

The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT
ACADEMIC YEAR: 2013– 2014

Part A: General Information**Subject area and awards being examined**

Faculty / School of:	School of Process, Environmental and Materials Engineering
Subject(s):	
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Energy and Environmental Engineering
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MEng/BEng

Name and home Institution /**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 Quality Assurance**
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

Some issues are raised under the comment section

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

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.*

The taught programme provides students with the appropriate levels of engineering education associated with the fundamental principles of Energy and Environmental engineering. The structure and content of the course allows students to develop their problem solving ability and to gain a greater understanding of knowledge, theory and issues relevant to their chosen subject area.

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 and ILOs are appropriate and are similar to MEng/BEng degrees offered at other 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 for the taught programme are varied and suitable for the type of degree offered. These range from design and research project work through to examinations and associated coursework. The assessment is well placed throughout the programme and the student progression and award criteria is clearly understood by the students

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 examination scripts, coursework, design project and research project were assessed. The examination papers were at a level where students of differing abilities could attempt the questions and their ability would be reflected in the overall assessment mark. The individual projects examined were also at an appropriate level for this type of degree.

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.

The School has made considerable effort in improving aspects of quality assurance

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.

The influence of the research on teaching and learning is clearly evident in the 4th year where the individual project is usually attached to a research group and the modules offered are associated with individual lecturer research areas. Again this is traditional for the type of course offered and is in line with other degree schemes offered within the University sector.

8. Where the programme forms part of an Integrated PhD, please comment on the appropriateness of the programme as training for a PhD

N/A

For Examiners involved in mentoring arrangements

9. **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

The Examination/Assessment Process

10. **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.

All the necessary guidelines and all other relevant information for my role as the external examiner were received in good time

11. **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.

Received all relevant documentation

12. **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?**

All draft examination papers and model solutions were received for comment and review. The nature and level of the questions were appropriate for the course. Unable to comment of suitability of the arrangements for consideration of my comments since there was no feedback given. This is the third year that this has occurred

13. **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?**

A range of assessed/examined work was made available so that evaluation of the standard of student work was carried out with confidence. Some comments with regard to script marking will be identified later.

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

The choice of subjects offered for dissertations offered students the opportunity to work in a range of research theme which was both topical and challenging. The method and standard of assessment was both fair and appropriate giving the student a wide range of assessments to complete.

15. **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?**

I was present at the Full board of examiners meeting. The arrangements of the Board, and its operation were exemplary and the recommendations made for each student were satisfactory.

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

Yes, this was undertaken by a small committee to which the outcomes were highlighted at the full board. This was seen as appropriate since many other universities now adopt the same procedure

Other comments

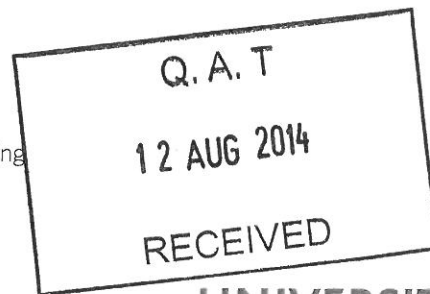
Please use this box if you wish to make any further comments not covered elsewhere on the form

The School has made considerable efforts to improve its quality assurance with regard to script management; however a number of concerns still need to be addressed.

- 1) The school has developed an arithmetic correction proforma for examination modules. This is a good system that needs some modification to it to ensure quality assurance. It is recommended that both the checker and module leader sign the proforma even though no amendments were found.
- 2) This proforma usually had a student number assigned to the amendment. However when tracking this correction to the marks summary sheet of the module, some only had student names, so it was difficult to track the correction.
- 3) In many cases within the scripts there was no final mark indicated at the end of the solution. This would help both the external examiner and the checker since it gives a clear indication where one solution ends and the next starts.
- 4) Some Examiners did not indicate at the front of the script what was the final mark that would be transferred to the spread sheet. Again for quality assurance this is a fundamental step for proper traceability. It is also recommended that the checker could also examine if the correct mark was transferred to the summary spread sheet. This was also highlighted last year.
- 5) Again there was no visible record/evidence of the checker reviewing the scripts. Generally other Universities require this process to be carried out using green pen, and clear indications that checker has reviewed the solution mark and that the solution mark is at the front of the script. Again this was highlighted last year.
- 6) Where minor errors were found on the scripts. it was noticed that this was corrected on the examiner spread sheet, but no record on the script. This needs to be implemented.
- 7) Talking to students is a fundamental part of the quality assurance activities that an external examiner undertakes. Student feedback is an important aspect of the duties. It was noted that only one student was presented for interview. This is not acceptable. When questioned on this fact the School stated that the issue was related to the timetabling of the Board of Examiners meetings outside term time. This was a University requirement. The Examiner wants a guaranteed assurance that more BEng/MEng students will be available for next year. If there is no commitment to this requirement, the Examiner will have to remove himself from the external examiner role for 2014/15.

Faculty of Engineering

School of Process, Environmental and Materials Engineering
University of Leeds
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UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

12 August 2014

Dear

Examiner's Report 2013/14 – MEng/BEng Energy & Environmental Engineering

Thank you for your External Examiner's Report for our MEng/BEng degree programme in Energy and Environmental Engineering. I have copied this to our Director of Student Education () and the Head of Process Engineering (), and their comments are incorporated with mine below.

First of all, thank you for the positive remarks about the content and quality of the programme, as well as the standards of the projects. Your acknowledgement of our procedures and the improvements we have made to various aspects of quality assurance are also welcome. These will all be made known to the teaching team.

I would like to respond to the more negative aspects of your report as follows:

- In response to your remarks in Q12, all comments made by the External Examiner about the draft examination papers are acted upon in consultation with the module leader. You were emailed about the receipt of these, but it would seem that we did not subsequently acknowledge that the changes had been made; this will be rectified for next year.
- The points made in the final Further Comments section about various aspects of our QA procedures are noted. The School's Taught Student Education Committee will be reviewing our marking and checking processes at its next meeting, with a view to producing further guidelines for staff and arithmetic checkers to follow carefully. As you have mentioned, we have made significant improvements in this area, but not all staff have the same degree of diligence, especially given the tight marking deadlines imposed.
- Your request to meet more students is also noted and we fully endorse your concerns about this. Indeed, this is a comment heard from all of our External Examiners and we have very limited scope for improving this, but we will endeavour to ensure that more students are present next year. We will also be inviting you to various project presentation events, so that you can have the opportunity for more engagement with the students during the year, rather than simply relying on ad hoc appearances in June.

cont'd

Once again, many thanks for your efforts this year. This concludes your duties for the MEng/BEng programme for 2013/14, but we look forward to seeing you again in October for the MSc Examinations Board.

Yours sincerely

Head of School.

cc. AQST