

The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2017-18

QAT Received 06/07/2018

Part A: General Information

Subject area and awards being examined

Title and Name of Examiner:

Faculty / School of:

POLIS

Subject(s):

International Development

Programme(s) / Module(s):

International Development

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

Please highlight areas of innovation or good practice within the programmes or processes you have been involved with in this box.

Contemporary and relevant subject matter, which students engage with very well. This is reflected in some excellent quality work in the first class category.

A good range of assessment types, which students respond to really well.

Wide spread use of electronic marking works very well and enables students to access their feedback smoothly.

Enhancements made from the previous year

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

More consistent use of Module Learning Outcomes is welcomed.

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 / 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 / N
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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 / 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.

The BA(Hons) International Development is a strong and coherent programme with appropriate progression across the three years of the programme. Level 6 modules are suitably advanced and specialist and reflect the strengths and research of the teaching team.

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)

All modules are clearly informed by the research of staff, and this is clear in the material covered and case studies developed.

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><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 range of assessment methods is good and these are appropriate to the ILOs, and students clearly receive substantial support to enable them to tackle tasks thoroughly.</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><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>I have seen some excellent work this year, and student work is generally of a very high standard. This cohort of students seems particularly strong and on quite a few modules there has been a high number of first class marks, but through the moderation process it is clear that these are well deserved. Lower down the classification scale I felt there was scope for greater differentiation of marks.</i></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>Feedback is generally thorough but I think it could be a little more consistent in terms of level of detail, content and format. Use of in-text comments on scripts is good, and useful for students, but this is not used by all markers. Feedback tends to be provided as a single block of text and it would be useful to think about some standard headings that could structure this and enable students to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of their work. Some markers separate out 'feed forward' and this is a practice that I would encourage you to consider rolling out across the programme.</p> <p>There could be greater transparency in the moderation process. In particular, I would like to see which scripts the internal moderator has looked at. Also, the section on the moderation form for the marker to respond to the internal moderator's comments is often left blank, and it would be good to see more clearly where there has been action as a result of the internal moderator's comments, or even just an acknowledgement that there has been a conversation between the marker and moderator.</p> <p>There are lots of marks around 70-72, and feedback tends to state that these are excellent pieces of work, however it is often not made clear to students where there is room for improvement (which presumably there is or the work would have been marked at 80+).</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 / 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
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
<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

It would be useful to have processes in place to communicate with external examiners where they have raised queries in relation to particular modules/scripts. On several occasions, I have made recommendations/raised queries within the moderation form itself following moderation, and it is not clear if/how they have been taken on board. At the moment it seems a bit like the moderation form disappears into the ether once I have returned it, so closely the loop here would be very useful.

Name of School and Head of School (or nominee)

Title and Name of Examiner:

Subject(s):

As stated above

Programme(s) / Module(s):

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

Title and Name of Responder:

Position*:

Head of School

Faculty / School of:

ESSL/POLIS

Address for communication:

University of Leeds

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. 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 these comments

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

We welcome the comment about the “more consistent use of Module Learning Outcomes”.

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:

None

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 value the comment: ‘There could be greater transparency in the moderation process. In particular, I would like to see which scripts the internal moderator has looked at. Also, the section on the moderation form for the marker to respond to the internal moderator’s comments is often left blank, and it would be good to see more clearly where there has been action as a result of the internal moderator’s comments, or even just an acknowledgement that there has been a conversation between the marker and moderator.’

Similar comments have been made by another external examiner and before the next assessment period we will be reminding one another what is sought from our moderation process and restate guidelines as to what is and what is not required therein.

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:

None.

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:

None.

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:

None.

Other comments

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

We thank _____ for the comment: "It would be useful to have processes in place to communicate with external examiners where they have raised queries in relation to particular modules/scripts. On several occasions, I have made recommendations/raised queries within the moderation form itself following moderation, and it is not clear if/how they have been taken on board. At the moment it seems a bit like the moderation form disappears into the ether once I have returned it, so closely the loop here would be very useful"

We will be looking at this closely in the context of a reminder to internal examiner's about the function of moderation.