

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:	School of Mechanical Engineering
Subject(s):	
Programme(s) / Module(s):	MDes,BSc Product Design MDes,BSc Product Design (Industrial) Year 3 Placement MDes,BSc Product Design (International) MDes, BDes Product Design BSc Product Design BDes Product Design BSc Product Design (Industrial) MDes, BDes Product Design (Industrial) Year 3 Placement MDes, BDes Product Design (Industrial) Year 4 Placement MDes, BDes Product Design (International) (No longer recruiting from 201516)
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	BSc and MDes

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?

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

Not applicable

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.*

Yes.

Clearly a good and well balanced programme with a range of interesting projects at an individual and group level. The multi disciplinary group activity is a particularly good idea. It was not possible to get a good feel of the technical level of the projects, this will be examined in more detail in the future. It had not been possible to visit the Design show this year.

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 not aware of any national benchmarks in this area.

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.*

A combination of exams, small coursework, large course work, individual projects and group projects.
Perfectly appropriate for this type of course.

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 don't understand this question, surely it is the nature of any well designed course(which this is) to do this?

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

Not applicable

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.

Not made aware of this specifically.

NOTE: Please do this in future years as it is part of the examination process.

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.

None

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

Not applicable

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**

Not applicable

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.

The short guidance booklet was fine. Some more background information was requested as a first time examiner, see overall comments below.

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.

On the day only.

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 made a number of comments, see associated reports.

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?**

See below in general comments.

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

Yes there was a good range in both the individual and group activities.

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. The Board was Chaired very effectively, with excellent support from the Director of Teaching and Learning, and the SSO.

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

These seemed perfectly appropriate.

Other comments

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

This was my first year as examiner and it was an enjoyable and interesting experience. The staff were very open and very helpful in assisting me with my task, especially <<>>.

The PDE course is both simple and complex. It is simple in that the MDES has only 20 modules over 4 years with only 13 modules that count towards the final degree classification and within these are 3 x 60 credit modules, one in each year. The complexity comes from within the modules where there are an extensive range of assignments, tasks, projects and critically from an examiners point of view – the associated assessments. As a rough estimate there must be around 30(?) of these.

To fulfil my duties as examiner, it is necessary to see these assessments and check that they have been carried out properly and with appropriate proformas and justifications for the marks awarded.

These assessments were included in the Team Projects on display and they had been completed thoroughly and consistently. Mark sheets were requested and obtained for the PDES3110(V6c for reference). These were obtained by printing them of the Blackboard/VLE system. These had been a marked very well and gave justifications for the final marks.

It was also possible to go into Blackboard/VLE and check on some of the other assessments. This was much less satisfactory in that it was difficult for this examiner to do unaided and it was not possible to get a sense of the level or consistency of the marking, although it seemed that there was an underlying process.

For future examination sessions it is requested that for each element of assessed work a sample of the work and the associated mark sheet is made available, a printout from Blackboard/VLE is perfectly fine. It is suggested that the sample consists of some top, middle and bottom work. It is not necessary to see everything, except for both of the major project work activities referred to above.

In the middle of the examination the module or project handbooks were made available for PDES3110 and PDES2200. These were very impressive and indicated the quality of the underlying processes including marking schemes. It is requested that these are made available for all the modules. It is then possible to match the marking information given to the students to the way the marking has been executed.

The examinations for Mech3770, PDES3170 and PDES2510 had been supplied along with their associated model answers. These had been commented on. The examination scripts were available in the examination room and had been marked satisfactorily.

Two minor points to be reflected on. There were a number of the modules that did not have reading lists, secondly a number of the submissions were written in the first person. In some reflective discourse this is acceptable, but for major submissions it probably should be policed or marked down.

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UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

16 November 2016

Dear

Response to your External Examiner's Report for BEng/MEng Mechanical Engineering; Automotive Engineering; Mechanical with Nuclear Engineering

Thank you for your recent report. We were pleased to note your generally positive views of these programmes and the procedures used to assess them. In response to the small number of specific queries in your report our responses are as follows.

Further Assistance with your access to coursework

This is a very useful suggestion and next year we propose to provide you with a representative sample of coursework from the VLE in a convenient, electronic format.

Meeting students during the programme

Next year we will inform you of the dates for the level 4 presentations as early as possible, so that you have the maximum opportunity to meet the students then.

Hardcopy of the Programme Structure

We will provide a hardcopy of the programme structure for you during your visit next year.

Module marks outside 'normal' range

You raised the issue of the high marks for MECH5510M. This module is being completely revamped for the next academic session and careful consideration will be made to ensuring that an average mark in the 'normal' range can be achieved.

I would be very happy to provide any further information or talk to you in person if that would be helpful.

Yours sincerely

Head of School