

The University of Leeds

EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2014– 2015

Part A: General Information

Subject area and awards being examined

Faculty / School of:	Civil Engineering
Subject(s):	Architectural Engineering
Programme(s) / Module(s):	BEng and MEng
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	BEng, MEng

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

No. The course is developing well in the direction of being more architecturally oriented under the strong and supportive direct of

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

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 standards and appropriateness of the Aims of the course and their related Intended Learning Outcomes are commensurate with the level of the awards given.

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.*

From my experience the standards expected of students graduating from the above courses are at or above the standards I have encountered for other courses for similar degrees in comparable fields.

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.*

There are three main assessment methods used for these courses. For the exams I have reviewed the exam papers and found them, and their proposed answers, to be of a high standard. The subject reports are at best really excellent and I would like to flag the structures papers for special mention for the care with which they are devised and marked really providing an exemplary learning opportunity for students. For the design work the way in which the learning pathway is built up and assessed between third and fourth year is another example of best practice from the team. I am very clear that the assessment methods for the course are really well thought out and applied in what is a very supportive environment for students.

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.*

Students appeared to be working to a high standard – and from the evidence of the final year project were being taught to be independent and creative thinkers. The gradual development of the learning requirements and scheduled outcomes appears to be supporting their skills and knowledge development in a well thought-out and constructive programme of learning and teaching.

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 introduction of more architectural guidance in the design project in the 4th year is appreciated and works well in terms of increasing the architectural balance of the course.

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.*

A number of the staff in the design team are specialists and their research and experience demonstrably informs the development and direction of the main design projects in 3rd and 4th year. Their taught courses are typically taught by research active staff in the specific field of the course.

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.

This material was provided in a timely and efficient manner.

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?

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 – a great deal of trouble was taken to set out the material in such a way as to make it easily accessible and comprehensible to me.

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

N/A

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

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

Yes

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

I was again impressed by the high standard of the course outputs and by the care and dedication of the teaching staff on the course under [redacted]. Students during the oral session reinforced that they felt that lecturers were very 'available and helpful' and that they appreciated the care and attention given to them over the duration of the course.

The loss of the building physics lecturers, [redacted] has created a definite lacuna in the staff skills base that is going to be filled by the appointment of a building physics lecturer.

Three final year students during their session with us also mentioned that they thought that there is a lack of input on the HVAC side of their teaching and while they did get first class structural training they felt that they would have benefitted from more input in terms of services and related systems. I am presuming that this will be addressed with the appointment of the new building physics lecturer.

In terms of the facilities it was also noted that the move towards more studio teaching and the enhanced provision of studio spaces meant that many groups of students were spending more time working in the studio spaces together, helping each other and contributing to not only a better learning environment but also very strong and constructive interactions between the group. This does not only cement friendships but also adds to the enjoyment of the study experience and is to be commended.

In conclusion I was satisfied that the standards of teaching and learning as well as the student experience is high in the school.

27th June 2015

Faculty of Engineering

School of Civil Engineering
University of Leeds
Leeds LS2 9JT, UK



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

11 August 2015

Dear

Thank you for your External Examiner's report on the School's Architectural Engineering programmes for the 2014/15 academic session. I am very pleased to note your positive and supportive comments about the programmes and the support that the teaching team gives to our students. The continued use of locally-based practising architects to help our 2nd, 3rd and now final year students with the architectural aspects of their design projects has proved to be very successful. We made use of a similar approach with our 3rd year design project using two structural engineers from ARUP; this also seems to have been well received by the students.

As the new programmes are rolled out (the second year of the two new pathways will begin in September 2015), you will note an even stronger emphasis on architectural engineering design than in the work you reviewed this year. In addition, for the beginning of the 2015/16 academic session, our architectural engineering team has recently been strengthened by the appointment to a new post of Lecturer in Architecture, of [redacted] from [redacted], and an Associate Professor in Building Physics, [redacted], who will join us from [redacted] to replace [redacted]. We are confident that [redacted] will allay the concerns reported to you by the three final year students you met regarding the teaching of Building Physics and Services.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for your much-valued work and support as one of our external examiners.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely