

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:	Engineering / Electrical and Electronic Engineering
Subject(s):	
Programme(s) / Module(s):	MSc / various (7 programmes in total, including 2 new ones)
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	

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

One thing needs to be mentioned: the project marking for the new MSc in Mechatronics/Robotics did not seem to be consistent; both examiners felt that the marks looked too high in a few cases, and one low-scoring project was perhaps no worse than one that had been scored higher. These projects were the responsibility of the Department of Mechanical Engineering. (By contrast, we found no such inconsistencies amongst the projects managed by the Department of Electronic and Electrical Engineering.)

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.*

These look appropriate

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.*

These were also appropriate

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, I would say so; and this cohort looked strong, judging by their overall 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.

None were brought to my attention

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.*

I would again say that this seemed to be significant

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, it was

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 indeed; I attended the meeting; the recommendations were (I summarised) 'tough but fair'

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

Yes, I would say so (this had been dealt with before the board)

Other comments

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

Standards including the examining process are high. There is still an issue concerning a difference between IET accreditation and that for other Engineering disciplines (including Mechanical). I should also mention that the (electronic) system to access project reports is unwieldy – and it would be more convenient for examiners to have paper copies of project reports available.

From:
Sent: 20 January 2016 15:37
To:
Subject: Fwd: External Examiner Report - MSc Communications and Signal Processing, & Digital Communications Networks, & Engineering Technology and Business Management

From:
Date: 20 January 2016 15:10:10 GMT
To:
Cc:

Subject: FW: External Examiner Report - MSc Communications and Signal Processing, & Digital Communications Networks, & Engineering Technology and Business Management

Dear

The University's QA office have prompted me to reply to your External Examiner's report on our MSc programmes.

First of all, many thanks for the support you expressed for our assessment and examination processes, both during your visit and in your report.

Regarding the one issue identified – that of the consistency of marking of the projects co-ordinated by the School of Mechanical Engineering – we have discussed this with that School. Apparently they have received similar feedback from their own MSc external examiners, and have confirmed that, in consequence, they are increasing the rigour of their MSc project marking system, including carrying out double-blind marking and providing more comprehensive written feedback to support the assessment of the work. Obviously, we need to monitor the efficacy of these changes during the current academic year and, in particular, at the final report+viva assessment stage.

Best wishes,

Professor of Semiconductor Nanotechnology,
Director of Student Education,
School of Electronic & Electrical Engineering,
The University of Leeds,
Leeds,
LS2 9JT, UK

=====

e-mail:

http://

Tel. +44 (0)113

Fax. +44 (0)113

=====