

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:	Business School
Subject(s):	<i>Marketing</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	MA Advertising and Marketing MSc International Marketing Management
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MA. & MSc.

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.

1. Very robust analysis of module performance (3-year review) and discussion of modules with high/low averages and module and exam related problems – very clear reporting of internal discussion and processes to address problems.
2. Excellent quality and quantity of feedback for in course module assignments – clear identification of strengths and weakness and advice on how the work could have been improved.
3. Clear assignment briefs and model answers for exams
4. Excellent quality module packs; consistent and well organised

Enhancements made from the previous year

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

I am happy that the programme team (and associated administrative team) have responded to issues raised in my 15/16 report and have made progress to address the issues raised including the quality and quantity of feedback and the module documentation. I would like to see more progress made in terms of the use of the full marking scale and efforts made to address the continued inconsistent use of component marking.

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 identified

For Examiners in the first year of appointment

1.	Were you provided with an External Examiner Handbook?	Y / N
2.	Were you provided with copies of previous External Examiners' reports and the School's responses to these?	Y / N
3.	Were you provided with a External Examiner Mentor?	Y / N – not required

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/ not applicable
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

As discussed above, I am happy that the programme team (and associated administrative team) have responded to issues raised in my 15/16 report and have made progress to address the issues raised including the quality and quantity of feedback and the module documentation. I would like to see more progress made in terms of the use of the full marking scale and efforts made to address the continued inconsistent use of component marking.

The exam board process is very professionally managed, comprehensive in how it examines modules and very well attended.

Standards

8.	Is the overall programme structure coherent and appropriate for the level of study?	Y / N
9.	Does the programme structure allow the programme aims and intended learning outcomes to be met?	Y / N
10.	Are the programme aims and intended learning outcomes commensurate with the level of award?	Y / N
11.	Did the Aims and ILOs meet the expectations of the national subject benchmark (where relevant)?	Y / N
12.	Is the programme(s) comparable with similar programmes at other institutions?	Y / N

Please use this box to explain your overall impression of the programme structure, design, aims and intended learning outcomes.

Overall these are well-designed, well managed programmes that aligns in terms of quality of standards with other similar programmes in other comparable institutions. Given current resources, any further increases in student numbers would need to be matched with additional resources. A continued growth strategy is unsustainable in terms of maintaining quality and standards and student learning experience.

13.	Is the influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching clear?	Y / N
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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)

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:

15.	Does the programme include clinical practice components?	Y / N
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Please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum here:

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:

Assessment and Feedback

17.	Does the programme design clearly align intended learning outcomes with assessment?	Y / N
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<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>		
18.	Is the design and structure of the assessment methods appropriate to the level of award?	Y / N
19.	Were students given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the programme aims and intended learning outcomes?	Y / N
<p>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:</p> <p>The performance of students on these programme is in line with comparable programmes at comparable institutions who have comparable admissions requirements and student profiles. The numbers taken are significantly higher than other comparable institutions who have different strategies with respect to admissions (English language requirements; prior work experience; 2;1 undergraduate degree (business related for some)).</p>		
<p>Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make in relation to assessment and feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent quality and quantity of feedback – clear identification of strengths and weakness and advice on how the work could have been improved. • Clear assignment briefs and model answers for exams • Inconsistent – component marking - within and between modules – full marking scale used for some assessments; component marking used in others including exam papers; bespoke scales in others. Lack of documentation in assignment briefs about how assessments relate to intended learning outcomes of their associated modules and how subject specific and personal and transferable skills are developed through the chosen assessment methods. • Inconsistency in key terms used in feedback – not aligning at times with marking criteria • Clear evidence of moderation with moderation summaries provided for most modules – That said, the policy and process of moderation is unclear especially with respect to when, why and how marks are changed and how assignments not included in sample are influenced by moderation and the decision to change marks. School level policy and advice needed. There is evidence of moderation adjustments but the process and underlying rationale is not clear. • More detail needed on how peer assessment is applied to group work assignments. • Relationship between word limit and % of module mark – have you a policy on word limits and % contribution of an assignment to module mark • LUBS5435: Public Relations and Corporate Communications – no feedback on scripts – very comprehensive model answers 		

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 / N
21.	Was the progression and award guidance provided sufficient for you to act effectively as an External Examiner?	Y / N
22.	Did you receive appropriate programme documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	Y / N

23.	Did you receive appropriate module documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	Y / N
24.	Did you receive full details of marking criteria applicable to your area(s) of responsibility?	Y / N
25.	Were you provided with all draft examination papers/assessments?	Y / N
26.	Was the nature and level of the assessment questions appropriate?	Y / N
27.	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments on assessment questions?	Y / N
28.	Was sufficient assessed work made available to enable you to have confidence in your evaluation of the standard of student work?	Y / N
29.	Were the examination scripts clearly marked/annotated?	Y / N – mixed – some are annotated, others have no annotation.
30.	Was the choice of subjects for final year projects and/or dissertations appropriate?	Y / N
31.	Was the method and standard of assessment appropriate for the final year projects and/or dissertations?	Y / N
32.	Were the administrative arrangements satisfactory for the whole process, including the operation of the Progression and Awards Board?	Y / N
33.	Were you able to attend the Progression and Awards Board meeting?	Y / N
34.	Were you satisfied with the recommendations of the Progression and Awards Board?	Y / N
35.	Were you satisfied with the way decisions from the School Special Circumstances meeting were communicated to the Progression and Awards Board?	Y / N

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

1. There is very limited annotation and feedback provided on some exam scripts. This is problematic both from an external examiner and student feedback perspective.
2. Very robust analysis of module performance (3-year review) and discussion of modules with high/low averages and module and exam related problems – very clear reporting of internal discussion and processes to address problems.
3. External examiners are given plenty of opportunity to provide module and programme level comments and recommendations.
4. Excellent quality module packs; consistent and well organised
5. Regular communications between administrative staff and external examiners
6. Most assessments sent to me throughout the year for approval – did not receive some of semester 1 assignments
7. Accommodated my diary clash for Oct Board to facilitate me undertaking the review of modules in person on Monday 23rd Oct and attend the exam board on Wednesday 25th October 2017.

Other comments

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

Detailed module specific comments are available for the programme team. Key points were discussed in the progression board and the cross cutting issues (good practice; areas of improvement) are detailed above.

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Part A: General Information

Subject area and awards being examined

Faculty / School of:	Leeds University Business School
Subject(s):	<i>Marketing</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Programmes: MSc International Marketing Management MA Advertising & Marketing MA Corporate Communications, Marketing & Public Relations MA Consumer Analytics & Marketing Strategy Modules: LUBS5409M01 LUBS5450M01 LUBS5451M01 LUBS5452M01 LUBS5461M01 LUBS5465M01 LUBS5418M01 LUBS5432M01 LUBS5433M01 LUBS5472M01 LUBS5478M01 LUBS5488M01
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MSc and 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.

Some effective use of rubrics to increase the feedback content to students.

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 1st year as external examiner so hard to establish this.

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.

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?	Y- outgoing report N- School's responses (I did not request this)
3.	Were you provided with a External Examiner Mentor?	Y but no contact details

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

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.

Overall the programme structure appears logical and the course design, aims and ILOs are logical and well planned. I have no concerns here.

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)

Reflection on theory and previous research was demonstrated throughout the assignments set students. In particular the Marketing Research Consultancy Project demonstrates application of research design on practice and this approach of students undertaking research with a practical focus is effective. There were some interesting and novel projects.

Future projects could perhaps more explicitly consider ethical implications of the research conducted and reflecting on the ethical approach could be set as part of the assessment task.

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

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:

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

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> <p>A good range of assessment methods was demonstrated (multiple choice, essay assignments, essay style exams and group work). All were appropriate to the ILOs. Student performance was largely in ranges expected at similar institutions for similar courses with course means lying between 60-70%. Marking consistency was excellent throughout</p> <p>Generally a good or excellent level of feedback was provided. A few areas for improvement can be identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The terminology used in feedback was vague in a few cases and sometimes the need to improve was flagged with limited guidance on the 'how'- for example use of phrases such as "a very nice essay" convey limited actionable feedback to students. • The volume of feedback did vary between courses, which is to be expected. • The audit trail/evidence of moderation was sometimes rather too light (missed signature on one mark sheet, limited evidence that a second person had touched a script that was indicated to have been moderated) although in all cases the marking was very consistent and the summary sheet provided suggested that the form had been moderated. I would just prefer to see BOTH markers make some mark on a moderated exam script- even if that is only to write or initial the agreed mark in the appropriate place on the script. (After writing this report I checked the outgoing external examiner report and I note that she highlighted the need for evidence of moderation to be tightened up in 2014/15 and then felt that it improved the subsequent year- perhaps it has just slipped back a little this year- there is scope to improve again for next year). • Although a number of rubrics were used well on some courses to provide good volumes of feedback, there was variation in content with regards to the feedback given at different decile ranges and there may be scope for the university or school to provide a general guide to rubric content that individual course leads could then adapt to their own needs. Specifically the detailed variation in decile feedback above the 70% mark varied between courses, with some providing limited rubric based guidance on how to improve performance between 70-80%, 80-90% and 90% +. Sometimes relevant additional feedback was given to explain how to improve marks above 70% further, but this was sometimes variable in its depth and therefore improved standardised rubrics would facilitate this. 		
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>There was some impressive submissions in both group and individual work. Assignments set stimulated some original and insightful work. Overall performance matches or exceeds that on comparable courses. Standards of English and grammar were largely impressive. As a cohort I would like to see even greater critical reflection and argument development drawing on a wider body of academic literature, at times. Practitioner sources were often used well and work was mostly well grounded in sources- however there was sometimes scope for a greater concentration of sources at times (particularly academic journal sources) and more criticality (rather than description) in their use.</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>Excellent marking consistency throughout all courses examined.</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
<p><i>Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make on the questions above:</i></p> <p>Progression board was managed well.</p>		

Other comments

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

The administrative support for the external examiner process has been excellent- thank you.

In summary: Standards of assessment and learning structures, student work and assessment consistency are high and comparable with similar universities. Some scope to improve feedback consistency and the evidence of moderation. Some excellent and detailed feedback, some that could be extended and could be more detailed/ focused.