

The University of Leeds

EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2015– 2016

Part A: General Information**Subject area and awards being examined**

Faculty / School of:	Leeds University Business School
Subject(s):	<i>Business Analytics</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	BSc Business Analytics 1520 Introduction to sports analytics; 1525 Analytical methods; 1530 Business analytics 1
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	BSc

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

n/a

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?

This is the first year of a new degree so there are no previous reports.

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.*

The programme aims and intended learning outcomes are entirely suitable for the level of the award. I did not see any samples of work as it is university policy not to show the work of first year students to the external.

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 aims to develop skills in statistical analysis and apply them within a business context to enhance evidence based decision making. It is clear how learning outcomes relate to skills to be developed, to programme aims and to the modules being studied. The aims and learning outcomes are as one would expect in similar programmes.

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 strategies are appropriate given the programme's learning outcomes and aims. The module assessments involve both examination and 100% coursework, and give students the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of key concepts, methodologies, and quantitative techniques of analysis. All three modules I surveyed had appropriate assessment instruments, which were both challenging and fair, and pitched at the right level. If students do not engage properly with the modules the assessments will find them out. This is how it should be.

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.*

I did not see any student work – see above.

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.

n/a

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.

As the modules are first year modules I would not expect to see research feature strongly in the curriculum and in learning and teaching. Even so, the assessed coursework for 1520 required students to write a 3000 word report identifying either the critical success factors or the performance of players, using team performance data in a specific sport. Essentially, students had to research this topic by examining particular data sets. It is evident that research in sports analytics has influenced the design of the module and the assessed work. This module serves as an excellent example of how to incorporate academic research into the curriculum even at first year level.

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

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.

It was fine.

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. I saw drafts of all exam papers/assessments. The exam paper for 1525 was appropriate to the level of the module. The questions required students to have a thorough knowledge of the material and were designed to prevent bluffers from doing well. This is a good strategy. The coursework assessments were carefully constructed, interesting and suitably challenging. They are appropriate to the level of the modules. I was invited to give comments on drafts.

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?

I did not see student work – see above.

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

n/a

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?

Admin arrangements were fine. I did not attend the board of examiners as it was not required.

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

n/a

Other comments

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

Leeds University Business School

Maurice Keyworth Building
University of Leeds
Leeds LS2 9JT

W business.leeds.ac.uk



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Wednesday 26th October 2016

Dear

Thank you very much for your Examiner's Report for the Business Analytics programme. We are very pleased with your comments on our programme. In particular, it is good to see that you found everything to be appropriate in its first year of operation.

We noted the following comments:

- **The exam paper for LUBS1525 was appropriate to the level of the module. The questions required students to have a thorough knowledge of the material and were designed to prevent bluffers from doing well. This is a good strategy.**

Response: Thank you for noting this module for good practice. I have passed on this comment to the Module Leader concerned, and also to the programme team who may wish to take on board this approach.

- **As the modules are first year modules I would not expect to see research feature strongly in the curriculum and in learning and teaching. Even so, the assessed coursework for 1520 required students to write a 3000 word report identifying either the critical success factors or the performance of players..... This module serves as an excellent example of how to incorporate academic research into the curriculum even at first year level.**

Response: Again, thank you for highlighting good practice. This has again been passed to the Module Leader for praise, and to the programme team as a positive example. It is so useful for these elements of practice to be validated by external examiners, as it makes the team confident to extend these approaches to other modules.

On behalf of the Division may I again thank you for your suggestions and comments. We greatly appreciate the assistance you have given to us, and I look forward to meeting you at next year's examination board.

Yours sincerely,

Dean, Leeds University Business School

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The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT
ACADEMIC YEAR: 2015– 2016

Part A: General Information**Subject area and awards being examined**

Faculty / School of:	Leeds University Business School (LUBS)
Subject(s):	Management
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Programme: BSc Business Analytics Modules: LUBS 1785, LUBS 2765, LUBS 2785, LUBS 3885, LUBS 3895, LUBS 3950
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	BSc

Name and home Institution / affiliation of Examiner**Completed report**

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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

N/A

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

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.*

I found the aims and ILOs to be highly appropriate in relation to the programme and modules that I examined. I believe that the standards of the programme and modules that I examined were highly appropriate for the award and award elements that were under consideration.

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 – I believe that they are commensurate with other HEIs and HE 'industry' standards.

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.*

From the coursework assignments and exams scripts that I have examined, I believe that the assessment methods are appropriate and rigorous in terms of their structure and content. I also believe that the arrangements for marking and the classification of awards are generally appropriate and well-founded, as are the teaching, learning and assessment methods.

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.

I thought that the standard of student work was generally very high, with some really excellent pieces of coursework and some good exam essays. Not being involved in other Business Studies courses/programmes, I cannot comment on the relative performance of LUBS students to students on comparable courses at other HEIs.

From the coursework assignments and exams scripts that I have examined, I believe that the standard of students at LUBS is very good.

I did not notice any weakness in the cohorts as a result of the documents that I examined.

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.

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.

In the scripts that I examined, I didn't see any obvious evidence of the influence of research, although I'd imagine that the final year modules that I examined are based around the research interests and expertise of the lecturers teaching on those modules.

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

I mentored <<>> from UCL who is also an external examiner in 'management'. I was given full information about mentoring by the University and used this information to offer and provide my support and guidance to <<>> as-and-when necessary. I made initial contact with <<>> in November 2015 (when I was appointed as <<>> mentor) when I offered my services as <<>> mentor. However, I wasn't required to provide <<>> with any advice or guidance during the year as our only contact prior to the exam board meetings and validation day in June 2016 was my initial introductory contact in November.

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.

I was provided with all necessary information and documentation all throughout the current academic year, including at the Validation Day and the Exam Board meetings.

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 – I was provided with such documents and I approved the majority of them without suggested amendments. In the few cases where I thought the documents needed to be altered in some way, my comments were adopted by the relevant lecturer.

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 a very good selection of exam scripts and coursework assignments, which allowed me to evaluate the overall standard of student work.

However, whilst all the exam scripts I saw were clearly marked with at least one tick on each page, there were no written comments on any of those scripts. I believe that it would have been beneficial (for me, and for students and staff when students come to staff to discuss their exam performance) if there had been a sentence or two of comment at the end of each exam essay so as to summarise the marker's view of how the essay addressed the set question.

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

N/A – I didn't examine any dissertations.

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 – everything in this respect was fine. I was able to attend the Board of Examiners' meeting and was happy with the recommendations of the Board.

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

Yes – everything in this respect was absolutely fine.

Other comments

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

As was the case last year, I am impressed by the way in which student assessment is conducted and administered in general at LUBS. In particular, the practice of providing generic feedback on exam papers to cohorts of students through the VLE system and the adherence to the prescribed marking criteria with respect to coursework assignments and exam essays is commendable as is the written dialogue between first- and second-markers on module marking paperwork. In addition, the good pieces of work (exam and coursework) are a pleasure to read, which speaks volumes about the quality of the students at LUBS.

In terms of feedback/comments on coursework assignments, there has been some improvement in the provision of in-text comments which seemed to be largely missing from the pieces of work that I examined last year. I have been informed in the letter of response to my comments from last year (from <<>>) that there is a project currently taking place at LUBS-level to provide rather more formalised guidance to markers of exams and coursework assignments; I hope that this project will yield obvious benefits in the short-term. Although feedback has improved somewhat since last year, I still believe that greater strides are needed to ensure consistency across modules and markers. On two of the modules I examined (LUBS 3895 and 3885), there were no obvious in-text comments on coursework assignments. On one module (LUBS 2785), there was no summary comments on each of the exam scripts, making it quite hard for the marker to stand-over the marks they've awarded in the event of a student appeal

or query. Additionally, the generic comments on coursework assignments, whilst always evident, should have been a little less 'glowing' for low-ish marks in the 'first-class' bracket (e.g., 'an excellent essay – well done' was the gist of the comments on an essay with a mark of 70%, with no directions for what could have been done better to produce an assignment that would have gained the bulk of the unawarded 30%). Likewise, some generic comments for assignments with marks not higher than the early-60s lacked detail on what needed to be done to achieve a higher mark; this could have referred specifically to the just-marked assignment or more generally to future similar (or not so similar) assignments.

Here's what I'd like to see in terms of comments on coursework assignments and exam scripts.

For generic comments on coursework assignments, I would like to see three elements covered consistently across modules and markers. Firstly, what was done well. Secondly, what was not so good. Thirdly, what needed to be done to improve (for the current assignment or more generally on future assignments). I believe that this would be beneficial for students in terms of learning from their past mistakes and encouraging them to do even better work in future.

For in-text comments on coursework assignments, I would like to see a little more detailed comments (positive as well as negative comments) presented in rather more of a conversational tone (e.g., 'You needed to elaborate more on this theory'), with at least one comment being evident per paragraph. I believe that this would be beneficial for students in terms of learning from their past mistakes and encouraging them to do even better work in future.

On exam scripts, I would like to see one or two sentences at the end of each essay question outlining the strengths and weaknesses of the essay and justifying the mark that was awarded.

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UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Wednesday 26th October 2016

Dear

Thank you very much for your Examiner's Report for the Management programme. We are very pleased with your comments on our programme. In particular, I am pleased that you found our students to be of high ability, and our administrative arrangements clear and robust.

We noted the following comment:

- **Whilst all the exam scripts I saw were clearly marked with at least one tick on each page, there were no written comments on any of those scripts. I believe that it would have been beneficial (for me, and for students and staff when students come to staff to discuss their exam performance) if there had been a sentence or two of comment at the end of each exam essay so as to summarise the marker's view of how the essay addressed the set question.**

Response: I note that this comment was also raised by you last year. At that time I reminded staff of the need for annotating scripts, and I am concerned to find that this was not resolved. I will now raise this directly with the Module Leaders responsible for the modules you covered to see what can be done.

I also note your guidance for what needs to be added for student feedback. Thank you for this, it is a useful summary which again I will send directly to that team.

The assessment project I mentioned last year has, in fact, resulted in a mark matrix being instructed for use in all UG modules. Whilst I note that you do feel in-text feedback has improved slightly in your modules, this is clearly not enough. I will look into whether the matrix is being used in this subject area, and/or whether it was used but did not end up in the materials you were sent for review.

On behalf of the Division may I again thank you for your suggestions and comments. We greatly appreciate the assistance you have given to us, and I look forward to meeting you once more at next year's examination board.

World Ranked – Triple Accredited – Award Winning



Yours sincerely,

Dean, Leeds University Business School