

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

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2017-18

**Part A: General Information**

**Subject area and awards being examined**

*Title and Name of Examiner:*

*Faculty / School of:*

Centre for Lifelong Learning

*Subject(s):*

*Creative Writing*

*Programme(s) / Module(s):*

LLLC1040 Creative Writing Workshop CRN 20042  
LLLC1040 Creative Writing Workshop CRN 31313  
LLLC1359 Global Conversations CRN 28783  
LLLC1412 Exploring the Digital World CRN 33717  
LLLC1433 Sci-fi, Fantasy & Horror CRN 34979  
LLLC2287 Creative Writing Workshop Two CRN 34992  
LLLC2288 Writing for Children CRN 34993

*Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):*

BA

**Part B: Comments for the Institution on the Examination Process and Standards**

**Points of innovation and/or good practice**

The creative writing modules I have examined this year continue to provide a very good balance between the 'tradition' and innovation. This creates variety in practice and in option choice. There is a good fit between the needs of students and the research interests of staff.

The modules are very well designed in suiting students with little prior knowledge of creative writing and the good results are a testament to the supervision of the course leader and the teaching staff. The balance of theoretical, contextual and creative practice in all modules allows for students to draw on existing academic skills, wherever they may have been developed. There is continuing innovative practice in assessment.

There is very good consistency between modules, again this is testament to the staff and course director in ensuring parity between a number of part time staff and a variety of different modules.

**Enhancements made from the previous year**

The programme continues in a similar manner to last year. This is good as there is evidence of clear good practice here. There is evidence of the refreshing and evaluation and development of assignment briefs and module details suggesting ongoing course development and response to staff and student feedback.

**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*

N/A

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

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

**For Examiners completing their term of appointment**

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

N/A		
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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

Yes, although given the specific nature of these modules and where they sit within the University structure they are carefully designed for students who may be taking a specific module alone.

13.	Is the influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching clear?	Y
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This is clear in that the students are being taught by practitioners in their fields. Given these are CW modules there is a direct correlation between practice and academia. The practice is in effect a large part of the research and this is outlined to students in online documentation.

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
The creative writing modules in the Lifelong Learning Centre contribute to a range of programmes throughout the University. Staff knowledge of the students and how to ensure that the modules would sit within and alongside broader programme aims was impressive. The individual module assessments are well aligned to module outcomes.		
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
As was the case last year, given the wide variety of academic experiences of the students taking these modules the cohort scored well across all the modules. There was a high level of attainment with many students scoring in the 2:1 category, with very little of the marked work falling in to the third class band. This is appropriate to the work that I saw. In my view the work was comparable to that produced in other HEIs. I would encourage the programme team to review the marking at the very top and to consider using the mark range at this end should they feel the work deserves it.		
I would like to reiterate my comment from last year, that there is clear evidence that feedback is ongoing and developmental. Formative feedback in addition to comprehensive summative feedback aids student development and is very good pedagogic practice. This takes staff a great deal of time and focus and they are to be congratulated on such detailed attention to detail.		

### 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
As with last year communication has been excellent and the information provided has been comprehensive and open. It is reassuring that external examiners have access to all the available material. The board was effective and efficient with excellent attention to detail and quality assurance.		

#### Other comments

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

Again I would like to reiterate my comments from last year; the creative writing team are to be congratulated on their attention to their students. The course leader has done well to ensure that there is excellent communication with the course tutors and this seems to have translated in to a quality experience for students.

## Part C: School Response to External Examiner Report

### Name of School and Head of School (or nominee)

Title and Name of Examiner:

Subject(s):

*Creative Writing*

Programme(s) / Module(s):

LLLC1040 Creative Writing Workshop CRN 20042  
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LLLC2288 Writing for Children CRN 34993

Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):

BA

Title and Name of Responder:

Position\*:

Creative Writing Programme Leader

Faculty / School of:

*Lifelong Learning Centre*

Address for communication:

Email:

Telephone:

*\*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**

It is wonderful to have read the comments about the good balance between tradition and innovation within the programme. We continue to work towards this goal, enabling students to be furnished with core knowledge, whilst exploring more innovative ideas.

It is always a challenge to meet the needs of learners with varying levels of knowledge in creative writing, and the expertise of the team enables us to meet this challenge.

The note re: consistency between modules is particularly helpful to hear – as we do strive for this throughout the programme design.

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

The programme is well established and cogent, however we do work to respond to student feedback and retain flexibility within this. It is a strong affirmation that this has been commended by the external examiner.

#### **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:*

There are no matters for urgent attention.

**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:*

This section has been responded to as being not applicable.

**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:*

The programme is coherent and meets its aims and learning outcomes. It is also in line with the creative writing benchmark statement. The programme is dissimilar to other institutions in that it enables both students that are developing from year one to three, and also meets the needs of early writers at all levels. I am pleased to note that the external examiner has been able to determine that the tutors' practice of writing (and of research), clearly aligns to their delivery.

**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:*

The creative writing modules are dynamic in the way that they are designed to be accessible by such a wide variety of students. Students have achieved good grades across the programme. The external examiner has encouraged us to review our marking at the top range of available marks. This is very welcome feedback and we have discussed our approach in our September team meeting, and have highlighted this as a key focus for the year.

The team works very hard to provide specific, coherent and encouraging feedback, and it is wonderful to see that being noted again by the external examiner.

**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:*

As with last year, the programme has met all of the criteria and continues to be well organised and cogent. We will continue to ensure that the external examiner has access to Minerva module areas.

**Other comments**

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

It is wonderful to hear that the work we put into team communication, support and students is effective in delivering a high quality learning experience for students. We will continue to strive for this level of excellence.