

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:

Leeds University Business School

Subject(s):

Human Resource Management

Programme(s) / Module(s):

LUBS0060	Introduction to HRM
LUBS1080	Personal Tutorials for HRM
LUBS1125	Economic Institutions (Labour)
LUBS1585	Economic Institutions (Ind)
LUBS1755	Business & Society (Combined)
LUBS1760	Business & Society Organisational Theory
LUBS1765	Business & Society Social Theory
LUBS1850	Organisational Behaviour
LUBS2000	Management Work & Organisation
LUBS2060	Contemporary Ind. Relations
LUBS2885	HRM Research Practice & PT
LUBS2890	Organisation & Human Resource
LUBS3001	Gender & Equality at Work
LUBS3002	Diversity Management
LUBS3055	Controversies
LUBS3095	Global Perspectives on HRM
LUBS3310	HR Mgmt: Dissertation
LUBS3855	Strategic Human Resource Mgmt

Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):

BA HRM

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

It is essential that all staff are aware of faculty rules on the use of graduate teaching assistants as markers on honours level modules, and that these faculty rules are adhered to.

Although efforts to address the problems of peer marking on LUBS2060 have been made, the outcomes were not satisfactory, so further thought about the use of peer marking on this module is required.

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

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

The most marked change in the programme over the period of my appointment is the way in which the faculty deals with mitigating circumstances. At the start of the period, there was a distinctly haphazard feel to the process, with quite detailed discussion of student cases within subject boards, in a way which was likely to make it harder to achieve consistency of decision making and equity across the faculty. Now much more work is done in pre-board meetings, with clear recommendations and rationales for the recommendations being presented to the subject board. I feel that this is a much fairer system because it ensures that all students within the faculty are treated in the same way, with their cases being judged against the same criteria.

The major change to the content and structure of the programme has been with regard to the teaching of research methods and preparation for the dissertation, which has also been integrated with personal tutoring arrangements. This change has resulted in students developing a sophisticated understanding of the research process and research methods, and has contributed to helping the stronger students produce some very good work at dissertation and across year 3 generally.

Overall, standards have remained high and processes have been strong and effective throughout the period I have been an external examiner.

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.*

As per previous years, The programme aims and ILOs were entirely appropriate for the level of the award. Assessments and marking standards were appropriate and in line with practice at other leading universities.

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 ILOs are in line with HEFCE subject benchmark statements for business and management. Programme content is broadly in line with comparable programmes offered by other leading universities. In some important respects (particularly the teaching of research methods and the accompanying demanding standards of critical thinking and analytical skills) the programme is in advance of other comparable programmes.

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.*

Assessments did a good job of examining the module and programme learning outcomes. There was a good mix of assessment methods. The mix of open/assignment based assessment and end of module closed exams meant that high quality feedback was provided on all modules. There was clear evidence of careful and rigorous procedures in the setting and marking of work. Generally there was consistency in marking standards between modules and markers, although there was some divergence in practice at the top end of the distribution, with some markers more willing to use marks in the 80 plus range than others. It would be useful for the teaching team to discuss this internally to try to come to a more consistent approach. Note that neither approach taken is necessarily out of line with sector norms, but within the framework provided by judgement based marking, it would be desirable if a greater consensus about how to exercise that judgement could be achieved. Procedures for classifying awards were also clear, appropriate and carefully implemented.

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, students were given adequate opportunities to demonstrate achievement. The mix of exams and course work facilitated this. At the top end, I thought student performance was as good if not better than I have seen at other leading universities. This was particularly the case for research methods and dissertation modules. The quality of third year work at the top end did not stand out to me as much as last year, but as a cohort, the students demonstrated sound knowledge and strong analytical abilities.

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.

There were no significant changes or enhancements to the programme or modules compared to the previous year.

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 was clear evidence of research informing teaching and curriculum design across all modules. Research methods and dissertation modules encouraged students to undertake their own research, and where students did this, results were impressive. Students were taught how to critique the academic literature and to critically evaluate research methods with reference to research undertaken by Leeds faculty.

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.

I had sufficient access to all the information I needed. I was sent hard copies of the relevant rules, regulations and guidance in good time, and I also had access to this material via the intranet.

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. Full information was sent out with draft assessments and exam scripts/essays. Additional module and programme information was made available to me via the intranet (giving me access to the intranet was a welcome innovation compared to previous years).

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. The nature and level of the questions was appropriate and did not require any substantive changes.

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 received sufficient examples of assessed work to evaluate standards. All scripts were clearly marked and annotated, however, on some modules this annotation was sparser than on others. It would be good practice if all scripts for all modules included short sentences providing an overall justification for the mark awarded.

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?

I attended the exam board. Administrative arrangements were very good. Draft assessments and scripts were sent out in plenty of time with very good supporting paperwork. The Board of Examiners worked well and I was satisfied with the recommendations.

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

Yes. Mitigating circumstances and medical evidence had been considered carefully in pre-board meetings, with clear recommendations presented to the subject board on the basis of these deliberations. I was impressed with the thoroughness of the procedures. This ensured that cases were handled fairly and consistently.

Other comments

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

N/A

Leeds University Business School

Maurice Keyworth Building
University of Leeds
Leeds LS2 9JT

W business.leeds.ac.uk



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Wednesday, 02 December 2015

Reference: External Examination Report 2014-15

Dear

Thank you very much for your Examiner's Report for the Human Resource Management programme. We are very pleased with your comments on our programme. In particular, how you described the marked improvement in the Business School's handling of mitigating circumstances cases, as well as the work and employment relations division's changes with regard to the teaching of research methods and preparation for the dissertation. We were especially pleased to note your comments that top-end student performance in research methods and dissertation modules was as good – if not better than – what you had seen at other leading universities.

We noted the following comments which required immediate attention:

A) It is essential that all staff are aware of faculty rules on the use of graduate teaching assistants as markers on honours level modules, and that these faculty rules are adhered to.

Response: Thank you for your comments here. This issue has been raised and discussed at Faculty Executive Group and the policy on graduate teaching assistants performing honours-level marking has been communicated, through Heads of Division, to those allocating teaching loads. We shall remind staff of the School policy regarding the use of graduate teaching assistants.

B) Although efforts to address the problems of peer marking on LUBS2060 Contemporary Industrial Relations have been made, the outcomes were not satisfactory, so further thought about the use of peer marking on this module is required.

Response: As noted on the annual review, the peer review element of LUBS2060 was completely removed for the academic year 2015/2016 and the school has revised the peer marking policy

As your tenure is coming to an end after 4 years of service as external examiner on the BA Human Resource Management programme, we would like to take this final opportunity to thank you for your work.

Yours sincerely

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
Subject(s):	<i>Business Law and Employment Law</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	

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

These two modules have been well presented and clearly well taught. Assessments are thoroughly in line with the expectations of undergraduates in two quite specialised modules.

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.*

Thoroughly

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.*

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 assessment methods are in keeping with the Learning Outcomes and test students thoroughly on all aspects of required performance

4. **Were students given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the Aims and ILOs?**
- *The academic standards demonstrated by the students and, where possible, their performance in relation to students on comparable courses;*
 - *The strengths and weaknesses of the students as a cohort.*

Students demonstrated some very good and comprehensive learning and the majority made a good or excellent attempt at applying their knowledge and understanding.

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.

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.*

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

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 this is the last year of my appointment, I can reflect on a very consistent delivery of the guidance I needed over time. I felt well supported throughout and had a good working relationship with the lead tutors.

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, and I found them consistent and fair.

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?

It was and scripts were well selected and presented to me.

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

They were

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

I only attended one Exam Board at the beginning of my period of appointment and can comment that very good consideration was given to both mitigating circumstances and medical evidence (where appropriate).

Other comments

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

Leeds University Business School

Maurice Keyworth Building
University of Leeds
Leeds LS2 9JT

W business.leeds.ac.uk



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Thursday, 28 January 2016

Reference: External Examination Report 2014-15

Dear

Thank you very much for your Examiner's Report for the undergraduate business law and employment law modules taught at Leeds University Business School. We are very pleased with your comments on our programme. In particular, we appreciate your positive comments on the consistency of delivery, and additionally how the students tended to make good, if not excellent, attempts at applying their knowledge. We will continue to teach at the high standard you have commented on.

As your tenure is coming to an end after 4 years of service as external examiner on the BA programmes at Leeds University Business School, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your work.

Yours sincerely

Dean, Leeds University Business School

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