

**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:	Law
Subject(s):	<i>Environmental law</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	LLB LAW3131 and 3135
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	LLB

**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**

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

**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*

More notice is needed for considering resits – this year I had a maximum of a couple of days.

**For Examiners in the first year of appointment**

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

**For Examiners completing their term of appointment**

4.	Have you observed improvements in the programme(s) over the period of your appointment?	<u>Y</u> / N
5.	Has the school responded to comments and recommendations you have made?	<u>Y</u> / N
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?	Y / <u>N</u>

*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 achieved this year on the whole appear to represent an improvement on those of last year's cohort.

This form needs a N/A option – not all issues warrant a yes/no response.

## Standards

8.	Is the overall programme structure coherent and appropriate for the level of study?	<u>Y</u> / N
9.	Does the programme structure allow the programme aims and intended learning outcomes to be met?	<u>Y</u> / N
10.	Are the programme aims and intended learning outcomes commensurate with the level of award?	<u>Y</u> / N
11.	Did the Aims and ILOs meet the expectations of the national subject benchmark (where relevant)?	<u>Y</u> / N
12.	Is the programme(s) comparable with similar programmes at other institutions?	<u>Y</u> / N
<p><i>Please use this box to explain your overall impression of the programme structure, design, aims and intended learning outcomes.</i></p> <p>Programme is commensurate with that in the sector generally.</p>		
13.	Is the influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching clear?	<u>Y</u> / N
<p><i>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)</i></p> <p>Course and question coverage reveals up-to-date knowledge of a rapidly developing subject area.</p>		
14.	Does the programme form part of an Integrated PhD?	<u>Y</u> / N
<p><i>Please comment on the appropriateness of the programme as training for a PhD:</i></p>		
15.	Does the programme include clinical practice components?	<u>Y</u> / N
<p><i>Please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum here:</i></p>		
16.	Is the programme accredited by a Professional or Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB)?	<u>Y</u> / N
<p><i>Please comment on the value of, and the programme's ability to meet, PSRB requirements here:</i></p> <p>Qualifying LLB satisfies the relevant professional bodies.</p>		

## Assessment and Feedback

17.	Does the programme design clearly align intended learning outcomes with assessment?	<u>Y</u> / N
<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>Good assessment design allowing candidates to demonstrate detailed and contextualised knowledge and understanding of the subject area.</p>		
18.	Is the design and structure of the assessment methods appropriate to the level of award?	<u>Y</u> / N
19.	Were students given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the programme aims and intended learning outcomes?	<u>Y</u> / N

<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 range of performance is representative of that among other cohorts in universities in which I have taught and externally examined.</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>		

### 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?	<u>Y</u> / N
21.	Was the progression and award guidance provided sufficient for you to act effectively as an External Examiner?	<u>Y</u> / N
22.	Did you receive appropriate programme documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	<u>Y</u> / N
23.	Did you receive appropriate module documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	<u>Y</u> / N
24.	Did you receive full details of marking criteria applicable to your area(s) of responsibility?	<u>Y</u> / N
25.	Were you provided with all draft examination papers/assessments?	<u>Y</u> / N
26.	Was the nature and level of the assessment questions appropriate?	<u>Y</u> / N
27.	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments on assessment questions?	<u>Y</u> / N
28.	Was sufficient assessed work made available to enable you to have confidence in your evaluation of the standard of student work?	<u>Y</u> / N
29.	Were the examination scripts clearly marked/annotated?	<u>Y</u> / N
30.	Was the choice of subjects for final year projects and/or dissertations appropriate?	<u>Y</u> / N
31.	Was the method and standard of assessment appropriate for the final year projects and/or dissertations?	<u>Y</u> / N
32.	Were the administrative arrangements satisfactory for the whole process, including the operation of the Progression and Awards Board?	<u>Y</u> / N
33.	Were you able to attend the Progression and Awards Board meeting?	<u>Y</u> / N
34.	Were you satisfied with the recommendations of the Progression and Awards Board?	<u>Y</u> / N
35.	Were you satisfied with the way decisions from the School Special Circumstances meeting were communicated to the Progression and Awards Board?	<u>Y</u> / N
<p><i>Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make on the questions above:</i>  Where prizes are awarded the top scoring student's grade should be clearly distinguishable from other scripts – a single mark margin should be avoided if possible.  I would like clearer guidance on the status of marks communicated to students before the external examining process.</p>		

### 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:

Address for communication:

Email:

Telephone:

Director of Student Education

*ESSL Law*School of Law  
University of Leeds  
Leeds LS29JT

\*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](mailto: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**

By way of a general comment, we recognise that we can do more in relation to feedback - and this year we are addressing a somewhat opaque set of marking criteria and are moving to online marking across the board. This will hopefully ensure the marking standards are clearer still and can be more easily explained to students.

**Response to Enhancements made from the previous year**

Again, a further general comment would be that our plagiarism detection has been more timely. We ran into some problems the previous year which didn't allow much time for considered decision making – this year we made it a priority to get this right.

**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:

The resit period is increasingly tight and we recognise the difficulties this brings to our external examiners. I will endeavour to ensure that this year you will not be taken by surprise but will be able to plan on the basis of fuller information.

**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:

It is pleasing to note that you have seen improvements in the programme – thank you for that. As to the Handbook and external examiners reports – this is something we need to check as a school and we will ensure that in addition to providing materials for new externals we will provide links for ongoing externals to find other externals' reports and comments.

**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:

Thank you for confirming the standards of the degree – this is, of course, absolutely at the core of the external examiner process and we are very pleased to have your endorsement on 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:*

Issues related to assessment and feedback are perennially an issue on student evaluation questionnaires. It is very pleasing to note your response but we are aware that there is more we need to do. As mentioned previously, a thorough evaluation of the marking criteria is being undertaken – developing level specific criteria – categorical marking is being rolled out to aid transparency and certainty, and online marking is designed to enhance the quality of feedback through the potential to cross reference to other useful resources.

**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 many different methods that Universities employ for progression and awards certainly ensures that this aspect of external examining can be more complex than it needs to be. However, I am pleased that this was clear. We are, of course, always happy to take on board suggestions as to how things might be improved.

**Other comments**

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

Thanks for your additional comments. Students are aware that all marks provided before the examination board sits are provisional and may be subject to change. We are very open about the external examining process and are very clear with the students that we are subject to external scrutiny. Students are able to view external examiners reports and some comments are relayed directly back to students in 'welcome back' meetings and on the plasma screens.

As regards prizes – these are discussed and recommendations are made at the internal board and confirmed by the external examination board. The timing of these boards make the publication of prizes somewhat difficult but full discussion of the award of prizes does take place. If there are ideas that you have about more formally identifying prize winners perhaps we could take them up in due course – it is always pleasing to be able to recognise and reward the best performers.