

The University of Leeds

EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2015– 2016

Part A: General Information**Subject area and awards being examined**

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| Faculty / School of: | Business School |
| Subject(s): | Marketing |
| Programme(s) / Module(s): | Semester 1: Marketing Research (LUBS 5450), International Marketing (LUBS 5460), Global Strategic Marketing (LUBS 5409), Marketing Strategy (LUBS 5465). Semester 2: Global Distribution Supply Chain (LUBS 5478), Brand Management and Corporate Identity (LUBS 5432/5433), International Services Marketing (LUBS 5472), Company Marketing Project (LUBS 5488), Consulting Project (LUBS 5500M). |
| Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc): | MSc / 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

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

I have very much enjoyed serving as an External Examiner at Leeds Business School. Over my period of appointment I have found the administrative and academic provision excellent. The administrative process throughout the year was irreproachable (as in previous years) and so was the commitment of staff to the courses that were being offered and taught.

The School has a dedicated administrative support team who have ensured that I have received an appropriate level of scripts/assessment for external moderation and feedback. Likewise, over the period I have received copies of assessment in a timely manner. A range of initiatives has been implemented to ensure quality control across the programmes, which was pleasing to see.

The breadth of assessment and quality of the programme have been excellent overall. This year the marking and assessment by academic staff was exemplary. There were clear instructions to students to show how the marks had been awarded. Building on the feedback that I offered in my 2014/2015 report I was pleased to see that there was tighter internal moderation of the marks across the courses and a stronger audit trail showing how these marks were agreed and internally moderated. Where questions were the same across modules, additional internal moderation was undertaken across the cohort to ensure consistency in the mark allocation and moderation processes. This was very good.

I am very grateful to all staff for the help, support and assistance they have offered towards me over the past four years.

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 stated in previous years the aims and intended learning outcomes were commensurate with the level of the award and standards were appropriate.

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 met the expectations of national subject benchmarks and were comparable with other Russell Group university standards.

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.*

As in previous years there was a broad range of assessment methods used across the different modules. This is in my opinion a strength of the programme. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment methods were endorsed further by student performance.

The documents provided evidence to indicate that students were clearly informed of what they needed to do to achieve marks across the spectrum. There was clarity in the explanation as to how marks would be allocated, submission method and penalty processes, etc., and there was very good feedback given to students to explain how marks were allocated, in terms of both strengths and weaknesses. This was the case for all the modules that I assessed. However, in particular this year the Marketing Consultancy Project (LUBS5500M01), Company Marketing Project (LUBS5488M01) and the Market Research (LUBS5450M01) modules were excellent both in terms of what the students produced and the feedback given by staff. I did have one query re the data on the mark sheet of the Company Marketing Project module. This has since been checked by the administrative team and I believe clarified and amended as appropriate. Outside of this correction no other marks were adjusted.

The level of feedback offered to students on the Brand Management & Corporate Identity modules (5433/5432) (as demonstrated in previous years) was very good.

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.*

Instructions were clear and students were given adequate opportunities to demonstrate their achievement of the Aims and ILOs. The academic standards demonstrated by students were comparable with my experience of other courses being taught at Russell Group Universities.

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.

Overall, the level of feedback was high in terms of the range of comments offered on the coursework assessments and showcased the good practice deployed across the modules. This year all staff had clearly tried hard to ensure the exam scripts contained clear evidence of double marking, script annotation and the signing off of documents across modules. This was really good and was the case for all the subjects externally moderated.

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.

Curriculum design was informed by current research and there was a range of excellent examples whereby staff and students demonstrated how they had engaged in linking theory with practice. As mentioned in point 3 of the document, the Marketing Consultancy Project (LUBS5500M01), Company Marketing Project (LUBS5488M01) and the Market Research (LUBS5450M01) modules were excellent and showed explicit links between theory and practice.

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.

The information that was provided was more than sufficient for me to act effectively as an external examiner both in terms of the materials that were made available to me during my visit to Leeds and also by the electronic files that I received that related to the assessments over the year and the model answers.

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.

As in previous years I received a range of documentation – and the administration of this documentation throughout the year, as with previous years, was 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?

I was provided with draft examination papers/assessments. The nature and level of the questions was appropriate for the modules assessed. However, the multiple choice questions sent for external approval for modules LUBS5465M/ LUBS5409M contained a number of grammatical errors and so were returned for correction. Staff responded quickly and appropriately when this was pointed out and a revised file was sent with the amendments. The revised file was fine and was subsequently approved. No further problems were incurred with this module. The exam scripts made available to me for modules LUBS5465M/ LUBS5409M provided evidence that my feedback had been taken on board and it was noticeable that suitable arrangements were made to consider my comments. I can confirm that when I looked at the scripts for these two modules during my recent visit actions had been taken and the documents that I looked at regarding these modules provided evidence that the module leaders had worked hard to correct the problem. In this capacity the scripts were appropriately marked, moderated and annotated.

Cross curriculum the standard of marking for these modules was excellent, contained relevant feedback, provided evidence of double marking etc. This was very well done and I am grateful to all staff for this.

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?

Sufficient assessed/examined work was made available to me across the range of courses, along with cohort mark sheets. Building on my earlier feedback staff comments/marks were clearly annotated on the relevant documents across module and there were some excellent examples of staff feedback. Modules showed clear evidence of internal marking and consistent feedback from both first and second markers.

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

The choice of project topics was broad and appropriate. There were some excellent projects submitted. The standard of assessment was excellent and consistent across all the markers.

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 did not attend the meeting this year.

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

Yes – to my knowledge

Other comments

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

EVALUATION OF PROGRAMME AS A WHOLE

The courses that I examined were excellent in the teaching methods deployed, the range of assessment offered, the level of advice given to students prior to submission and feedback given after submission. The nature and type of the questions were thought-provoking and were of an appropriate standard for assessment at postgraduate level. The assessment materials/assessment briefs were research-led in style and showed a clear link between theory and practice. As mentioned in previous years my overall assessment is that this is a well run course. This remains my opinion. In general standards are high across the modules and the design and delivery methods enhance the student experience. I wish colleagues well with their future programmes and I thank them for their hard work and the support that they have offered me during my time as external examiner.

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31 March 2017

Dear <<>>,

Thank you for your recent Examiner's Report.

We are very pleased with your comments on our Masters programmes in Marketing, especially our programmes being comparable with benchmark standards, quality of marking and feedback relating to assessments, and the commitment of the Divisional staff to teaching and learning.

We are very pleased to hear that you enjoyed serving as an external examiner at the Leeds University Business School. We also note your observation of the breadth and quality of our assessments that you found to be excellent overall. Your kind comments and suggestions made during your tenure as an external examiner has particularly contributed to tighten internal moderation of our assessments and marking. As a result of your comments we managed to implement several initiatives to ensure quality control across the range of assessments.

We also note your observation of evidence that indicates clear communications with students related to assessments and clarity of explanation as to how marks would be allocated, and the detailed feedback. You particularly note marketing Consultancy Projects (LUBS5500M01), Company Marketing Project (LUBS5488M01), and Marketing Research (LUBS5450M01) as excellent both in terms of what the students produced and the quality of feedback given by the staff.

We very much appreciate your contribution to our programmes during your tenure as the external examiner which helped us to improve on both breadth and quality of assessments across the range of modules you examined.

We are very grateful for your supportive and constructive role and your guidance for our programmes.

Yours sincerely,

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