

The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2017-18

QAT Received 10/07/2018

Part A: General Information

Subject area and awards being examined

Title and Name of Examiner:

Faculty / School of:

Business

Subject(s):

Economics

Programme(s) / Module(s):

LUBS1260, LUBS1270, LUBS1280, LUBS1610, LUBS1940, LUBS2050, LUBS2230, LUBS2420, LUBS2500, LUBS2570, LUBS2670, LUBS2675, LUBS3340, LUBS3370 and LUBS3930.

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

BA and BSC Econ/Business

Part B: Comments for the Institution on the Examination Process and Standards

Points of innovation and/or good practice

The degree programme continues to have a high standard and core modules are at the appropriate level with a few more applied modules to give students a flavour of how economics can be used in policymaking.

Enhancements made from the previous year

There was a longer gap between the marking deadline and the exam board which is commendable

Matters for Urgent Attention

NA

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

The programme compares favourably with other top UG programmes in the country, with marking fair and consistent. The modules enhances the learning process and has a good mix of traditional and slightly less traditional modules. Some process improvement has been noted above.

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
<p><i>Please use this box to explain your overall impression of the programme structure, design, aims and intended learning outcomes.</i></p> <p>I see this as an excellent degree programme, with the rigour expected at the UG level enhanced by more applied modules. Programme structure and design is appropriate and consistent with the intended learning outcomes.</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 undertake independent research in at least two modules that I have looked at.</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> <p>N/A</p>		
15.	Does the programme include clinical practice components?	Y
<p><i>Please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum here:</i></p> <p>N/A</p>		
16.	Is the programme accredited by a Professional or Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB)?	Y
<p><i>Please comment on the value of, and the programme's ability to meet, PSRB requirements here:</i></p> <p>N/A</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>Entirely appropriate.</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

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 standard is appropriate, student performance is on the whole excellent and comparable with other Russell group universities offering similar degrees.

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?	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

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

Other comments

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

My experience has been very positive throughout my 4 years and academic staff have been responsive to comments I have made.

Part C: School Response to External Examiner Report

Name of School and Head of School (or nominee)

Title and Name of Examiner:

Subject(s):

Economics

Programme(s) / Module(s):

LUBS1260, LUBS1270, LUBS1280, LUBS1610, LUBS1940, LUBS2050, LUBS2230, LUBS2420, LUBS2500, LUBS2570, LUBS2670, LUBS2675, LUBS3340, LUBS3370 and LUBS3930.

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

BA/BSc

Title and Name of Responder:

Position*:

Economics Programme Director

Faculty / School of:

Division of Economics

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

Response to Points of innovation and/or good practice

It is encouraging to read that our programmes are of "high standard" and that you believe some of our modules are giving students exposure to the use of economics in policy making.

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

We shall ensure that your comment regarding deadlines is passed on to relevant colleagues in the assessment team.

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:

No matters for urgent attention were made.

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:

Nothing specific is raised.

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 appreciate your comments and are happy that you continue to highlight the enhancement to our programme by offering applied modules.

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 comments and the valuable insight relating to our programme to other Russell group universities offering similar degrees

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:

Thank you for your responses.

Other comments

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

We note that this is your final year as an external and we would like to thank you for your dedication during the last four years. We are happy that your experience has been a positive one and that our colleagues have been responsive to your comments.

The University of Leeds

EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2017-18 QAT Received 23/07/2018

Part A: General Information

Subject area and awards being examined

Title and Name of Examiner:

<i>Faculty / School of:</i>	Leeds University Business School
<i>Subject(s):</i>	Economics
<i>Programme(s) / Module(s):</i>	Economics programmes, including joint degrees Modules: LUBS1290, LUBS1295, LUBS1950, LUBS2040, LUBS2280, LUBS2590, LUBS2610, LUBS3010, LUBS3011, LUBS3300, LUBS3301, LUBS3430, LUBS3505, LUBS3560, LUBS3570, LUBS3925
<i>Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):</i>	BA and 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.

I would repeat the two points I made last year:

1. The practice of providing individual feedback on their script to candidates who failed an examination is helpful and I would count it as good practice.
2. The level of annotation in some modules is also good enough to be seen as good practice.

Enhancements made from the previous year

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

I am not aware of any.

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
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
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.

As last year, my impressions are all favourable. The modules I have seen form part of a large number of programmes, including joint degrees where the items identified above clearly reflect more than one discipline. The structures, design, aims and ILOs are all fairly standard and as I would have expected. They are consistent with the QAA benchmark statements (there are no professional body requirements in economics). There is a typical core of economic theory and quantitative methods and a very good range of optional and discovery modules around these. The balance between core and options is again fairly typical of good UK degrees and seems entirely appropriate. The options in areas like political economy and the history of economic thought are not all that common these days, so it is good to see LUBS maintaining them.

13.	Is the influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching clear?	Y
-----	---	---

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)

Much of this is achieved in the normal way of better departments, by providing a range of options which reflect the research interests of staff. This clearly facilitates research-led teaching as well as helping to make Leeds programmes distinctive. Core modules in microeconomics, macroeconomics and quantitative techniques are inevitably (and rightly) more prescribed in what they need to cover, particularly in the early stages of the degrees, but the *Advanced Macroeconomics* papers (LUBS3505) for example clearly reflect the module manager's research interests too. Drawing on expertise from elsewhere in the University (such as the Institute for Transport Studies and the Faculty of Medicine and Health) is also good.

Students undertake research most obviously for the final-year dissertations and projects. These cover a wide range of topics and I understand that supervisors are matched to students on this basis as far as possible, which is good. At the top end the student outputs were extremely good, and would certainly count as research.

14.	Does the programme form part of an Integrated PhD?	N
-----	--	---

Please comment on the appropriateness of the programme as training for a PhD:

N/A

15.	Does the programme include clinical practice components?	N
-----	--	---

Please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum here:

N/A

16.	Is the programme accredited by a Professional or Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB)?	N
-----	--	---

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

N/A

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 assessment methods for individual modules are appropriate. I was struck last year by the number of modules where the assessment is 100% on a final exam, but I understand this is being considered by the Division. Most of the exam papers that I see are predominantly essay-type questions, as my modules don't include the more quantitative subjects, but I am confident that students' technical skills are being adequately tested elsewhere.</p> <p>As far as I can tell the arrangements for the marking of modules are satisfactory and work well. The classification of awards seems sensible to me, and the use of the higher of two alternative weighted averages to incentivise both second and third year performance is useful.</p> <p>Student performance would suggest that the teaching, learning and assessment methods are all performing satisfactorily, even after allowing for the high quality of your students in terms of A-level grades or equivalent.</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?	<p>In some cases certainly Yes. Some of the other programme aims and learning outcomes (e.g. PA4, PA7, LO6, LO9) cannot be demonstrated or tested in the sorts of assessment I have seen, but I am confident that they are being tested in the modules seen by the other two economics externals.</p>
<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>Standards were generally good, and the high marks that appeared in some modules were well deserved. The top scripts were very good, with good citations of relevant literature in particular. The marks for weaker and failing students were also appropriate. The top end at Leeds is noticeably better than I have seen elsewhere, which no doubt reflects the quality of your intake as well as the teaching they receive; the bottom end is more similar to other places, but numerically the tail is much smaller at Leeds.</p> <p>I did not notice any difference in this year's cohorts as opposed to last year's.</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>The level and quality of annotation varied considerably between modules – although I appreciate that in several cases I was seeing exam scripts rather than coursework, and students (especially finalists) may not generally see exam scripts, so the feedback role is limited. Examples of where it was good or very good included modules LUBS2280, LUBS3010, LUBS3505, LUBS3570 and LUBS3925. In some other sets of exam scripts there was little or no indication of why the mark awarded was what it was. However feedback on the dissertations and projects – where it matters most – was good and would be helpful to the students.</p> <p>Marking</p> <p>This is generally fine. The pattern of marks varies somewhat between modules but in a not unexpected way; some of the entirely essay-based assessments not surprisingly tend to bunch in the 2:1 range, whereas more varied or technical questions spread the students out a bit more. Where students get technical questions (mostly) right then they will get high marks. This was most noticeable in LUBS3010, where most students who answered the technical questions 5 and 6 scored well, and therefore did well on the paper as a whole (inevitably there were one or two weaker students in the sample I saw who should not have picked these questions!).</p> <p>I did feel that some of the marking at the very top end was perhaps a little mean, or at least not quite consistent with the comments the marker made. One comment said "Perfect! 80"; if it was perfect then maybe it should get a bit more than a bare 1* mark? There were also a couple of individual exam answers where the marks seemed a little low given the marker's comments. On a slightly different note, the top mark in 343 essays for LUBS2610 was 78; I</p>		

thought the sample I saw was accurately marked, but from nearly 350 scripts I would have expected some marks into the 80s at least. It may be that the assessors' expectations are a little too high.

I would stress that these quibbles are only within the top band of marks, and I am not suggesting any changes to these or any other marks. [I am also aware that there are high marks in the more mathematical and statistical modules, so to some extent the two effects may offset each other.] However it may be something to ponder for future years.

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?	Not directly, but the website provides a good and very usable source.
23.	Did you receive appropriate module documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	Not directly, but the website provides a good and very usable source.
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?	Yes; the samples were well-chosen to reflect the full range of marks
29.	Were the examination scripts clearly marked/annotated?	Some (e.g. LUBS3570) were exemplary; others gave little or no indication of how the marks had been arrived at.
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?	The change in arrangements was communicated rather late, although I do realise that there were particular 'one off' problems this year. The Validation Day and the board itself on 26 June were run very efficiently.
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

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

I thought that Special Circumstances cases were well handled at the board, with sensible decisions reached on each individual case (for example, some borderlines were raised but others were not, after careful consideration).

Other comments

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

This form does not appear to ask about marking *per se* anywhere, so I should state clearly here that I considered the marking I saw to be fair and accurate. I have included some further commentary under Assessment on pages 4-5 above. [A direct question on this in Part B might be a useful addition to this form.]

Some questions do not lend themselves well to “Y/N” answers.

I appreciate the reasons (connected with the UCU industrial action earlier in the year) behind the changes in exam board arrangements for this year. However I thought last year’s system was better, so I hope you will be able to revert to that in 2019.

Part C: School Response to External Examiner Report

Name of School and Head of School (or nominee)

Title and Name of Examiner:

Subject(s):	Economics
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Economics programmes, including joint degrees Modules: LUBS1290, LUBS1295, LUBS1950, LUBS2040, LUBS2280, LUBS2590, LUBS2610, LUBS3010, LUBS3011, LUBS3300, LUBS3301, LUBS3430, LUBS3505, LUBS3560, LUBS3570, LUBS3925
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	BA and BSc

Title and Name of Responder:

Position*:	Economics Programme Director
Faculty / School of:	Economics
Address for communication:	Dr Mike Reynolds, G.23 Maurice Keyworth Building, Leeds University Business School
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

Response to Points of innovation and/or good practice

Thank you for this valuable observation. As we continue to enhance our programmes and modules, we intend to encourage the spread of good practices, particularly in the area of assessment and feedback.

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

N/A

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:

No matters for urgent attention were made.

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:

This examiner is not in their first year of appointment nor are they completing their appointment.

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:

It is encouraging to read that you consider our programmes to contain a good range of optional and discovery modules, and that we are offering options in areas that are less common. We are also happy that you consider a number of our modules to reflect the research interests of staff whether they are optional or core.

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:

We continue to consider the balance and variety of assessment across the programme, and to encourage the improvement of our practice of providing feedback for students on exam scripts. We are happy that the marking and classifications have attracted positive comments. We also agree with your comments regarding the reluctance to award above 70%-75%. We continue to encourage colleagues to award excellent pieces of work appropriate marks (by using the full 100% scale).

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:

Thank you for your comments. As a division we are planning to review the provision of information to, and communication with, external examiners.

Other comments

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

I note your comments about the timings of the Progression and Awards Board being arranged in a different week. The amendment of the exam board date was primarily guided by the industrial action and the potential impact on student's assessment. The faculty had to be assured that all necessary measures had been taken to ameliorate any impact caused by the industrial action. This meant undertaking a rigorous analysis of all modules and programmes and re-visiting our internal quality assurance processes. Alongside the analysis and review of the potential impact, the faculty felt that a clear split of the assessment board and award and progression board would allow a rigorous reflection of the cohort and individual student marks at each meeting, also affording extra time to act upon any issues that may have arose. This additional measure would add a level of agility to our meetings and secure the same level of robustness to our processes. The timings should be back on track next year.

We would like to thank you for your comments and we shall ensure that they are passed on to relevant colleagues within the faculty.

The University of Leeds

EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2017-18

QAT Received 30/07/2018

Part A: General Information

Subject area and awards being examined

Title and Name of Examiner:

Faculty / School of:

Leeds Business School

Subject(s):

Economics

Programme(s) / Module(s):

HECN2010	Introduction to Health Economics
HECN3010	Introduction to the Economic Evaluation of Health
LUBS0010	Foundations of Economics
LUBS1060	Personal Tutorials for Econ
LUBS1070	Personal Tutorials for E&M
LUBS2140	Intermediate Microeconomics
LUBS2665	Economics of Innovation
LUBS2680	Ethics and Economics
LUBS3005	Advanced Microeconomics
LUBS3330	Economic Development
LUBS3365	Environmental Economics
LUBS3435	Public Enterprise & Regulation
LUBS3785	The Economics of Unions
MECH2640	Economics and Management

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

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.
 In some modules assessment is designed to 'draw' students into the learning process and to actively engage them into the learning process. I think this is an interesting and innovative approach that, perhaps, could be shared and replicated in other modules.

Enhancements made from the previous year

Please highlight any enhancements made to the programme(s) or processes over the past year in this box.
 I seem to have noticed some attempts to relate more coursework tasks and exam questions to real world issues. I think this is a positive step and would encourage module organisers to explore ways to harness deep understanding of theory through applications to real world issues.

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

No.

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
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
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.

The degree provides students with solid foundations in core microeconomics, macroeconomics and quantitative analysis while, at the same time, offering students the opportunity to engage with the subject within a wider context right from year 1. I believe that such a structure motivates students while, at the same time, providing good training in the core areas of economics.

13.	Is the influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching clear?	Y
-----	---	---

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)

It is evident that the curriculum content and structure is informed by current research in the various areas of economics. It also seems clear to me that a number of level 5 and level 6 modules have been designed to reflect the research interests of members of staff and to offer students the opportunity to explore the insights provided by economics in different context such as industrial relations and the health industry. Perhaps the teaching team could investigate ways in which the actual research of members of staff finds its way into the classroom through, for example, research-based learning or similar approaches.

14.	Does the programme form part of an Integrated PhD?	N
-----	--	---

Please comment on the appropriateness of the programme as training for a PhD:

15.	Does the programme include clinical practice components?	N
-----	--	---

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)?	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>Overall, I believe that there is a good alignment between ILOs and assessment both across the whole degree programme and within each individual module.</p> <p>I believe, however, that there are opportunities to further fine tune such an alignment. I notice that a number of modules' assessment is based 100% on exam. While this is not an issue on its own, I think that the learning process would be improved by the introduction of more variety in assessment and consider, for example, project work possibly data driven, individual/group presentations etc. There is some very good practice in assessment design and content in some modules and perhaps examples of good practice/variety could be shared among the various module organisers in order to foster discussion on alternative ways in which ILOs can be developed and aligned to assessment.</p> <p>Another thing that I noticed is that a good number of exam papers tend to test mainly for theoretical knowledge and understanding of theory. To some extent there is little or very limited attempt to test for students' ability to apply theory, or to analyse case studies or provide critical/policy analysis of real world issues. I believe that helping students developing such critical skills can help strengthen the development of the modules' ILOs.</p> <p>I would also encourage module organisers to consider increasing the assessment variety when modules are assessed 100% by coursework. I believe that by mixing different types of coursework assessment, students engagement and ILOs development can be enhanced.</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>My feeling is that, through both formative and summative assessment, students are given ample opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the ILOs. Students' performance across the modules has been quite strong with a limited number of students finding it difficult to fully engage with the given material. Overall, my impression is that students are well supported by staff and are given the opportunity to prove their learning and understanding.</p>		
<i>Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make in relation to assessment and feedback:</i>		
<p>Overall, I found the marking fair and consistent with a close and consistent application of the stated marking criteria. There is some variability in the details of the marking criteria across modules but nothing too serious.</p> <p>I noticed a general reluctance by markers to award marks above 70%-75% even to pieces of work or exam answers that received comments such as "excellent" or "very good" or "outstanding". In this respect, it would be helpful to have some further feedback on why the mark awarded on a piece of assessment is (for example) 75% and the accompanying comment states 'excellent answer'. Why hasn't the student been awarded a higher mark given that his/her work has been graded as 'excellent'? What should the student do in order to get a higher mark?</p> <p>My broader concern is that the reluctance to use the full 100% scale will negatively impact the students relative, for example, to other students who are studying on more quantitative/technical modules/subjects (e.g. statistics, mathematics, accounting, etc.) where the full marking scale is more likely to be used.</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?	NA
31.	Was the method and standard of assessment appropriate for the final year projects and/or dissertations?	NA
32.	Were the administrative arrangements satisfactory for the whole process, including the operation of the Progression and Awards Board?	NA
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?	NA
35.	Were you satisfied with the way decisions from the School Special Circumstances meeting were communicated to the Progression and Awards Board?	NA

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

This year the modules' confirmation and the progression and award procedures were handled in separate meetings. I was able to attend the module's confirmation meeting only. I would like to confirm that I was given access to plenty of assessed work to moderate and I could get a good understanding of the students' overall performance across the various modules. All assessed work I looked at had good evidence of first and second marking with further information/evidence available on the mark distributions summary sheets.

The administrative arrangements were excellent: I received copies of semester 1 assessment work at my home University and was able to review semester 2 assessed work while in Leeds.

I felt that the modules' confirmation board meeting was run efficiently and dealt with various assessment-related issues and with mark distributions in an effective, consistent and fair way.

I felt that the effects of the strike on students' learning and assessment was addressed and dealt with in an appropriate and relevant way.

I just have a couple of suggestions concerning the discussion of mark distributions:

- 1) During the board the discussion focuses on modules whose distributions are out of line relative to some benchmark values. Last year's experience and this year's experience seem to suggest that quantitative modules tend to generally be out-of-line relative to such benchmarks. However, the generally accepted explanation is that the nature of quantitative modules is such that meeting such benchmarks is very difficult or impossible. While I understand the reasoning underpinning such an explanation, I am wondering whether the board (or the School) should reflect on the nature of quantitative modules and either remove them from the benchmarking or consider whether there are ways to address the assessment of quantitative modules so that the distributions are more likely to meet the expected benchmark values;

- 2) Often the discussion focuses on the distribution relative to previous years' distributions rather than on the absolute values of the distributions. While generally this is not a big issues in some cases it can lead to the overlooking of some 'issues' with the distributions. Perhaps it is worth making sure to focus on the year's distribution first before comparing the statistics across years;
- 3) It would be helpful if the external examiner were provided with his/her modules' distributions in advance and, in case, was alerted to any 'issue' that the distribution might pose. This would give the external examiner the opportunity to look at the assessed work and, more generally, at the overall module's performance in greater detail in order to be able to contribute to the discussion of why the distribution might look out-of-line relative to expected benchmarked values.

Just some suggestions!

Other comments

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

Part C School Response to External Examiner Report

Title and Name of Examiner:

Faculty: Leeds University Business School

Subject: Economics

Programme(s)/Modules(s):

HECN2010 Introduction to Health Economics
HECN3010 Introduction to the Economic Evaluation of Health
LUBS0010 Foundations of Economics
LUBS1060 Personal Tutorials for Econ
LUBS1070 Personal Tutorials for E&M
LUBS2140 Intermediate Microeconomics
LUBS2665 Economics of Innovation
LUBS2680 Ethics and Economics
LUBS3005 Advanced Microeconomics
LUBS3330 Economic Development
LUBS3365 Environmental Economics
LUBS3435 Public Enterprise & Regulation
LUBS3785 The Economics of Unions
MECH2640 Economics and Management

Title and Name of Responder:

Faculty: Leeds University Business School

Address: Maurice Keyworth Building, Leeds University Business School

Email:

Telephone:

Response to Points of innovation and/or good practice

Thank you for this valuable observation. As we continue to enhance our programmes and module, we intend to encourage the spread of good practices, particularly in the area of assessment and feedback.

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

We welcomed your comments from the previous year with regard to improving the real world application of our modules and we happy that there has been some improvement. We will continue to look at ways to reinforce the understanding of theory through real world applications in our programmes and modules - we note that you call for further application in your response to Question 17.

Response to Matters for Urgent Attention

No matters for urgent attention were made.

Response to questions 1-7

This examiner is not in their first year of appointment nor are they completing their appointment.

STANDARDS

Response to questions 8 -16

It is encouraging to read that you consider our programmes offer “solid foundations” and gives students an opportunity to “engage with the subject within a wider context” as this is something we try to emphasise in our programme development. We shall encourage staff to make further use of their research on the modules that they teach.

ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

Response to questions 17-19

We continue to consider the balance and variety of assessment across the programme. We are particularly keen to develop the work that students do with data during their programme and to increase the application of theory in our programmes. We also wish to further encourage the sharing of good practice between colleagues. We also agree with your comments regarding the reluctance to award above 70%-75%. We continue to encourage colleagues to award excellent pieces of work appropriate marks (by using the full 100% scale) and to further expand on their feedback.

THE PROGRESSION AND AWARDS PROCESS

Response to questions 20-35

We would like to thank you for your comments and we shall ensure that they are passed on to relevant colleagues within the faculty. The faculty will be undertaking a review to our exam board processes during semester 1 of the 2018/2019 session, with emphasis on refining the journey from marking to publication and the operation of our board meetings. Any necessary changes will pass through our deliberative Faculty Assessment Group and we will consult with our externals on any changes to process.

Other Comments

We would like to thank you for your comments and we shall ensure that they are passed on to relevant colleagues within the faculty.