

The University of Leeds

EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2018-19

QAT Received 01/01/2020

Part A: General Information

Subject area and awards being examined

Title and Name of Examiner:

Faculty / School of:

School of Design

Subject(s):

MA Fashion Enterprise and Society

Programme(s) / Module(s):

All modules.

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

MA

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 alignment of the modules to industry practice.
- The level of professionalism achieved within the student work, the way it is being presented and the exceptional levels that some students are achieving.

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 team has made developments to the way that students link the modules and how they relate to industry practice, and encouraged them to focus on current issues and research topics.

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 only

1.	Were you provided with an External Examiner Handbook?	n/a
2.	Were you provided with copies of previous External Examiners' reports and the School's responses to these?	n/a
3.	Were you provided with a External Examiner Mentor?	n/a

For Examiners completing their term of appointment only

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

6.	Where recommendations have not been implemented, did the school provide clear reasons for this?	n/a
7.	Have you acted as an External Examiner Mentor?	n/a

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 programme is well designed to provide students with a structure that reflects what is required of them from an industry perspective. The design of the programme is appropriate, current and well received by the students. I discussed the course design with both new starters and students two thirds of the way through the course during this academic year. The intended learning outcomes are clearly communicated to students and are appropriate for the level.

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 curriculum design and style of delivery appears to be informed by and reflects well the teams research expertise and current industry practice.

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

Assessment and Feedback

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

- The assessment methods are appropriate and in keeping with the sector and level of the award.
- The 2nd marking and feedback process was evident and visible in all the modules, although it is a little more difficult to work through the exam papers and easily view the process due to the format of the assessment.
- The learning and assessment methods are appropriate for level and type of module.

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:

- Students have performed at a range of abilities in both the project work for the creative modules and in the Dissertation. The exams are harder to judge due to the nature of the assessment process.
- Students are given a range of opportunities to stretch themselves, although the large number of students can sometimes present challenges in relation to delivery and one to one attention.
- The range and spread of ability is commensurate with that of other institutions.
- This course offers a unique, broad spectrum of topics, the students indicate that they enjoy the range of topics on offer to them, but mentioned that they find some clear differences between the styles of the business teaching delivery and the creative module taught delivery. This is common, but the indication is that perhaps there could be a slightly better 'blending' of the way that the topics relate to each other and how each can support the other.
- The presentation of the student's work is much improved since I saw it last year, it is presented to a more professional standard, and some exceptional students have achieved a level that would be expected in industry settings.

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

The feedback provided to students is clear and comprehensive, the team also provided some feedforward comments, that is helpful even to the brightest students. The feedback is also well aligned to the learning outcomes, but could perhaps be monitored between first and second marker to make sure that all marks awarded are aligned and completely reflective of the learning outcomes for the module. The assessment process is fair. I understand that the students receive formative feedback regularly during taught sessions and tutorials.

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
<p><i>Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make on the questions above:</i></p> <p>No further comments on these questions.</p>		

Other comments

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

- I would like to thank the team for allowing me more time to view the work on this years visits.
- It was helpful to meet the students that are half way through the course on the earlier visit, and then to meet the new students during the award board visit.
- With such large a large cohort every year the way that the small team cope with maintaining good relationships with the students is to be commended.
- The students I met are all hopeful of what the course will add to their skills set and very satisfied with the course so far.
- It's good to see the students presenting their work with more professionalism right from the early stages of the course, and using industry appropriate software to achieve this.

Name of School and Head of School (or nominee)

Title and Name of Examiner:

Subject(s):

MA Fashion Enterprise and Society

Programme(s) / Module(s):

All school of design modules:

compulsory

DESN5300M Fashion Marketing

DESN5301M Fashion Futures

DESN5318M Research Methods

DESN5316M Fashion Realisation and Contextual Studies

DESN5317M Dissertation: Fashion Enterprise and Society

Optional:

DESN5160M Brand Design and Management

DESN5303M Fashion Communication and Photography

DESN5305M Fashion Industry Analysis

DESN5312M Sustainability and Fashion

DESN5313M Fashion Product Development

DESN5319M Internationalisation in the Fashion Industry Context

TEXT5304M Textile Product Design, Innovation and Development

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

MA

Title and Name of Responder:

Position*:

Head of School

Faculty / School of:

Faculty of Art, Humanities and Culture, School of Design

Address for communication:

School of Design Office

University of Leeds

Leeds

LS2 9JT

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) must be sent 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

Thankyou very much for such a positive report and the team is very happy to know that you feel that the modules within the programme are aligned to industry practise and that the students are achieving a level of professionalism in the presentation of their work that is not only satisfactory but also (in some cases) exceptional. The team has worked hard to ensure that studies within the modules incorporate current affairs news, empirical research data and case studies to capture industry practise. In response to advice from you in previous years, we made time within the timetable to develop digital presentation skills which will be of use to the students in their future careers.

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

In response to the comments from the previous year, the team had made some considerable effort at reorganising the brief set to the students on photography and styling and extended the digital skills in illustration to all the students on the programme. We felt that this had greatly enhanced the cohort's confidence and enjoyment of the programme, and this seems to have been borne out in your comments about their levels of professionalism in presentation.

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:

There were no matters indicated for urgent attention.

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:

Response to question 1-7 relate to new external examiners or those completing their term of office. This is third year of office and as such the questions neither appear to apply nor have any specific issues been 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:

The team are grateful to know that you feel that the programme has been designed appropriately for an MA level standard and reflective of industry expectations as well as communicated well with regards to the intended learning outcomes. The team are especially grateful to know that you found that the students you met with, both in this academic year and the previous one, also felt satisfied with the programme structure; this has been borne out by the very positive postgraduate programme survey responses. As a programme team, we have tried to incorporate our research and industry experience, expertise and practise and we are grateful for your acknowledgement of this in your report.

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:

The team are again grateful for the positive comments regarding the assessment and feedback and that they are appropriate for the level, the results achieved by the students and the opportunities for the students to develop and stretch their capabilities. You raised a few pertinent issues that we are grateful for the opportunity to reflect on:

- The ability to judge the exams due to the nature of the assessment process. The exams are marked according to university procedures in that they are paper based exams with annotated handwritten notes should they be required for feedback. In recognition of potential difficulties handwritten legibility, one of the module leaders for exam based assessment has agreed to take part in a new, university based, trial of an e-marking system, Gradescope, this year.
- You have also raised the challenges in delivery and one to one attention for the large cohort. This has also been recognised at faculty and university level and the programme leader is working with the postgraduate admissions team to further focus the recruitment process.
- The issue of differences in teaching styles between the school of design the business school has also been raised and you have suggested that some form of 'blending' of presenting how the topics are presented may be sought and the programme leader will endeavour to work with the Enterprise course team to work towards a way to demonstrate to the students how the studies at the two schools correspond and support one another.

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:

The team is pleased to note that you judged the progression and awards process through the MA programme to be satisfactory and that there were no issues raised about this.

Other comments

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

The team, again, thank you for such a positive report. The longer period of time for viewing and discussing the work viewed was also felt to be valuable by the team and this appears to be a good template to work with in future years. Receiving feedback about the student's experience of the programme and hopes for their future careers is always of importance for the staff and so we are, of course, delighted with the good news, but also extremely grateful for your faithful feedback to us.