

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:

Psychology

Subject(s):

Psychology

Programme(s) / Module(s):

PSYC2509: Advanced Cognitive Psychology
 PSYC2503: Psychological Disorders
 PSYC2521: Individual Differences
 PSYC2522: Research Skills 3
 PSYC3501: Health Psychology
 PSYC3502: The Biopsychology of Human Appetite
 PSYC3505: The Spatial World
 PSYC3507: Applied Psychology: Critical Issues
 PSYC3508: Drugs, Hormones and Behaviour
 PSYC3514: Occupational Health Psychology
 PSYC3516: Evolutionary Psychology
 PSYC3517: Approaches to Nutrition and Behaviour
 PSYC3518: Motor Learning in Children & Adults with Disability
 PSYC3536: Applications of Learning Theory to Psychological Disorders
 PSYC3537: Contemporary Memory Research
 PSYC2504: Advanced Social Psychology
 PSYC2518: Cognitive Neuroscience
 PSYC2519: Behavioural Neuroscience
 PSYC2510: Advanced Developmental Psychology
 PSYC2512: Evolution and Human Behaviour
 PSYC2523: Research Skills 4
 PSYC3510: Reasoning and Decision Making
 PSYC3511: Drug Addiction
 PSYC3519: Psychology of Eyewitness Testimony
 PSYC3527: Techniques in Human Neuropsychology
 PSYC3528: One Brain, two hemispheres
 PSYC3529: Language Acquisition and Development
 PSYC3531: The Biopsychosocial Approach to Understanding Human Pain
 PSYC3532: Eating Disorders
 PSYC3533: Clinical Psychology
 PSYC3535: Cognition and Nutrition
 PSYC3520: Major Project

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

BSc and MPsych

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.

- The programme offers excellent statistical and research methods basis.
- There are examples of excellent feedback in a range of modules, and the feedback sheet well used with appropriate use of moderation/2nd marking.
- There are many examples of high standards of work, and good examples of challenging assignments.
- The projects are research led but also often conducted in groups, this is an excellent example of good practice and develops critical employability skills.

Enhancements made from the previous year

Please highlight any enhancements made to the programme(s) or processes over the past year in this box.
The programme has enhanced assessment methods (increased diversity) and improved 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
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
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?	Y

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
The School has increased the diversity of assessments and enhanced the provision of feedback which provides an important mechanism for students to demonstrate the module and programme learning outcomes. The School has improved its use of statistical data for monitoring achievements across the modules and programmes. The School have improved utilisation of the full range of the marking scale ensuring that when high first class marks are warranted these are better reflected in the marks – there is still room for improvement here but in most modules this now occurs.

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.

It remains my impression that the structure, design, aims, and ILOs are appropriate for the discipline and the standards expected. There is a clear pathway with introduction to modules and then greater specialisation later on. The final year project provides an opportunity for a more in depth piece of work, and the link to professional ethics and integration of learning.

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)

Class material is clearly informed by research, and most often delivered by research specialists. Research is well integrated into a range of assessments for example critical reviews, presentations and research reports. The final year projects are often times run in groups (as is usually the case for research projects in Psychology) and the topics are relevant to current research topics.

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)?	Y
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Please comment on the value of, and the programme's ability to meet, PSRB requirements here:

It remains my view that the programme is appropriate for the requirements of the British Psychological Society. All core areas of the discipline are covered, there is the opportunity for specialisation, there is excellent grounding in statistics and research methods, and an appropriately challenging final year project.

Assessment and Feedback

17.	Does the programme design clearly align intended learning outcomes with assessment?	Y
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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.

There is good diversity of assessment methods to ensure students have the opportunity to develop important transferable and employability skills. Assessments allow for differentiation between students, including at the upper end. The assessments appropriately assess the learning outcomes.

18.	Is the design and structure of the assessment methods appropriate to the level of award?	Y
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19.	Were students given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the programme aims and intended learning outcomes?	Y
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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:

The academic standards are high, as would be expected with comparable programmes in other institutions. As I mention above there is still the possibility for greater use of the upper range of the marking scale to differentiate between students who are very high attainers.

Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make in relation to assessment and feedback:
None.

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
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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?	N
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>Unfortunately, I was unwell on the day of the Progression and Awards Board meeting. However, the administrator kept in touch with me providing me all the information I needed. I had already assessed a very extensive range of marked work including projects. Overall, the administrative running of the exams process at School level has been exemplary and has made my role as External Examiner as straightforward as possible.</p>		

Other comments

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

None

Name of School and Head of School (or nominee)

Title and Name of Examiner:

Subject(s):

Psychology

Programme(s) / Module(s):

BSc Psychology
BSc Psychology (International)
BSc Psychology (Industrial)

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

Title and Name of Responder:

Position*:

Head of School

Faculty / School of:

Faculty of Medicine and Health, School of Psychology

Address for communication:

School of Psychology
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 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

Thank you very much for your positive comments regarding the elements of our provision that you have identified as good practice.

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

Once again thanks for these pleasing observations recognising the efforts that we have made to introduce a more diverse range of assessment methods.

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:

N/A

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 have noted your positive support for the diversity of assessment methods in our programme and for the efforts that we have made to improve feedback provided to students. It is also pleasing to see recognition of the way in which we are trying to use data to help us monitor our provision. Regarding the comment about utilising the full range of marks, this is something that we reinforced at our Staff Briefing Day before the start of the session and we hope that marking descriptors that we have developed for different forms of assessment will encourage markers to award excellent marks for excellent work.

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:

Thank you for these positive comments across the board, particularly relating to the way in which research is integrated into the programme in different ways.

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:

Again, these are pleasing comments which reflect the work that we have put in to ensuring that our students are developing relevant skills and knowledge for their future careers.

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 were sorry that you were unable to be at the Board meeting due to illness, but this was unavoidable. Nevertheless, we are glad that our processes and the support provided by our Student Education Service meant that this did not cause any difficulty in terms of you being able to assess our provision appropriately.

Other comments

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

N/A