

**The University of Leeds**  
**EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT**

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2016– 2017

QA Team received 21/06/2017

**Part A: General Information**

**Subject area and awards being examined**

Faculty / School of:	POLIS
Subject(s):	British Politics
Programme(s) / Module(s):	BA Politics BA Politics and Parliamentary Studies BA Economics/Politics BA Geography/Politics
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	BA (Hons)

**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](mailto: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

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**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*

## 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.*

The ILOs and the academic standards applied are commensurate for the award of BA (Hons). The programmes I examined are well designed and the standards are appropriate.

**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.*

The Aims and ILOs are in line with sector norms and met the expectations of the national subject benchmark.

**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.*

The assessment methods for the modules on the degree programmes are appropriate. The marking is consistent across the board and care has been taken with second marking. A majority of students on the modules I examined attained 2:1s.

**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.*

I think the modules offered by POLIS are good. Students are stretched and given the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned. The work I moderated suggests that student performance is comparable to that of students on courses in other universities.

**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.*

N/A

**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.*

A number of the British Politics modules clearly emanate from colleagues' research interests and these are very good modules.

**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

This academic year I mentored \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. We spoke by phone at the start of the academic session and by email during the period of moderation. Both have taken very well to the role of External Examiner in their respective fields.

## 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

### 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

### 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 read and authorised drafts examinations and assessments for the modules I was given. The nature and level of the questions was appropriate. Where there were typographical errors (or such like) I flagged this and amendments were made.

### 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. Scripts were clearly marked and annotated.

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

Yes.

### 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. \_\_\_\_\_ have been professional and very helpful. A few bumps along the way which is understandable in a period of change. I attended the Exam board which was conducted in a thorough manner. \_\_\_\_\_, the Exams Officer, was in full control of processes and procedures. The Board's recommendations were sound.

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

SCC was held a week or so prior to the Exam Board. We were informed that this was because there had been changes in University regulations relating to student confidentiality. Therefore external examiners were not privy to the SCC, its procedures or how recommendations to raise classifications had been reached.

## Other comments

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

Another good year for POLIS adding value and stretching their students. Grading is sound. Feedback is copious. Well done team!

5 October 2017

Dear

**External Examiner's Report 2016 – 2017**

On behalf of the School, may I thank you for your Examiner's Report which was discussed by colleagues at the POLIS Taught Student Education Committee meeting on the 18 October 2017. We are pleased that the aims and objectives of our programmes were clear and appropriate, that our modules are suitable and reflect the School's research strengths and that you deemed our assessment practices and process to be fit for purpose.

We acknowledge that there have been, as you put it, "a few bumps along the way", with respect to administrative arrangements. This relates to a transitional period and we are working hard to iron those bumps out. I have confidence that the team will achieve this quickly. We are pleased that this did not impact on the assessment process, which you describe as thorough.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for the time and effort that you have invested as our external examiner in ensuring that the programmes and modules offered by POLIS are commensurate with the standards offered in comparable institutions.

Yours sincerely

**Head of School**