

The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2016-17

Part A: General Information

Subject area and awards being examined

Faculty / School of:	Education
Subject(s):	MA Technology, Education and Learning MA Technology, Education and Learning (Distance) MA ICT and Education
Programme(s) / Module(s):	All modules
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MA

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.

The programme uses a number of innovative assessment methods reflecting the nature of the modules and the intended learning outcomes. This is commendable given much of assessments at HE and specially at M level in the social sciences tend to be in the form of written essays. On this programme, students can demonstrate their learning outcomes as a designed lesson as text-based or as a Prezi presentation, a group assignment, etc). The modules also use the potential of VLE and face-to-face methods to provide a good blend of learning resources and opportunities.

Enhancements made from the previous year

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

I didn't get a chance to discuss this aspect with the course team. I will report on this in my next report.

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.

For Examiners in the first year of appointment

1.	Were you provided with an External Examiner Handbook?	Y / N
2.	Were you provided with copies of previous External Examiners' reports and the School's responses 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 an External Examiner Mentor?	Y / N
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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

Standards

8.	Is the overall programme structure coherent and appropriate for the level of study?	Y
9.	Does the programme structure allow the programme aims and intended learning outcomes to be met?	Y
10.	Are the programme aims and intended learning outcomes commensurate with the level of award?	Y
11.	Did the Aims and ILOs meet the expectations of the national subject benchmark (where relevant)?	Y
12.	Is the programme(s) comparable with similar programmes at other institutions?	Y

Please use this box to explain your overall impression of the programme structure, design, aims and intended learning outcomes.

The modules in the programmes are well-designed, using the potential of VLE and face-to-face elements blending very well. Discussions I have had with the course team (and with the students in my previous attendance at the examiner meetings) were helpful for me to understand that students are well supported on the programmes I have examined. The sample of assignments that I have reviewed showed that students have achieved the intended learning outcomes and they have generally demonstrated very good understanding of the topics they have explored through their assessed work. There were clear links between their assignment topics or themes and their professional backgrounds. Students are generally well-supported in these modules and the majority of them have received high quality of feedback highlighting both strengths and weaknesses of their work.

As mentioned in my previous report, it might be worth thinking about the extent and the consistency of the use of detailed advice for students to improve their work. There is some excellent annotation on the scripts by some tutors.

13.	Is the influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching clear?	Y
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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)

Students undertake a piece of research for their final assessment (Critical Study). They also have access to a module in which they can improve their knowledge and skills on research methods. Programme has drawn from the core research team's research in the topic area.

14.	Does the programme form part of an Integrated PhD?	Y / N Not known
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Please comment on the appropriateness of the programme as training for a PhD:

The programme provides a suitable foundation for students who are planning to enrol on a PhD programme in the topic area.

15.	Does the programme include clinical practice components?	N
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Please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum here:

16.	Is the programme accredited by a Professional or Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB)?	N
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Please comment on the value of, and the programme's ability to meet, PSRB requirements here:

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Assessment and Feedback

17.	Does the programme design clearly align intended learning outcomes with assessment?	Y
<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></p> <p>Topics selected for assessments are generally linked to students' professional context and personal interests with clear link to academic literature. As I have mentioned early in this report, the modules use innovative assessment methods relevant to the intended leaning outcomes and the nature of the modules. These are also in line with the professional background of the learner on the programme. Students can choose topics that are relevant to their professional background / context.</p>		
18.	Is the design and structure of the assessment methods appropriate to the level of award?	Y
19.	Were students given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the programme aims and intended learning outcomes?	Y
<p><i>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:</i></p> <p>Learning outcomes, marking and feedback given to students are comparable with similar programmes that I am familiar with. In carrying out assignments, students have drawn on from the course concepts that they have engaged in their learning and study activities on the modules, and used a wide range of literature demonstrating a good level of engagement with their chosen area / theme. Those who have obtained higher grades demonstrate good evidence of critical engagement with the subject material, a critical assessment of the literature, and adherence to accurate academic writing conventions. Weaker assignments show limited engagement with core concepts and academic literature.</p> <p><i>Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make in relation to assessment and feedback:</i></p> <p>Students receive feedback and support both orally and in writing before they submit their assignments. Feedback / Marksheets and annotated scripts show that students have been well-supported in their engagement with both learning activities and assessed work. Feedback for assignments were very helpful and formative, written in accessible style with in most cases clear suggestions for improvement. In some cases, for weaker students the markers have encouraged the students to improve their academic reading and writing. Consistency in the detailed feedback (eg., advice for improving students work in the form of bullet points?) might be a useful approach to consider.</p>		

The Progression and Awards Process

20.	Were you provided with guidance relating to the External Examiner's role, powers and responsibilities in the examination process?	Y
21.	Was the progression and award guidance provided sufficient for you to act effectively as an External Examiner?	Y
22.	Did you receive appropriate programme documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	Y
23.	Did you receive appropriate module documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	Y
24.	Did you receive full details of marking criteria applicable to your area(s) of responsibility?	Y
25.	Were you provided with all draft examination papers/assessments?	Y
26.	Was the nature and level of the assessment questions appropriate?	Y
27.	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments on assessment questions?	Y

28.	Was sufficient assessed work made available to enable you to have confidence in your evaluation of the standard of student work?	Y
29.	Were the examination scripts clearly marked/annotated?	Y
30.	Was the choice of subjects for final year projects and/or dissertations appropriate?	Y
31.	Was the method and standard of assessment appropriate for the final year projects and/or dissertations?	Y
32.	Were the administrative arrangements satisfactory for the whole process, including the operation of the Progression and Awards Board?	Y
33.	Were you able to attend the Progression and Awards Board meeting?	N [November meeting]
34.	Were you satisfied with the recommendations of the Progression and Awards Board?	Y
35.	Were you satisfied with the way decisions from the School Special Circumstances meeting were communicated to the Progression and Awards Board?	Y
<p><i>Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make on the questions above:</i></p> <p>I apologise for not attending the examiner meeting in November 2017. I had put the wrong date in my diary and only realised this mistake the day after the board meeting. Missing this meeting meant I lost a valuable opportunity meet the course leader and the programme team as well as the opportunities they provide for me to meet the students on the course.</p>		

Other comments

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

I appreciate all the work that goes into making my work as an external examiner easier and more productive. I want to thank the administration team for their work. As I mentioned previously, adequate time has been allocated and arrangements have been made to meet the course team and some of the students. I also value the opportunity to meet other external examiners to discuss our views in a shared platform, and finally to offer feedback at the Examination and Assessment Committee Meeting.

Name of School and Head of School (or nominee)

Title and Name of Responder:

Position*:

Faculty / School of:

Address for communication:

Email:

Telephone:

Head of School	
<i>ESSL/ School of Education</i>	
Hillary Place University of Leeds Leeds LS2 9JT	

*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

We welcome the positive feedback about innovation and good practice in assessment. This will be further developed in the new MA Digital Education in which each module will be assessed in a different way, making use of innovative digital approaches to assessment.

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

There are no comments about enhancements.

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:

There are no matters for urgent attention.

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:

There are no responses to questions 1-7.

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:

We welcome the positive feedback about the high standard of the programme and the support given to students. We note the suggestion about consistency with regard to detailed feedback and the programme team will consider this.

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:

We welcome the positive feedback on assessment and student support with drafts. As above, the programme team will consider suggestions about improving consistency of detailed feedback.

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 appreciate the work and care that _____ puts into examining this programme. The programme team was disappointed that we were unable to meet in November as we look forward to discussing developments as

we move from the MA Technology, Education and Learning to the MA Digital Education. We hope that
will continue as external examiner for the MA Digital Education.

Other comments

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

We welcome the positive feedback about the work of the administration team and the opportunities to discuss
our programmes with other external examiners.