

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:	Design
Subject(s):	<i>Fashion Marketing</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Fashion Marketing
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	BA

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?

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable.

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 am of the view that the programme fully matches the requirements of the award level. The ILO, as well as the structure and content of the programme, are appropriate. The standards achieved overall in the programme are also fully appropriate for 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.*

The programme compares favourably with similar programmes at other institutions and against the relevant benchmarks / GEQ Framework.

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 is considered carefully and consistently. Further, sufficient care and attention is given to the marking of modules and decisions relevant to the classification of awards. Based upon the indications provided by student performance, I believe that the quality of the teaching, learning and assessment methods is very good.

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 standard demonstrated by the students was generally good and in some cases, it was excellent. The overall levels reached by the cohort compared favourably and well with that of students undertaking comparable programmes of study elsewhere. The particular strengths of the students as a cohort relate to their clear engagement with current developments in fashion trends, brand and product development and product technology advances. Further, the cohort typically demonstrated a good understanding of the cultural and historical contexts of fashion and fashion creation / production. In terms of weaknesses, I noted that the cohort demonstrated a limited understanding of the methods and measures used in marketing management in order to assess and evaluate marketing performance. Allied to this, few students made reference to any financial measures that are most commonly used to indicate brand or marketing success. This was particularly apparent with respect to the standard measures of digital marketing action and success. Further, the majority of the fashion companies evaluated by the cohort were from the UK. There is an opportunity to extend the geographic reach / country of origin of the fashion companies that the students select.

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.

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.

In general terms, I was pleased to note that the programme has continued to keep pace with contemporary fashion consumer developments and it incorporates a range of important consumer global issues that challenge fashion marketers. I note in particular advances and improvements in the areas of sustainability, digital fashion marketing and fashion brand communications.

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 among the best performing students that their final project work was shaped by current research in the area. Furthermore, these students demonstrated a good grasp of understanding with respect to advances in research methodology within their major project submissions.

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 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.

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.

All information was relevant and useful. No issues with respect to my accessing relevant information.

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.

Full and extensive documentation was provided with respect to all relevant aspects of the administration of the programme – such as in relation to module handbooks and marking criteria. There was evidence that these were carefully developed and given sufficient attention and importance.

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?

Draft assessments and examination papers were made fully available for consideration. Sufficient time was given for me to consider and review the papers. I was of the view that the assessments / examination questions were appropriate for the level of the award.

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?

A sufficient and relevant range of assessed and examined work was made available for my consideration. I noted that scripts and assessed projects often had extensive annotation and in most instances it was very clear why and how marks had been allocated. I can confirm that marking was fairly and consistently applied. There was evidence of internal moderation and cross marking. As such, I am fully confident in the processes that were deployed in order to evaluate the standard of students' work.

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

In the majority of cases, the choice of subjects / topics for the major project was appropriate. Indeed, in some instances, the topics researched and explored by students were derived from very recent academic research advances and current developments in fashion business development. In contrast, some topics tended towards descriptive outcomes. These topics tended to have limited theoretical / research under-pinning and these had limited industry relevance. I can confirm that the method and standard of assessment for the two major project components was fully appropriate and consistently applied.

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?

Unfortunately, due to other own-university commitments, I was unable to attend the Board of Examiners' meeting. However, the School's administration team provided all relevant documents in a timely manner and maintained excellent contact throughout. Full, clear and relevant details were provided with respect to the recommendations of the Board. I can confirm that I was fully satisfied with the recommendations of the Board.

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

Given the extensive communications sent to me with respect to considerations of mitigating circumstances and medical evidence, I am of the view that the procedures were appropriately, carefully and fairly applied.

Other comments

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

Dear <<>>

BA Fashion Marketing

Response to External Examiner's Report 2014-15

Thank you for your detailed report.

As the programme moves into its third year, your affirmative comments regarding benchmarking and assessment methods reinforced our direction for this current academic year at all levels.

Your recommendations for integrating evaluation tools to enable students to measure the success of their marketing strategies have been noted and are being formally taught at level 2 and embedded further in the Major Project at level 3. Students are now encouraged to recognise the importance and impacts of the global marketplace, and critically appraise this dynamic, even if the brand selected is UK based.

The programme team has evolved further, with the addition of two new staff. <<>>, who has extensive experience teaching and marketing of textile and apparel and <<>>, a digital marketing specialist both joined the university in September. The Fashion Marketing staff now has a diverse and relevant range of experience and skills, which are necessary for the future development of the programme, as well contributing to innovative research in the area.

Our first cohort of 'Year in Industry' students are excelling, and are taking internships at Asos, French Connection, L'Oreal, Wallis, Starworks PR, Donna Karan to name but a few. In a couple of instances, companies have asked for more students based on the performance of those already in situ. At time of writing one of the students on placement has secured a job upon graduation and another of the current level 3 has been offered employment based on her Fashion Marketing Major Project research journal.

As noted in your report, although you were unable to visit the university, you commented that the documentation, including student work and feedback was thorough and well prepared.

Yours sincerely

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Programme Manager