

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):	Secondary
Programme(s) / Module(s):	SCITT
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	PG Cert

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.

Enhancements made from the previous year

N/A as this is the first year of the SCITT so no previous EE report.

Matters for Urgent Attention

None

For Examiners in the first year of appointment

1.	Were you provided with an External Examiners Handbook?	Yes
2.	Were you provided with copies of previous relevant External Examiners' reports and the response of the School to these?	N/A as 1 st year of the programme
3.	Were you provided with an External Examiner Mentor?	Yes

For Examiners completing their term of appointment

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

Please comment on your experience of the programme(s) over the period of your appointment, remarking in particular on changes from year to year and the progressive development and enhancement of the learning and teaching provision, on standards achieved, on marking and assessment and the procedures of the School

Standards

8.	Is the overall programme structure coherent and appropriate for the level of study?	Yes
9.	Does the programme structure allow the programme aims and intended learning outcomes to be met?	Yes

10.	Are the programme aims and intended learning outcomes commensurate with the level of award?	Yes
11.	Did the Aims and ILOs meet the expectations of the national subject benchmark (where relevant)?	Yes
12.	Is the programme(s) comparable with similar programmes at other institutions?	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please use this box to explain your overall impression of the programme structure, design, aims and intended learning outcomes. <p>The external examining process has revealed a well-structured programme that is run efficiently by both the university and the Red Kite SCITT. The students I met felt well prepared for their NQT year and had a good understanding of the demands of the teaching profession and had all gained employment. Strong and effective academic and pastoral support was cited by each student and an understanding of the relevance and value of each aspect of the programme. Students commented on the commitment of leaders from both the University and the Red Kite SCITT and on the bespoke approach to designing and developing the SCITT programme to meet the needs of schools and students/trainees.</p> <p>The PG aspect of the programme supports QTS development well.</p> <p>Quotes from the meeting with trainees include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I enjoy the Uni days on the whole. Putting everything together I now realise how much I have learnt. It's a really good course and I wouldn't want to have trained anywhere else! 		
13.	Is the influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching clear?	Yes
<p>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)</p> <p>The students were involved in small-scale action-based research which in general was well presented. In the assignments that met the required pass grade, students use a broad range of relevant literature and are able to analyse and synthesis their theoretical knowledge and understanding linking to the assignment brief. Ethical issues were dealt with well.</p>		
14.	Does the programme form part of an Integrated PhD?	No
<p>Please comment on the appropriateness of the programme as training for a PhD:</p>		
15.	Does the programme include clinical practice components?	No
<p>Please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum here:</p>		
16.	Is the programme accredited by a Professional or Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB)?	No
<p>Please comment on the value of, and the programme's ability to meet, PSRB requirements here:</p>		

Assessment and Feedback

17.	Does the programme design clearly align intended learning outcomes with assessment?	Yes
<p>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.</p> <p>PG Cert Assessment and Feedback</p> <p>I have scrutinized a number of written assignments from 3 different assignment titles. In addition, during my EE visit, I met with 5 PG Cert trainee teachers and two leaders from the Red Kite SCITT. The summary of my findings from all of these activities is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The course is well structured and the assessment procedures are rigorous and in-line with other, similar courses. The design and structure of the assessment methods is rigorous and appropriate to the PG level Marking is accurate and consistent across the range of assessed assignments. Marking is clear and comprehensive with feedback which addresses and relates to the marking criteria and supports the development of academic writing including grammar, punctuation and referencing. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When questioned, trainees were extremely positive about the timing of the assignment and praised the approach to have deadline dates at the end of a school holiday. 	
18.	Is the design and structure of the assessment methods appropriate to the level of award?	Yes
19.	Were students given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the programme aims and intended learning outcomes?	Yes
<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 academic standards demonstrated by the students through the marked work I moderated is of the standard required for awards at Postgraduate (Masters) level and is comparable with other secondary PGCE programme with which I am familiar.</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>For consideration by Programme leaders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include summative feedback at the end of each assignment with overall strengths and areas for improvement. Do the assignment titles provide sufficient opportunity for trainees to developing theory in relation to practice in their subject However, I moderated an excellent example in a Barriers to Learning assignment from a PE trainee who focused their assignment on physical disability in PE/Inclusion. 		

The Progression and Awards Process

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

35.	Were you satisfied with the way decisions from the School Special Circumstances meeting were communicated to the Progression and Awards Board?	N/A
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Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make on the questions above:

Other comments

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

Suggested areas for consideration by Programme leaders

- Recruitment and retention – Consider a joint approach (University and SCITT) to recruitment to ensure those recruited are exceptionally strong candidates for all aspects of the programme.
- Students commented, that at the beginning of the programme, there was some ambiguity around how the Red Kite school-based and the university PG aspects of the programme worked cohesively. Students felt that synergy of the two aspects was intended, but not always achieved as there was some repetition of themes/subject input. Communication and the integration of the course improved over-time. (Introduction of the year plan/course overview described by Red Kite leaders, which identifies the areas of learning throughout the year should help improve this).
- When providing assignment guidance, students requested that the university provide this early after the assignment is set rather than providing additional guidance just prior to the school holiday. Some trainees had already started writing/completed their assignment and therefore felt at a disadvantage.
- Focus on ensuring that the core SCITT (school) team are committed to and embedding the philosophy of the university/SCITT of research-informed. Students talked about a lack of clarity for school mentors of the expectations of their role. Further training of mentors to ensure consistency.
- Trainees identified that the afternoon seminar groups are too large and that reducing group size would be beneficial.

Strengths

- Students felt that the research theory relating to their subject looked at during the PG sessions, particularly the psychology and theory behind the practice complemented the Red Kite days.
- Timing of PG assignments works well.
- All lecturers are really passionate.
- Relationships/openness and willingness to change aspects of the programme and listen to student feedback.
- Support from the University and school has been highly effective and prompt. Students mentioned in particular the Pastoral support from Red Kite.

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

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Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

Not applicable, 2016-17 was the first year the programme ran.

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:

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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:

We are pleased that you felt that you were supported well in your first year as External Examiner.
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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:

<p>We are pleased and encouraged by the positive comments that you make about programme structure and design and how efficiently it is run. Particularly pleasing is the feedback that you received from the students on these points and how they valued the University element of their initial teacher training.</p> <p>In designing the programme we were keen to ensure that practice and theory come together. Your comment about how students synthesise small-scale action research with ideas from the literature is most welcome.</p>

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:

Your comments on the design of assessment methods, the accuracy and consistency of marking, the quality of feedback and the timing of assignments are appreciated.
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Your point about encouraging students to develop theory in relation to practice in their subject is noted. One way we will try to encourage this is to introduce students to academic sources in their subject areas in addition to more generic sources, for example, on behaviour management.

The Progression and Awards Process

Response to questions 20-35 (and related comments)

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

We are pleased that you responded positively to these questions.

Other comments

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

We will respond to each of the areas for consideration by Programme leaders that you raised:

- We have had discussion with the SCITT leaders to ensure that applicants to the programme are suitably qualified for all aspects. Last year some exceptional circumstances pertained in that the SCITT was only accredited as an ITT Provider after UCAS had opened and consequently more risks had to be taken in ensuring recruitment targets were met. The expectation is that a stronger cohort of students will be recruited for 2017-18.
- We have taken a number of steps to ensure greater cohesion of the school and University-based elements of the programme. University leaders met with school leaders in July 2017 to review and plan. A meeting was held where a University leader and subject leaders from schools shared ideas about the programme. An agreed strategy for the forthcoming year is to make greater reference to the Teachers' Standards and the newly created Golden Threads (key priorities, e.g. behaviour management, addressing barriers to learning, etc.) to provide a common framework of reference and, hopefully, coherence.
- We are a little confused about your point relating to the timing of assignment guidance, we made a point of providing guidance as early as possible. Given that this was the first cohort on the programme perhaps advice and guidance hadn't been fully thought through and aspects were provided nearer the submission date than was ideal. Given the benefit of last year's experience we will ensure that all students receive full guidance at the earliest possible date.
- The whole premise of the programme is on an evidence-based approach to teaching education. Through our joint planning meetings leaders from the University and schools will continue to emphasise this approach and the different types of evidence that both partners contribute to supporting students' professional development.
- We understand the importance of small group sizes and have arranged that the largest personal tutor group (afternoon seminar sessions) will be 20 in 2017-18.

We are delighted that you were also able to identify a range of strengths of the programme

Thank you for your feedback and support, this is very helpful helping the partnership move forward.