

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:	Music
Subject(s):	Music
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Applied Psychology of Music
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MMus

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.

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

The MMus in Applied Psychology of Music is a distinctive programme and represents an area of study in which the School is able to distinguish itself from MMus study elsewhere, both in terms of its taught PG provision and in training students to pursue advanced research at doctoral level. While changes during my term as External Examiner have been minor, those that have been made reflect a genuine attempt to improve the student experience and show responsiveness to student feedback (e.g. see my 2011/12 report).

The teaching staff are well placed to deliver the programme. Progress in this field can be fast-paced, with new methods devised to shed light on psychological processes that explain and underpin musical experience. In this sense, Leeds students are well placed to benefit from the research experience of the programme team.

I've enjoyed my term as External Examiner and wish the School every success in carrying forward this programme in future years.

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 ILOs were articulated clearly in the programme documentation, and I am satisfied that the standards set are appropriate.

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.*

Yes, compared to similar programmes at other institutions.

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 encouraged students to engage with content on both a scholarly and practical basis. The assessment criteria were applied judiciously to the work I sampled, and tutors' feedback seemed fair, constructive and detailed.

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.*

I reviewed work submitted by students and feedback reports on two core modules, (1) Case Studies in the Applied Psychology of Music and (2) Research Techniques in the Applied Psychology of Music, as well as modules covering Applied Performance Studies, Composition Studies and several Short Dissertations and Dissertations. Within the range of marks awarded, standards of student performance were comparable to those I have seen on similar programmes elsewhere.

The feedback reports for Case Studies and Research Techniques helpfully provided a section labelled 'Primary areas for improvement', which seemed a particularly effective way of distilling key points to assist students in developing skills to tackle subsequent assessment tasks.

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.

There were no changes to report from 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.

The on-going research of staff plays an integral part in this programme, particularly in informing teaching and assessment on the Case Studies and Research Techniques modules.

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.

I sampled several students' work and related feedback. This was sufficient to allow me to survey the range of assignments and marks awarded, as well as to assess the overall detail and extent of the feedback provided to students.

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.

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?

N/A

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?

Yes.

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

Yes.

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?

Yes.

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

Yes.

Other comments

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

None.

School of Music

University of Leeds
Leeds LS2 9JT



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

26 October 2014

Dear

Many thanks for your report. Your positive comments regarding the distinctiveness of the programme and the quality of feedback are especially appreciated. We greatly appreciate your contribution and advice during your tenure as External Examiner here at the University of Leeds.

With best wishes,

Head of School

Examinations Officer

Director of Student Education