

The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT
ACADEMIC YEAR: 2018-19

Part A: General Information**Subject area and awards being examined***Title and Name of Examiner:**Faculty / School of:*

School of Philosophy, Religion & History of Science

Subject(s):

History of Science

Programme(s) / Module(s):

HPSC2150 History of Science in 10 Objects

HPSC2307 Science Culture and Society in the Industrial Age

HPSC2400 History of Psychiatry and mental illness

HPSC3450 Mind Brain and Society

HPSC3000/1 Dissertation

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

BA

Part B: Comments for the Institution on the Examination Process and Standards**Points of innovation and/or good practice**

- Course information clearly outlined how much time students were expected to devote to their studies
- The response forms for each of the examiners in the dissertation component of the course – they were particularly useful as the process to reaching a grade decision was clearly outlined
- In -depth engagement with specific 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 was pleased to see that the department have taken up the suggestion for courses to be examined in detail, undergoing rigorous attention in order that the External Examiners were able to feel that they had an excellent grasp of the course, and were enabled to feedback in a timely manner.

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*

N/A

For Examiners in the first year of appointment

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

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

N/A still in post

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

The course is comparable with similar programmes.

13.	Is the influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching clear?	Y
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It is evident that the course content is research driven, the research profiles of staff in the School reflect their individual interest. In their course feedback, students also seem to be cognizant of the fact – they often responded that the lecturers knew their research area.

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
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The assessment methods were appropriate and in line with intended learning outcomes. All information provided to the students makes this clear and this is also reflected in the comments provided to the students, which were of a very high standard.

18.	Is the design and structure of the assessment methods appropriate to the level of award?	Y
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19.	Were students given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the programme aims and intended learning outcomes?	Y
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The mark sheets were particularly useful in this area as marks were awarded for the individual components of a dissertation, for example, which helped students understand the reason for a mark, and to clearly demonstrate to them where improvement was needed. The mark sheets for the dissertations in particular are an exemplar of an excellent feedback form.

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
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21.	Was the progression and award guidance provided sufficient for you to act effectively as an External Examiner?	Y
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22.	Did you receive appropriate programme documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	Y
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23.	Did you receive appropriate module documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	Y
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24.	Did you receive full details of marking criteria applicable to your area(s) of responsibility?	Y
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25.	Were you provided with all draft examination papers/assessments?	Y
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26.	Was the nature and level of the assessment questions appropriate?	Y
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27.	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments on assessment questions?	Y
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28.	Was sufficient assessed work made available to enable you to have confidence in your evaluation of the standard of student work?	Y
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29.	Were the examination scripts clearly marked/annotated?	N/A
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30.	Was the choice of subjects for final year projects and/or dissertations appropriate?	Y
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31.	Was the method and standard of assessment appropriate for the final year projects and/or dissertations?	Y
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32.	Were the administrative arrangements satisfactory for the whole process, including the operation of the Progression and Awards Board?	Y
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33.	Were you able to attend the Progression and Awards Board meeting?	Y
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34.	Were you satisfied with the recommendations of the Progression and Awards Board?	Y
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35.	Were you satisfied with the way decisions from the School Special Circumstances meeting were communicated to the Progression and Awards Board?	Y
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The entire process was very well organised. The electronic packages of information were provided in a timely fashion, and I was emailed prior to their arrival that they were due to arrive. I received everything in good time, and the process was clearly communicated, as well as the due dates for the Board. I have nothing but praise for the administration of the process, particularly the assistance I received from

. Coming to the university the day before to talk to other External Examiners and to have some quiet time to read exams and look over all the work from a course was particularly valuable.

I was particularly impressed with the range of topics for dissertations. The students had been encouraged to follow their interests, and were well-supported by staff in their endeavours.

It would have been helpful if the exam scripts contained a mark on the actual exam. The feedback was good – there were comments on each question, but errors were more likely without marks to match up between the paper and the electronic mark.

Other comments

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

While the department is extremely good at communicating and is well-organised, the same cannot be said for the on-going and highly frustrating issues with Minerva. Issues have arisen every year since I was appointed as an external examiner. I was told my account was suspended as I had not done some on-line training. I thought that some sort of email was sent to my account at [redacted] from Leeds so I would be able to complete all of my External tasks – as I was not able to get into my Leeds account, I was not getting the emails – so it was a Catch-22 situation. My account was closed because I did not do training, (six emails apparently, none that I could read because I could not get into my account) yet I could not sign into my account to check anything.

That said, I must praise the staff at the Help desk who ensured that I was able to get on to my account back just in time. They were really patient and responsive – so they deserve a mention. The department sent me everything so I was prepared, but all of this could be avoided if the University sent emails to our university accounts if there are tasks we need to complete, or a schedule for checking our Leeds accounts. Minerva is difficult to use at the best of times, so one needs time every year to get to grips with it and being locked out of one's account makes things all the more stressful for the External and the staff at Leeds.

Name of School and Head of School (or nominee)

Title and Name of Responder:

Position*:

Faculty / School of:

Address for communication:

Email:

Telephone:

Assessment Officer

School of Philosophy, Religion and History of Science

**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 qat@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 to note that our course information and feedback forms for dissertations are suitably informative.

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

The academic year 2018-19 was the first time we had implemented our new procedure for enabling external examiners to focus their attention more strategically (as opposed to doing excessive sampling across multiple modules). We are pleased and encouraged that this is working well.

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:

We are pleased that there are no matters requiring 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:

Everything seems in order.

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 very encouraging to note that the close connection between research and teaching is evident in the area of the History of Science within the School and that students seem aware of this fact.

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:

It is pleasing to hear that our assessment methods and feedback to students (especially on dissertations) are appropriate and well communicated.

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:

It is gratifying that our progression and awards processes seem generally to be working well and that relevant materials are being received by external examiners in good time.

Your point about the absence of marks from some exam scripts is important. The script books contain a space for marks to be hand-written on the cover and we expect markers to enter the marks there as well as on the electronic mark sheet. We shall remind markers to do this in future.

Other comments

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

It is dismaying that the Minerva system is proving to be so awkward. The School's administrative team will continue to liaise with relevant staff in the University's Minerva team to try to secure easier access for external examiners. We are grateful for your immense patience!