

The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2016-17

QA Team received 10/07/2017

Part A: General Information

Subject area and awards being examined

Faculty / School of:	Lifelong Learning Centre
Subject(s):	
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Arts and Humanities Foundation Year Modules: LLLC0121; LLLC0122; LLLC0123; LLLC0124; LLLC0143.
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	Foundation Year

Part B: Comments for the Institution on the Examination Process and Standards

Points of innovation and/or good practice

Please highlight areas of innovation or good practice within the programmes or processes you have been involved with in this box.
Assessment: excellent practice, mainly in terms of feedback and the range of assessments offered
Curriculum: current and engaging

Enhancements made from the previous year

Please highlight any enhancements made to the programme(s) or processes over the past year in this box.

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

For Examiners in the first year of appointment

1.	Were you provided with an External Examiners Handbook?	Y / N
2.	Were you provided with copies of previous relevant External Examiners' reports and the response of the School to these?	Y / N
3.	Were you provided with a External Examiner Mentor?	Y / N

For Examiners completing their term of appointment

4.	Have you observed improvements in the programme(s) over the period of your appointment?	Y / N
5.	Has the school responded to comments and recommendations you have made?	Y / N
6.	Where recommendations have not been implemented, did the school provide clear reasons for this?	Y / N
7.	Have you acted as a External Examiner Mentor?	Y / N

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
It was a pleasure to work with this programme as external examiner over these 4 years. The course has always been very well organised and shown very high standards. Marking and assessment are exemplary, feedback is helpful, friendly and clearly rationalised. One of the things that most impressed me and that I really enjoyed about

the programme was to see how students engaged with and grew through the course and coursework and how studying helped them change their lives.

Standards

8.	Is the overall programme structure coherent and appropriate for the level of study?	Y / N
9.	Does the programme structure allow the programme aims and intended learning outcomes to be met?	Y / N
10.	Are the programme aims and intended learning outcomes commensurate with the level of award?	Y / N
11.	Did the Aims and ILOs meet the expectations of the national subject benchmark (where relevant)?	Y / N
12.	Is the programme(s) comparable with similar programmes at other institutions?	Y / N
<p><i>Please use this box to explain your overall impression of the programme structure, design, aims and intended learning outcomes.</i> This is very good. I think that the aims and intended learning outcomes are appropriate and this is apparent in everything especially, and crucially, student performance.</p>		
13.	Is the influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching clear?	Y / N
<p><i>Please explain how this is/could be achieved (examples might include: curriculum design informed by current research in the subject; practice informed by research; students undertaking research)</i> This is clearly there, the average student coursework will engage with a healthy selection of the relevant literature, the feedback normally reflects this concern.</p>		
14.	Does the programme form part of an Integrated PhD?	Y / N
<p><i>Please comment on the appropriateness of the programme as training for a PhD:</i></p>		
15.	Does the programme include clinical practice components?	Y / N
<p><i>Please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum here:</i></p>		
16.	Is the programme accredited by a Professional or Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB)?	Y / N
<p><i>Please comment on the value of, and the programme's ability to meet, PSRB requirements here:</i></p>		

Assessment and Feedback

17.	Does the programme design clearly align intended learning outcomes with assessment?	Y / N
<p><i>Please comment on the assessment methods and the appropriateness of these to the ILOs, in particular: 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> This is excellent, in my view. The assessments are varied, interesting and engaging and are in line with the programme objectives. Marking is rigorous and transparent, there is a consistent process. Students seem to engage well (some quite personally, I would say) with the modules/assessments.</p>		
18.	Is the design and structure of the assessment methods appropriate to the level of award?	Y / N
19.	Were students given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the programme aims and intended learning outcomes?	Y / N

Please comment on 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:
Some really excellent work at the top end of the marking range; more generally, student performance is comparable to that in similar courses.

Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make in relation to assessment and feedback:

I find that this a /key strength in this programme.

The Progression and Awards Process

20.	Were you provided with guidance relating to the External Examiners role, powers and responsibilities in the examination process?	Y / N
21.	Was the progression and award guidance provided sufficient for you to act effectively as an External Examiner?	Y / N
22.	Did you receive appropriate programme documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	Y / N
23.	Did you receive appropriate module documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	Y / N
24.	Did you receive full details of marking criteria applicable to your area(s) of responsibility?	Y / N
25.	Were you provided with all draft examination papers/assessments?	Y / N
26.	Was the nature and level of the assessment questions appropriate?	Y / N
27.	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments on assessment questions?	Y / N
28.	Was sufficient assessed work made available to enable you to have confidence in your evaluation of the standard of student work?	Y / N
29.	Were the examination scripts clearly marked/annotated?	Y / N
30.	Was the choice of subjects for final year projects and/or dissertations appropriate?	Y / N
31.	Was the method and standard of assessment appropriate for the final year projects and/or dissertations?	Y / N
32.	Were the administrative arrangements satisfactory for the whole process, including the operation of the Progression and Awards Board?	Y / N
33.	Were you able to attend the Progression and Awards Board meeting?	Y / N
34.	Were you satisfied with the recommendations of the Progression and Awards Board?	Y / N
35.	Were you satisfied with the way decisions from the School Special Circumstances meeting were communicated to the Progression and Awards Board?	Y / N

Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make on the questions above:

Other comments

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

My only comment reflects a concern that I also have in my own university/programme and has to do with the assessment process as it becomes fully effected through turnitin. I find that turnitin has many limitations which ultimately affect the student learning and experience, from the feedback layout to comments' word length, display of the assessment criteria, etc and I am not sure how helpful this is to the student (especially when compared with the flexibility and range of information possible in the old style feedback forms).

Part C: School Response to External Examiner Report

Name of School and Head of School (or nominee)

Title and Name of Responder:

Position*:

Faculty / School of:

Address for communication:

Email:

Telephone:

Programme Leader, BA Arts and Humanities with Foundation Year

Lifelong Learning Centre

*If the individual responding to the report is not the Head of School please state their position within the School.

Completing the School response

The completed School response (including the full original report) should be attached to an e-mail and sent to the Pro-Dean for Student Education in the relevant Faculty. Following approval by the Pro-Dean for Student Education, the School must send the response (including the full original report) directly to the External Examiner. A copy must also be emailed to the Quality Assurance Team at gat@leeds.ac.uk. External Examiners should receive a formal response no later than six weeks after receipt of the original report.

Response to Points of innovation and/or good practice

The External Examiner's Report highlights excellent practice in feedback, the variety of assessment types within the programme and curriculum design. The positive feedback relating to these areas is particularly welcomed by the programme team. These are core elements which have been a central focus within the development of the foundation year programme over the last four years.

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

No matters were identified

Response to Matters for Urgent Attention

If any areas have been identified for urgent attention before the programme is offered again please provide a specific response to them here:

No matters were identified

Response to questions 1-7 (and related comments)

Schools may provide a general response; however, where Examiners raise specific points these must be addressed individually:

The External Examiner's observations regarding student engagement and the enjoyment and development of the learner as a strength are greatly appreciated. They echo the growth and achievement of many learners on the course. A focus of embedding friendly support and feedback into the programme has been instrumental in shaping how supportive strategies have been established to enable learners to succeed and flourish both in their foundation year and ongoing progression within the university.

Standards

Response to questions 8 to 16 (and related comments)

Schools may provide a general response; however, where Examiners raise specific points these must be addressed individually:

Programme structure and learning outcomes within the foundation year programme are considered both in terms of student development and their progression needs. The External Examiner's response that these are appropriate and are underpinning student performance is welcomed as part of the ongoing development of the Arts and Humanities Foundation Year curriculum which is multi-faceted in its objectives and interdisciplinary in scope. The influence of

research on curriculum design is identified through learners' use of relevant literature which reflects the focus on research which is embedded into module teaching and the skills development of learners.

Assessment and Feedback

Response to questions 17 to 19 (and related comments)

Schools may provide a general response; however, where Examiners raise specific points these must be addressed individually:

The report notes excellent practice in this area, some excellent student work and student performance comparable to similar courses. A focus on pursuing best practice in feedback and assessment, as well as monitoring the student experience of this at programme-level throughout the year, continue to be an area of strong focus and review within the programme.

The Progression and Awards Process

Response to questions 20-35 (and related comments)

Schools may provide a general response; however, where Examiners raise specific points these must be addressed individually:

We are pleased to note the process ran smoothly.

Other comments

Response to items included in the 'Other Comments' section of the report

The External Examiner's comments regarding Turnitin are very helpful as this year the programme has moved to establish e-marking using Turnitin across all modules and assignments. As part of this transition, the programme team is continuing to develop their awareness of the functionality of Turnitin and its scope as a tool for communicating with learners. Further consideration of these areas, such as perhaps trialling audio-feedback in the future via Turnitin, and the limitations of Turnitin is particularly valuable as part of the ongoing development of programme-wide e-marking strategies.

16 October 2017

Dear

External Examiner's Report for 2016-17

I am writing to thank you for your work over the last year, and indeed over your whole period of appointment, as External Examiner for our BA Professional Studies and Foundation Year in Arts and Humanities. This has been a period of significant development for both programmes and we have very much appreciated your observations on our work from an external perspective and welcomed your assurance of the quality of this provision. It is good that you have seen positive developments over the last four years and we appreciate the part that you have played in enabling us to make this continuing progress.

This year, the University has added further sections to the External Examiner's form to provide you with a structured response to your report from our programme teams. Please find the completed forms enclosed so that you can see the thoughts and plans that arise from our consideration of your comments.

With all good wishes,