

The University of Leeds

EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2016-2017

Part A: General Information

Subject area and awards being examined

Faculty / School of:	School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies
Subject(s):	History of Art
Programme(s) / Module(s):	History of Art
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	BA

Name and home Institution / affiliation of Examiner

Title and Name of Examiner:

Institution:

Address for communication:

Email:

Telephone:

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

No – the programme is fascinating – exemplary

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?

Yes – very helpful

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 ILOs and the structure and content of the programme I examined were entirely appropriate, as were the standards for award. The standard is very high.

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 can confirm that the programme standards were comparable to those at equivalent institutions and appropriate with the national benchmark

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.*

I was particularly impressed by the sheer range and scope of the programme – there is such a wide range of courses on offer – including the interface between art and anthropology, non-western art, postcoloniality, revolution, Leftist politics, material culture, gender and cinema. Exemplary and unique. Many other UK institutions could benefit by familiarising themselves with this approach to the study of art/visual culture. As External I was also impressed by the diversity of forms of assessment – this is imperative for the intellectual development of student life. The phasing out of the end of year exam is certainly a good approach especially given the stress/mental health issues that it can lead to. A long dissertation is demanding but the students certainly rise to the challenge.

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.*

Very high standards and consistency. Feedback was consistent. The programme as a whole is certainly theoretically ambitious as are many UK programmes. Leeds however includes a strong personal and imaginative element which is unique. It allows students a tremendous diversity and a very rich and diverse education and multifaceted experience of Art History broadly defined. I am impressed by the strong political commitments eg. ART F3156 Ramaterlisation of Art; ART F3101 The Origins of Postcolonial England; ART F3016 Soviet Socialist Realism, ART F3054 Art, Anthropology and Representation. It must be noted that has done so much to shape this programme. A wonderful achievement.

Standards are high certainly meeting the criteria of national standards.

Good balance between archival and theoretical work across modules -but also especially to be observed in the dissertations. Excellent balance.

I appreciate that this is a very forward looking programme with less 'old school' exams.

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.

This my first year – n/a

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.

Modules are closely related to the research interests of the faculty. This is vibrant, exciting and essential. This is most clearly reflected in the dissertation work. The length of the dissertations is extremely demanding and certainly prepares strong students to have the confidence to go onto further study in any context. The quality of the work is high and students are clearly deeply committed to research and engaged with theory. I look forward to finding out what new modules will be on offer next year. All modules are on an intellectual par as are the results.

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.

Sufficient access to relevant material was available.

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.

Appropriate documentation was available.

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 sent draft assessments and was able to provide comments.

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 was sent sufficient amounts of assessed/examined work. In all but one instance I was able to view annotations. However I was not sent in advance examples of sample moderation for all of the 2nd and 3rd year modules I looked at.

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

Dissertations – very strong and fitted well with the rest of the programme. Clearly students benefitted from staff expertise and careful guidance, and they find wide-ranging opportunities to demonstrate their own individual research skills and abilities. I liked the theoretical ambition. It is not easy to sustain such engagement with a topic over so many words. No fault with the dissertation topic choices. Not too narrow which in some institutions can be the case.

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?

Arrangements were exemplary. I attended the extremely efficient Board and was satisfied with its procedures and recommendations. I found the board to be fair and to be exacting yet sympathetic to problem cases. I was happy that my opinion as External was counted as important in border cases.

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

Proper procedures were in place for mitigating circumstances and medical evidence and I witnessed appropriate considerations for these.

Other comments

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

n/a