

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 Languages, Cultures and Societies
Subject(s):	Translation Studies
Programme(s) / Module(s):	MA and PG Diploma in Applied Translation
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MA and PG Dip

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?

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

Unfortunately I held this role for a very short period of time, and it is with regret that I had to resign as a result of UCU industrial action to address the erosion of pay, casual contracts, and the gender pay gap.

Feedback provided by lecturers was constructive and helpful, with generally consistent use of mark sheets and rigorous comments. The cohort of students in 2015/16 seemed to be a good one, given the cluster of marks in the mid 60s and above across the range of modules. I found the marking a bit generous at times - in one instance, 6 of the 8 samples of work sent to me had received marks in the 70s, and it was difficult to see much in the way of differentiation between students. In future it will be good for the external examiner to review a better range of marks to get a better idea of the spread of marks across the modules.

Students undertook a number of interesting tasks on the course, and often had the opportunity to choose their own topics. The marking criteria are very detailed which is good practice. In some modules, marks are consistent across the languages, despite the use of different markers, which shows a robust system of moderation. The depth and breadth of the feedback provided could be a bit more consistent across languages at times, but this is often the case in other universities I have worked with too. I was particularly pleased to see reference to 'further ways to improve the commentary' in some of the feedback sheets, which is good practice.

In a couple of instances, I suggested that the teaching team improve the instructions or guidelines provided to students, to avoid confusion when marking. Having said that, I was often impressed with the depth of knowledge attained by students on the various modules. As I told the Director of Translation Studies, it is clear from the student work that they are well taught.

Despite my short term of office, I have been impressed with the quality of the students' work as well as the quality of the feedback provided by lecturers. I wish the programme team all the best for the future.

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 ILOs were commensurate with the level of the award.

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 and ILOs meet the expectations of the national subject benchmark.

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.*

I commented on these aspects in a previous section

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

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.*

N/A

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, it was 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?

Samples were provided. I commented on these aspects in a previous section.

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?

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?

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

N/A

09 January 2017

Dear

Many thanks for your report on our MA in Applied Translation Studies for 2015-16.

I am glad that you found the design and structure of our assessments, as well as our arrangements for marking, to be appropriate. I am delighted by your comments on the quality of feedback and the high standard of achievement by our students.

I regret that you feel that the sample provided was at times not showcasing the entire range of marks. Please be assured that in the future we will more carefully select the samples and include a more adequate range of marks so that the reviewer can have a better idea of the spread of marks across the modules.

I am glad that you have found communication with colleagues on matters academic and procedural to be good and that you find the provision of documentation appropriate.

With regret for the fact that you have had to resign from your position of external examiner, I would like to express our deepest appreciation for your work and thank you for your scrutiny of and support for the quality of our teaching and assessment during this period.

In the meantime, if there is anything I can do to help, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

With kind regards,

Exams Tutor, Translation Studies

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:	Arts/ School of Languages, Cultures and Societies
Subject(s):	<i>Postgraduate Translation and Interpreting (German modules)</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	ODL5114M Specialized German-English Translation A MODL5124M Specialized German-English Translation B MODL5039M Interpreting Skills – German MODL5762M Consecutive and Bilateral Interpreting: German MODL5712M Simultaneous Interpreting: German MODL5302M Extended Translations (with German)
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MA (various courses)

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.*

The ILOs, as described in module outlines, course overviews and online, were appropriate to Masters level translation/interpreting courses. The ILOs, the range of skills they implied, and the standards met on the German modules I observed were all of good quality, robust and commensurate with the award.

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.*

Having taught on the German-English component of two comparable MAs in Translation in the UK, I can confirm that the aims, ILOs and course content admirably meet the FHEQs, as well as national benchmarks and standards more generally.

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 range of modules I covered assessed performance across a range of vocationally relevant and intellectually challenging skills, including written translation and extended summer project work. The range of tasks, teaching and assessments allow for students of all ability to take part, though the project works serves as a good differentiator for the more able students. Colleagues remain vigilant for work that does not meet 'pass' standards and are quick to flag this up, this assuring fairness and assuring quality.

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.*

See above (3). Over the last two years I have been struck by the thorough and reflective marking of summative assessed work, and the detailed feedback given to students during formative assessment across all the modules I considered. In keeping with the culture and practices of the School generally, colleagues gave particularly rich and helpful feedback to lower and mid-range achievers, and demonstrate added value to the modules I considered.

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 refer colleagues to my comments above on practices of (what amounts to) formative feedback given to students following coursework submission. Although assessed pieces are. I also think colleagues make good use of well used technical terminology germane to translation studies in their teaching and feedback and students appear well conversant in this – as is evident in their commentaries.

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 modules I saw were delivered by a range of staff from across the School. Within this context, it was particularly effective having colleagues working out of the Centre of Translation Studies, whose current and up-to-date research expertise in comparative translation and translation studies directly informs their work in delivering vocational translation and summer project work with a cultural bias.

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.

All materials are available online or quickly sent along upon request by colleagues at School level. I have no criticisms here.

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?

I did see draft copies of exam papers/ coursework project outlines for all modules I assessed.

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 saw a representative sample of work on the modules I considered, and felt this to be more than adequate. Scripts were clearly annotated. I was sent lists of marks and grids that were not, at first, intelligible to me and did not appear to relate to the sample of work sent. However, an explanation and some further context by email quickly clarified this – and there is no fundamental problem here.

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

Summer projects were wide ranging in their topics, appropriately ambitious and well-marked.

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?

I was not able to attend the board. However, all communications were swift and answers were full.

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

None.

06 March 2017

Dear <<>>,</p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 187 870 220" data-label="Text">
<p>Many thanks for your report on our postgraduate modules in translation and interpreting involving German for 2016-17.</p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 230 866 298" data-label="Text">
<p>I am glad that you found the design and structure of our assessments, as well as our arrangements for marking, to be of a high standard. I am delighted by your comments on the quality and fairness of our assessment methods, the detailed and helpful feedback given (especially in formative work) and the high standard of achievement by our students.</p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 308 855 342" data-label="Text">
<p>I took note of your comment regarding the marks' spreadsheets sent, but I am happy to hear you found communication with our support and academic staff was efficient and readily available.</p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 352 860 403" data-label="Text">
<p>Finally, I would like to thank you for your ongoing commitment to supporting the quality of our programmes and their assessment. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with me directly, should you seek clarification at any point.</p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 439 260 456" data-label="Text">
<p>With kind regards,</p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 495 160 508" data-label="Text">
<p><<>></p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 520 367 536" data-label="Text">
<p>Exams Tutor, Translation Studies</p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 537 160 550" data-label="Text">
<p><<>></p></div>