

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 & Materials Engineering
Subject(s):	<i>Aviation</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	PEME114001 PEME218001 PEME311501 PEME310501 PEME113001 PEME202001
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	BSc

Name and home Institution / affiliation of Examiner**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

NONE AT ALL

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.*

I am pleased to report that Leeds is maintaining a high standard of academic rigour and that the subjects being studied have appropriate ILO's which are commensurate with the BSc aviation programme.

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 short answer is a resounding 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 assessments seem to be well matched to the subject areas and the marking is very thorough. Student performance is for the most part good or very good with only a few seemingly to struggle with the demands of the course

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.*

Yes. Although no two cohorts are ever the same, I believe that students studying aviation at Leeds are on a par if not better than those at other institutions who offer this subject area. This is a credit to the admissions policy of the university.

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.

I think there was much greater clarity in the way exam questions were formulated and presented this year.

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.

It is evident that the aviation teaching staff keep up to date with their subject areas as the exam papers contained several topical themes.

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.

Yes, the support given to me by the schools officers is first class.

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.

Yes an up to date module handbook was supplied

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?

Yes, all exam paper work was in good order with model answers supplied.

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?

Complete exam scripts were supplied for all subjects and the marking appeared to be very thorough.

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

Yes to both questions. The students submitted some very innovative subjects and the evidence of team working was quite impressive.

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?

The administration and operation of the Exam Board was very precise and completed in a satisfactory manner.

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

Yes. I raised an issue over one particular student's submission and the circumstances surrounding it but it was easily resolved after all the relevant facts had been ascertained.

Other comments

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

Since my visit last year I am pleased to say that this school has maintained its high standards and its students have produced some excellent work. I particularly liked the exam paper for PEME 114001 for its well rounded and balanced approach to the subject.



20th August, 2014

Dear

**Response to External Examiner's Report
B.Sc. in Aviation Technology with Pilot Studies
B.Sc. in Aviation Technology with Management**

This letter acknowledges with thanks and responds to your External Examiner's report, for our two Aviation Technology B.Sc. degrees. On behalf of the School, I wish to thank you for your insightful comments and helpful suggestions for improving the Aviation Technology Programmes.

Response to Matters for Urgent Attention: You identified no matters requiring urgent attention.

Response to Programme-Related Comments: My colleagues and I were pleased to note that your view of the programme was extremely positive and that no specific areas of concern were raised. Regarding two matters you commented upon:

- ***The challenge of making meaningful cohort to cohort comparisons*** is something that we too are conscious of. In part, this reflects the small size of these cohorts, but we have also noticed that the Aviation cohorts have an exceptionally strong sense of group identity. This is such that a common viewpoint tends to emerge from each cohort, often differing substantially from that of the preceding cohort. In view of this, we are allowing time for the impact of the major changes made previously to the Aviation programmes to become fully apparent and plan only incremental changes in the coming year.
- ***Most students performed well, but a few seemed to struggle.*** Some key factors impacting student performance appear to be that:
 1. We have sought explicitly to increase the level of rigour and intellectual challenge in the Aviation programmes, especially, but not exclusively in level 3. We see this as necessary if we are to continue to equip students for a working environment where they will face very strong competition from their global peers.
 2. Our major use (especially in level 3) of problem-based learning and other educational approaches intended to build student leadership and

overcome student passivity.

3. The increase in our admissions standards has been such that most students flourish under the more challenging regime resulting from "1" and "2".

Notwithstanding "3", we did anticipate that some students would struggle and have therefore focussed on providing effective proactive and reactive support. Those struggling students who availed themselves of this support did well, but this left a small group who appeared very reluctant to engage. If this persists in the coming year, we will seek to identify the origin of this reluctance and develop strategies to encourage greater engagement.

Thank you again.

With best wishes,

Head of School

c.c. AQST