

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

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

<b>School of Process, Environmental Materials Eng</b> <b>Programme(s) / Module(s):</b> <b>Quarry Management and Operations</b>	<b>Subject(s): Quarry Management and Operations</b> <b>awards: (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc.)</b> <b>PG Cert</b>
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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](mailto: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.*

n/a

***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?*

I was provided with a copy of the previous year's external examiners report

***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.*

## 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 structure and content of the programme, and its aims and intended ILO's are appropriate for this level of award

**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 programme compares very well with other programmes in this study area that I have seen.

**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 range of student performance as indicated by the marks presented at the Examination Board, suggest a satisfactory teaching and learning environment. There is a good mix of assessment between assignments, on-line discussion groups, and tests. I was particularly impressed with the case histories that formed the basis of the assignments.

**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 demonstrated in the course material I surveyed suggest that this cohort of students demonstrate a very similar pattern of performance to those that are in my experience of comparable courses.

**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.*

I am a first year examiner of this course, that is closing. I am not aware of any further enhancements other than those highlighted by my predecessor..

**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 influence was evident in the assignments – particularly the work on rock blasting. The high quality and interest level of the project subjects appeared both to rely on the inputs of staff from their own research activity but also the close collaboration with the sponsoring aggregate company.

## ***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 confirm that the material I received was sufficient.

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

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

I was given access to all assessed work in the three modules together with staff feedback to students.

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

Very good

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

I understand from staff that such procedures are in place.

### ***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.*

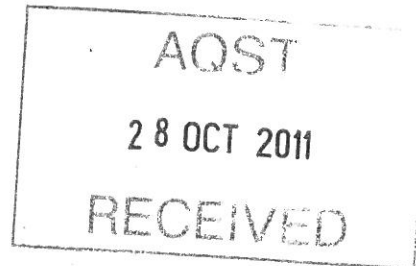
One of my objectives this year was to satisfy myself that the run-down of this course was being conducted in an orderly manner and that students were not disadvantaged by the situation in which they found themselves. I was unable to speak with any students as students from this cohort, with its worldwide base, were no longer in Leeds. However, it was clear to me that high standards are being maintained right through to the end of the programme and that no students are being disadvantaged by the run-down.

The arrangements for classifications of the awards were based on those that the University applies for cohorts of students with courses that are based on a larger number of modules. I was a little unhappy with the use of the "performance at the higher level in the majority of modules" system to assess borderline students that had taken only 3 modules. This system seemed to engender a degree of unease in decisions made at the borderline of certificate classifications. My view is that a greater weighting should be given to the exercising of discretion in decisions on borderline classifications by staff that have a good knowledge of the students in question, which is possible in a course such as this.



CP/pgc  
26 October 2011

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### **External Examiner's Report 2010/11 – PGCert Quarry Management and Operations**

Thank you for your External Examiner's Report for our PGCert programme in Quarry Management and Operations. I have copied this to the Director of Student Education (Professor Fairweather) and the Head of Process Engineering (Dr Poole), 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 high quality of individual assignments and projects are also much appreciated and will be conveyed to the teaching team.

We also note your concerns about the criteria adopted for determining classifications in borderline cases. As explained at the Examinations Board, the "performance at the higher level in the majority of modules" rule was developed for our normal, multi-module programmes and may be, perhaps, less appropriate for one consisting of just three 20-credit modules. As this was the final cohort of this particular programme, the situation will obviously not arise again.

Once again, many thanks for your efforts this year. We look forward to seeing you again at the June 2012 Examinations Board.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Bell".

Professor AJ Bell  
Head of School