

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:	Business
Subject(s):	<i>Advertising and Marketing</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	MA Advertising & Marketing LUBS5407M Advertising, LUBS 5402M Consumer Behaviour, LUBS 5426M Media Planning & Strategy, LUBS 5447M/ 5491M Social Media Marketing, LUBS 5448M/ 5486M Direct, Digital & Interactive Marketing, LUBS 5405M/5455M Marketing Communications, LUBS 5435M Public Relations and Corporate Communications, LUBS 5440M Sales Promotion & Sponsorship, LUBS 5482M/ 5492M Professional Skills & Employability, LUBS 5495M Dissertation
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MA/MSc

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

Over my five-year term the support from academic and administrative staff at the Business School has been consistently very good. Communications about when to expect material to examine have been clear and responses to any queries have been prompt.

The degree is very well-designed and well managed. It offers relevant and comprehensive coverage of specialist advertising and marketing areas. The curriculum was updated in 2013/14 and reflects marketing developments in the digital era very well. The course has a good combination of marketing theory and practice elements. Furthermore, students are tested in different ways using a variety of assessment formats over the two semesters, which stretches them. Over the last two years I think that the inclusion of the Professional Skills & Employability credit-bearing module has helped to improve student performance on other modules where presentation skills are formally assessed and literature reviews and critical thinking are required.

I have also been mindful of the fact that this degree is a conversion course rather than a cognate one. It is clear from the student performance over the last five years that this course is taught well with appropriate materials. Students engage well with the modules taken: a high standard of work is evident from high achieving students, while there is a good standard of work overall.

I have always found the standard of marking to be fair and appropriate.

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 current programme structure was newly introduced in 2013/14 and remains well-designed. The contemporary and relevant content enables students to develop academic and practical skills in advertising and marketing. The modules continue to be well-designed. The aims and ILOs are appropriate for the programme and are made clear. Standards are appropriate for the level of the 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.*

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.*

The forms of assessment used across modules in the programme continue to be well thought out and appropriate for the modules I have examined. The coursework briefs and examination papers capture the breadth of each module's syllabus and are appropriate to the ILOs. A strength of the programme is that there continues to be a variety of assessment formats adopted for coursework (e.g. group and individual projects and presentations) and examinations (e.g. case study questions, multiple choice questions, short and long answer questions), which allow learning outcomes to be tested in different ways.

Internal moderation is evident for the sample of assessments sent to me for scrutiny. Overall a very good amount of feedback is provided on coursework assessments. Examination scripts are annotated with comments. I found the standard of marking to be appropriate and fair across all of the modules I have examined.

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 assessment bandings are clearly communicated to students in all module documentation. The academic standards demonstrated by students' performance indicate that they are consistent with expectations at Master's level and are comparable to my own institution.

It is clear that a high standard of work is expected from students on the programme and this has resulted in work of a very high quality from excellent students and of a good quality on average.

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.

N/A.

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 continues to be evidence of research-led teaching and coverage of contemporary issues in the curriculum.

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.

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.

Yes, the nature and level of questions was 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?**

Yes, I was provided with sufficient material for scrutiny for each of the modules I had been assigned to examine.

Samples of exam scripts and coursework were clearly marked/annotated.

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

For the three dissertations which I examined this year, the choice of dissertation subjects was appropriate. The method and standard of assessment was also 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 satisfied with the administrative arrangements for the whole process. I attended the External Board of Examiners meeting this year. It was conducted in a professional manner and I was satisfied with the Board's recommendations.

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

Yes, as in previous years, some cases discussed at the Internal Board of Examiners were brought to the External Board of Examiners meeting and due consideration to mitigating circumstances and medical evidence was given.

Other comments

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

N/A.

<<>>

08 April 2016

Dear <<>>,

Thank you for your recent Examiner's Report for the MA in Advertising and Marketing.

We are very pleased with your comments, especially those around your experience of the programme overall during your five year tenure as External Examiner.

We are happy to hear that you feel the changes introduced in 2013/14 have contributed to the development of a contemporary and well-designed programme which offers a balance between theory and application and note your support within this for a credit bearing module in Professional Skills and Employability. We also welcome your feedback that our assessment methods are appropriate, varied and supported by suitable learning outcomes with robust documentation and that our marking is fair with a very good amount of feedback. We are particularly pleased to hear that you view student work to be of a good standard with some high achievements at the top end on this conversion course.

The constructive feedback that you have consistently provided has helped the team to make improvements to the student experience, and it is always gratifying to have our teaching methods reviewed and found to be of a standard that allows our students to make good progress. The programme team has arranged to meet to review the course, and as part of this to reflect on your report.

We regret that your tenure has come to a natural end and your input will be sadly missed on the programme. We have very much benefited from your continued support and guidance which has seen us through a major programme review and restructuring.

Yours sincerely,

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**Dean
Leeds University Business School**

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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:	Business School
Subject(s):	<i>Marketing</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Semester 1: Marketing Research (LUBS 5450), International Marketing (LUBS 5460), Global Strategic Marketing (LUBS 5409), Marketing Strategy (LUBS 5465). Semester 2: Global Distribution Supply Chain (LUBS 5478), Brand Management and Corporate Identity (LUBS 5432/5433), International Services Marketing (LUBS 5472), Company Marketing Project (LUBS 5488), Consulting Project (LUBS 5500M).
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MSc / MA

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

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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 matters for urgent attention are listed, but some issues have been raised and are detailed in the comments box. These issues were raised at the examination board and related to modules **LUBS5465M/ LUBS5409M.**

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 intended learning outcomes were commensurate with the level of the award and standards were 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.*

The aims and ILOs met the expectations of national subject benchmarks and were comparable with other Russell Group university standards.

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.*

A broad range of assessment methods were used across the different modules.

As in previous years, the documents provided evidence to indicate that students were clearly informed of what they needed to do to achieve marks across the spectrum. There was clarity in the explanation as to how marks would be allocated, submission method and penalty processes, etc., and there was very good feedback given to students to explain how marks were allocated, in terms of both strengths and weaknesses.

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.*

Instructions were clear and students were given adequate opportunities to demonstrate their achievement of the Aims and 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**

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.

Overall, the level of feedback was high in terms of the range of comments offered on the coursework assessments and showcased the good practice deployed across the modules.

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.

Curriculum design was informed by current research and there was a range of excellent examples whereby staff and students demonstrated how they had engaged in linking theory with practice.

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.

The information that was provided was more than sufficient for me to act effectively as an external examiner.

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 a range of documentation – and the administration of this documentation throughout the year, as with previous years, was excellent overall.

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/assessments. Overall, the nature and level of the questions were appropriate for the modules assessed, with the exception of the points made in the comments section of this document.

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/examined work was made available to me across the range of courses, along with cohort mark sheets. One mark was adjusted due to clerical error which related to a discrepancy between the marks recorded on the formal mark sheet and the project feedback report sheet. This was due to a penalty for late submission of a group project. Outside of this correction no other marks were adjusted.

Staff comments/marks were clearly annotated for the majority of the modules and there were some excellent examples of staff feedback across modules. For example, the marketing consultancy projects, company marketing projects and the market research modules showed clear evidence of internal marking and excellent and consistent feedback from both first and second markers. Likewise, feedback comments were excellent and consistent on the majority of modules.

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

The choice of project topics was broad and appropriate. There were some very good projects submitted. The standard of assessment was excellent and consistent across all the markers.

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 did attend the meeting. The board executed its business in an efficient manner and I was more than happy with the recommendations made and the administrative arrangements. Overall, the whole process was excellent and I endorse the decisions made.

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

Appropriate procedures were in place to give due consideration to mitigating circumstances. The process was conducted in a sensitive and efficient manner.

Other comments

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

EVALUATION OF PROGRAMME AS A WHOLE

Consistent with previous years, the majority of the courses that I examined were excellent in the teaching methods deployed, the range of assessment offered, the level of advice given to students prior to submission and feedback given after submission. The nature and type of the questions were thought-provoking and were of an appropriate standard for assessment at postgraduate level. The assessment materials/assessment briefs were research-led in style and showed a clear link between theory and practice.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS AND CONDUCT OF THE EXAM BOARD

The administrative process throughout the year was irreproachable and so was staff conduct at the Exam Board. As in previous years, administrative staff were excellent in their management of the programme. The Chair of the Exam Board did an exemplary job of ensuring that the board was run in an efficient and professional manner, all of which was commendable.

QUERIES AND ACTIONS FOR THE COMING ACADEMIC SESSION

There are a few issues that related to modules LUBS5465M/ LUBS5409M which are worthy of attention. They relate to the quality of the examination questions set and the assessment/moderation process for these modules.

My first concern relates to the number of times that I was asked to look at these two papers and the number of errors in the document. Whilst many of these errors related to basic grammatical usage such as inserting question marks at the end of questions or the use of question marks when a colon is needed as no question was asked, I am of the opinion that the way we present information to students is important. We expect them to submit pieces of assessed work that not only answer the question, but also adhere to the correct use of the English language, including appropriate punctuation. My recommendation therefore is that all documents should be properly internally moderated and corrected prior to being sent to the external examiner for approval.

The second point that was made at the exam board related to the signing of documentation and explanations of how the marks were allocated and moderated for these modules. Whilst no marks were adjusted during my visit, I would encourage staff to use clearer annotation on the scripts both in terms of 1st/2nd marker signage and to offer more detailed comments to show the strengths and weaknesses of the answers in the context of the marks allocated. Where questions are the same across modules, additional internal moderation should be undertaken across the cohort to ensure consistency in the mark allocation and moderation processes. Put another way, I should like to see a tighter degree of internal moderation of the marks across these two courses and a stronger audit trail showing how these marks were agreed and internally moderated. This should be done for all courses in line with best practice and for quality control purposes.

POST BOARD

Since the board I am pleased to say that I have subsequently received communications from the Programme Directors confirming that they have had a team meeting to pick up on these issues and I have been informed that relevant actions have been implemented to address the points made with staff during the visit and at the Board.

I thank the team and the course directors for the prompt action taken and I look forward to working with

staff over the next academic session and seeing the effects of these actions.

FINAL COMMENTS

My overall, assessment is that this is a well run course. In general standards are high across the modules and the design and delivery methods enhance the student experience. A few recommendations have been made to enhance the degree of best practice across the programme.

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12 April 2016

Dear <<>>,

Thank you for your recent Examiner's Report.

We are very pleased with your comments on our Masters programmes in Marketing, especially our programmes being comparable with benchmark standards, quality of marking and feedback relating to assessments, and the commitment of the Divisional staff to teaching and learning.

We are happy to hear that you feel that our assessment methods are appropriate with evidence that students have been given adequate guidance and support. We also welcome your positive comments on the variety of assessment methods used in our programmes. Also, we note your positive comments on modules such as marketing consultancy projects, company marketing projects and the market research modules which you found to have clear evidence of internal marking and excellent and consistent feedback from both first and second markers you noted as 'excellent and consistent' on the majority of modules.

We note the concerns and comments you have made on LUBS5465M/LUBS5409M relating to the quality of the examination questions set and the assessment/moderation process for these modules. I can assure you that we take your comments seriously and in fact we have already had a meeting with the relevant teaching team associated with the modules and agreed an action plan addressing your comments and suggestions.

We are very grateful for your supportive and constructive comments and your guidance for our programmes.

Yours sincerely,

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