

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:	Lifelong Learning Centre
Subject(s):	Islamic Studies
Programme(s) / Module(s):	LLLC1304 Islam in Western Societies LLLC1321 Women, Culture and Islam LLLC1354 Sufism LLLC1356 Principles of Islamic Law LLLC1367 Introduction to Islam LLLC1371 Arabic LLLC1372 Key Texts in Islam LLLC1373 Islamic History and Civilisation LLLC1374 Arabic 2 LLLCI 389 Islamic Philosophy
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	Certificate of Islamic Studies

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.*

In my opinion all the Intended Learning Outcomes are appropriate for the modules I examined and also for the structure and content of the programme. The programme is taught to appropriate standards for the award of a certificate.

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 quality of the marking is very good across the range of modules. They are fair and equitable and are appropriate to the ILOs. The feedback by the tutors is appropriate and of good standard.

The Assessment scope is appropriate to the Certificate level and offers a variety of methods which allows the students to develop their skills such as exams and essays. I am very glad to say that much care was taken in ensuring the fair and rigorous assessment of students. The marking was accurate and represented the work presented.

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 quality of the marking is very good across the range of modules. They are fair and equitable and are appropriate to the ILOs. The feedback by the tutors is appropriate and of good standard.

The assessments are very well structured and have a good variety. The assessments demonstrate that students are learning a very wide range of topics with good knowledge and critical ability.

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 am impressed by the overall quality of the scripts I read. There was a depth of understanding demonstrated by the students. This was further reflected in the marks awarded.

The assessments of the students in the variety of modules demonstrate good academic standards at the Certificate level. The marks vary between pass and a first across all the modules, which is to be expected from a group of fourteen students from varied background. The assessments show that students have overall good access to academic resources and ability to analyse and be critical within academia.

The evidence of the material I examined showed that the students had been well taught and there was evidence of substantial learning.

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.

I feel that the Certificate has developed very well over these three years and the provision of the Certificate remains as positive as in the previous years. I judge the programme to be appropriate in terms of its contents, standards, delivery and assessment strategy. As before I would like to endorse the relevance of the curriculum, appropriateness of standards and integrity of the assessment processes.

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 lecturers are clearly teaching from their research strengths and in my view this is critical to fostering an environment for students to reach the learning outcomes.

The curriculum is, as I have pointed out before, a good balance between traditional and innovative modules.

The various modules such as the Arabic Language modules, Introduction to Islam, Key Texts in Islam are good traditional modules whereas Islam in Western Societies, Islamic History and Civilization, Women, Culture and Islam and Introduction to Philosophy are very good innovative modules in Islamic Studies.

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.

As an External Examiner I had sufficient access to the material needed to make the required judgements and I was encouraged to request additional information if needed.

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.

All appropriate documents were received.

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 draft examination papers and assessments and the questions were all appropriate

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?

Sufficient assessed work was made available to me and the scripts were clearly marked for me to give an evaluation of them.

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?

I was able to attend the exam board through Skype and I was satisfied with operation of it.

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

Yes, they were.

Other comments

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

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18th December 2015

Dear <>

External Examiner's Report for 2014-15

Over the last few months we have been reviewing reports from our External Examiners along with feedback from students, including the results of the National Student Survey of finalists and the University's Programme Survey which covers those in other years of study. I am now writing to each Examiner both to respond to reports individually and to give an overview of the outcomes of this annual review.

Thank you for your report this year on our Arabic and Islamic Studies provision which endorses "the relevance of the curriculum, appropriateness of standards and integrity of the assessment processes". We note that you observe a "good balance between traditional and innovative modules" with lecturers "teaching from their research strengths" and that students' work shows "depth of understanding" and "ability to analyse and be critical within academia".

It is a great encouragement to receive such positive feedback and to know that you feel that the Certificate has "developed well" over your three years as External Examiner. <> and <> team are certainly committed to continuing this development and to sustaining good practice in the coming year as the certificate evolves to open new progression possibilities to degrees in Middle Eastern Studies alongside the existing Islamic Studies and Arabic routes.

Alongside your own report, we have also received observations from our other External Examiners and feedback from students through the NSS and the University's Programme Survey. We are encouraged to see consistently positive messages from all of these sources and look, of course, both to build on good practice where this is identified and to address any issues that are raised. Please find attached, for your information, a summary of our external examiners' reports along with our action plan for 2015-16 which captures our student scores and feedback and sets out the key developments that we are looking to take forward in the current year.

Thank you for all of your work on our behalf as External Examiner for our Islamic Studies Certificate. It is good that you have seen positive developments during your period of appointment and we very much appreciate the part that you have played, through your carefully judged and supportive comments, in enabling us to make this

continuing progress. I am sure that Samar and all of her team join me in wishing you well in your new role in Istanbul.

Yours sincerely,

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Director

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