

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

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2017-18

QAT Received 09/07/2018

**Part A: General Information**

**Subject area and awards being examined**

*Title and Name of Examiner:*

*Faculty / School of:*

Centre for Lifelong Learning

*Subject(s):*

Business Management

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

Diploma of Higher Education in Business Management (part time)  
Business Management and Leadership (part time)  
Business Studies with Foundation Year (full time)

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

Dip HE, BSc

**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.*

There is clear evidence of good practice concerning quality assurance – clear evidence of moderation (form), exams are blind marked and some presentations use panels/several members of staff.

The teaching staff provide excellent, detailed and constructive feedback to students to allow them to develop. The use of online feedback has been implemented extremely well and students receive a detailed breakdown of feedback very promptly.

Feedback from students was generally excellent and, in some cases, exceptional as evidenced by the Module feedback in the fourteen module boxes reviewed; staff deserve great credit.

The Board is conducted with consistency and fairness and the programme teaching and administration team demonstrates great knowledge and genuine care for their 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.*

A number of enhancements have been made in the last couple of years and these have been improved or widened (as outlined elsewhere in this report).

Improvements that were discussed this year for implementation going forward include improvements to skills modules, blended learning, and developments for students with prior business knowledge. There is also a movement into apprenticeships.

**Matters for Urgent Attention**

There are no matters for urgent attention

**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

**For Examiners completing their term of appointment**

4.	Have you observed improvements in the programme(s) over the period of your appointment?	Y
5.	Has the school responded to comments and recommendations you have made?	Y
6.	Where recommendations have not been implemented, did the school provide clear reasons for this?	Y
7.	Have you acted as an External Examiner Mentor?	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*

This is the final report of my term of appointment, and this has been a very good experience from my point of view. This has been a very collaborative, constructive and mutually beneficial relationship and the staff at the Centre for Lifelong Learning have been extremely communicative, helpful and responsive.

In my term, there have been a number of changes made to enhance the programme and support learning:

For example, changes to delivery for part-time students have been made following consultation with these learners, such as the delivery of HRM and Marketing modules (side by side vs shorter consecutive blocks); where this was not positively received by the students, their views were paramount going forward.

The use of dual accreditation on the Dip HE (to include the CMI Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management) without any additional assessment is of great value to these students.

The use of on-line submission and on-line marking across a number of modules has been of benefit to students, markers/moderators and to me as external examiner (as well as the environment). The introduction of this initiative has been justified, very well utilised, and the implementation very smooth.

There have been enhancements with regard to the processes and practical usage of online assessment submission, grading and feedback to the betterment of assessment administration, moderation and the student experience.

Last year, Studying in a Digital Age was delivered as a compulsory (5 credit) module along with a larger Skills module to specifically address and enhance academic skills and academic integrity.

Over this time, I have been able to observe and confirm incremental and substantive changes to enable progressive development and enhancement of the learning and teaching provision. These have been discussed with the programme leader and key module leaders, and what has always been evident is that the students were at the centre of every development.

The standards achieved by the students have been excellent on the whole. Given the starting point of the students on these programmes, there is a definite and positive trajectory of development in the vast majority of students. These standards have been maintained year on year which is a credit to the dedication of the close-knit team of teaching and administration staff.

During my time as external examiner, the assessment strategy has been consistent, challenging, varied and appropriate. Marking has been fair and consistent, and the feedback provided to students extremely clear, detailed and constructive.

The processes of the School have been meticulously followed, such as the information on the students, adherence to the regulations, moderation practices, and the operation of the assessment boards. Administration and academic staff have been extremely focused on the ensuring processes are correct and that each and every student is treated fairly.

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
<p><i>Please use this box to explain your overall impression of the programme structure, design, aims and intended learning outcomes.</i></p> <p>The programmes have been very carefully structured to support the students in developing foundational knowledge, skills and behaviours, and subsequently allow students to further these as they progress through their programme of study. Given the background and situation of students on these programmes, the programme team have sought to provide a structure which best suits their needs and encourages their potential.</p> <p>The programmes' content is suitable for this subject and level, providing a range of associated and complementary subjects, and comprehensively covering business approaches.</p>		
13.	Is the influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching clear?	Y
<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>Students are introduced to research methods on both full-time and part-time programmes. Full time students complete a dissertation in year four.</p> <p>Part-time students undertake their own primary research in the form of a Work Based Research Project in year three and a Dissertation in year five.</p> <p>Both modules included examples of excellent work; the Work-based project demonstrates very good practice of research in organisations and the dissertations were suitably underpinned by academic literature and methodologies.</p>		
14.	Does the programme form part of an Integrated PhD?	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?	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)?	Y
<p>The Dip HE includes dual accreditation with the CMI Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management which adds value for these part-time students in furthering their careers within their workplace / practice.</p>		

## 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>The modules effectively utilise a range of assessment methods (sometimes in combination) to suitably challenge the students on these programmes.</p> <p>The types of assessment used include reports, essays, case studies, exams, in-class tests, group presentations, PDP, literature reviews, work-based projects and dissertations.</p> <p>The design and structure of the assessment methods enables students to demonstrate their understanding of theory, skills, and application of theory to examine different scenarios.</p> <p>Almost all modules use multiple assessments to provide students with the chance to develop, apply further skills, consider the progress of their learning and gain from formative feedback and address areas for attention in their summative assessment.</p> <p>The assessment methods employed are appropriate to the ILOs at both module and programme level and are aligned with the programme's ethos and the students' academic development.</p> <p>Marking criteria are clearly broken down for the students to understand exactly what is expected of them; feedback is clear, detailed and structured accordingly, and moderation is evident through the moderation form.</p>		
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>Student performance is demonstrative of extremely effective and focused teaching, learning and assessment. This is reflected in the examples of high quality student work and grades in modules and evidenced by the progression and classifications in the programme.</p> <p>Furthermore, student feedback indicated excellent teaching and the enthusiasm of the delivery team.</p> <p>The performance of these students is good in relation to students on comparable courses, and there is clear evidence of student progression through engagement. Conversely, there are also a few examples of students who have not progressed due to their own lack of engagement or issues beyond their control.</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?	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>		

#### Other comments

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

\*I agreed to be a mentor but was not contacted regarding any questions or issues by/on behalf of the identified new external. This may be a good thing (and they are being well supported), but I would encourage mentoring as good practice.

As this is my last report I would like to take the opportunity to thank the University and the staff at the Centre for Lifelong Learning for all their help, support and willingness to collaborate.

## Part C: School Response to External Examiner Report

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

Title and Name of  
Examiner:

Subject(s):

Business Management

Programme(s) /  
Module(s):

Diploma of Higher Education in Business Management (part time)  
Business Management (part time)  
Business Studies with Foundation Year (full time)

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

Dip HE, BSc

Title and Name of  
Responder:

Position\*:

Programme Manager

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 [gat@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:gat@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**

We welcome your comments regarding the marking and moderation of student work and the robustness of wider QA processes in general. Programme staff spend a considerable amount of time reviewing, marking and feeding back on student work and our Student Education Service team spend a great deal of time preparing for and running exam boards. It is encouraging to see that this is recognised in your report.

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

We note your comments regarding the enhancements made from last year particularly with regard to a more blended approach to the delivery of our part-time programme and the move into Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeships. These areas are a key part of the ongoing development of the business programmes with the Lifelong Learning Centre.

#### **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 were 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:*

We were encouraged to read your written comments relating to questions 1-7 particularly with regard to our student centred approach, our use of on-line submissions and on-line marking, the dual accreditation of the CMI Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management and the operation of our administrative processes.

We note your comment that you were “able to observe and confirm incremental and substantive changes to enable progressive development and enhancement of the learning and teaching provision” and we would like to thank you for the collaborative and supportive way in which you helped us to achieve incremental developments to our programme.

**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:*

We noted your positive and constructive comments regarding the structure and content of our business programmes. Your comments sit within a context where we regularly review the content and structure of the programme portfolio to ensure currency, to assist with the successful achievement of learning outcomes and to enhance the overall quality of the student experience.

**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:*

Summative and formative assessments, together with detailed and constructive feedback, are seen as integral and important parts of our pedagogic approach. We were pleased to note your views regarding the diversity in our methods of assessment and the detailed and constructive feedback provided by module tutors for our learners.

We were also encouraged by your comments regarding the quality of student work following your review of modules assessments across both semesters.

**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:*

We note that you were satisfied with the processes and procedures contained in questions 20-35 and that there were no additional comments,

**Other comments****Response to items included in the ‘Other Comments’ section of the report**

We note your comments regarding the use of mentors as an example of best practice and we can confirm that this remains a part of our work with all newly appointed external examiners.