

The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2018-19

QAT received 01/10/19

Part A: General Information

Subject area and awards being examined

Title and Name of Examiner:

Faculty / School of:

Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Language Centre

Subject(s):

Language for Business Management and Enterprise (Pre-sessional)

Programme(s) / Module(s):

Language for Business Management and Enterprise

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.

The degree of collaboration between the language and subject departments is to be commended.

That the programme is not based on a Pass/Fail system so all completing students will progress provides an example of good practice in terms of student support. The resultant positive effect this openness towards support must have on student experience and completion, should be commended.

Independent Learning sections are an integral part of the syllabus.

Enhancements made from the previous year

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

In response to suggestions made in the last report, the programme included a post-consultation reflection document. I feel this is a positive addition to the programme though the quality of reflection and effort demonstrated varied greatly across students. This suggests a need to provide guidance to students on how to make the most effective use of those documents.

The use of Turnitin for submission of all written assignments could be seen as an enhancement in terms of administrative record-keeping processes. In particular, it could help with turning around a large number of assignments in a short period of time as is standard on a pre-sessional.

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

There are no matters requiring urgent attention.

For Examiners in the first year of appointment only N/A

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 only N/A

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

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

The programme is intelligently-designed and appropriately built around a clear and practical purpose. The aims and ILOs remain highly appropriate. They have been carefully designed to meet the needs of a pre-sessional student offering language enhancement, skills development and cultural induction along with subject-specific content. The programme is well-conceived, clearly informed by research, precise and makes excellent use of the time available to ease the transition of students into academic life at the University of Leeds.

13.	Is the influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching clear?	Y / N
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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 design of ELU3007 is clearly informed by research into the most effective way to deal with EAP skills improvement along with subject requirements. Student learning is scaffolded to support the production of a report and presentation built upon wide reading and integration of sources.

14.	Does the programme form part of an Integrated PhD?	Y / N
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Please comment on the appropriateness of the programme as training for a PhD:

n/a

15.	Does the programme include clinical practice components?	Y / N
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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)?	Y / N
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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 / N
<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>Assessments are clear, have well-designed and logical assessment criteria which tutors and students are taught to use effectively. There is evidence of standardisation among markers to ensure fair outcomes for students. However, whilst this evidence was clear in the Record of Check Marking, it would be helpful for all tutors to be reminded of the need to ensure the agreed mark is clearly recorded on those sheets.</p> <p>Assessments are appropriate and in keeping with pre-sessionals delivered by other institutions. This year has seen the introduction of online marking through Turnitin. This has features which are beneficial for learners and teachers especially those with larger than average class sizes and the need to mark very quickly. However, in comparison to last year, I felt that the connection between assessment criteria and written feedback is not as overt as it could be from all markers. I felt some tutors were more proficient in their use of Turnitin than others and were able to ensure the feedback was as detailed and clear through the Turnitin systems as in the previous system. There appeared to be a need for better training during induction to ensure all teaching staff are making full use of the tools in Turnitin so students are absolutely clear why they received the mark they did in relation to the criteria.</p> <p>Overall there is a clear indication that teaching and feedback identifies areas in which the student can improve and provides guidance and support for students to make that improvement.</p>		
18.	Is the design and structure of the assessment methods appropriate to the level of award?	Y / N
19.	Were students given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the programme aims and intended learning outcomes?	Y / N
<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><i>Academic standards as demonstrated by students are high in comparison with those on similar programmes in UK universities. In terms of the academic writing, the quality and range of sources consulted is very good and the integration of those sources frequently managed very effectively. Criticality and the ability to write clear conclusions also seems strong in this cohort. Presentations are of a high standard and of a more academic standard, length and depth than is usual in my experience.</i></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 assessment methods related to ELU3007 link very well to the ILOs. One possible further link would be to use the draft version of the Extended Essay not just formatively. It is quite common practice on similar pre-sessionals to allocate some marks to the draft version since the writing of that does involve certain skills distinct from the final submission. Awarding marks for the Draft clarifies the importance of undertaking that stage in the writing process. Similarly, some assessment marks could be assigned to the extent to which feedback on the Draft has been acted upon thus rewarding the feed-forward element here and acknowledging that skill. Drafting and re-drafting are identified in the ILOs but not explicitly assessed. Some reference to improvement or lack of improvement between Draft and Final submission was made by some but tutors but not all. It may be helpful for such elements to be commented upon by all teaching staff.</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 / N
21.	Was the progression and award guidance provided sufficient for you to act effectively as an External Examiner?	Y / N
22.	Did you receive appropriate programme documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	Y / N
23.	Did you receive appropriate module documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	Y / N
24.	Did you receive full details of marking criteria applicable to your area(s) of responsibility?	Y / N
25.	Were you provided with all draft examination papers/assessments?	Y / N

26.	Was the nature and level of the assessment questions appropriate?	Y / N
27.	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments on assessment questions? N/A	Y / N
28.	Was sufficient assessed work made available to enable you to have confidence in your evaluation of the standard of student work?	Y / N
29.	Were the examination scripts clearly marked/annotated? N/A	Y / N
30.	Was the choice of subjects for final year projects and/or dissertations appropriate? N/A	Y / N
31.	Was the method and standard of assessment appropriate for the final year projects and/or dissertations? N/A	Y / N
32.	Were the administrative arrangements satisfactory for the whole process, including the operation of the Progression and Awards Board?	Y / N
33.	Were you able to attend the Progression and Awards Board meeting?	Y / N
34.	Were you satisfied with the recommendations of the Progression and Awards Board?	Y / N
35.	Were you satisfied with the way decisions from the School Special Circumstances meeting were communicated to the Progression and Awards Board?	Y / N
<p><i>Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make on the questions above:</i> I was provided with all the documentation I needed prior to arrival. Having access to Minerva is very helpful. This year I was able to spend 2 days at the University of Leeds which allowed plenty of time to talk to module leaders and look at students' work in detail. Every element of that in terms of organisation was excellent.</p>		

Other comments

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

This is an effective pre-sessional strand, delivering appropriate learning outcomes in a seamless, integrated manner. The team involved are conscientious and committed to delivering a quality product and most importantly supporting learners to achieve their potential.

Name of School and Head of School (or nominee)

Title and Name of Examiner:

Subject(s):

Programme(s) / Module(s):

ELU3007 Language for Business, Management and Enterprise

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

Title and Name of Responder:

Position*:

Module co-leads

Faculty / School of:

AHC

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) 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

The comments regarding innovation and / or good practice are very pleasing and we would be happy to share these with other strands.

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

The comments on the use of a reflective feedback form and on the use of Minerva marking are pleasing. We accept with thanks the suggestion regarding providing greater support to students in making use of the form.

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:

NA

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:

N/A

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 positive feedback provided in these sections is most welcome.

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:

17: We accept the comments made with respect to variation among markers in terms of a) the link between assessment criteria and write-ups and b) proficiency with Turnitin. We are happy to note the suggestion for a greater degree of training in this respect. However, variation can be a function of sheer size of teacher cohort and with 20 tutors, some of whom had taught the course before, some of whom had not, a degree of variation is perhaps to be expected.

18 / 19: We welcome the comments on making greater use of the draft in terms both / either of allocating some percentage of the marks to the draft per se and / or allocating some percentage of marks to student uptake from the draft. This may require cross-strand consensus in terms of the application of the marking rubric. Moreover, in an already highly intensive summer pre-sessional, this may add further to the marking burden on tutors.

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 seems to be in order here.

Other comments

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

We accept these positive comments with thanks and note the helpfulness of comments.