

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

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

<i>Faculty / School of:</i>	School of Modern Languages and Cultures
<i>Subject(s):</i>	Russian
<i>Programme(s) / Module(s):</i>	MA Conference Interpreting and Translation Studies; PG Diploma Conference Interpreting
<i>Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):</i>	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](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*

There are no matters 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?*

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 do not believe that I received the programme Aims and ILOs.

**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 have been external examiner at many UK (and Irish) HE institutions; on the basis of this extensive experience and my own experience within the subject I am confident that the programme is fully comparable with equivalent 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.*

In terms of the work I had to moderate I found the design and structure of the assessments, and the arrangements for the marking of the modules entirely appropriate. I found the quality of the student work very good indeed, and infer that the quality of the teaching was very 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 strengths and weaknesses of the students as a cohort.*

See 3 above. In addition to my comments there, I would also note that the level of linguistic attainment by some students was outstanding, with the marks in some modules being exceptionally high.

**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.*

Nothing to note.

**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.*

I was not aware of this influence as such; this said, by its very nature purely language programmes do not reveal the influence of research with the same transparency as those dealing with culture, politics, history etc.

## For Examiners involved in mentoring arrangements

**8. 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

**9. 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 received sufficient guidance to perform my role effectively.

**10. 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.*

I do not feel that I received sufficient documentation.

**11. 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?**

I received draft assessments, and was able to comment on them as relevant. The assignments were appropriate.

**12. 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 made available to me to enable me to have confidence in my evaluation of the standard of student work.

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

N/A

**14. 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?**

I was informed of the examiners' meeting rather late in the day. More significantly, it was arranged on a day in the week that I was already due to be in Leeds for two days, but with a 3-day gap between the two. Perhaps efforts could be made to dovetail these meetings?

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

I have no information about this either way.

## Other comments

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

As will be evident from the above, I have two rather contradictory impressions from my involvement with this programme:

1 The performance of the students has been very high, from which I infer commitment on their part and on the part of staff who taught them, as well as high professional standards in the delivery of the programme.

2 On the other hand, the administrative arrangements have been weaker; more broadly, it has been somewhat difficult to form an overview of the overall arrangements for this programme.

# School of Languages, Cultures and Societies

FACULTY OF ARTS



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

25 Feb 2015

Dear

## External Examiner Report – 2013-14

Many thanks for your External Examiner report and helpful feedback on our modules and procedures. We are pleased to hear that once again the procedures at each stage of the year's activities ran smoothly and that once again you were impressed by the achievements of our students.

We are also very pleased that you were able to attend the Final Year Orals: we are delighted that you would hold them up as a paragon of good practice; this is particularly valued given your extensive experience as an External Examiner. I am sorry that you felt your suggestion for all School External Examiners to be invited to attend orals at least once during their tenure was not given due consideration. I am assuming that this oversight was simply due to the multi-faceted challenges of co-ordinating a large team of External Examiners across a School of our size. I will ensure that your suggestion is passed on to the School Exams and Assessment Officer for consideration for 2014-15.

Thank you also for noting the improvements and enhancements made in our modules and procedures, such as the typed feedback and the updates to modules. It is helpful to know that the impact of these changes is beneficial.

We are particularly gratified to hear your opinion that those areas with the greatest level of student autonomy are where there are the highest levels of excellence. This is especially important for us in our efforts to develop skills of independent learning and critical enquiry in the curriculum.

Thank you for sharing your concerns with us. With regard to the structure of modules in relation to semesters, we will bear your comments in mind. Some modules we feel are not best suited to single semester patterns; however, for 2014-15 there will be two level 3 modules running as 'short-fat' single semester modules, one in the first semester and one in the second semester. Also, the Russian team is considering a revision of the first year non-language modules and we will investigate whether the use of single semester modules may be appropriate here. With regard to the range of module topics, again we acknowledge that greater diversity would be ideal, but we are constrained both by staff and student numbers and have so far been unsuccessful in seeking shared teaching opportunities with units outside the School, as the larger subject areas such as History have less need of such initiatives. On the 20-90 scale, we note your concerns; as this is a University-level issue, I will draw your comments to the attention of our central Quality Assurance Team.

On behalf of the whole of GRASS I would like to thank you for your useful comments on draft assessments sent during the year, your careful scrutiny of student work and our practice as well as your particular attention to individual cases on which we have asked for your special input. We look forward to working with you again during the next academic year and to seeing you again next summer.

Best wishes,

Director of Russian  
School of Languages, Cultures and Societies  
University of Leeds  
Leeds LS2 9JT

Email  
Tel: