

The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT
ACADEMIC YEAR: 2013– 2014

Part A: General Information**Subject area and awards being examined**

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| <i>Faculty / School of:</i> | Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies |
| <i>Subject(s):</i> | Arabic & Arabic Interpreting & Translation Studies |
| <i>Programme(s) / Module(s):</i> | BA Arabic, Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies and related degrees; MA Translation Studies and Interpreting |
| <i>Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):</i> | BA, MA |

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

There are no matters for 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?

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

N/A

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.*

I am satisfied that all of the grades are appropriate to the level required in all of the modules I have examined.

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.*

I am satisfied that the aims and ILOs met the levels of other institutions and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

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 course tutors have been consistent in the application of the marking criteria and in their feedback on the assessments, providing helpful and detailed comments. Comments provided this year were more thorough than in previous years. The teaching, learning and assessment methods are of an excellent standard.

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 standard of the students was overall very good. The courses are clearly attracting high-calibre students. The overall spread of grades is appropriate and reflects the performance of the students in their assessments.

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.

The AMES is an excellent department with dedicated, skilled and highly motivated staff. The decisions made to expand and develop the programmes offered draw upon the expertise and talents of the academic staff, and these programmes are clearly attractive to a wide range of students. In general I have noted an improvement in the programmes with respect to content and attention to detail in the assessment of students. The Department of AMES is to be commended.

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 curriculum design of the programmes is informed by current research and issues in the subject areas taught. In general the students' research projects were of a good standard.

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.

The material provided to me was sufficient to make the required judgements.

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?

All of the examination papers and assessments were suitable and to a high standard. Any queries I had regarding these were adequately responded to by members of staff.

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. I was provided with all of the scripts with comments and grades necessary to provide an informed evaluation.

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

Yes. These were appropriate and the 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?

Yes. This was appropriate. I was able to attend the meetings and I was satisfied with the recommendations of the Board.

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

The Department of AMES programmes and modules which cover a wide range of subject areas. The courses are informed by cutting edge research and are taught by a dedicated team of academic staff. The Department is maintaining excellent standards and as such is to be commended.

Arabic, Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies

School of Languages, Cultures and Societies



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

04 August 2014

Dear

I am writing to formally thank you for externally examining our SH BA Programmes in Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies, Arabic and Islamic Studies, Islamic Studies and Middle Eastern Studies and for your very positive External Examiner's Report 2013-2014. We are pleased to read that yet again no concerns were raised about the examination process, the assessment methods used and the grades given and thank you for rating our subject area so highly for its dedicated and skilled staff, the quality of the UG programmes we offer and the overall academic standard of our students. We noted with particular delight your positive commentary on our written feedback provisions, which you defined as 'helpful', 'detailed' and 'thorough'. Indeed, over the past academic year we worked hard on improving our written feedback provisions, amongst others through the introduction of a thoroughly revamped feedback proforma.

Thank you again for your report, but please do not hesitate to contact me should you like to add anything further regarding our programmes.

With best wishes,

Director of Arabic, Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies
School of Languages, Cultures and Societies
University of Leeds
Leeds LS2 9JT