

The University of Leeds

EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2018-19

QAT Received 09/11/2019

Part A: General Information

Subject area and awards being examined

Title and Name of Examiner:

Faculty / School of:

Electrical & Electronic Engineering

Subject(s):

Programme(s) / Module(s):

MSc Electrical Eng & Renewable Energy Systems, MSc Electronic & Electrical Engineering, MSc Mechatronics and Robotics

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

MSc

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 organisation of the assessment by the teaching and learning office within the School continues to be excellent. Exam scripts and projects were made available, as were moderation comments and processes. The very traceable moderation process is particularly commendable.

The readiness with which academics made themselves available to answer questions raised by the externals is also to be commended – this indicates that the entire School clearly has a good, supportive T&L culture.

Procedures on the whole are adhered to well and quality is good.

Enhancements made from the previous year

Please highlight any enhancements made to the programme(s) or processes over the past year in this box.
 Points addressed in my previous comments have largely been addressed, where possible. The issue of moderation of large pieces of assessed coursework is, I am assured, working its way through the University of Leeds' consultation process. The issue of alignment to ILOs is likewise being raised with the University.

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 for urgent attention.

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
n/a

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 MScs are suitably challenging and at a level comparable to other good quality MScs nationally. The ILOs could usefully undergo a review to align them with best practice (see comments above), but I am given to understand that this is underway.

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 projects offered, particularly at the top end, are challenging and clearly offer students to engage in research and/or cutting edge industrial practice. This is to be commended.

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:

As far as I am aware, and as far as I have been able to ascertain, these MScs do not form part of an integrated PhD. However they would be a good start for PhD training.

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:

n/a

16.	Is the programme accredited by a Professional or Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB)?	Y
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Please comment on the value of, and the programme's ability to meet, PSRB requirements here:

The School is doing a good job of managing the complex IET requirements. These are part of the professional accreditation procedure.

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>See above. Fewer ILOs may be easier to manage and give a better outcome.</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
<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>Assessment is in general very good and very fair.</p> <p>Some work to further improve consistency in the 65%+ bracket for project dissertation marking could usefully be undertaken. Stronger rubrics for 60-70%, 70-80%, 80-90% and 90%+ might help academics ensuring consistency in assessment (for example the degree to which achievement is tensioned against independent progress).</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>Marking is generally very good. In a very limited minority of cases however it could be improved. Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ticks to indicate 'this bit has been seen' should be avoided – else this could be interpreted as an awarded mark. - For sections bearing a large amount of marks, some break-down of where marks were awarded/lost should be given (unless no marks were lost, or unless a very strong solutions rubric exists with a detailed breakdown). Otherwise moderation becomes incredibly and unnecessarily difficult. - Some indication that sections have been seen by examiners should be made, even if the sections attract no marks (though see comment above about ticks). - All questions attempted should have a total mark for that question entered in the exam script (even if it is zero) to aid checking. 		

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>Arrangements for the board were entirely appropriate, well organised and efficient – exemplary in fact.</p>		

Other comments

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

n/a

Name of School and Head of School (or nominee)*Title and Name of Examiner:**Subject(s):*

Electronic and Electrical Engineering

Programme(s) / Module(s):

MSc Electrical Engineering & Renewable Energy Systems

MSc Electronic & Electrical Engineering

MSc Mechatronics & Robotics

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

BEng/MEng/BSc

*Title and Name of Responder:**Position*:*

Director of Student Education

Faculty / School of:

Faculty of Engineering / School of Electronic and Electrical Engineering

*Address for communication:*School of Electronic and Electrical Engineering,
The University of Leeds
Woodhouse Lane, 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

We are pleased that the External Examiner has commended, once again, the School's approach to the examination processes.

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

The moderation of large pieces of coursework has been discussed within the School and new processes are being devised to ensure that these items of assessment receive both internal and external scrutiny.

The University as a whole has recently embarked on an extensive exercise to map assessments and ILOs. The School had already commenced a review of ILOs at programme and module level, and so this process has been continued alongside the wider University initiative. Our aim is to make sure that module and programme ILOs are properly aligned, and that assessments are both fully mapped to the ILOs and appropriate for the FHEQ level. Since the programme ILOs are, to a large extent, derived from the Engineering Council's UK-SPEC learning outcomes, we are also seeking to harmonise this with the most recent revision of the Accreditation of Higher Education Programmes (AHEP 4).

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 points for urgent attention were raised.

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:

No points for attention were 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:

As noted above, we are reviewing the wording of the learning outcomes for both programmes and 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:

We note the External Examiner's confirmation that the overall assessment and feedback processes are satisfactory and appropriate.

We have held further discussion within the School to review the assessment rubric for the major project modules, and we agree that there is further work to be done in ensuring consistency of marking, especially at the upper end of the marking range. Some changes have been implemented for the 2019-20 session, and the impact of these changes will be further reviewed at the appropriate time.

The issue of marking practices for examinations scripts has been discussed and we agreed to issue clearer guidelines to all staff concerning the annotation of scripts.

The Progression and Awards Process**Response to questions 20-35 (and related comments)**

Schools may provide a general response; however, where Examiners raise specific points these must be addressed individually:

We are pleased to note the External Examiner's confirmation that the procedures in place for viewing examination papers, students' scripts and project reports, and for the conduct of the Examination (Awards) Board, are considered to be exemplary.

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

No additional points were made.