

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:	Education
Subject(s):	BA English, Language and Education
Programme(s) / Module(s):	EDUC 2009, EDUC2080, EDUC 3000, EDUC 3009, EDUC3030
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.

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 noted.

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?

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 thoroughly enjoyed my term as external examiner on this degree. The programme is clearly structured, relevant and contemporary, reflecting very well current trends in the field. The support and feedback from tutors is exemplary – among the best I have ever seen in more than 20 years of external examining. It is apparent that students taking this degree receive teaching and learning support of the very highest quality, as exemplified both in their written work and feedback from tutors. The support staff team should also be highly commended for their excellent contribution; administrative support has been excellent and the attention to detail in sending me papers and mark sheets was also exemplary. Thank you all very much for the wonderful and professional support you have given me. It has been a genuine pleasure to work with you all.

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 seem appropriate for the level the course is aimed at. No changes suggested.

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 would say that the ILOs of this programme are comparable to those of other BA degrees of this nature.

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 impressed by the range and variety of assessment types and procedures. It is clear that the course tutors are using an appropriate and varied approach to assessment and making use of many types of task to reflect the diversity of the modules on offer. All assignments I saw were clear, logically structured and intrinsically interesting with a very high level of learning value.

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.*

The overall standards in the sample I saw are high and demonstrate a sound understanding of key concepts. I was especially struck by students' ability to link theory to practice and to draw on both published research and experiential knowledge in their writing. Some of the weaker responses failed to engage adequately with the tasks set and/or made poor use of the literature. The overall marks were high, but I felt appropriate and accurately reflected the abilities of this cohort of students.

5. For Examiners responsible for programmes that include clinical practice components, please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum

Not applicable.

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.

N/A, this is a relatively new programme.

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.

I felt that all the five modules I examined were research led and made extensive use of current literature and recent research studies. It was pleasing too to note that some of the tutors' own work is being used in the modules, a real strength and to observe that research methodologies used (for example in the final year project) are both current and

appropriate to the type of action research being undertaken here. I would say that this degree is located very clearly in an appropriate research area and guided by current debates.

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 am acting as mentor to _____ for the session 2016-2017, but to date, nothing to report.

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 found all the materials which were available to be entirely appropriate, easy to use and transparent. No changes recommended here.

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.

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?

Yes.

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?

Yes, all scripts were clearly marked and demonstrated a useful spread of marks. Feedback from tutors to students is exemplary and students clearly receive excellent feedback which is both formative and summative.

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

Yes, all the final year projects seemed appropriate in terms of both level and content.

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?

Yes, all very satisfactory. I was not able to attend the meeting on this occasion, but I was available by phone.

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

There were none noted, but I believe these procedures are in place and are used where necessary.

Other comments

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

I thoroughly enjoyed meeting the course team and the students, which was a really invaluable aspect of the QA procedure. I believe that this will become an extremely successful degree and would like to congratulate the team for the very high quality of their work and for the time and trouble taken in relation to student guidance and support and to assessment practices more generally. Feedback from the students was excellent (see below) and no real concerns were expressed, though there were suggestions concerning some of the assessment procedures used. I think these suggestions are worth considering. This said, it is obvious to me, from conversations with students and from reading their work, that anyone taking this degree is very well-supported and experiences high quality teaching and support for learning.

BA in English, Language and Education Meeting with students, March 15, 2017

I was able to meet with 4 students from the current cohort, one from Level 2, the rest from Level 3. I asked a range of questions related to their expectations and the extent to which they had been fulfilled; future plans; assessment practices; feedback and support; overall quality of the course.

While there were some differences in their feedback, a number of common themes emerged:

- Overall satisfaction with the degree is high. They all felt it had much to offer and that they were well prepared for a career in education or similar, though one student said might go into marketing!
- Expectations had been met fully or partially.
- Particular strengths include the year abroad, the language learning module, the support provided (especially by).
- Some modules were more interesting and useful than others, but they didn't specify which ones!
- They were unsure about their future plans, but teaching as a career seemed the most likely choice.
- They felt assessment procedures were satisfactory, but they did have a number of suggestions:
 1. Include an examination for at least one module.
 2. Include more than one assignment per module, not 'just' the 5000 word essay
 3. Make sure feedback is dealt with promptly – for some modules they had to wait far too long, they felt.
 4. Go back to the 'old' assignment cover sheet. The feedback they get via Turnitin was felt to be less detailed and less useful. (An issue for us at by the way!).
- There was a suggestion to include the CELTA in the summer of year 2.
- Lots of praise overall for course tutors and admin support.

Part C: School Response to External Examiner Report

Name of School and Head of School (or nominee)

Title and Name of Responder:	
Position*:	Head of School of Education
Faculty / School of:	<i>ESSL</i>
Address for communication:	Hillary Place University of Leeds Leeds LS2 9JT
Email:	
Telephone:	

**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 qat@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

NA

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

NA

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:

None noted

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 comments with regard to the programme are very positive.

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:

The external examiner's comments with regard to the standards are very positive.

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 external examiner is satisfied with the assessment procedures and does not raise any concern.

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:

The external examiner has not raised any concern.

Other comments

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

The external examiner has drawn attention to a number of student suggestions vis-à-vis assessment procedures.

1. Include an examination for at least one module.

Response: This suggestion has been taken into account in the development of BA TESOL programme and we will have examination for more than one module.

2. Include more than one assignment per module, not 'just' the 5000 word essay

Response: Some of our current modules already have more than one assignment (e.g. EDUC3009, EDUC3000) but a variety of assessment procedures have been put in place for the BA TESOL programme.

3. Make sure feedback is dealt with promptly – for some modules they had to wait far too long, they felt.

Response: This is an important issue which has been raised in Undergraduate Strategy meetings but needs to be emphasized in future again.

4. Go back to the 'old' assignment cover sheet. The feedback they get via Turnitin was felt to be less detailed and less useful. (An issue for us at by the way!).

Response: Given the affordances of Turnitin, it is definitely possible to provide detailed and useful feedback (as most tutors already do so). But we will raise this issue in future Undergraduate Strategy/Programme meetings.

5. There was a suggestion to include the CELTA in the summer of year 2.

Response: Currently, our Level 2 students actually receive 10% discount for doing a CELTA at Leeds Centre of English Studies (Action English)