

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):	<i>Fire and Explosion Engineering</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Fire and Explosion Engineering
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	PGCert/MSc Fire and Explosion Engineering

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

No areas requiring urgent attention

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?

NA

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 Fire and Explosion programme has been maintained at a high standard over the four years of my term of appointment and continues to be well-supported by the school and to attract high calibre students – which has been challenging in the recent economic environment. Changes have been evolutionary, with progressive development of teaching and mentoring to maintain the course up to date and relevant. I have been impressed by the very high standard of care and attention devoted to marking and assessment procedures, maintained in line with changes in the university systems and policy. For the future I feel it will be important to play to the particular strengths at Leeds in relation to industrial fire and explosion protection engineering, while also maintaining a good standard and coverage of general fire engineering subjects.

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.*

From examination of the structure and content of the programmes I am content that the mix of course topics and Intended Learning Outcomes are appropriate for the subject area. I am also satisfied that the content provides students with the correct set of knowledge areas and skills to an appropriate standard required for professional application in Fire and Explosion Engineering.

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.*

From my experience of teaching and examining similar courses at different universities in <>, <>, <> and <> I feel that the Leeds course is comparable with other courses in terms of course content and standards. There are some differences in emphasis in the Leeds course (as there are in others). While the Leeds course provides comprehensive cover of all the necessary and relevant subject areas for fire engineering, Leeds has particular strengths in relation to physical and chemical aspects of fires and explosions. It is especially appropriate for engineers intending to work in industrial applications, as well appropriate for those intending to work in building design applications.

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 were clearly structured and applied, with appropriate marking for the modules for which I viewed course work, and classification of awards. Prior to the examiners meeting I was provided with information on marking schemes. From the course work I viewed and report of the grading discussions, I am content that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is high.

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 academic standards achieved by individual students varied to the extent expected on this course. The quality of work was comparable with that from the previous years on the Leeds course and comparable courses at other universities I have been associated with.

5. For Examiners responsible for programmes that include clinical practice components, please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum

NA

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.

Standards have been maintained and enhanced since last 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 clear that the curriculum is heavily influenced by the Leeds fire and explosion research strengths. This shows not just in the course work but also in the design and research project topics chosen by the students and the way they were implemented. As in previous years, there were some excellent research projects this year.

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

NA

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

NA

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.

I was provided with access to sufficient guidance material for me to act effectively as External Examiner and encouraged to request any additional information I considered necessary.

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.

I was provided with all appropriate documentation matching my role.

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?

I was provided with and reviewed all draft examination papers/assessment projects. I am content that the nature and level of the questions and assignments were appropriate. Provision was made for me to provide comments on draft papers. These were available for consideration prior to finalizing the papers.

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?

All appropriate assessed and examination work has been made available both by access to the VLE system and by making hard copies available for inspection in the department, in advance of the Examiners meeting. Scripts were clearly marked and annotated with appropriate comments.

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

A varied choice of dissertation topics made available for students and the facilities provided for them to be carried out. The choice of subjects and methods and standard of assessment were appropriate.

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 administrative arrangements were satisfactory and staff helpful. I was unable to attend the Examiners meeting but the relevant aspects, and any issues relating to the meeting, were communicated to me. I reviewed the grading for the students and in particular for any students borderline for particular awards. I was satisfied with the recommendations of the Board. I was invited to hear the student presentations on their research projects, but was unable to attend on the day.

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

It was evident that staff went to considerable lengths to ensure that all students were treated fairly, and that due and careful consideration was given to mitigating circumstances and medical evidence.

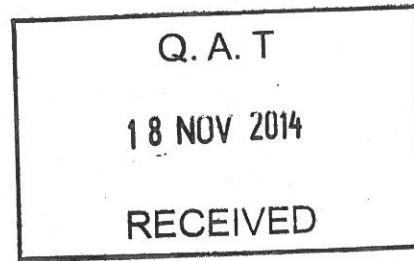
Other comments

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

Since this is my last year as External Examiner I would like to thank the University for the opportunity to participate over the last four years. I have enjoyed working with the team and found examination of the course and student work interesting and enlightening. I would like to extend my best wishes for the future of the School of Chemical and Process Engineering.

Faculty of Engineering

School of Chemical and Process Engineering
University of Leeds
Leeds LS2 9JT, UK



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

17 November 2014

Dear

External Examiner's Report 2013/14 – MSc Fire and Explosion Engineering

Thank you for your completed External Examiner's report for our MSc degree programme in Fire and Explosion Engineering. As usual, I have copied this to the School's Director of Student Education () and Head of Process Engineering () and their comments are included with mine below.

I would like to thank you for the very favourable comments about the quality and standards of the programme, as well as your remarks concerning the level and variety of the design and research projects. I also note that you were again happy with all of our administrative arrangements and procedures.

This marks the end of your duties as External Examiner for the Fire and Explosion Engineering programme. We take comments from our External Examiners very seriously and, on behalf of the School, I would like to thank you for your help over the past few years.

Yours sincerely

Head of School.