

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>Criminology</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	MA Criminal Justice and Criminology
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.
Students across the different modules are examined in a variety of ways. Some modules required multiple submissions allowing students to learn from their mistakes and improve their marks across the course of a semester or year-long assessment. Others allowed students to design their own title/topic. LAW5305M *Researching Security and Justice* required students to develop a research proposal, a very useful skill for students at this level to develop.

Enhancements made from the previous year

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

This is my first year as examiner.

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

No urgent issues beyond the minor points and suggestions I made across individual modules in my various reports throughout the year.

For Examiners in the first year of appointment

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

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

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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.

This is a strong, coherent PGT programme that provides a very solid and comprehensive grounding in criminological theory and research methodology. I have been impressed by the clarity and consistency of the course materials and feedback provided to students. Programme offerings cover a rich, diversity of criminological issues and the students are performing very much at the highest postgraduate standards

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)

Each module draws on the research expertise of the lecturers, and xxx

14.	Does the programme form part of an Integrated PhD?	Y / N
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Please comment on the appropriateness of the programme as training for a PhD:

I am not aware of whether there are 1+3 students on the pathway, but the programme is certainly ideal preparation for the Ph.D.

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:

I am not aware of this aspect of the programme if so. It would be unusual for a criminology MA.

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

Not to my knowledge, but again this is not at all common for MA in criminology

Assessment and Feedback

17.	Does the programme design clearly align intended learning outcomes with assessment?	Y /
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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 am satisfied with the assessment overall (see above). Students should be made aware of internal confirmation of marks and provided with consistent feedback.

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>I read numerous distinction-level essays in my review and can say that the best work being done on the Leeds MA is competitive with the best work at this level being done internationally.</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>The PGT team at Leeds (students and staff) should be very proud of these achievements.</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 appreciate more guidance in future years in terms of the expectations of this role. I was often unsure what I was being asked to do and how much depth was expected from me in my reviews. Some greater forewarning in terms of time tables ("You will be asked to provide reviews on approximately these dates... This is how long each review should take in terms of hours..." etc) just so I can budget my time and keep my timetable.

Other comments

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

But thank you sincerely for the admin team there for always answering all of my many questions and being so very helpful overall!

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 School of 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. 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

Although not directly applicable to you, it is worth knowing 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:

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:

In reference 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:

As regards students being made aware of internal confirmation of marks – this does happen in the vast majority of cases though sometimes, when the marking is done just before the exam board takes place marks are held back awaiting full confirmation. This is merely an administrative efficiency but there is little to be gained from students knowing marks one week earlier than they otherwise might, particularly out of term time.

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.

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:

Thank you for your comments in relation to guidance on the expectations of the role, in this communication you will see I have also attached previous reports we have received from external examiners so you are able to see the style and extent of feedback we have received previously at the University of Leeds. It may also be helpful to note that we plan to create a practical timeline for external examiners as a point of reference, which will hopefully assist with time planning for our external examiner community.

Other comments

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

Many thanks for your attendance at this year's Board. The attendance of external examiners adds an extra element of scrutiny and accountability which are vital for student confidence in the process. We also recognise what a busy time it is for academic staff, so again, thanks for your close attention and commitment to the process.