

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):	TESOL
Programme(s) / Module(s):	MA Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) MEd Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MA/MEd

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.

Within the module specifications, there is scope for module tutors to read and give advice upon drafts of student assignments. This is unusual (and commendably resource intensive) on a programme of this type – and is a remarkable aspect of the Leeds provision compared with other UK institutions. (However, see also *Matters for Attention* below).

There is widespread use of portfolio work in for assessing modules. This enables students to embed their theoretical knowledge in suitably 'applied' type of work, such as materials development or language analysis.

There is also on many modules very well staged progression through different assessment points. In a/y 2016-7, I noted this in particular in relation to *EDUC5931M Analysing Language Learning*.

Enhancements made from the previous year

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

The year 2016-7 was the last year in which this iteration of the MA TESOL was rolled out. I am currently engaging with a major recasting of the programme in a/y 2017-2018 and will make more detailed comments 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

Despite the best intentions of module tutors, in the a/y 2016-2017, students raised the issue of some inconsistencies in the provision of reading drafts across different modules on the programme. However, I conveyed this orally to the programme leader, and am confident that this matter is being addressed by the course team for a/y 2017-8.

For Examiners in the first year of appointment

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

For Examiners completing their term of appointment

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

N/A	
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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 programme's Aims and ILOs are entirely comparable with similar programmes at other institutions and against national benchmarks.

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)

As in previous years, the curriculum is pf the programme influenced by current research as follows:

- In its unswerving commitment to maintain the links between theory and practice in keeping with the best pedagogic research in the field
- In its deployment of progressive assessment techniques such as portfolio learning.

Learning and teaching is influenced by current research as follows:

- In the use of a VLE to ensure that students can access and engage with their leaning materials at all times and in all places

The use of a varied range of teaching contexts in order to address the individualised needs of learners: from lectures, to seminars, to tutorials, to small group conferencing, to individual conferencing.

14.	Does the programme form part of an Integrated PhD?	N
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N/A	
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15.	Does the programme include clinical practice components?	N
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N/A		
16.	Is the programme accredited by a Professional or Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB)?	N
<p><i>Please comment on the value of, and the programme's ability to meet, PSRB requirements here:</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">N/A</p>		

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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All assignments tasks were well-conceived and the rubric well set out on assignment sheets, which were particularly well set out, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Excellent paperwork and proforma: o Well designed and clear proforma for marking o Tightly specified criteria for marking o Detailed grade sheets o Good presentation of course assignments o Well-designed assignment sheets - There was a good range of assessment tasks, including expository assignments, analytical assignments, a portfolio of pedagogic tasks and assessed presentations. - Assessment tasks were well designed in relation to the practical context of language teaching and learning. In this there was a very good attempt to contextualise the knowledge and skills which the students were learning on the programme. - On the whole there was very thoroughgoing feedback on assignments, although it was a little uneven in places. It would be good to ensure consistency in quantity of feedback across all modules on the programme (although this was the case in most modules on the programme). The markers of the critical study, however, are to be commended on the consistency of their feedback, both in terms of quality and quantity. <p>The overall high level of student performance reflected a good quality of teaching and learning across all modules.</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>The students demonstrated the full range of academic standards, with the top performing students were amongst the best I have seen in 20 years in the UK HE sector. In this respect the student performance was broadly comparable with other courses in the field. The strengths of the students as a cohort included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ability to relate theory to academic practice - ability to understand assessment task and execute it - ability to analyse the data set - good academic skills 		
<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>If there was one weakness, it was probably in critical thinking, which unfortunately, is a perennial challenge given the diversity of students on the programme.</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?	Y
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

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

I would like to reiterate, and draw attention to my view, that once again this year the administrative arrangements for convening the PGT Exam Board at Leeds School of Education were the indisputably the best I have come across in UK HE, and indeed in HE internationally. It displays the highest levels of excellence and is a sure-fire guarantee of the maintenance of standards across PGT programmes in the School.

Other comments

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

I attended each of the two programme boards in a/y 2016-7. Each visit I met a group of elected representatives from the two programmes for which I have oversight. While there are one or two minutiae of operational issues which arise, which I feed back immediately to the programme leaders, the students overwhelmingly endorse both programmes and the experience which they have on them (apart from the single point which I have raised requiring attention above). In particular, students are highly appreciative of the commitment and professionalism of the program tutors they encounter on their modules.

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 MA TESOL Studies

Education

Hillary Place

*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 are delighted at the recognition given to:

- the assignment support we provide by means of comments on drafts;
- the variety in our modes of assessment, including portfolio work;
- the staged progression through different assessment points in some of our modules.
-

We feel that these are important dimensions of our strategy to support a diverse, international student cohort on a very intensive learning experience.

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

N/A

We look forward to the External Examiner's thoughts on our newly structured programme.

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:

Immediately following the External Examiner's last visit, TESOL colleagues were made aware of the issue relating to 'inconsistencies in the provision of reading drafts across different modules on the programme'. We are quietly confident that this issue will not arise again this year. All students are offered the opportunity to submit a draft and to receive feedback on this. It is up to the student whether s/he takes advantage of this opportunity.

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:

N/A

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 are very pleased that the External Examiner responds positively to the 'Standards' related questions. It is heartening that he acknowledges our research informed and research driven teaching, our 'progressive assessment techniques' and our exploitation of the VLE.

We are committed to further enhancing our work in this area.

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 are pleased that the External Examiner is very happy with almost all dimensions of our assessment procedures and related documentation. We are aware that, although our feedback is generally very good, this is not universally the case. Our Head of TPG, in particular, has done excellent work to ensure greater consistency.

Especially pleasing is the External Examiner's comment: 'The students demonstrated the full range of academic standards, with the top performing students amongst the best I have seen in 20 years in the UK HE sector'.

We will certainly address the identification of 'critical thinking' as a deficiency, regardless of the challenge this poses in relation to our diverse student population.

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 aware of the excellence of our colleagues in the Student Education Office and are delighted that the External Examiner too acknowledges the wonderful support they provide to students, tutors, External Examiners and others.

The following comment is richly deserved: '...the administrative arrangements for convening the PGT Exam Board at Leeds School of Education were indisputably the best I have come across in UK HE and indeed in HE internationally. It displays the highest level of excellence and is a sure-fire guarantee of the maintenance of standards across PGT programmes in the School.'

Other comments

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

We are grateful to our External Examiner for the positive feedback on the commitment and professionalism of programme tutors.

We are deeply grateful to _____ for _____ detailed insights and tireless commitment to supporting us in our efforts to improve our provision.

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 Education
Subject(s):	<i>TESOL</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	EDUC 5991 M – Approaches and contexts in TESOL EDUC 5992 M – Introduction to second language acquisition EDUC 5993 M – Teaching oral and written skills for TESOL EDUC 5994 M – Language testing EDUC 5008 M – Critical study EDUC 5431 M – Dissertation
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MA TESOL (China)

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

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

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.*

Learning outcomes are appropriate to the level of the award and the structure and content of the programme are appropriate to the type of award.

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.*

Yes, the aims and ILOs are comparable to those of similar course at other universities and in line with benchmarks set by the HEQ framework.

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 visited Guangdong University of Foreign Studies in March 2017 and some of my comments below are adapted or drawn directly from the report I submitted to Leeds soon afterwards.

Teaching

The quality of teaching on the programme appears to be high. The current students (the 2016-17 cohort) were deeply appreciative of _____'s teaching of the first module in October 2016, and during my visit I observed a very well-taught lesson on assessment provided by _____. _____ is clearly very knowledgeable in _____ subject area; _____ has a PhD in assessment, which has led to relevant publications. _____ communicates _____ enthusiasm for _____ subject area well. _____ teaching style is characterized by a friendly manner and a pleasant sense of humour. The pace of the lesson seemed appropriate, with thoughtful eliciting and well-chosen examples.

_____ was also supporting the students through non-credit teaching of statistics, which could feed into their EDUC 5994M assignments. Some students reported they felt a little intimidated, though, by the Mathematics, and, in response to students' requests, _____ was offering extra sessions. It seemed likely, though, that some students would choose an assignment focus that required less emphasis on statistics; it is important that such an option is retained.

Tutorial support

Some of the students reported that it had been difficult initially to adjust to the more autonomous learning style required by the programme at the commencement of their studies, and highlighted that they would have liked more individual help in making the transition. More individual guidance on the research proposal would also have been much appreciated.

There were comments as well about support on the first two assignments. One student reported that _____ was allowed to email the course tutor 2-3 times, but couldn't get further support after that. In response, I pointed out that tutors would wish to avoid over-supporting students and would also wish to achieve some consistency in the level of support provided each student.

However, if students simply felt 'confused' and wanted to talk, I suggested there should be avenues available. The students said, though, that it was impossible to speak to some of their teachers out of class individually about matters relating to their studies that troubled them. This surprised me and I asked _____ about teachers keeping office hours – being available in their office, perhaps for just 2 specific hours per week when they can be consulted by any student seeking advice. _____ said this practice was inconsistent. Some of the local faculty do this, while others do not make themselves available for consultation in this way. There was no suggestion that any of the Leeds staff were not accessible, and indeed it was made very clear to me that _____ in particular had been extremely accessible, and not only during office hours. I would recommend that all faculty on site connected with the programme are encouraged to employ the practice of keeping regular office hours.

Marking and feedback

The students made no criticisms about the feedback they had received on their first two assignments, which

suggests improvements have been made in this area (and I also thought the feedback on EDUC 5991M and 5992M was generally good). However, I did also note that the locally-marked assignment (EDUC 5992M) appeared more generously marked than the Leeds-marked one (EDUC 5991M). Several key differences (which mirror those I identified last year regarding EDUC 5993M and EDUC 5994M) are as follows:

Module	Mean average	Percentage of students gaining 60% plus
EDUC 5991M	60%	46%
EDUC 5992M	64%	73%

Despite positive comments from current students, it became evident during my meeting with teaching staff that more guidance in marking practices is needed; assumptions as to shared understandings should not be made, particularly since there have been periodic changes in staffing in China.

I was quite astonished, during my meeting with them, when it was reported by [redacted] and [redacted] that they had never seen the marking criteria, and had assumed that Leeds did not have any set criteria they provided markers. This might explain the apparent mismatch between comments and scores awarded that I have sometimes noted. [redacted] also reported that sometimes [redacted] referred to marking criteria provided by the [redacted] (used for a joint programme for novice teachers they have with that university) while marking University of Leeds scripts. [redacted] said [redacted] had also done this. [redacted] went on to say that the [redacted] sends them the marking criteria every year, while reiterating [redacted] had never seen those from Leeds. In mitigation, it should be pointed out firstly that [redacted] said [redacted] had not been working on the Leeds programme for very long; it is quite possible that other Guangdong-based staff at the university who were not present at the meeting were much more familiar with the Leeds marking criteria. Another possibility, one raised by [redacted] in August, is that rather than criteria, [redacted] was referring to something else, perhaps “a more detailed set of guidelines for how to write the feedback using these criteria”.

However, this situation does underline the need for highly explicit advice, sharing of information and in-service training on a regular basis. It is evident that key information can be misunderstood or forgotten quite quickly. For example, [redacted] informed me two years ago that [redacted] had corrected a misapprehension on the part of Guangdong-based staff that all assignments needed to be double-marked. However, when I looked at the EDUC 5994M scripts in August 2017, I noticed that all had been double-marked. [redacted]’s advice from 2015 had either been forgotten or had not reached everyone who needed to know.

So, it is necessary to be highly explicit in sharing information and advice on a regular basis. Since my visit to China in March, [redacted] has told me that [redacted] had a meeting about marking practices with Guangdong-based staff; this was in October. Then, in November, [redacted] reported on leading a session in Guangdong on using the marking criteria and writing feedback for students; [redacted] indicated the participants “were certainly very engaged and interested, commenting extensively during the session”. So, various misunderstandings regarding assessment that were apparent during my visit have been addressed in positive ways that have supported professional development.

A further approach that could be adopted to improve quality practices concerns the second marking of scripts. [redacted] did actually say, in March, that early in the programme there had been closer cooperation in marking, with the second marker of each script drawn from the other university. However, after a few years this practice (which sounds excellent) had been abandoned. [redacted] was unsure why. It is a practice I would certainly recommend restoring, if possible, partly for the professional development benefits. For example, feedback on an EDUC 5994M script that scored 52% included the following comment: “the most serious drawback of this study is that the writer is not only the researcher but the teacher in the case study. How could the writer deal with the observer’s paradox? To what extent can the writer be sure of [redacted] impartiality?” It occurs to me that if the second marker had come from Leeds, maybe that teacher/researcher might have been able to engage the first marker in fruitful discussion as to the characteristics and value of practitioner research, the need for reflexivity in that line of inquiry and ways of encouraging this.

Other issues in the marking of EDUC 5994M this year include no substantive indication in the second marking process of reasons for final grades being decided on when there was disagreement between the markers, e.g. “the second marker in principle agrees with the first marker, but suggesting lowering the mark below 70” to 64; the agreed mark was 66. Another, perhaps related, issue is that the range of scores was quite narrow, between 50 and 68. In contrast, markers in Leeds (for EDUC 5991, EDUC 5993 and EDUC 5431) utilized a wider range of scores and also invariably adopted excellent second marking practices. This underlines the need for expertise to be shared. Hopefully, this is now happening to a greater extent, as the messages I have received in the last few months from [redacted] and [redacted] suggest.

Administrative arrangements

While it was clear from my visit in March that the relationships between Leeds and Guangdong staff are generally very positive, it was evident that administrative arrangements could be improved in some respects.

Firstly, there is the issue of the 'missing' marking criteria referred to above. [redacted] assured me in August that Leeds would send the marking criteria to [redacted] every semester; [redacted] also indicated Guangdong-based staff have always had the criteria (which to me makes perfect sense; I am always sent the criteria - I believe it simply needs to be done more explicitly). Secondly, when the degree certificates for the 2016 graduates were delayed earlier this year (arriving in March 2017 rather than November/December 2016), there was no obvious explanation from Leeds, according to [redacted] who indicated [redacted] had sent emails requesting information and action. A third indication that information could be better shared or more explicitly flagged up is that Guangdong-based staff were under the impression that the final degree classifications had not been shared with them; they felt they had been thus left in the dark regarding the final outcomes achieved by their students. [redacted] assured me in August that [redacted] would show the Guangdong-based staff how to access their students' scores from the university portal during his October visit.

Facilities

The facilities seem good overall, though due to the slow Internet in China, it can be a challenge accessing information from Leeds websites. The library provides a very pleasant learning environment for students, with lots of study space and light, with stunning mountain views in the background. I wondered whether, though, the library could stock hard copies of all past dissertations. There is a small selection of these from early in the programme available for students to consult. If all were available, students could consult them and build their research on past studies. For this to happen, electronic copies of all past dissertations would need to be submitted to turnitin. However, the potential value, in terms of improved research, would surely make this effort worthwhile.

Concluding comments

While there is room for improvement in some of the areas above, I would emphasize that everyone I spoke to at Guangdong University of Foreign Studies has conveyed having received a positive impression overall of the University of Leeds. The partnership is clearly valued very highly.

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 academic standards demonstrated by the students were good overall, and some of the work was excellent, comparing well with that produced on other courses.

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.

As noted above, various improvements are being made.

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.

With regard to several modules, the managers are leading researchers in the field, and this is clear from the curriculum, the choice of assessment titles provided and the feedback.

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.

Yes, everything was provided.

- 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, appropriate documentation was provided.

- 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. I was provided with the assessment tasks. I thought the level of the questions was highly appropriate.

- 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, this was all fine. I was provided with the assessment and a range of work from all grade bands. The work was annotated.

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

Yes, certainly.

- 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, the arrangements were helpful. However, unfortunately I was unable to attend the meetings this year.

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

Yes, appropriate procedures were in place.

Other comments

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

Name of School and Head of School (or nominee)

Title and Name of Responder:

Position*:

Faculty / School of:

Email:

Telephone:

Head of School	
<i>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 are pleased that the examiner is aware that there are incremental improvements made to the programme each year.

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

In response to last year's report, conducted a workshop in November 2017 with the GDUFs tutors on using the assessment criteria for marking. As our PGT criteria are being revised, we will conduct a further workshop during 2018-19 to familiarize them with the new criteria.

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:

n/a

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:

n/a

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 thank for the many helpful suggestions in this section. In particular we note:

- The idea of reintroducing the practice of second marking being shared between Leeds and GDUFs staff on every module. We will implement this for the dissertations this year, and will consider it for modules in academic year 2018-19.
- The need to clarify when second and double marking is required.
- The need to improve communications among the team of tutors.
- The idea of placing hard copies of all MA dissertations in the campus library for students to consult.

The programme leader will send a message to all GDUFs and Leeds tutors clarifying these aspects of the assessment process and stressing that is available to be a conduit for all queries concerning student marks and classifications, and indeed other teaching-related aspects of the programme.

He will ask (local programme administrator and link) whether all previous MA dissertations could be placed in the library or if not, at least a wider selection of more recent high quality works.

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're pleased that the examiner is satisfied with current procedures.

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:

As above.

Other comments

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

n/a

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 Education
Subject(s):	TESOL
Programme(s) / Module(s):	EDUC 5001M – Critical Study EDUC 5430M – Dissertation EDUC 5901M – Teaching and Learning in TESOL EDUC 5902M – Investigating Language for TESOL EDUC 5925M – Teacher Education for TESOL EDUC 5935M – Materials Development for TESOL EDUC 5306M – The Practice of Supporting Language Teacher Learning EDUC 5981M – Teaching Languages to Young Learners
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MA TESOL / TESOL Studies / TESOL & ICT / Teacher Education / YLs

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

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

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.*

Learning outcomes are appropriate to the level of the award and the structure and content of the programme are appropriate to the type of award.

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.*

Yes, the aims and ILOs are comparable to those of similar course at other universities and in line with benchmarks set by the HEQ framework.

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.*

EDUC 5901M - Teaching and learning in TESOL

The assignment encourages students to reflect on issues relating to the teaching of listening and speaking skills (in Part 1) and reading and writing skills (in Part 2) in contexts they are familiar with; these are contexts that the students have typically left temporarily for study in the UK. As I have commented before, this is a very suitable task for students at this stage in the course. It usually stimulates some fascinating responses describing and analysing learning and teaching in various parts of the world, and within the work from this year's cohort there are some very thoughtful pieces.

However, when reading students' Part 2 assignments immediately after reading the same students' Part 1 assignments, I was struck by differences in the quality of the feedback. Perhaps it is more important in a way that the feedback on the Part 1 assignments is more formative, sensitively worded and helpful, since the students' overall grade for the module will result, to a certain extent, from how well they learn from this feedback as they approach Part 2. Nevertheless, the feedback on the Part 2 assignments should also be carefully formative, particularly since the students receive it at a time when it can still influence their work on other modules.

In this case, the feedback on the Part 1 assignments was excellent, including for example not only sensitive advice but also helpful suggestions about how to take interest in a field forward. In contrast, feedback on the Part 2 assignments was fairly minimal. I felt especially sorry for one student who scored 67%; the feedback gave no indication of how could have achieved a better score. An additional issue in this particular case is that, since the student had scored 70% on Part 1, this left stranded on 69%. In such borderline cases, I would suggest that there could be some discussion between the Part 1 and Part 2 markers about whether the student deserved a distinction overall for the module.

EDUC 5902M – Investigating Language for TESOL

This module provides valuable linguistic input, and the assignment clearly supports the development of needed linguistic knowledge. Some very good work was produced for the assignment, and some of the feedback was excellent. Feedback is of course vital when students fail. In cases where this happened in this module, very clear explanations were given.

Second marking practices on this module are clearly robust. On the second markers' sheet, it was very good to see interaction between the markers and the decision-making process made explicit, which is good for everyone within the community of practice, especially perhaps any newcomers.

EDUC 5925M – Teacher Education for TESOL

The course content of this module is highly stimulating, and it was good to see that a very interesting choice of assignment questions was offered. Most students, though (whose work I saw), seemed to opt for their own titles, which in some ways was perhaps a little disappointing since in one or two cases there might have been a temptation to focus on something slightly easier or more formulaic. Perhaps the process of justifying choice of an original topic should be made a little stiffer?

Feedback was extremely well-written, so that even a student who deservedly scored 74% was given clear advice on how the assignment could have been better, which is how it should be. Second marking practices were also excellent, with illuminating discussions evident between markers and final decisions on the mark awarded justified.

EDUC 5935M – Materials Development for TESOL

The assignment clearly encourages deep engagement with materials, whether these are designed or adapted (the options chosen by the students in the sample). As with last year, there was evidence of students investing thoughtfully and creatively in the process, and it was good to see the best deservedly rewarded. The feedback was of very high quality.

EDUC 5306M – The Practice of Supporting Language Teacher Learning

I feel the assignment tasks for this module are very well-designed, catering effectively to teachers / teacher trainers of varying levels of experience. Some highly proficient, deeply reflective and quite self-critical work was produced. Clearly, exposure to reflective mentoring on the course has facilitated deep learning taking place. The feedback was appropriate, very sensitively-written.

EDUC 5981M – Teaching Languages to Young Learners

The assignment task seems appropriate, clearly allowing stronger students to excel. A 73% in the sample, for example, made sophisticated use of the literature in providing detailed and insightful analysis. In contrast, the weaker students do seem to struggle to use criteria from the literature to support their evaluations. The marking seemed very fair.

EDUC 5430M – Dissertation

There was some excellent work amongst the scripts I saw, containing well-nuanced, reflective argumentation and demonstrating deep learning from the course. However, there were weaker scripts too, including the one that started the literature review: "According to Wikipedia..." and another that devoted a chapter to 'Graphs'. While I am fully aware that lecturers within the School of Education work tirelessly to encourage students to benefit from the tutorial support on offer, it is unfortunate that there are nevertheless students who do not seem to avail themselves of this help. While this is a problem everywhere, this might suggest a continual need for creative solutions, so that fewer students fall through the net.

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 academic standards demonstrated by the students were good overall, and some of the work was excellent, comparing well with that produced on other courses.

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.

The nature of the assignments promotes deep engagement and most of the feedback is very good.

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.

The various lecturers bring relevant research expertise to these modules, which clearly informs the teaching and assessing of them.

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.

Yes, everything was provided.

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, appropriate documentation was provided.

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. I was provided with the assessment tasks. I thought the nature and level of the questions were highly appropriate.

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, this was all fine. I was provided with the assessment and a range of work from all grade bands. The work was annotated.

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

Yes, highly appropriate.

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, the arrangements were helpful, but unfortunately I was unable to attend the meetings this year.

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

Yes, appropriate procedures were in place.

Other comments

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

Name of School and Head of School (or nominee)

Title and Name of Responder:

Position*:

Faculty / School of:

Email:

Telephone:

Head of School	
<i>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

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Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

We appreciate your positive responses.

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

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:

NA

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 are pleased that you have responded positively to these questions.

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 are pleased that you have provided positive response to the questions about assessment and feedback. Your point about EDUC5901 marking and feedback is noted. We will try to address this concern through reminding module tutors/markers of the importance of providing detailed and high-quality feedback for both

assignments. We appreciate your suggestion as to discussing borderline overall marks. The assessment criteria for the School of Education has been rewritten and with Categorical Marking being implemented from 2018/19 hopefully this issue will be addressed as well.

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:

NA

Other comments

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

NA