

The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2017-18 QAT Received 21/06/2018

Part A: General Information

Subject area and awards being examined

Title and Name of Examiner:

Faculty / School of:

Lifelong Learning Centre

Subject(s):

Child and Family Studies

Programme(s) / Module(s):

Cert HE Child and Family Studies; FD Child and Family Studies; BA Child and Family Studies.

Modules: LLLC1421, LLLC1369, LLLC1370, LLLC1080, LLLC1411, LLLC2251, LLLC2222, LLLC2267, LLLC2060, LLLC2285, LLLC2284, LLLC3854, LLLC3955, LLLC3956, LLLC3958, LLLC3957

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

Cert HE, Foundation degree, BA degree

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.

- Very helpful overviews and guidance given to me as External Examiner by the Programme Lead including short videos of module aims, curriculum and assessments;
- Innovative approach to assessment evidenced across the programme and modules with the use of varied, engaging and highly suitable assessment strategies which facilitate professional and academic learning and skills;
- Good balance of professional/practice development knowledge, skills and learning along with theoretical, research and contextual orientated knowledge, skills and learning to provide broad and valuable child and family studies professional orientated programmes/courses. These strengths are also reflected in the varied professional backgrounds and specialisms of the teaching team;
- Good consideration of coherency and complementarity across modules with some modules purposefully focusing on alternative aspects of core professional knowledge, research and learning (e.g. LLLC1080 and LLLC1411 designed to complement one another with foci on safeguarding children and multi-agency working in children's services);
- Evidence of clear and comprehensive guidance provided for assessments especially in relation to practice-orientated assignments such as reports, assessments, case study analysis or reflective writing (e.g. LLLC2252 provided several frameworks for students to choose from in undertaking a reflective writing assignment);
- Across modules and assessments a detailed, supportive, constructive and clear approach is taken across the team to marking assessments, providing comments and feedback to students, and to justifying and explaining marks awarded. Students are provided with clear guidance on areas for improvement for future assignments.

Enhancements made from the previous year

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

- There has been a review of modules and curriculum which I think has been led to significant improvements with fewer modules, modules having clear and distinct yet complementary learning aims and outcomes, and the programme having a varied, engaging and well-structured approach to assessments.

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

A few of more minor matters to review for next year are to:

1. Review if minor changes could be usefully made to the module moderation form so that the comprehensive approach to moderation module marks can be documented more fully.
2. Include module level and assessment level learning outcomes in all the module handbooks and to consider if these may also usefully be stated/referenced more in the assessment marks sheet/feedback for students.
3. It would be valuable to review student/module evaluation reports/information as part of the end of year External Examiner process.

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?	NA
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

The programmes provide a highly engaging, high standard and comprehensive Child and Family Studies foundation and undergrad courses which facilitate professional and academic knowledge, learning and development among students. The team are excellent to work with as an External Examiner which I am sure is also reflected in their work with students. I didn't request any changes to the programme last year – so nothing to comment in this respect.

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.

Few Universities offer Child and Family Studies foundation and BA degrees – and I would judge the Lifelong Learning Centre's programmes in this area as among the best due to the strengths above.

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)

The influence of research is evidenced in the practice-informed by research curriculum activities and assessments, research methods module and inclusion of research in relation to specialist areas/modules such as in terms of child development.		
14.	Does the programme form part of an Integrated PhD?	N
<i>Please comment on the appropriateness of the programme as training for a PhD:</i>		
15.	Does the programme include clinical practice components?	N
<i>Please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum here:</i>		
16.	Is the programme accredited by a Professional or Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB)?	N
<i>Please comment on the value of, and the programme's ability to meet, PSRB requirements here:</i>		

Assessment and Feedback

17.	Does the programme design clearly align intended learning outcomes with assessment?	Y
<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>Each module includes a statement of learning outcomes in the module summary and mostly also in the module handbook (although a few need these including in the Handbook). A comprehensive approach is taken to setting out and assessing learning outcomes in relation to knowledge, skills, analysis and communication with an additional generic framework of learning outcomes providing level-related (e.g yr 1, yr 2 , yr 3) learning outcomes across these criteria. Aiding transparency for students, assessments are also provided marks for each level-related learning outcomes with accompanying marker comments as well as the overall assignment mark.</p> <p>Module and assessment level learning outcomes though could perhaps also more consistently be explicitly restated on mark sheets/in comments.</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
<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>Several students achieved high standards in assessments and the majority performed well. There was evidence of above average standards among the students on the programmes given the foundation and BA level cohorts often including adult learners returning to education after some years out of further education and balancing demanding lives alongside part-time and full-time studies. Over the course of the programme there was also good evidence of students' benefitting well from guidance and support with academic skills as well as programme knowledge and learning overall.</p>		
<i>Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make in relation to assessment and feedback:</i>		

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?	NA – no exams
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?	NA
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
<i>Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make on the questions above:</i>		

Other comments

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

Name of School and Head of School (or nominee)

Title and Name of Examiner:

Subject(s):

Child and Family Studies

Programme(s) / Module(s):

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Modules: LLLC1421, LLLC1369, LLLC1370, LLLC1080, LLLC1411, LLLC2251, LLLC2222, LLLC2267, LLLC2060, LLLC2285, LLLC2284, LLLC3854, LLLC3955, LLLC3956, LLLC3958, LLLC3957

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

FD, BA

Title and Name of Responder:

Position*:

Head of School

Faculty / School of:

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. 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

The External Examiner provided a positive evaluation including six distinct points of note in this section. There were no points raised which required programme team attention.

This is the second year that the CFS programme team have facilitated electronic EE moderation. Innovations this year included short talking head explainer videos explaining the aims, structure, content and modes of assessment for each module and a standardised folder-structure of samples, forms and feedback, intended so the EE could navigate and assess work efficiently.

Other positive EE evaluations include the variation of assessment, breadth of complimentary content and horizontal synergies across modules. Our feedback to students was clear, helpful and forward focused.

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

In this section the External Examiner identified our efforts at rationalising our suite of modules. This has been in line with wider University objectives to review modules in terms of their utility, viability and sustainability. As we have moved incrementally towards a blended and flipped mode of delivery, this has necessitated that all module learning aims, syllabi and modes of assessment be revisited and amended.

This programme-wide has undertaken by the staff team with other modules in mind. This has improved the coherence and horizontal and vertical synergies within the overall programme.

Learning objectives have been reduced and rewritten to be consistent with Bloom's verbs. This increased consistency in terminology has led to more clarity for staff delivering modules, and also clarity for students and what is expected. The fact that Bloom's verbs are mostly demonstrable and SMART has also improved day-to-day

pedagogic practice. Our key objective is now to incorporate reference to these Bloom learning objectives in our feedback to students. (See matters for urgent attention below).

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:

1. Review if minor changes could be usefully made to the module moderation form so that the comprehensive approach to moderation module marks can be documented more fully.

We have already acknowledged this weakness in the paperwork, in that the departmental form did not capture the complexity, and analysis discussions involved in our internal moderation processes. As a result, the CFS team began adapting some of the moderation paperwork so that it was able to capture our discussions about feedback, marks and application of the grading criteria. I am pleased to see that these adapted forms are now being promoted as good practice across other programme teams in the department. Our action plan regarding this is to ensure that all modules are moderated using this enhanced moderation form we have developed.

2. Include module level and assessment level learning outcomes in all the module handbooks and to consider if these may also usefully be stated/referenced more in the assessment marks sheet/feedback for students.

Module level and assessment level learning outcomes are now present in the module handbooks. Our priority task of these three matters of attention is to include explicit reference to the stated learning outcomes in our feedback to students.

3. It would be valuable to review student/module evaluation reports/information as part of the end of year External Examiner process.

This recommendation is consistent with the Child and Family Studies (Social Work) ethos of seeking service user voice. We shall make module and in programme evaluation data available to the External Examiner for end of academic year 2018-9 evaluation.

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:

1-7 not relevant, as the External Examiner is not in their first year. Also, the EE did not raise points in this section for us to reflect upon.

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 external examiner was affirmative in responses regarding our meeting of standards and benchmarks. Based on the fact that our programme is comparable to other similar programmes and could identify research informed teaching and learning.

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, there were no points of concern, rather a welcome acknowledgement of how well our mature students attain while juggling work and family commitments. Our response to the point on feedback consistency with learning outcomes is addressed elsewhere on this form.

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:

All these were answered with affirmatives, except the two questions relating to exams; as the programme does not use the examination mode of assessment.

Other comments

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

No other comments were made by the External Examiner.