

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:	Process, Environmental and Materials Engineering.
Subject(s):	<i>Materials Science and Engineering.</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	B.Eng, M.Eng.

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

The programme that I examined has now been discontinued. <> and <> I find it sad, and possibly very short-sighted, that the excellent, worldwide reputation gained at Leeds for undergraduate materials education, particularly in Metallurgy and Ceramics, has come to an end at a time when the demand for such graduates is rising. That this follows the closure of the highly regarded mining and minerals courses is a cause for concern for these subjects in the UK.

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?

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

Following the comments made above, my experience with the materials programmes over this period of external examinership has been unlike that obtained in previous appointments at Leeds. There has been no progressive development and enhancement of the course, nor should there have been in its final year of offering. The standards achieved on marking and assessment were excellent, as usual in this efficiently run activity. The procedures within the School are good, albeit complicated, because of the situation in Leeds.

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 Intended Learning Outcomes were correct and appropriate for this course of high academic reputation and were achieved. In this final fourth year of the course the standards were completely appropriate for the award of the M.Eng degrees.

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.*

General expectations based on the national subject benchmark were met although the full breadth of the subject was not met in a few places. The programme compares well with those of other equivalent 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.*

Assessment methods and marking were based on well-tested and proven procedures which demonstrated the high quality of teaching and learning received by the undergraduates.

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.*

Good opportunity was given to the students to show their learning and understanding of the subject because of the varied assessment methods used. This final fourth year cohort of students was extremely strong and compared well with the students on similar courses elsewhere.

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.

No enhancements were made to the programme as it was in its final year of delivery.

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 influence of research on different aspects of the programme was varied. In some areas such as electronic materials, microscopy and structure of materials, it was clear that cutting edge research had influenced the curriculum and learning and teaching.

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.

Sufficient guidance was available.

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.

All appropriate documentation was available.

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?

All draft papers were seen and queries answered.

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?

Sufficient assessed work was available on my visit. All examined scripts were clearly and correctly marked.

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

A good, wide range of appropriate subjects was available for the students to select. Assessment methods were thorough and standards were good.

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?

Administrative arrangements were good for a scheme involving five external examiners at the same period of time. I attended the Board of Examiners which, for such a complicated Board, was run extremely efficiently and was seen to make satisfactory recommendations.

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

Yes.

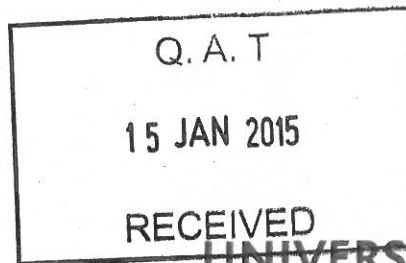
Other comments

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

Faculty of Engineering

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W www.engineering.leeds.ac.uk/chemical



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

13 January 2015

Dear

MEng/BEng Materials Science and Engineering

Many thanks for your final External Examiners report for the MEng/BEng Materials Science and Engineering programme and for acting for us in this capacity. Your positive comments on both the structure and content of the programme, and the organisation within the School, are much appreciated by myself, and in the Student Support Office and the materials teaching staff.

In view of the excellent reputation of Leeds materials graduates over the years, built upon the hard work and dedication of the staff, it is indeed in some aspects regrettable that we have had to withdraw this Undergraduate programme but this was based on poor recruitment and the need to concentrate our efforts on our core Chemical Engineering programme. Materials teaching will continue at Leeds, however, as minor components of the MEng BEng Chemical and Materials Engineering and BSc Nanotechnology programmes. We have also just launched the MSc Materials Science and Engineering programme, the part-time, distance-learning variant of which is designed specifically to address the shortage of materials graduates in the UK.

Once again, my I express my thanks for your assistance and guidance with the materials programmes at Leeds.

Regards

Head of School