

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):	Management
Programme(s) / Module(s):	LUBS0070; LUBS1890; LUBS2085;LUBS2900; LUBS2970; LUBS3008; LUBS 3070; LUBS3970; LUBS3980
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	BA/ BSc

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

. There are no matters requiring urgent attention

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?

Yes I was provided with all the relevant documents at the beginning of my tenure.

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 Intended Learning Outcomes at a course and module level are clear and provide a structured path for students through the course. The programme content provides a broad base to key management topics as well as allowing students to choose from a range of current and interesting options.

Standards are appropriate and student responses reflect the level they are at in the course. The year of study is taken into account when marking with final year students particularly demonstrating a high level of knowledge and skills for the topics being assessed.

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. I examined a range of modules which contributed towards the aims and intended learning outcomes articulated in the subject benchmark for Business and Management.

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.*

There was a wide range of assessment methods in the modules I examined which is a reflection of the different skills and knowledge that are required on a management degree.

A number of modules contained exams which were well-written with a combination of compulsory and optional choice questions. Some topics were clearly favoured by the students as they performed better on certain questions. Marking was overall clear and I could see how markers had arrived at the grades due to comments on the scripts

Coursework was clearly marked and provided detailed feedback to students on the reasons for the mark awarded. It would be worth considering on assignments providing students more feed forward information highlighting areas for development.

Overall I was impressed by the quality of assessment and the level of work produced by high-performing students. A number of students were awarded marks above 80% and the quality of work presented to me warranted these high grades.

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 assessments allowed students to demonstrate their ability in relation to the aims and intended learning outcomes. Overall achievement was good with the majority of students in the 2.1/ 1st classification boundary. As marking is anonymous it is difficult to be certain but from the language used I would expect the lower graded scripts to be from international students where English is not their first language. However, a number of international students performed well so this comment relates to individual ability rather than being across the cohort.

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 for this programme

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.

As this is my first year it is difficult to comment on this. However, I was supplied with the previous year's assessments as part of the assignment approval process and this was extremely helpful. It did allow me to see where assessments had been developed due to previous examiners feedback.

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 assessments set were topical and clearly demonstrated staff were up to date in the subject area and brought this knowledge into their teaching and assessment. Modules requiring students to research a topic used up to date case studies and examples to support.

I particularly liked the module LUBS30008 as it allowed the students to engage with local organisations and undertake a practical research project. The company research in the reports on LUBS3070 should also be commended.

However, all teaching and assessment is clearly influenced by staff research.

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 this programme

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. I am a new examiner at Leeds but have external examining experience at other institutions.

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 was provided with all the material I needed to be able to complete my role as external examiner. At the beginning I was provided with a number of links to electronic course structures which were useful to understand the course structure as a new 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.

Yes I received all the relevant information and documentation to complete the role.

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 assessments and model answers to enable me to examine each module fully. I had one or two very minor comments which were fed back but overall the assessments I reviewed were well written and appropriate for the level.

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 a suitable sample relative to the cohort size. I received work across the full mark range and I could see clear differentiation between the levels. Work was clearly marked and annotated except one set of exam papers which contained marks only. It was easy to see where student marks were obtained on the calculation based questions but annotation on the essays would have been useful.

Annotation on some exam scripts was impressive and even though students are unlikely to see the feedback if there was a case of appeal staff would be able to see how they arrived at the relevant mark,

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

Not applicable as I did not review dissertations

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?

The administrative assessments were exemplary. This is my first year but it was easy to follow all proceedings and have confidence in the assessment decisions. The support provided by the admin team is outstanding with quick responses to questions and timely supply of paperwork. The Exam Board was professionally conducted and the external examiners included in the process.

The validation day is useful as there is the opportunity to speak to module tutors should the need arise.

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

Yes all mitigating circumstances and medical evidence were fairly considered with a consistent approach to ensure equal treatment of students. Processes were supportive of students in difficulties and the programme director clearly knew the students and provided excellent support to help them achieve their qualifications.

Other comments

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

This is my first year as an examiner at Leeds University Business School and I have been impressed by all aspects of the process. Students are clearly engaged with a range of appropriate modules and assessments, providing them with the opportunity to achieve good grades.

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 Management programme. We are very pleased with your comments on our programme. In particular, I was happy to see that you felt everything was appropriate and well organised, especially on LUBS3070 and LUBS3008. I have passed on your praise to the module leaders.

We noted the following comments:

- **It would be worth considering on assignments providing students more feed forward information highlighting areas for development.**

Response: the Business School has just revised its policy and guidelines on feedback, and has distributed the refreshed guidelines to all staff this week.

- **Work was clearly marked and annotated except one set of exam papers which contained marks only**

Response: It is Business School policy to ensure that all examination scripts are annotated. We shall remind staff of this requirement.

On behalf of the Division may I again thank you for your suggestions and comments. We greatly appreciate the assistance you have given to us, and I look forward to meeting you once more at next year's examination board.

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:	Leeds University Business School
Subject(s):	Management
Programme(s) / Module(s):	LUBS3006, LUBS3975, LUBS1790
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	BSC

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?

Yes plus relevant data on past rates, progressions was provided the various module packs which was very helpful in determining overall trends and assisting me in spotting anything that needed dealing with.

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 – my first year.

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 issues with the levelness of the modules and indeed thought that many of the assessments stretched the candidates at level six in a way that allowed the stronger candidates to distinguish themselves (in line with QAA benchmark statements for Business and management) while providing guidance and structure for weaker students (see below for further comments).

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.*

I can find no significant variance between the ILOS and the QAA subject benchmarks for Business and Management at the level I would consider significant. There are minor tweaks I would suggest (see below) but nothing of major concern.

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.*

I am happy with both the marking criteria as set out and their actual comments and these were in line with the ILOs. I was pleased to see a range of interesting and changing assessments many of which expected students to engage with the academic peer-reviewed literature in a systematic way. It is also good to see a range of feedback techniques used, for example the use of in-line comments as much of the research indicates this is the most effective way to produce better results in future.

Overall when verifying modules and the assessments provided I was happy that there was both level appropriate context and that the assessment provided not only was in line with this but allow strong candidates the opportunities to stretch themselves.

Moreover, in regards to individual modules, I would add that while LUBS3006 Assessment was clearly outlined with clear criteria but I would recommend the use of a boundary based rubric (31-40,41-50, 51-60) which might give students a better understanding of what is required than classification Boundaries which are often a bit more nebulous to students. However, I would consider this a minor tweak rather than a critique and would also bring this in line with many of the other modules within the school.

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, as was made clear by the samples I were provided with and also further evidenced by the spread of marks. Indeed, if we look at LUBS3006, we can see that the overall high pass mark and strong classification data was evidence of a robust approach and a willingness to use all of the marks.

Similarly, the LUBS3975 assessments as well as being robust was grounded in the extant academic literature and give students the chance not only to meet the ILOs but also really challenge and extend their understanding of the area via further research. Having said that although the feedback is accurate in regards the work submitted, I would have liked to have seen more feed-forward to students in regards to performance improvement.

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.

My first 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 is clear evidence of this for example the individual assessment for LUBS3975 is very clearly structured and while is an interesting as an assignment and a robust assessment in its own right because of its design is very a very useful exercise for students who are also likely to conducting a research project that will also make use of a literature review as part of a dissertation.

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, this was absolutely fine and I would also note that the underlying process was very good compared to other schools – the UG office made sure made was provided promptly.

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, with clear evidence of an internal moderation process including discussion and movement of marks. There was a good use of in-text marking.

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 attended both the meeting and the validation day. I thought that the board was well-organised and there was good discussion of issues raised rather than simply a rubber-stamping exercise.

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

Yes and the meeting itself had some quite robust discussion about the various candidates impacted by mitigating circumstances and how that was managed previous to the meeting.

Other comments

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

I commend the UG office admin staff for the way they ensured that as an external examiner in my first year that I was adequately prepared and that during the validation day events and the board that any requests for further information and clarification were met with a solid appropriate response. Academics are fairly useless at following process at the best of times but at each step everything was made clear to me and documentation provided promptly.

Maurice Keyworth Building
University of Leeds
Leeds LS2 9JT



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

W business.leeds.ac.uk

Thursday, 28 January 2016

Reference: External Examination Report 2014-15

Dear

Thank you very much for your Examiner's Report for the Management programme. We are very pleased with your comments on our programme. In particular, I was happy that you found our arrangements to be appropriate, particularly since this is your first year. I also thank you for your positive comment on our engagement with peer reviewed research and feedback techniques, and I will pass on this praise to the teaching team.

We noted the following comments:

- **LUBS3006: I would recommend the use of a boundary based rubric (31-40,41-50, 51-60) which might give students a better understanding of what is required than classification boundaries which are often a bit more nebulous to students. However, I would consider this a minor tweak rather than a critique and would also bring this in line with many of the other modules within the school.**

Response: Thank you for this suggestion – I have discussed your recommendation with the module leader of LUBS3006. The module doesn't run this year, but your suggestion will be adopted for the future.

- **LUBS3975: I would have liked to have seen more feed-forward to students in regards to performance improvement.**

Response: This module has a new tutor this year, whom I have made aware of your comment. He responded positively that he would ensure a focus on feed forward.

On behalf of the Division may I again thank you for your suggestions and comments. We greatly appreciate the assistance you have given to us, and I look forward to meeting you once more at next year's examination board.

World Ranked – Triple Accredited – Award Winning

Yours sincerely

Dean, Leeds University Business School