

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:	Languages, Cultures, and Societies
Subject(s):	<i>Japanese Studies</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	UG and PGT
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	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.

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

Nothing for 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?

N/A

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.*
- ILOs and standards are all appropriate to the best of my knowledge.

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 programmes are of a high standard when benchmarked against programmes that I have experienced at other institutions in the UK and worldwide.

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 methods are appropriate and comprehensive, arrangements for marking are appropriate and of a high standard, as are classification of awards.
As I understand from student performance, quality of teaching is of a high standard. I am impressed by the dedication of the staff at the University of Leeds.

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 adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the Aims and ILOs through their assessments and other means.

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.*
- The programmes appear well organised and taught to a very high standard. The students appear to be learning and developing to a very high standard. Organisational enhancements have been achieved, in particular with respect to students' extenuating circumstances and extensions.

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 teaching is research driven and students have a good opportunity to learn from lecturers working at the forefront of their fields. This was clear both in the content of students' submissions as well as in the methods employed in their own research as demonstrated by the high quality of dissertations.

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**
- In the 2013-14 session I was mentor, but was not informed whether I would be mentor again this year to the same examiner. I assumed not, as no arrangements for this were provided in the 2014-15 session.

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.

Very sufficient.

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.

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

Yes.

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?

Improved from the previous year. However there will still some occasions where individual members of staff contacted me directly and on an ad hoc basis. I don't think it is good practice for individual members of teaching staff to do this during the term time when teaching and assessment is ongoing. Best to always go through admin staff, and materials to be sent only at specific times, to avoid disruption, confusion, and potential loss of materials.

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

Yes. These have markedly improved from the previous year.

Other comments

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

No other comments. The process was much smoother than the previous year, but could be improved still further.

School of Languages, Cultures and Societies

FACULTY OF ARTS



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

25 April 2016

Dear

Response to External Examiner's Report, 2014-2015

Many thanks for your Examiner's Report for the academic year 2014-2015 and my apologies for the delay in sending a formal response.

I am glad that you have found both our Japanese programmes, and the teaching within them, to be of a high standard, and in particular that the research-led nature of the teaching is evident and demonstrated in part by the high quality of the dissertations you read.

I am pleased that you have noticed an improvement this year on the administrative arrangements. I note though that you feel there have still been too many ad hoc communications by individual members of staff, and that processes could be improved further. We will endeavour to work further on this this year and I have already asked all staff to ensure that all communications go via Shiqin, to help streamline this process.

I was also very pleased to note that you have found a marked improvement this year in the processes surrounding the submission of mitigating circumstances and medical evidence.

With regards to the mentor role, I can confirm that mentors are only required for one year, for staff new to external examining, and so you will no longer be expected to act as mentor for 2015/16. Sorry if this was not made clear at the beginning.

It only remains for me to thank you very much for your input to our programmes and for your very helpful contributions at the exam board. Our programmes will benefit enormously from your comments.

With very best wishes