

The University of Leeds

EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2012– 2013

PART A: GENERAL INFORMATION

Subject area and awards being examined:

School of:	Mechanical Engineering	Subject(s):	
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Automotive Engineering Mechanical Engineering	awards: (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc.)	MEng/BEng

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?

N/A

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.

The programmes have improved substantially over the 5 years of my term of office. They have risen from being satisfactory to being outstanding through the leadership of the Head of School and the Director of Teaching. The staff in the School have developed a community of practice and a sense of spirit that is rare in their Russell Group peers. The student body is fully engaged with the School and they trust that the School is working in their interests. One of the most telling comments was from a student I spoke to this year whose first words to me were 'The staff care'.

The mechanical and automotive programmes at Leeds have, in my opinion, set the national standard for the education of professional engineers through the development of coherent and relevant curricula.

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 aims and ILOs are appropriate.

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 aims of the programmes comfortably exceed the requirements of the IMechE and are comparable with the programmes at Russell Group universities.

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 assessment methods are appropriate for the aims of the programmes and provide good discrimination of student competences and attainment levels. The marking standards appear to be fair, consistent and reliable.

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 graduating students are well educated engineers with clear evidence of their ability to solve challenging technical problems. The wide range of assessment methods provides ample opportunity for students to demonstrate their individual abilities.

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.

The integration of the design activities throughout the programme is worth of note.

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.

The research-teaching nexus at Leeds is probably the most comprehensive amongst the UK universities in that all four of Mike Bradford's categories are addressed. In addition to the expected practices of informing students of the research activities of the staff, providing opportunity to undertake research studies, and to learn by their own investigation, the student learning experience has enhanced by the staff reflecting on, and developing, their teaching practices.

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.*

I was satisfied with the information available to me

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.*

Yes, I was fully informed of the relevant information

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

Yes, a wide range of material was made available to me

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

Yes, as usual the administrative arrangements were excellent.

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

The process of dealing with mitigating circumstances appears to function well.

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.

The School of Mechanical Engineering at Leeds is outstandingly good at educating engineers.