

## The University of Leeds

### EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2014– 2015

#### Part A: General Information

##### Subject area and awards being examined

<i>Faculty / School of:</i>	School of Languages, Cultures and Societies.
<i>Subject(s):</i>	
<i>Programme(s) / Module(s):</i>	BA Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies, BA Arabic and Islamic Studies and MA Arabic-English Translation
<i>Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):</i>	BA , 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](mailto: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 for urgent action

**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

**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

## 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.*

Standards of achievement expected by the programme are consonant with the levels of study and fully aligned with the ILOs. The subject matter fully reflects the content and levels set out in the module Handbooks. .

**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 am satisfied that the aims and ILOs met the levels of other institutions 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.*

Assessment items are set with great care. Examination questions and essay titles are worded in a way that enables the full range of level descriptors to be addressed by the students. The open-ended character of the questions elicits from candidates wide ranging responses for example the 'History of Islamic Legal theory' and 'Arabic Drama on Stage'. Criteria specific to the learning outcomes of the module are clearly stated, relate well to academic levels and, where appropriate, to professional standards. They are presented to students in a way that articulates for them the levels of knowledge, understanding and skill required to achieve at each grade. The marking criteria are clear and appropriate, and effectively link the areas of knowledge to be tested to the academic characteristics expected at Honours level. All markers make good use of the published criteria, by underlining those which are demonstrated by the students in their scripts and also by using the relevant terminology in their written feedback. Tutors' feedback provides a clear rationale for the mark obtained, together with formative comments designed to point the way to future improvement.

### **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.*

Overall, the standard of candidates' work is appropriate to Honours level. Students' performance in the core module examination reveals that they generally respond well to the direct teaching and guidance that they receive in those courses.

- 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.*

I cannot comment on the enhancement of the programmes or modules since last year but from what I reviewed this year I can say that the department is demonstrating high quality programmes and modules and the staff should be commended on their dedication, skills and motivation.

- 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 design of the programmes is informed by current research and issues in the subject areas taught. In general the students' research projects were of a good standard.

- 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. The administrative staff were organised and very helpful.

- 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?**

All of the examination papers and assessments were suitable and to a high standard. Any queries I had regarding these were adequately responded to by members of staff.

- 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 all of the scripts with comments and grades necessary to provide an informed evaluation.

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

Yes. These were appropriate and the methods and standard of assessment were 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?**

Yes. This was appropriate. I was able to attend the meetings and I was satisfied with the recommendations of the Board.

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

Yes and I was satisfied with the pastoral care plan put in place to follow up these circumstances.

## **Other comments**

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

The Department's programmes and modules cover a wide range of subject areas. The courses are informed by cutting edge research and are taught by a dedicated team of academic staff. The Department is maintaining excellent standards and as such is to be commended.

## **Arabic, Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies**

School of Languages, Cultures and Societies



**UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS**

25 April 2016

Dear

I am writing to formally thank you for externally examining our SH BA Programmes in Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies, Arabic and Islamic Studies, Islamic Studies and Middle Eastern Studies and the MA in Arabic-English Translation. We are pleased to read that no concerns were raised by you about the examination process, the assessment methods used and the grades given and thank you for rating our subject area so highly for its dedicated and skilled staff, the quality of the UG and PGT programmes we offer and the overall academic standard of our students. We noted with particular delight your positive commentary on the suite of taught programmes we offer, which you defined as being ‘informed by cutting edge research and taught by a dedicated team of academic staff’. Indeed, over the past academic year we worked hard to improve our overall module offerings and enhance the coherence of the programmes on our books.

Thank you again for your report, but please do not hesitate to contact me should you like to add anything further regarding our programmes.

With best wishes,