

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:

School of Design

Subject(s):

BA Art and Design

Programme(s) / Module(s):

Module code	Module Title	Module Manager
DESN1440	Studio Practice 1A	Dr Judith Tucker
DESN1441	Studio Practice 1B	Dr Kevin Laycock
DESN1705	Drawing 1A	Andrea Thoma
DESN1706	Drawing 1B	Dr Eirini Boucla
DESN1800	History and Theory of Art and Design	Dr Christine Atha
DESN2400	Contemporary Art and Memory	Dr Judith Tucker
DESN2440	Studio Practice 2A	Ms. Andrea Thoma
DESN2441	Studio Practice 2B	Ms D Gardner
DESN3440	Studio Practice 3A	Ms D Gardner
DESN3441	Studio Practice 3B	Dr Judy Tucker
DESN3445	Time and the Image in Contemporary Art	Ms Andrea Thoma

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

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

No urgent matters

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'm in my 2nd year of appointment

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

I'm in my 2nd year of appointment

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 ILO are in line with National Benchmarks for Art and Design courses. The ILOs could be simplified for student consumption.
This course in terms of the delivery of practice and theory is evidently at the appropriate levels.

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.*

It is clear that the QAA guidance for Art and Design Benchmarks 2008 has been used. Clearly indicating the levelness. There are two categories to choose from either the generic Art and Design or Communications and Media. An appropriate selection of Art and Design ILOs has been used.

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 student performance is excellent. The majority of students gaining good degrees. Very few fails. I was taken through the work thoroughly and I can see tutors had worked hard with all students and fails were rare and the last resort.

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.*

Many of the practical modules are substantial 30 credit modules giving the student a good opportunity to develop their work. In modules that are divided into portfolio and source analysis, this gives the students an opportunity to gather material and demonstrate a range of knowledge and skills covering the ILOs. Students are clear about criteria and staff expectations.

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.

Some additional specialist staff have been employed and contributed to the modules. There is a positive change in printmaking and the use of new technologies on the programme. Drawing on a large scale is even stronger than the previous year. The refurbishment and additional technical resource was clear. The digital print room is impressive and the amount of access for the students. Sculpture is a strong area of the course, one student had won a £2000 award. The encouragement of awards, competitions and open studio events are a useful professional practice addition to the practice module.

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 strong group of staff, all with an ethos of research informed teaching. The staff are active practitioners and exhibit widely. This experience is beneficial and has a direct on the course with the exciting 1st yr show at Armley mills, industrial museum and a very professional degree show. The staff collaborate externally and encourage their students to use this useful method of collaboration.

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

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 material provided has been very useful.

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.

The documentation is very well organised and the Programme Manager is very helpful in providing any material.

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?

The project briefs have always been available.

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 course manager has ensured that all tutors are available for my visits and all work ordered for viewing. I saw a cross section of folders and could understand how students move between print, sculpture, photography and painting. The work varied in style, some graphics orientated, some with level textile outcomes, other students showed a high level of conceptual thinking. The staff knew the individual students and how they had produced their work, there was very detailed feedback and students appreciated this. The 2nd year students spoke about wanting more involvement in the assessment process.

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

The standard of academic writing is high. These tutors can supervise a huge range of topics. There is often a dissertation that could be published, this year there was a high achieving student who research Art Therapy. The dissertation marking is fair and rigorous and the feedback is very good. The dissertation students successfully research online using a range of journals.

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 am very impressed with all the administrators. The process is very professional. The course administrators and whole team work very well together. The Programme Manager has been a strong leader.

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

Yes

Other comments

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

Some recommendations: -The third year students have the perception that some dissertation supervisors spend longer with individual students, and want see more equality.

There is some careers advice centrally and an opportunity to do a year abroad but students would like more discipline related advice about future possibilities.

Students asked for more choice about how they submit research, for example not necessarily in a sketchbook and folder but also through blogs and podcasts. The student spoke about more communication between courses using social media.

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RE: BA Art and Design

November, 2015

Dear <<>>,

Thank you for your discerning and inspiring observations in your report. Our students have enjoyed meeting you and levels 2 and 3 gained from discussing aspects of our Art and Design course with you. Staff equally appreciated the opportunity for external feedback and enjoyed the conversations regarding various aspects of the course.

Overall, your report has been very encouraging. You comment on the appropriate use of QAA guidance of Art and Design benchmarks with clear level indicators. There is the suggestion that ILOs could be simplified for student consumption. <<>>, Programme Manager until the end of the academic session of 2014-15 and <<>> who has taken over since July 2015, have clarified and simplified the mapping of ILOs for all studio practice modules. These changes have been submitted to STSEC in September and were approved by the committee.

We welcome your feedback on the strength of the Art and Design team and the positive impact of recent appointments. You made a note of the prevailing ethos of research led teaching, how staff are practitioners exhibiting widely sharing their experience with students. The latter have ample opportunities to show their work in a public context. You pointed out the vibrancy of the Level 1 exhibition at Armley mills and the professional quality of the Degree show. Further comments included your appreciation of opportunities such as awards, open competitions and open studio events as valuable extension of the studio practice modules.

Your observations that students would appreciate more choices as to how they could submit and discuss their work and be more involved in the assessment process, including blogs and posts on social media, is something we are looking to address more fully. You have kindly agreed to meet with <<>> during the current academic year to explore this further.

Generally speaking, you mentioned that feedback, module documentation and communication between students and staff was taken very seriously and students benefitted from this. You also appreciated the quality of the dissertation supervision and breadth of expertise, reflected in a high quality of academic writing.

On the whole, your report was positive. The programme team finds much encouragement in your observations and is pleased that our course – with its unique combination of studio, design and theoretical – continues to meet with your understanding and approval.

We look forward to seeing you again during your next visit.

Yours sincerely,