

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:	Business
Subject(s):	<i>Economics</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	LUBS1260 Mathematics for Economics and Business 1 LUBS1270 Statistics for Economics and Business 1 LUBS1280 Mathematical Economics LUBS1610 Research Skills for Economists LUBS1940 Economics For Management LUBS2050 Industrial Economics LUBS2230 Mathematics for Business & Economics 2 LUBS2420 Business Economics LUBS2500 Applied Economics LUBS2570 Introduction to Econometrics LUBS2670 Statistics for Business & Economics 2 LUBS2675 How to be a Successful Policy Economist LUBS3930 Economics of Bus & Corp Strategy
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	BA and BSC Econ/Business

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?

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.*

ILOs are commensurate with the degree awarded.

- 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

- 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 assessments have been designed in a way which is appropriate to the ILOs. The marking is of the appropriate standard. The assessment methods are varied and allows for testing a broader understanding of the subject.

- 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 and the distribution of marks was appropriate.

- 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 think feedback was more consistent compared to last year.

- 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.

I think all courses reflect the state of the art in the area and essays allow students to demonstrate their research skills.

- 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.

Access to materials is sufficient and queries are dealt with appropriately and usually swiftly.

- 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 and the level were appropriate. In a small number of cases I had minor suggestions were taken into account.

- 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, and the marking was clear.

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

I did not look at dissertations but the essay based modules had appropriate topics and the method and standard of assessment was 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, on the whole it was satisfactory but turnaround time was very tight. I was able to attend the meeting and was satisfied with the recommendations.

- 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

Overall, like last year I have a very positive experience, the standards are appropriate and the students also get a chance to apply their knowledge to policy which is commendable. The administrative staff are also co-operative and efficient. I would however request exams to be posted a bit earlier as some of them reached me very late.

Leeds University Business School

Maurice Keyworth Building
University of Leeds
Leeds LS2 9JT

W business.leeds.ac.uk



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Monday 28th November 2016

Dear

Thank you very much for your Examiner's Report for the Economics programmes. We are very pleased with your comments on our programme. In particular, you observed that our feedback on assessment was more consistent compared to last year and that we managed to mark under quite tight turn-around expectations. Moreover, you mentioned in your report that the quantitative modules reflect the current rigour in this area.

We noted the following comment:

- **I would request exams to be posted a bit earlier as some of them reached me very late.**

Response: Thank you for your valuable feedback; in response to the feedback we have received on this matter we will be adapting our processes for the 2016/17 academic session. We will be asking our External Examiners whether they would like their module samples when they are ready and the marks have been released to students, or at the end of each semester (as is the current policy).

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.

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

Subject(s):

Economics

Programme(s) / Module(s):

HECN2010	Intro to Health Economics
HECN3010	Intro to Econ Eval of Health
LUBS0010	Foundations of Economics
LUBS1060	Personal Tutorials for Eco
LUBS1070	Personal Tutorials for Eco & Man
LUBS2140	Intermediate Microeconomics
LUBS2300	Explanation in Economics
LUBS2665	Economics of Innovation
LUBS2680	Ethics and Economics
LUBS3005	Advanced Microeconomics
LUBS3330	Economic Development
LUBS3365	Environmental Economics
LUBS3435	Public Enterprise & Regulation
LUBS3580	Economics of Labour-Managed Firms
LUBS3785	The Economics of Unions
MECH2640	Economics & Management (Economics)

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

BA

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

Not applicable

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 that I can recall. I made no request for 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

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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 ILOs and structures of the range of modules I examined were entirely appropriate, and enabled students to progress in terms of the programme ILOs.
All standards were appropriate for the award elements 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, easily. Indeed, in my view they exceeded, and were superior to the QAA benchmark in Economics in that the programme provided students with a pluralistic, and cutting-edge approach to the subject. This was extremely refreshing to see.

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.*

Please note I do not accept the premise of the second bullet point.

The design, structure, and examination procedures in place for assessment are entirely appropriate. Over the range of modules which I examined I noted a variety of assessment methods, including; examinations, traditional essay type assessment, group and presentation work. This enabled students to deepen their understanding of the subject.

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, without doubt. As noted in (3), above, the variety of assessment methods encouraged students to engage with the materials and the subject matter, more generally. The cohort of students demonstrated some instances of excellence, and the overall standard of work was high. To the best of my knowledge is comparable to similar institutions.

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.

This is my first year as external examiner.

As noted, I am very impressed by the programme's pluralistic approach to economics. This provides considerable benefits to students in terms of developing critical thinking, and does so to greater extent than economics programmes elsewhere. The Division is to be commended for its approach.

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.

It was obvious from the range of courses I examined that they were delivered by staff who had research interests in that particular field. There was extensive evidence of research-led and research-informed teaching. For instance, the courses Explanation in Economics and Ethics and Economics are highly innovative and have benefitted from the research activities of staff.

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.

Yes, the material was sufficient. Commendably, it was supplemented by LUBS staff in discussions during my visit.

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, all relevant documentation was sent to me in good time.

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. It would be preferable from an external examining perspective for materials to be sent in 'bulk' rather than separately. Overall, the nature and level of questions was appropriate, and where there were doubts staff responded swiftly to address any queries.

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, and Yes. There was obvious evidence of moderation and second marking, although there was some variation in feedback, which the Division and School may note.

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

Not applicable

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 to all questions. A highly satisfactory, transparent, and fair process.

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

Yes. Again a highly satisfactory, fair, and transparent process.

Other comments

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

I noted that for one examination – LUBS 2140: Intermediate Microeconomics – there was a highly demanding turn-a-round period for a course of this size (if memory serves there was well over 200 students enrolled on this course). Students sat the examination on 1st June and the full examination board was held on 23rd June. It is not reasonable to expect academic and administrative staff to operate effectively with such a tight timetable for such large courses. It is to the credit of staff that they met this timetable without compromising standards. However, in my view the University should reflect on the scheduling of examinations in order to avoid excessive demands on staff and risk undermining standards.

Leeds University Business School

Maurice Keyworth Building
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Leeds LS2 9JT

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UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Monday 28th November 2016

Dear

Thank you very much for your Examiner's Report for the Economics programmes. We are very pleased with your comments on our programme. In particular, you observed that in your view our aims and intended learning outcomes exceeded, and were superior to the QAA benchmark in Economics in that the programme provided students with a pluralistic, and cutting-edge approach to the subject.

Moreover, you remarked that the variety of our assessment methods encouraged students to engage with the materials and the subject matter, more generally. The cohort of students you inspected demonstrated some instances of excellence, and the overall standard of work was high and comparable to similar institutions. You also observed that we managed to mark under very tight turn-around expectations, especially the assessment of LUBS 2140 Intermediate Microeconomics.

We noted the following comments:

- **It would be preferable from an external examining perspective for materials to be sent in 'bulk' rather than separately.**

Response: Thank you for your valuable feedback; in response to the feedback we have received on this matter we will be adapting our processes for the 2016/17 academic session. The current process of sending assessed coursework briefs and examination papers individually was to allow for a quick response to module leaders in relation to the approval of assessments, in addition to assisting administrative staff to process the large volume of assessments at Undergraduate level.

The 2016/17 academic session will see the introduction of Divisional Exam Paper Scrutiny Panels (DESPs) at the start of semesters 1 and 2, which will allow Divisions to scrutinise all in-session and resit examination papers concurrently. As a result of this change, examination papers will be sent to External Examiners as a collection in advance of the Semester 1 and 2 examination periods with the intention of including a large proportion of assessed coursework briefs at same time.

We will also be improving the communication provided at the start of the academic session to produce more transparent guidance for External Examiners to assist in their roles. Please accept our apologies if the current process of sending examination and coursework assessment hindered your role.

- **There was obvious evidence of moderation and second marking, although there was some variation in feedback, which the Division and School may note.**

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Response: We will take note of this variation you pointed out and will work on the consistency of feedback. Improving the satisfaction of our students with the way we assess them and the way we provide feedback is one of the three priority action points in our student enhancement strategy for the coming academic year.

As you have resigned from your tenure as external examiner after your first year on the Economics programmes at Leeds University Business School, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your work.

Yours sincerely,

Dean, Leeds University Business School

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:	LUBS
Subject(s):	<i>Economics</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	LUBS 204001, LUBS259001, LUBS261001, LUBS301101 LUBS343001 LUBS350501 LUBS356001 LUBS2280 LUBS3010 LUBS3300 LUBS3570 LUBS3925
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

na

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?

No

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.*

The content of teaching and curriculum at a very high standard. I congratulate the team for both the breadth and depth of the content, in particular in their ability to integrate pluralism in teaching economics, a comparative presentation of competing theories, in the context of real world applications.

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 aims meet and go beyond the subject benchmark in economics in terms of the level and analytical content, in particular in terms of the achievement to reflect alternative theoretical debates and put them into empirical context.

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 assessment is at a very high standard and the students performance was impressive. The higher end of the marks were well justified, and moderation was effective. However, in two modules, LUBS261001 and LUBS3300 the use of multiple choice questions, albeit at a high standard and in combination with other essay questions, may not be the most effective way of stimulating critical thinking and assisting the students to realise their full potential.

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. In particular in the essay questions and the dissertations students are given genuine space to develop analytical skills and critical thinking.

5. For Examiners responsible for programmes that include clinical practice components, please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum

na

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.

na

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 world leading research in the field of economics has clearly informed teaching and the curriculum and assessment.

8. Where the programme forms part of an Integrated PhD, please comment on the appropriateness of the programme as training for a PhD

na

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

na

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

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.

I have not received programme specifications or module handbooks. However assessment was always sent with detailed marking criteria.

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. The assessments were at a high standard.

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. The dissertations as well as feedback were at a high standard. Wherever there was a borderline case, marking and moderation was adequate.

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.

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

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UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Monday 28th November 2016

Dear

Thank you very much for your Examiner's Report for the Economics programmes. We are very pleased with your comments on our programme. In particular, you observed that the content of teaching and curriculum are at a very high standard and you congratulate us for both the breadth and depth of the content, and our ability to integrate pluralism in teaching economics, a comparative presentation of competing theories, in the context of real world applications.

Moreover, you remarked that the learning aims in our programmes meet and go beyond the subject benchmark in economics in terms of the level and analytical content, in particular in terms of the achievement to reflect alternative theoretical debates and put them into empirical context.

Although you commented that our assessments are at a very high standard and that you are impressed with our students' performance, we noted the following comment:

- **In two modules, LUBS261001 and LUBS3300 the use of multiple choice questions, albeit at a high standard and in combination with other essay questions, may not be the most effective way of stimulating critical thinking and assisting the students to realise their full potential.**

Response: This comment has been discussed at our Economics Student Education Committee and we are reviewing our assessment and feedback practice this year. As part of this review, we will reflect on the use of multiple choice questions in exams.

As you have resigned from your tenure as external examiner after your first year on the Economics programmes at Leeds University Business School, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your work.

Yours sincerely,

Dean, Leeds University Business School

World Ranked – Triple Accredited – Award Winning