

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 Modern Languages and Cultures/Centre for Translation Studies
Subject(s):	<i>MAAVTS MA Audiovisual Studies</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	MODL5006M Introduction to Screen Translation MODL5207M Monolingual Subtitling MODL5025M Audiovisual Translation: Processes, Strategies and Industry-Driven Practice MODL5303M Subtitling Projects
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MA

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?

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

This is the end of my fourth and final year as External Examiner for the MA Audiovisual Translation Studies. It is clear that the students are supported by their tutors and they are well-prepared for the world of work. There have been some adjustments to the curriculum to take account of industry requirements and a good balance between theory and practice is maintained throughout the MA. The programme is essentially training the subtitlers of the future and the programme is designed to help graduates meet their future career aspirations whilst equipping them to deliver subtitled products that are of a high quality. This is, in turn, of benefit to audiences and the wider public. I would like to congratulate the Programme Leader and programme team for the quality of the learning and teaching provision and hope that the MAAVTS continues to thrive.

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.*

As noted in previous reports, the programme outcomes remain appropriate and correspond to FHEQ Level 7 requirements. The aims and intended learning outcomes are in line with the level of the award and the programme corresponds to the QAA Master's degrees characteristics. There is a good balance of theory and practice and the programme has been well-designed to take account of the professional context.

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 MA programme is comparable with similar programmes at other institutions and is in line with the FHEQ.

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.*

Student performance on the programme is very good. For example, there was some strong work in the Subtitling Project module which involves a significant amount of work, first in subtitling the film/programme and then writing the commentary and applying theory to practice. One of the assessments for *L5025M Audiovisual Translation: Processes, Strategies and Industry-Driven Practice* includes a simulation of a request for a subtitling and adaptation job from a potential client. This is a relevant exercise and ensures that as well as being able to complete the more traditional Level 7 assessment types, students are equally equipped to communicate appropriately in a specific professional context. In addition, there is a team project assessment which measures the students' ability to operate within a team, using subtitling tools and CAT tools (memoQ). Assessments have been designed to appropriately measure the ILOs.

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.*

As noted in previous reports, the feedback that students receive is helpful and identifies strengths and weaknesses. The marking criteria are clearly defined and useful feedback sheets are provided in addition to comments that are electronically added to the text. MODL5006M is also an elective for the MA Applied Translation Studies. Students are either required to create monolingual subtitles for a 5 minute clip and include a 1,500 word commentary or they can write a 2,000 word essay which analyses the multilingual subtitles of an audiovisual text and the linguistic or culture-specific translation challenges which occur (from or into English). Allowing students this choice demonstrates that due consideration has been given to the potential differences that may exist across cohorts. This also allows students to play to their strengths and provides them with adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the aims and ILOs. In this particular module, all students passed the course.

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.

There were no changes to the programme structure this year. A new module was introduced in 2014-15 merging MODL5204M *Film Translation and Subtitling* and MODL5203M *Audio-Visual Text Analysis*. The new course, *L5025M Audiovisual Translation: Processes, Strategies and Industry-Driven Practice* has been successfully embedded (please also see comments in 3.)

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 core programme team are research active and this feeds into curriculum design and delivery. There are also close links with practitioners who are usually external freelance subtitlers, acting as language specific tutors. Students gain hands-on experience of industry requirements as well as acquiring the theory and knowledge of the discipline area.

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 received a letter confirming the details of the External Examiner I would be mentoring in 2015-16. This did not require a significant amount of work as the information that is provided by the programme team is detailed and pre-empts potential queries. In addition, the University of Leeds Handbook provides further helpful information to allow External Examiners to fulfil their roles.

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 received the University's 2015-16 External Examiner Handbook which clearly presents guidance to External Examiners. This is supplemented by programme and course documentation provided by the Programme Leader. The material is easily accessible with zipped files that are clearly labelled. I was able to cross-reference grades and feedback sheets, referring to the spreadsheet which records all grades for the full cohort, as required.

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, I received appropriate documentation to cover the range of assessments on the MA programme. Communication with the Programme Leader and the Director of Translation Studies is 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?

The assessment for the MAAVTS is through coursework and there are no examinations. The nature and level of the questions, and the topics for the project work and commentaries, were certainly appropriate.

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?

As in previous years I received a representative sample of work. For smaller cohorts I was sent all scripts. Grades that covered all the boundaries, including borderlines, were submitted. Feedback was detailed, relevant and rigorous throughout. Marking is consistent and fair. Internal moderation processes are in place and evidenced.

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

Students complete a Subtitling Project rather than a dissertation and the topics for the projects were entirely appropriate and at the correct level.

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 attended the MAPLIS Classification Board via Skype on 4 November 2016 as I was unable to attend in person. I am grateful to the Director of Translation Studies and the School Administrator for facilitating this. I was able to participate in the discussions and view student profiles as they were being considered. Borderline cases were discussed, referring to the regulations as appropriate. The Board ran smoothly and the process was rigorous.

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

Yes, all procedures were appropriate and students with mitigating circumstances were duly considered.

Other comments

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

N/A

Dear <<>>,</p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 187 714 203" data-label="Text">
<p>Many thanks for your report on our MA in Audiovisual Translation for 2015-16.</p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 214 879 264" 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 appropriate. I am delighted by your comments on the quality of feedback and the high standard of achievement by our students.</p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 274 886 324" data-label="Text">
<p>I note your enthusiasm for the module MODL5025M and the training in simulated scenarios included in this module. I am also happy to hear you find that the range of assessments measure the outcomes nicely.</p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 335 874 369" data-label="Text">
<p>I am glad that you have found communication with colleagues on matters academic and procedural to be excellent and that you find the provision of documentation appropriate.</p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 379 883 447" data-label="Text">
<p>I would like to thank you for your ongoing commitment to supporting the quality of our programmes and their assessment. Finally, given that this was the final year of your appointment as external examiner at Leeds, I would like to thank you for your support in ensuring the quality of our teaching and assessment over recent years and to express my pleasure in working with you.</p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 484 260 500" data-label="Text">
<p>With kind regards,</p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 592 160 605" data-label="Text">
<p><<>></p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 617 481 632" data-label="Text">
<p>Exams Tutor and Director of Translation Studies</p></div>
<div data-bbox="115 645 160 658" data-label="Text">
<p><<>></p></div>