

The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT
ACADEMIC YEAR: 2010– 2011

PART A: GENERAL INFORMATION*Subject area and awards being examined:*

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|----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| School of: | Process, Environmental and Materials Engineering | Subject(s): | Fire and Explosion |
| Programme(s) / Module(s): | MEng,BEng Fire and Explosion PGCert/PGDip/MSc Fire and Explosion Engineering | awards: (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc.) | MEng,BEng PGCert/PGDip/MSc |

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.

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?

Not yet

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.

This was my first Examiners meeting. I have been impressed with the quality of the exam papers I have received for comment and the quality of the exam papers and course work I have inspected. I am content that they the standard for teaching and of the performance required from the students compares favourably with those for similar courses from other universities I have worked with.

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.*

Having reviewed the structure and content of the programmes I am content that the mix of course topics is appropriate for the subject area and that the content provides students with the correct set of knowledge areas and skills 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.*

Having experience of teaching and examining similar courses at different universities in the UK, US, Sweden and New Zealand 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, Leeds has particular strengths in the applications of 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 assessment methods were clearly structured and applied, with appropriate marking for the modules for which I viewed course work. Prior to the examiners meeting I was provided with information on marking schemes and these were explained and discussed during the meeting.

- *The quality of teaching, learning and assessment methods that may be indicated by student performance.*

From the course work I viewed, students I interviewed, and 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 academic standards achieved varied to the extent expected for a group of students with different abilities and application.

- *The strengths and weaknesses of the students as a cohort.*

Although the group is small, as a cohort the range of strengths and weaknesses displayed was appropriate

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. 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.

No comment – since this my first year

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.

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.

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 have been well prepared and guided with respect to the courses and course material by the administrative staff and given all the access to course material, exam papers and course work that I have found necessary.

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.*

Appropriate documentation has been provided

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

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.

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

The administrative arrangements were excellent and staff very helpful

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

These aspects were covered where relevant.

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.



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

19 January 2012

Dear

External Examiner's Report 2010/11 – MSc Fire and Explosion Engineering

Thank you for your completed External Examiner's Report for our MSc programme in Fire and Explosion 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.

Firstly, thank you for the complimentary remarks about the content of the programme and the quality and standards that we achieve. Your comments about the quality of the assessments, as well as the range and depth of research projects, are also much appreciated and will be passed on to the teaching team. I also note that you were very satisfied with the administrative arrangements and, once again, this will be passed on to relevant staff.

However, I see in your report that you were not provided with copies of reports from the previous External Examiner. This is an error on our part and you will be sent these in due course.

Many thanks for your efforts this year and we look forward to seeing you again in June.

Yours sincerely

Head of School.