

# 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:	English
Subject(s):	MA in Theatre and Global Development
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Uses of Theatre Making Theatre in the Community Research Methods Dissertation
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	

#### 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](mailto: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?*

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 programme retains its high standard as per all stated aims and objectives.
  
- 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 would rank the programme very highly alongside similar practice-based MAs. Its configuration of theoretical components alongside well-managed placements in my opinion makes it the best in the UK alongside <<>> and <<>> own.
  
- 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 methods as I have noted in previous years are appropriate and show an attentiveness to the need to support Praxis with a series of formative assessment points and a recognition that this is a labour-intensive programme when it comes to delivering that level of support. The weighting of the assessment for Making Theatre in the Community is a good example of this as the quality of the workshop plan (20%) is then tested in practice and subsequently given formative feedback (30%) from the placement partner as an independent indicator of rigour alongside the actual delivery (50%). This 50/50 weighting is what I mean by appropriate assessment of Praxis, reflected across all the modules and configured within the breakdown of the degree as a whole.
  
- 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.*

The work was of a consistently high standard and the rigour of the placement experience shows where and how the very high quality of the writing in the dissertations has been galvanised through personal enactment of Praxis and supported by sometimes quite uncompromising formative feedback. I tracked a First and a borderline 2.2/2.1 with this developmental agenda in mind and in both cases could see how the structure of the programme demands that the student test their grasp of theory and (more than that) ideology by taking a workshop out into the field, structured, delivered and documented so as to find a personal voice as a practice-based researcher, evidencing theory from a well-constructed research base.
  
- 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.*

See above in terms of the placement support.
  
- 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 programme is a leader in the field when it comes to the teaching of theory and its evidencing through Praxis.
  
- 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.*

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.*

Yes: excellent

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: comprehensive

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?

Yes: excellent

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

It has been a pleasure and an intellectually very satisfying experience to continue in this role for another year. Many thanks.

Head of School  
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**UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS**

14 March 2017

Dear

Thank you for your positive report on the MA in Theatre and Global Development (2015-16) and for your articulation of this programme as ranking alongside the best in the UK and one that constitutes 'a leader in the field'. Colleagues will be pleased that the structure of assessment practices is appropriate and designed to bring out the best in students. It is gratifying to hear your confirmation of the high standards achieved by students undertaking the programme, with particular attention drawn to the placement experience and the impact of this on the written work produced. It is clear that this programme offers excellent examples of practice-based research, and combines field work with the development of a sound research base.

Thank you, too, for agreeing to extend your period of service to cover 2017-18. I really am most grateful.

Yours sincerely,

Head of School