

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

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2017-18

QAT Received 29/06/2018

**Part A: General Information**

**Subject area and awards being examined**

*Title and Name of Examiner:*

*Faculty / School of:*

*Subject(s):*

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

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

Education
Secondary
Red Kite SCITT
PG Cert

**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 clear focus of assignments which draw on teacher education research literature and require students to reflect, evaluate, critique and synthesise their ideas.

The SCITT ensures breadth of school-based trainee experience through a range of school-based experiences; for example, the students I met described a 2-day mini placement in a school with high EAL as well as contrasting placements in other settings. Each student was keen to share the broad range of training experience and PG learning throughout their training year.

**Enhancements made from the previous year**

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

Please see section below under 'The department has taken a number of steps...'

**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?	Yes
2.	Were you provided with copies of previous External Examiners' reports and the School's responses to these?	Yes
3.	Were you provided with an External Examiner Mentor?	Yes

**For Examiners completing their term of appointment**

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

6.	Where recommendations have not been implemented, did the school provide clear reasons for this?	Yes
7.	Have you acted as an External Examiner Mentor?	No

*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 Department has taken a number of steps to ensure greater cohesion of the school and university-based elements of the programme. University leaders met with school leaders in July 2017 to review and plan for the 2017-18 programme along with sharing of ideas for developing the programme. This resulted in the following:

- The development of 5 golden threads running throughout the entire SCITT provision. This has enabled the trainees to see how the different parts of the programme fit together.
- Introduction of the year plan/course overview which identifies the areas of learning. This approach has supported trainees' understanding of how the PG and school-based learning align.
- An agreed strategy for the forthcoming year is to make greater reference to the Teachers' Standards and the newly created golden threads (key priorities, e.g. behaviour management, addressing barriers to learning, etc.) to provide a common framework of reference and greater coherence.
- Trainees commented that the timing of assignment guidance was appropriate. However, a small number of trainees commented on a poor response from their university tutor when requesting support on a PG assignment. When questioned further, these amounted to a small number of occasions, but nevertheless, worth noting as an area to ensure consistency between tutors.

## Standards

8.	Is the overall programme structure coherent and appropriate for the level of study?	Yes
9.	Does the programme structure allow the programme aims and intended learning outcomes to be met?	Yes
10.	Are the programme aims and intended learning outcomes commensurate with the level of award?	Yes
11.	Did the Aims and ILOs meet the expectations of the national subject benchmark (where relevant)?	Yes
12.	Is the programme(s) comparable with similar programmes at other institutions?	Yes

*Please use this box to explain your overall impression of the programme structure, design, aims and intended learning outcomes.*

The programme is well-structured and operates effectively between the university and the Red Kite SCITT schools. Students commented that they felt well prepared as they enter their NQT year and all have gained school teaching employment. SCITT and University leaders have created and implemented a programme which enables trainees to develop in both the PG and school-led aspects of the programme. The Red Kite SCITT colleague commented on 'the high level of the university input' and how the work developed over the year to identify the golden threads has enabled greater coherence between both aspects of the programme. The SCITT ensures breadth of trainee experience through a range of school-based experiences; for example, the students described a 2-day mini placement in a school with high EAL as well as contrasting placements in other settings. Each student I met was keen to share the broad range of training experience throughout their training year.

The level of commitment from the university staff to work with the SCITT to ensure the highest possible quality PG Cert programme is clear.

13.	Is the influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching clear?	Yes
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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 assignments require trainees/students to be involved in small scale school-based action research; their work is of a high quality. Trainees use a broad range of relevant literature and are able to demonstrate theoretical knowledge and analysis alongside an ability to reflect on their school practice and make critical observations of the literature and present their analysis. Consideration to ethical issues is well thought through.

14.	Does the programme form part of an Integrated PhD?	No
<i>Please comment on the appropriateness of the programme as training for a PhD:</i>		
15.	Does the programme include clinical practice components?	No
<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)?	No
<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?	Yes
<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>		
<b>PG Cert Assessment and Feedback</b>		
<p>Prior to my visit, I moderated the marking of a number of assignments from 3 assignment titles. During my visit I met with the PG Cert programme lead along with university tutors and one of the Red Kite SCITT leaders. In addition, I discussed all aspects of the programme with 6 SCITT trainees.</p>		
<b>The summary of my findings from all of these activities is as follows:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The programme is well structured and assessment procedures are rigorous and in-line with other, similar programmes.</li> <li>• Each assignment provides a clear focus for trainees to relate their classroom practice to research.</li> <li>• PG assessment marking is thorough, consistent and accurate across all assignments with clear and comprehensive feedback which addresses and relates to the marking criteria.</li> <li>• All marking identified a range of aspects of relevant feedback: grammar, punctuation, referencing, strengths of the assignment and areas for improvement.</li> <li>• When questioned, trainees were positive about the timing of the assignment deadlines.</li> </ul>		
<b>Areas for consideration:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the sample includes a range of marked work across all band grades for each assignment.</li> <li>• Ensure a consistent approach by all markers. For example, some marking/feedback includes highlighting where a student has met the band criteria which is a useful approach when moderating the marking.</li> <li>• Ensure each trainee's assignments are marked by a different marker</li> <li>• Consider, introducing a different type of assessment, for example academic poster and presentation which requires trainees to demonstrate a different range of skills and competency relevant to the teaching profession.</li> </ul>		
18.	Is the design and structure of the assessment methods appropriate to the level of award?	Yes
19.	Were students given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the programme aims and intended learning outcomes?	Yes
<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>		

The academic standards demonstrated by the trainees through the marked work moderated is of a standard required for an award at PG level and is comparable with other secondary PGCE programmes in which I have been involved.

*Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make in relation to assessment and feedback:*

### 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?	Yes
21.	Was the progression and award guidance provided sufficient for you to act effectively as an External Examiner?	Yes
22.	Did you receive appropriate programme documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	Yes
23.	Did you receive appropriate module documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	Yes
24.	Did you receive full details of marking criteria applicable to your area(s) of responsibility?	Yes
25.	Were you provided with all draft examination papers/assessments?	Yes
26.	Was the nature and level of the assessment questions appropriate?	Yes
27.	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments on assessment questions?	Yes
28.	Was sufficient assessed work made available to enable you to have confidence in your evaluation of the standard of student work?	Yes
29.	Were the examination scripts clearly marked/annotated?	Yes. Please note the feedback/recommendation on this point.
30.	Was the choice of subjects for final year projects and/or dissertations appropriate?	Yes
31.	Was the method and standard of assessment appropriate for the final year projects and/or dissertations?	Yes. Please note the feedback/recommendation on this point.
32.	Were the administrative arrangements satisfactory for the whole process, including the operation of the Progression and Awards Board?	Yes, for those aspects pertinent to my EE activity.
33.	Were you able to attend the Progression and Awards Board meeting?	N/A
34.	Were you satisfied with the recommendations of the Progression and Awards Board?	N/A
35.	Were you satisfied with the way decisions from the School Special Circumstances meeting were communicated to the Progression and Awards Board?	N/A

*Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make on the questions above:*

The administrative support for me to carry out my EE role has been excellent.

I am not clear as to why the final exam board I attended included other programmes as this was not the case in 2016-17. This appeared to compromise the time allowed for myself and the Primary EE to provide feedback to

programme leaders and tutors. I felt uncomfortable providing feedback with my back to those colleagues who had invested the last year of their time in the programme.

I ask you to consider reinstating the approach where both primary and secondary EEs are allocated time to provide bespoke feedback and to ensure the room allocated permits a round table conversation. If it isn't possible to hold a separate board meeting, both EEs will need time in the programme to prepare our joint feedback.

## Other comments

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

### Strengths

- Commitment of leaders from both the university and Red Kite;
- Bespoke approach to designing and developing the SCITT programme
- The PG aspect of the programme supports QTS development well.
- Relationships between the university and Red Kite leaders; the openness and willingness to change is a significant positive
- The approach of joint planning to create a coherent programme
- Pastoral support from both university tutors and Red Kite mentors

### Feedback from the six students I met, as follows:

- *It's a really good course.*
- *All lecturers are really passionate*
- *Timing of PG assignments works well*
- *I enjoy the uni days on the whole. Putting everything together I realize how much I have learnt.*
- *Support from uni and school has been highly effective and prompt.*

### For consideration by University and Red Kite SCITT programme leaders:

- From the trainees' perspective, there is work still to be done on the consistency and effectiveness of communication of school mentors, with some trainees reporting a superb experience and others, less so. Students talked about their school mentors and the expectations of this role and the need for further clarity to ensure consistency across all schools.
- Are all school mentors allocated time to carry out the role and is there an agreed role description and/or entitlement for trainees?
- How knowledgeable and engaged in the philosophy of the university/SCITT approach to research-informed learning and practice are school-based mentors?
- Whether further training is required for mentors on how their school-based role links to the PG content and delivery of the programme, with a view to further enhancing the integration of each aspect of the programme.
- Embed and make explicit the 'golden threads' across the whole programme to support future trainees to see the cohesion and integration of taught sessions across the university-led and school-led aspects of the programme.

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

Title and Name of Examiner:

Subject(s):

Programme(s) / Module(s):

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

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](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 are pleased that you recognise that the assignments drew on relevant teacher education research literature. This suggests that the University is making an appropriate contribution to the evidence-based model of teacher education that underpins the Partnership's approach.

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

We are pleased that you have recognised some improvements in the programme, for example, better cohesion across all of its elements as a consequence of the introduction of the Red Kite Golden Threads.

The point you raise about the small number of trainees not receiving timely support for their assignment preparation from University Tutors is regrettable. This was a consequence of the industrial action taken by members of the University and College Union.

**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:

Your comment about the high level commitment of university staff is most welcome.

## 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 are pleased that you found the structure and coherence of the programme to be good and that standards are in line with other similar universities. Again, it is pleasing to note that you recognise that the action taken to ensure coherence across the various elements of the programme have been effective.

We are encouraged by your comments on the trainees' use of first hand research and their use of published research to support and compliment their practical teaching. This is how we planned the programme to operate.

## 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:*

Thank you for your positive feedback about the course assignments and the quality of marking and feedback. However, we recognise that there are issues that need to be addressed:

- Next year we will ensure that you receive an appropriate sample of assignments across the grades bands
- Though our standardisation meetings we will address the inconsistencies in marking that you have identified
- It has been standard practice for Personal Tutor to mark all the assignments of their tutees on our teacher training programmes. We will discuss the point you raised in this respect with the School of Education's Director of Student Education.
- We plan to change the Barriers to Learning assignment from a case study report to a poster presentation for 2019-20. This type of assignment has worked well on the primary programme.

## 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 are pleased that you responded positively to these questions. We have addressed the points you make against questions 29 and 31 above.

Next year we will ensure that there is ample time for you to meet with the PGCE (SCITT) Primary External Examiner and to provide feedback to programme leaders and tutors in an appropriate setting. However, the final Exam Board will be included with other Taught Postgraduate programmes.

## Other comments

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

We are delighted that you recognise a number of strengths of the programme particularly in relation to how University and Red Kite colleagues work to ensure a coherent training programme for the trainees that draws on a range of evidence. We are equally pleased by the positive feedback that you received from the trainees.

We appreciate that the PGCE (SCITT) programme is part of a teacher training programme and that Red Kite provides other elements of the programme. Some of the points you raise at the end of your report are outside the University's control but we will discuss these with Red Kite leaders.

Our philosophy is centred on an evidence-based approach to teacher education. Both the University and Red Kite leaders share this approach with colleagues across the partnership and with the trainees. We will continue to make efforts to ensure that there is a collective understanding of this approach to teacher education.

You will recognise the challenge of getting school-based mentors fully engage with all aspects of a teacher training programme. Nevertheless, we are trying to engage mentors in the bigger picture, for example, since your visit

school mentors have received anonymised examples of trainees' assignments. It is hoped this will enable them to provide more focussed support when trainees are collecting data in schools to feed into their assignments.

The Golden Threads have been mapped across all elements of the programme and this mapping has been shared with all partners. I can make this available to you.

Thank you again for your feedback and support, this is very helpful in assisting the Partnership to move forward.