

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:	Education
Subject(s):	<i>Mathematics and Science Education</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	MA
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?

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.*

The aims and outcomes of the programme and modules are appropriate for a masters level award.
- 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.*

The aims and outcomes of the programme and modules are in line with those of other similar institutions and indeed in line with the subject benchmark.
- 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 are appropriate to a course of this kind and indeed the quality of the best essays I have received reveals how the assessment has the potential to allow the students to shine.
- 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 have seen some really very good assignments submitted for both modules I am an external examiner for. The fact that the students are offered to submit a more theoretical assignment is important I think for those who are interested in this. And indeed I had one such assignment which was very good indeed. The first assignment especially for EDUC5769M is structured in such a way that allows students to practice several abilities which are important in a Master in Education.
- 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.

Continuing attention is given to the quality of feedback which, as in previous years, is very high.
- 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 preparation for the written assignments relies heavily on critical reading of current research, which is also part of the delivery of the course. Judging from the quality of the essays I have seen this is working very well and students are able to engage with research in a very meaningful way.
- 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

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 information was clear and sufficient

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.

I received appropriate documentation in a timely manner

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

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?

I was not able to attend the board this year but I am happy to agree with the recommendations made.

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

As in previous years I am very impressed by the quality of the feedback which is precise and to the point. With this feedback students will surely be able to improve on their performance. I liked especially the attention to the use of words in the write up of the feedback and the detailed explanation of why for example marks were short for a jump of degree classification. In my experience students often find this difficult to see, especially at the top end of the scale where comments tend to be positive. The only suggestions I would like to make is that perhaps the markers could consider to be a little more generous, especially at the top end of the scale. I have seen some remarkably good assignments which could have been, in my opinion, marked higher to recognise the effort and achievement of the students. I do agree however with the degree classifications across the board.

13 May 2015

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Dear <>

Re: External Examiner's report for Mathematics and Science Education, MA, 2013-2014

Can I start by thanking you for your work on these programmes and the report that you have submitted. The input from External Examiners is invaluable. We note that you write, in Part B, that there are no matters for urgent attention.

With regard to the Standards, I was pleased that you confirmed that the programmes and modules are appropriate and consistent with those provided elsewhere. The programme team have tried to develop assignments that support the academic development of the students whilst recognising the different strengths of the students. They have worked hard to provide formative assessment and we appreciate your recognition of the quality of the feedback. The tutors do try to guide the students to achieve higher classifications.

The team have noted your comment about being a little more generous especially with the strongest assignments. They will reflect on this.

I was also pleased that you found the examination and assessment process efficient, "The information was clear and sufficient. I received appropriate documentation in a timely manner".

The programme has been strengthened by your thoughtful guidance.

Yours sincerely

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Head of School of Education