currently have a mixture of formal exams and assignments. Three of our seven modules have formal exams, two are case study based and one is closed book. The cases are provided in advance of the examination and one paper is open book. The University requires us to have a minimum number of formal examinations and we are at this minimum level.
- Group assessments operate on two modules that are assignment based. They represent 30% and 60% of the final mark. In the 60% module there is peer review of contribution and interim assessments conducted by the module leader. We will review group assessments to make sure we do not disadvantage any students. Group work, as you identified, is central to the learning experience and most students enjoy this interaction.
- The timing of assessments has created a workload problem for students. As we have moved towards the greater use of coursework, pressure has built up during the semester. We do ensure that there are no multiple submissions during a single week. We also make sure that we have at least four weeks before a submission is due.
- Our current model of teaching is a four day block. We revisit this approach on a regular basis. Current constraints on appropriate space represent our biggest challenge to moving from four to five day blocks.
- Access to the facility is an ongoing issue for students. Faculty health and safety rules constrain access to the building. The Faculty is in the process of revisiting access for students. However, all key software is now available on University clusters that are open 24 hours a day. We have also made software available to students on our Citrix server which allows remote access. The library has also extended its opening hours and there are group discussion rooms within the library.

Once again thank you for your constructive comments from the report and the support you have provided during the year. We look forward to seeing you in October.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely