

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:	Modern Languages and Cultures – Centre for Translation Studies
Subject(s):	Consecutive and Simultaneous Interpreting: Spanish
Programme(s) / Module(s):	MACITS, MATSI
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MA

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

In my opinion, there are no areas of 'urgent' attention, although following this academic year 2014-15 there are some areas which could benefit from some attention during the next academic years.

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?

I was the external examiner the previous year and I had the previous report.

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

Although in my past years as an external examiner to the University of Leeds I have received sample materials for review and approval at regular intervals (3-4 times) during the year, this past academic year 2014-15 I seem to have received the whole year's materials in June and later the resits in October; thus only twice during the year. Managing the whole year's materials at once is quite challenging, given the short deadline for revision of all modules.

Furthermore, I normally receive materials for moderation via electronic means (documents including comments and links) and although on previous years I did not encounter any problems to watch the recorded files, it seems that since the September 2014 reassessments I have been unable to watch the relevant videos easily (which would not open with any of my browsers). I am not sure if there have been any changes in format, but it would be good to be notified of how files are formatted/saved, in case software needs to be adjusted or other routes to access need to be found. Also, it would be good to know if the University servers are down due to maintenance.

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 programme's aims and learning outcomes were in line with the level of the award. The standards were appropriate to the award and they reflect well the level students are expected to attain to fulfil future employment opportunities as professional interpreters.

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 design and structure of the assessment methods were appropriate, and in line with what would be expected of students at accreditation tests for work in international institutions or similar organisms.

Students' overall performance indicated that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment methods were 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, students were given appropriate and relevant tasks (very current) to demonstrate achievement of the ILOs. The standards reached were in line with those of students on similar courses.

The cohort included students of various abilities and this was reflected on the different marks awarded.

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.

Although from my experience this year it is obvious that there have been some changes to the programme (particularly staff changes), I have not been notified officially of any other changes since the previous academic year. It would be good to be contacted at the beginning of the academic year with updated information on module conveners, modules to be examined and dates of assessment/boards.

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 curriculum seems to be in line with current research on the subject.

8. Where the programme forms part of an Integrated PhD, please comment on the appropriateness of the programme as training for a PhD

I am not aware of the programme being part of an Integrated PhD, as I am not involved in PhD examination.

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 External Examiners materials were given to me at the beginning of my external examiner period in 2011. Since then, I have not had access to any other updated materials. Perhaps it would be good to reissue the materials on an annual basis, in case they include any amendments. And to have a reminder of role and responsibilities.

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.

As indicated above. I was given materials at the beginning of my external examiner turn. Since then, I have not been given any other updated materials. It would be good to revisit materials annually. It is always good practice to review procedures and get acquainted with whoever is dealing with them.

This particular year, I seem to have more modules to examine than in previous years. It would be good to send each examiner a list of the modules to be examined.

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 not given any drafts, as speeches are delivered "live", but I did receive the recordings of the speeches. However, I was unable to access the speeches' recordings when needed (due to the server being down) and confirmation of marks was delayed due to this.

The nature and level of the exams questions were 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?

The amount of assessed work available to me was ample.

I would have liked to see copies of the actual feedback mark sheets given to students (not a summary). This is a point that I already raised the previous academic year.

Regarding the marking, there were some issues with agreement of marks between first and second marker on a couple of assessments. Interpreting can be a very subjective affair and as such, assessment criteria should be well defined and weighted. As far as I know this is the case at the University of Leeds, so perhaps it is also worth considering that staff may need to undertake/revisit some training on how to apply marking criteria strictly to avoid similar situations in the future.

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

N/A

I am not aware of the choice for dissertations for this course, as I am the external examiner for Spanish oral interpreting tasks only.

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?

As far as I can gather, the administrative arrangements for the year were satisfactory, although I was unable to attend meetings in person due to a busy agenda.

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

I am not aware of any mitigating circumstances applications for the cohort during this academic year.

Other comments

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

During the past five years, I have had the pleasure of moderating the Spanish consecutive and simultaneous assessments for this programme and I have been pleased with administration and logistics in general, in spite of the odd flaw in technology.

The Spanish programme is good and it is obvious that staff make efforts to use current and relevant materials year on year, which is an excellent practice and should be continued.

More attention could be paid to technology issues, which may have an impact on meeting deadlines.

15 July 2016

Dear <<>>,</p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 187 838 219" data-label="Text">
<p>Many thanks for your report on our postgraduate modules in interpreting involving Spanish for 2014-15.</p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 230 853 281" data-label="Text">
<p>I am glad that you found the design and structure of our assessments to be appropriate. I am delighted by your comments on the high standard of achievement by our students. I have shared your inference that this reflects a very high quality of teaching with colleagues.</p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 291 877 394" data-label="Text">
<p>I regret that you feel that the method followed to send documentation was at times troublesome in the case of audio-visual files and that you not all the information and documentation was sent to you in timely manner. Please be assured that we will make every effort to find another system to make recordings available to external examiners. We will also endeavour to keep the external examiner informed of any changes in procedure or staff as well as send the documentation and recordings at regular intervals.</p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 404 883 454" data-label="Text">
<p>Given that this was the final year of your appointment as external examiner at Leeds, I would like to thank you for your scrutiny of and support for the quality of our teaching and assessment during this period.</p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 465 260 481" data-label="Text">
<p>With kind regards,</p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 573 160 586" data-label="Text">
<p><<>></p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 598 367 614" data-label="Text">
<p>Exams Tutor, Translation Studies</p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 626 160 639" data-label="Text">
<p><<>></p></div>