

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:	School of languages, cultures and societies
Subject(s):	
Programme(s) / Module(s):	MA in Professional Language & Intercultural Studies
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	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

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?

No

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.*

The ILOS seem very well aligned and appropriate for an MA level programme. The modules address timely, relevant and well thought out issues and the students are provided with opportunities to apply theory into practice through their assessment. The independent research the students produce at the end of the programme clearly shows good and critical understanding of the subject area and strong skills in designing and carrying out research-as appropriate for their level of study.

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, the programme is well designed and comparable in width and depth with similar MA programmes in the UK.

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 is well designed and the students are given good formative and structured feedback in developing skills to carry out independent research but also to address issues of greater complexity. The range of assessment -both at the level of the whole programme and per module- is very good and provides the students with the learning context to develop a range of skills. The marking and feedback is entirely appropriate. The marks are consistent, the moderation is thorough and the feedback generous.

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.*

This is the first year I examine on the programme but the standards are entirely appropriate and what I would expect for an M level programme. The marks distribution is very good and some of the work I examined was very strong indeed. I also enjoyed seeing links between the modules and the final dissertation. The students have space to develop their own interests and to carry out research that relates to their own outlook which is excellent. The Research Methods and Project module provides the students with very good opportunities to develop the necessary skills for a hands on study and all the students have clearly benefited from strong formative feedback. The work and commitment of the colleagues is clearly reflected upon the student performance.

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.

This is my first year on the programme.

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.

All the modules address topical and current issues and provide the students with opportunities to draw on cutting edge research in relation to their specific aims and objectives. The Writing for Professional Purposes and Skills and issues in Intercultural Studies modules are good cases where the students can develop a range of useful skills in the application of theory to practice.

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.

Yes

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, I have received appropriate documentation about the programme as a whole and about individual modules as well as the university handbook.

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?

Yes, all the material was communicated in a timely manner. I received a well-constructed and thorough response to my comments.

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 received the appropriate range of student work and all the details from the colleagues involved in marking/moderation was also made available to me.

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

Yes, the student work covers a good range of topics. The marking is consistent and the feedback the students get is constructive, directly aligned with the marks and also provides good basis for those who wish to continue researching in the area.

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, all arrangements have been entirely satisfactory.

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

I would have welcomed the opportunity to meet some students on the programme and discuss their own learning experience. Perhaps that could generate useful feedback for the further development of the programme and individual modules.

School of Languages, Cultures and Societies

FACULTY OF ARTS



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

25 Feb 2015

Dear

Many thanks for your thorough report on our MA in Professional Language and Intercultural Studies and associated modules for 2013-14.

I am glad that you found our learning outcomes and assessment methods to be appropriate to the level of award, that the marking was consistent and that you found the feedback provided to students to be constructive, sufficiently detailed and well-structured. I was also pleased that you found the modules to address current issues and that they draw on cutting edge research in the field. In particular, I was delighted to read your comments on the strength of the relationship between the taught elements of the programme and how these prepared students for their research projects. I have shared your comments with members of the programme team, with whom I know you have also been in direct contact.

In specific regard to your request to meet students, you are very welcome to do so. You might find it preferable to do so at time before the October Classification Board, by which time teaching for the session being examined is finished and many students will have left Leeds. This said, the new cohort will have arrived and may already have ideas to feed in. In any case, please contact the programme managers, should you wish to arrange a visit.

I should also note that we take student feedback very seriously with formal surveys at module and programme levels, and dialogue in regular student-staff forums, as well as in our day-to-day interactions.

Finally, I would like to thank you for your ongoing support in ensuring the quality of our teaching and assessment.

With kind regards,

Exams Tutor, Translation Studies