

**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:	Performance, Culture and Creative Industries
Subject(s):	
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Performance Design PCI2014 PCI2403 PCI3401
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	BA

**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*

.  
no

**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*

2015-16 was an extension of my standard 4-year term of appointment. I submitted an end-of-appointment report in 2014-15. This year, I was only reviewing three modules: Image-based Performance, PCI2014; Design Presentation, PCI2403 and Scenographic Scheme, PCI3401

## 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.*

As in previous years, the ILOs for these modules are well matched to their structure and content.  
The tasks and expectations of the modules are appropriate for the level of study.

### 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 are comparable with those of institutions offering similar modules/programmes – e.g. Aberystwyth University (although I believe the now defunct Performance Design programme offered something unique)

### 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 programme uses a range of innovative methods to allow students to explore theatre/performance through a scenographic lens. The methods are entirely appropriate to the ILOs, and also equip students with a range of valuable transferable skills.

### 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. The range of assessment methods used and module content allowed this.

The students work was generally of a high standard in comparison with other student work in the field of scenography/design in Russell Group universities. This was reflected in the range of grades achieved.

### 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.*

Since this programme is being discontinued, no major enhancements were made.

However, the strength of the distinctive approach to teaching and learning in the Performance Design programme at Leeds is that it extends beyond narrow definitions of and vocational approaches towards performance design. It encourages and equips students to approach theatre from a non-human-centric perspective (echoing current debates in theatre and performance studies) and to develop a range of practical and conceptual skills that can be applied in a wide range of contexts.

### 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.*

There is strong evidence of staff research in the programme. E.g., in courses dealing with immersive theatre/performance, site-specific performance, performance and technology and in the introduction of ideas from new materialist philosophy to performance design. This reflects the research interests of staff and demonstrates their engagement in current developments in the field.

### 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.*

The material sent was presented in an ordered, accessible and timely form. I was provided with ample material to allow me to act effectively as external examiner.

**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 received access to all appropriate documentation.

**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?**

n/a

**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 significant sample of work from the modules I was reviewing. All was clearly labelled and presented with necessary supplementary material.

**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?**

The administrative arrangements were handled with courtesy, warmth and efficiency. I was not able to attend the Board of Examiners this year, but I submitted an oral report, which was read out at the Board. I was sent marks sheets to review and sign, in a timely fashion. In previous years I have found the operation of the Board of Examiners exemplary and recommendations fair and apt. I have no reason to assume it was otherwise this year.

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

Again, I was not present at the Board but my previous experience is that mitigating circumstances and medical evidence are given due and fair consideration and appropriate actions taken.

Other comments

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

I enjoyed having the opportunity to view work on the Performance Design programme for another year. I hope that elements of the distinctive scenographic approach towards the study of theatre and performance offered at the University of Leeds can be carried through into the revised undergraduate programme and into the new Masters programme in Performance Design. The strength of this distinctive approach is that it extends beyond narrow definitions of and vocational approaches towards performance design. It encourages and equips students to approach theatre from a non-human-centric perspective (echoing current debates in theatre and performance studies) and to develop a range of practical and conceptual skills that can be applied in a wide range of contexts. I hope that the distinctive approach of using scenography as a critical lens to explore theatre and performance (and wider social/cultural/political issues) will be carried through into the new curriculum/programme structure.

**FACULTY OF PERFORMANCE, VISUAL ARTS and COMMUNICATIONS**  
**EXTERNAL EXAMINER REPORT: SCHOOL RESPONSE**

<b>School:</b>	PCI
<b>Programme(s):</b>	Performance Design
<b>External Examiner:</b>	
<b>Academic Session:</b>	2015-16

<b>Comment:</b>	<b>Response / Action:</b>
<p>I hope that elements of the distinctive scenographic approach towards the study of theatre and performance offered at the University of Leeds can be carried through into the revised undergraduate programme and into the new Masters programme in Performance Design.</p>	<p>The MA in Performance Design has been launched with the first cohort arriving in Sept 2016. The distinctive approach that the External Examiner identifies as 'using scenography as a critical lens to explore theatre and performance (and wider social/cultural/political issues)' is the guiding principle of this new programme.</p> <p>At undergraduate level, scenographic concerns are embedded in core Theatre and Performance modules, for example, 'Performance Perspectives' and 'Performance Project '(L1) and 'Interpreting Theatre and Performance Histories' (L2).</p> <p>Core creative practice modules also allow scope for a distinctly scenographic approach where specialist staff are part of the teaching teams.</p> <p>A new L2 option in Performance Design has recruited a full group for 2016-17 and a new L3 option in Performance Design is being developed. We expect these options to inform student practice and research in other modules at L2 and L3 and to encourage more progression from UG to PG.</p>
<b>Head of School:</b>	
<b>Programme Manager:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2017