

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:	Law
Subject(s):	<i>Law</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Foundations of Law, Employment Law
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	LLB

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?

NA

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

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 programme aims and learning outcomes are appropriate for the award being considered. The new module Foundations of Law was very well devised, and worked very well.
The learning outcomes are clear and the structure and content of the course are sound.

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 ILOs are appropriate for the national subject benchmarks. The programmes are comparable with similar programmes at other HE 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.*

The design and structure of the assessments are good and clear. Fair arrangements are made for marking. There was clear evidence of moderation. The arrangements for award classification seemed clear and fair. The student performance at the top end was very good and an indication of good teaching.
The structure of assessment for the new Foundations of Law module are imaginative, and provide a very fair method of assessment.

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 standards demonstrated by students were at times very high.
Students are given appropriate opportunities to demonstrate their achievement of the ILOs.

5. For Examiners responsible for programmes that include clinical practice components, please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum

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 range of understanding of jurisprudence and legal system demonstrated in the Foundations of Law module was excellent. If feel that this module is an excellent model for an introductory first year module in Law, which other institutions could learn from.

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 research interests of staff are reflected in the content of the course taught, suggesting that the teaching is research informed.

8. Where the programme forms part of an Integrated PhD, please comment on the appropriateness of the programme as training for a PhD

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

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, good access to materials, including access to online materials.

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.

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?

Yes. I was unable to attend the board, so cannot comment on this aspect.

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

Not present at exam board.

Other comments

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

School of Law

The Liberty Building
University of Leeds
Leeds LS2 9JT

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UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

9 October 2015

Dear

I am writing to thank you for your commitment to our external examining process through 2014-15. I appreciate that external examining is perhaps not the most thrilling task undertaken as part of an academic's job but your close attention to the task is most useful to us.

This was the first time the newly developed Foundations of Law module had run and it is very pleasing to note your positive feedback. The module is seen as essential in preparing the students for the rest of their degree and has been well conceived. The feedback from students is positive so your additional, objective comments are valuable.

I hope that the administrative burden was not too great and we will aim to make the task as convenient as possible in future. However, if there are changes that we can make please do let us know.

Again, many thanks for your help and support.

Yours sincerely

Head of School

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:	Law
Subject(s):	Law
Programme(s) / Module(s):	LAW3031, LAW3032, LAW3033, LAW3320, LAW3340, LAW3341, LAW3342, LAWM5334, LAWM5338, LAW5686M, LAW5687M, LAW5688M, LAW692M, LAW5694M, LAW5697M, LAW5698M, LAW5780M.
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	LLB, LLM

Name and home Institution / affiliation of Examiner

Completed report

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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

Not Applicable

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?

Not Applicable

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

Not Applicable

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 think the programme Aims and ILOs are entirely appropriate for the level of the award at both LLB and LLM levels.

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.

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.*

Assessment by essay is appropriate for the units in question, and the marking and classification are in line with comparator institutions. Performance at the top end is clearly influenced by the quality of the teaching.

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.*

Student performance is consistent, and demonstrates the range of abilities one would expect to find at both LLB and LLM levels.

5. For Examiners responsible for programmes that include clinical practice components, please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum

Not applicable

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.

Teaching and assessment maintain the high standard of previous years.

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 nature of the work undertaken by the students indicates a solid engagement with current research in the areas of cyberlaw and intellectual property.

8. Where the programme forms part of an Integrated PhD, please comment on the appropriateness of the programme as training for a PhD

Not applicable

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

Not applicable

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 and 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

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, I made some suggestions for minor amendments – these were duly taken on board.

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. Feedback to students was detailed and thoughtful (and helpful for externalling)

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

Yes and 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?

Yes, No, N/A.

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

Did not attend exam board (on sabbatical).

Other comments

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

Not applicable

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14 December 2015

Dear <<>>

Many thanks for the work you have carried out in 2014-15 as an external examiner at Leeds. Your confirmation about the operation and outcomes of the modules you reviewed is very reassuring and pleasing. I hope we have been able to make the process of external examining a smooth and efficient one but do please let us know if there are further things we can do.

There will be some changes to operations for 2015-16 which have resulted from our ongoing dialogue with our external examiners and internal initiatives. Firstly, we will be seeking to introduce student anonymity to our next round of examination boards. This is largely a question of changing some of the administration but certainly should be possible. Secondly, the use of categorical marking is also being piloted in two level one modules. This development stems from a desire to have more certainty in the justification of individual marks. In the June 2015 undergraduate board there was some discussion about the difficulties of explaining the difference between single percentages (e.g. differentiating a 64 from a 65) and a move to a banded system might reduce that uncertainty.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the central university is currently reviewing the 20-90 marking scale that we operate. I will keep you fully informed should any changes result.

I hope we have not placed undue pressure on you this academic year. I realise that the turn-around times have been very tight and we will constantly work to ease the burden wherever we can. Again, many thanks and I look forward to working with you during the next year.

Yours sincerely

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Head of School

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:	School of Law
Subject(s):	<i>LLB</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	LAW2142, LAW5810; LAW2146; LAW2143; LAW3320; LAW3100; LAW1141; LAW5300M; LAW3135;
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	LL.B; LL.M.

Name and home Institution / affiliation of Examiner**Completed report**

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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

N/A

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?

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

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 were appropriate for the degrees that I examined. They meet the relevant subject benchmark and allow the students to fully demonstrate their knowledge and application.

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. Law has a draft Framework under discussion but the modules would meet both the existing and new framework.

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 design and structure is fine. They allow the students to demonstrate their abilities and it is clear that the staff look at the ILOs when deciding their marks. I am fully satisfied that the markers took their role seriously.

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.*

Yes. The very strongest students were producing some excellent work, particularly in the dissertations and international law modules. The work is comparable to institutions that I am aware of.

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.

None that I am aware of.

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.

It is that staff do involve research in the design of the curriculum, as would be expected of a research-led institution. This is particularly evident in the modules relating to international law, environmental law and the LL.M. modules.

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

I was approached to be a mentor to a new external examiner but I was never contacted by that examiner. To an extent that is not necessarily surprising but I do wonder whether the mentoring scheme works.

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,

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. I am particularly pleased to see that a decision has been taken that all firsts and fails no longer need to be sent. Fails that are at the real bottom end are unlikely to be salvageable by the external examiner (especially given the new rules on our powers). Similarly, it is appropriate that a sample of 1st class work is sent to me – particularly borderlines – to check that the grade is being used correctly rather than look at each script.

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

Yes. I saw no problem and the dissertations I saw included very strong pieces of work as one would hope.

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?

I was not at the board but no reason to believe it was not.

Other comments

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

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4 September 2015

Dear <<>>

Thank you for your recent report and for your encouraging comments about our programmes and the quality of the work produced by our students. We work hard to integrate teaching and research and I am glad that we have been able to demonstrate this to you by supporting students to conduct high-quality dissertation research and providing a range of modules informed by staff research.

Thank you also for your positive response to the changes we have made this year to the sampling of assessments for external examiners. We introduced them in response to feedback from our external examining team and they appear to have been well-received.

I have noted your comments about the university mentoring scheme. All external examiner reports are submitted to the University's Quality Assurance Team which has responsibility for appointing external examiners so they will be aware of your concern. Our student education team provide a great deal of support to external examiners so I am confident that any queries new examiners had were dealt with within the School.

Finally, I would like to thank you for your support over the past four years for our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. I know my colleagues have very much appreciated the constructive feedback your have provided and your willingness to take on a range of modules.

Yours sincerely

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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:	Law
Subject(s):	<i>Criminal Law, Family Law</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	BA

Name and home Institution / affiliation of Examiner**Completed report**

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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

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?

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

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 programmes were at entirely appropriate level to reach the ILOs which were suitable for the courses.

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.
- These were entirely appropriate.

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 courses were well designed to meet the ILOs and to assess them. The quality of teaching and assessment were 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.
- Yes. The dissertations and extended essays were particularly effective at doing this. Generally there was a good performance. It was especially pleasing to see in Criminal Law lower numbers failing than previously. Work has been undertaken to ensure students are aware at what examiners are expected..

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 courses followed a similar model to previous years, but these have proven to be very effective.

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 students were directed to the latest research and used it in their dissertations and answers. The dissertations titles were clearly selected in order to encourage students to address the latest research.

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 received all the information I needed

- 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?**

I was provided with the draft papers. They were at a suitable level. I had a few very minor changes to suggest, which were dealt with rapidly and appropriately

- 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 saw a good range of papers. The scripts were clearly marked. Helpful annotations explaining the marks in detail were attached to each script.

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

Yes the subjects were suitable and the assessment 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, I was not able to attend the meeting.

- 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

<<>>

14 December 2015

Dear <<>>

Many thanks for the work you have carried out in 2014-15 as an external examiner at Leeds, and indeed, thanks for your several years of service. Your confirmation about the operation and outcomes of the modules you have reviewed is (and has been) very reassuring and pleasing. I hope we have been able to make the process of external examining a smooth and efficient one – it certainly has been a productive and effective relationship from this end.

For information, there will be some changes to operations for 2015-16 which have resulted from our ongoing dialogue with our external examiners and internal initiatives. Firstly, we will be seeking to introduce student anonymity to our next round of examination boards. This is largely a question of changing some of the administration but certainly should be possible. Secondly, the use of categorical marking is also being piloted in two level one modules. This development stems from a desire to have more certainty in the justification of individual marks. In the June 2015 undergraduate board there was some discussion about the difficulties of explaining the difference between single percentages (e.g. differentiating a 64 from a 65) and a move to a banded system might reduce that uncertainty. Finally, it is worth mentioning that the central university is currently reviewing the 20-90 marking scale that we operate.

I hope that we have not placed undue pressure on you this academic year. I realise that the turn-around times have been very tight and we will constantly work to ease the burden wherever we can. Again, many thanks for your advice and assistance over the years.

Yours sincerely

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Head of School

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:	LAW
Subject(s):	CONSTIT. & ADMIN LAW MEDIA WRONGS AND HUMAN RIGHTS VARIOUS DISSERTATIONS
Programme(s) / Module(s):	VARIOUS LLBs
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	LLB

Name and home Institution / affiliation of Examiner**Completed report**

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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.*

I have no doubts that on the modules I am responsible for the aims and ILOs match and are appropriate for the various levels within an LLB and for an LLB overall. I'm not sure I can offer a view on mapping module aims onto the programmes as a whole.

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, at module level

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.*

These seem appropriately designed both to try to meet ILOs and as means to test across the range of student ability i.e. the Qs were "answerable" at different levels and thus could properly allow the examiners to test the range and differentiate between candidates.

If we can gauge quality of teaching (!) from student performance, then the School has nothing to worry about on this score. Many of the papers I saw were of a v high quality, demonstrating some v high quality students

As I think I have commented before, I very much like the blog post question on the Media Wrongs module.

I would encourage the School in turn positively to encourage – possibly to develop a strategy? – to broaden the types/range of assessment methods; I know steps have been taken in the past year or two but take-home exams and pre-release papers de-emphasise the rote learning aspects and shifting the emphasis towards analysis or application of rules

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.*

Yes – see above answer

5. For Examiners responsible for programmes that include clinical practice components, please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum

NA

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.

I'm not sure I am aware of any enhancements to either module or programme – if I should be, and am not, apologies! Coming in as an external only at the end of the year - though approving papers during it - it is hard to be aware of good practice in teaching/learning which tends to happen at the coal face. It seems to me a good practice to include, as the School does, notes for the external as to suggested content/expectations for each question or paper.

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.

There is clearly research-led influence on the Media Wrongs module with students clearly exposed to contemporary academic opinion, including some by those in the School, during the course and in the assessment.

I have made this point in previous reports – and I note some of the responses from Prof Mullis last year were directed at this – but wonder whether the school has given any thought to testing research not as outcomes but as process? This is not an especial comment directed at Leeds but more generally: while we are often good at assessing the product of student research endeavour, we are less able (generally) to assess whether they have gone about the

research task in a sensible manner. While this might be what the Level Two module is about – which Prof Mullis in his response referred to but of which I do not have sight – might there be some consideration in the case of the dissertation module (and perhaps others where some extended research is demanded) to ask for separate submission of a reflective research report? We do this at UEA for our dissertation (though it is notoriously hard to grade independently of the actual essay)

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, I think so

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 believe I did

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, I saw all drafts. On one, as I recall, I did suggest substantial changes and think (if memory serves) I offered to read over a revision. Nothing was forthcoming – but it may well be that all suggestions were taken on board. I'm sure I would and do fall into this trap myself but an acknowledgement from the module team where the suggestions are more than minor/typos might be in order?

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?

I saw a wide enough sample – though it does tend to be at the upper and lower end. Without making myself unpopular with other externals, I would not object to seeing a few more papers in the 53-65% bracket

As with previous years, and Leeds is not unique here, there was variation in the level/detail/amount of annotation by the internal markers. In one, for one internal, it was very hard indeed to work out why the various papers received the marks they did.

I would also make what I think is a repeat comment – that it is not at all clear which if any of the papers I see have been seen by a 2nd internal marker i.e. moderated. This could be indicated in the marksheet or on the script but it is useful to know.

I did this year raise an issue over marking with one of the internal teams – I felt that the marks on one question were not appropriate. We had discussions and I'm happy to say that my concerns were assuaged once the approach to marking and content of the teaching on that aspect were explained. This, it seems to me, is what the external system should do so I raise it not as a concern but to show it is working properly and effectively

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

Yes – and some of these, as last year, were very good, and one outstanding. It was marked at 85% which I was more than happy with

I'm afraid again I need to note my concerns about overlap with dissertation and taught modules, in this case Media

Wrongs. Two of the dissertations I saw covered topics that must have been covered in that, on privacy law, if not integrally then certainly in some depth. I note from last year's reply to me that the school has procedures in place to pick up plagiarism – though I am not sure I know what those are (not having seen them or been pointed to them, to my knowledge) but the point must remain about possible advantage over other students who have written a dissertation on something not taught elsewhere. This remains a concern for me.

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. I have again been very impressed with the admin support offered by <<>>, <<>> and <<>>. Equally too on the day, matters went well and smoothly and as an external I did feel this year far more involved in the process and decision-making such as there is (with most discretion removed, again not unique to Leeds)

I certainly feel better able to understand the mitigating circs system with its A – C for severity, timing and impact. I do not think this is new but it is from this external's perspective, much easier to follow

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

1. While I know that there have been changes to the 20% rule, I am still concerned that it improperly skews marks upwards i.e. there is simply no scope publicly to show that a paper is "really" worth only 12%. The change, as I understand it is effectively at the level of the paper, meaning that a student should not pass a paper where a mark of 20% artificially takes them over the 40% barrier.

That is welcome, but does not mean, as I understand it, that a paper cannot be awarded 20% for three 20% marks where, in reality each and every one would properly be worth far less. It means that Leeds is awarding students on their LLBs marks – albeit at the bottom end and thus rarely – that are simply not reflective of the poor quality of the paper overall.

2. I would repeat concerns about anonymity at final board – where I think Leeds may be increasingly out of line.
3. I would repeat my suggestion that thought be given to the creation of a starred 1st award. There was one student this year as I recall who I do not think wavered below 70% in any module over three years, and was the student who produced the 85% dissertation. In an increasingly competitive job market, this may be something of value.
4. Unworkably short deadlines imposed by the university, not the School. The turnaround time for the resit exams to needing marks confirmed in time enough for exam boards was ridiculously tight: in one case this meant I had 58 minutes from arrival of scripts at home to the midday deadline.

<<>>

14 December 2015

Dear <<>>

Many thanks for the work you have carried out in 2014-15 as an external examiner at Leeds. Your confirmation about the operation and outcomes of the modules you reviewed is very reassuring and pleasing. I hope we have been able to make the process of external examining a smooth and efficient one but do please let us know if there are further things we can do.

Your thoughtful and detailed comments are, as ever, very useful and will provoke discussion from our Taught Student Education Committee. The issue of varied assessments does remain a live one and some changes are occurring for the upcoming year (for example, the introduction of a presentation element in Land Law; posters in Law and Society etc.). I know our teaching team has these matters under constant review and changes are evolving.

The issue of assessing research as a process rather than simply the end product is a major part of the level two Researching Law module. This has series of ongoing assessments to test research skills and analysis of research materials. It is somewhat difficult to pitch this appropriately for students – their feedback presents us with some challenges though a recent student focus group has given us much encouragement that the module is appropriate of itself but also as a tool in preparing student for the dissertation in the final year.

As regard the recording of papers which have been second marked/moderated, we now have a form for staff to complete during the marking process which collects this information as well as a number of other issues. This should be sent to external examiners with the scripts and I'll remind all concerned that this should happen. As to the scripts themselves, these should be signed on the cover to show that they have been moderated. However, the scripts seen by the internal moderator and the external examiner may not be the same. Once the internal moderator is happy with the standards then the sample to be sent to you can be made up of any scripts. Therefore, whilst we have a minimum number of scripts that are moderated, these are not necessarily the same ones you receive. I'll relay the message that the samples sent might include a greater spread – including those in the mid-range.

There will be some immediate changes to operations for 2015-16 which have resulted from our ongoing dialogue with our external examiners, including yourself, and internal initiatives. Firstly, we will be seeking to introduce student anonymity to our next round of examination boards. This is largely a question of changing some of the administration but certainly should be possible.

Secondly, the use of categorical marking is also being piloted in two level one modules. This development stems from a desire to have more certainty in the justification of individual marks. In the June 2015 undergraduate board there was some discussion about the difficulties of explaining the difference between single percentages (e.g. differentiating a 64 from a 65) and a move to a banded system might reduce that uncertainty.

I am sure you will also be pleased to note that the central university is currently reviewing the 20-90 marking scale that we operate. I will keep you fully informed should any changes result.

I recognise that the timescales involved this year have placed pressure on all our externals. The turn-around times have been very tight indeed and we will constantly work to ease the burden wherever we can. Again, many thanks and I look forward to working with you during the next year.

Yours sincerely

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Head of School