

The University of Leeds

EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2018-19

QAT Received 01/07/2019

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>	Management
<i>Programme(s) / Module(s):</i>	Programmes: BA Management; BA Management with Marketing; BSc Business Analytics Modules: LUBS 2765, LUBS 2785, LUBS 3885, LUBS 3895, LUBS 3950
<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

I like the generic feedback that's given on exam scripts that haven't reached a pass mark, as the feedback is informative for students and can help them to improve in the future. Likewise, it's good to see generic comments on some coursework assignments concerning what students need to do better to improve on future similar assignments.

Enhancements made from the previous year

I noticed that some of the coursework assignments I reviewed had some in-text comments on them, which is something I have recommended previously. I also noticed the presence of some 'feedforward' comments in the generic/summary comments section on some coursework assignments, which is something I have recommended previously.

Matters for Urgent Attention

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 an 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?	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?	N/A
7.	Have you acted as an External Examiner Mentor?	Y

I'd like to thank everyone I've dealt with at LUBS over the last 5 years for their hospitality, friendliness and professionalism in accommodating me as an external examiner. It's been a privilege to serve as an external examiner for modules on the above mentioned programmes and it's a role I shall miss undertaking dearly. It was such a shame that I was unable to attend the exam board due to a clash with my own programme's exam board,

but I hope to see some of the LUBS people I've dealt with during my tenure at the postgraduate exam board in October which I should be able to attend.

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 programmes are well-run with robust assessment procedures and standards. The programmes comprise suitably challenging and innovative assessments that are effective at discriminating among students in terms of academic ability. The quality of the work I've assessed on the programmes is generally good, with some really impressive exam question answers and coursework assignments produced by students with marks of 70 and over, which is testament to the high quality of students that take modules on the programmes.

I've always been satisfied with the marks awarded on modules and feel that the quality assurance procedure adopted for marking assessments on the programmes is commendable, with an effective record being kept of how marks are arrived at, for example. Although I've rarely seen more than a handful of marks in the '1*' category (80-100%) awarded on all the assessments I've reviewed, which seems a little out of kilter with the very good quality of some of the assessments awarded between 70% and 79% (often no more than 75%) and the generic/summary comments on some '1' category assessments which are sometimes very positively-worded (e.g., headline feedback of 'an excellent essay' for a mark of 72%). Given the high quality of the students the programmes tend to attract, I would recommend that markers are more disposed to award 80s or even 90s for assessments that might, at present, attract marks in the mid- to high-70s.

I've made recommendations regarding markers providing more extensive and more informative feedback to students on coursework assignments since the start of my period of appointment. I have seen some good improvement in this respect over the years, with some 'feedforward' generic/summary comments being evident on a number of scripts and a handful of in-text comments on several of the assignments submitted through Turn-it-in. However, I still feel that markers could provide more in-text comments on coursework assignments (maybe even one per paragraph?) as there are still some assignments that contain only 1 or 2 comments (and sometimes no comments – see the comments on my module report forms for more specific information); this would be especially beneficial for students that haven't got such good marks, although all students (weak and strong) would I'm sure appreciate more 'pointers' regarding what they did well and not-so-well and what they need to do to do better to improve their performance in the future.

Overall, I believe the very good quality of learning and teaching provision on the programmes has developed in a positive manner during my time as an external examiner and I commend all who teach on the programmes on doing a really fine job.

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

On the scripts I reviewed, I didn't see any obvious evidence of the influence of research, although I'd imagine that the final year modules on the programme are based around the research interests and expertise of the lecturers concerned.

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
<i>Please comment on the value of, and the programme's ability to meet, PSRB requirements here: N/A</i>		

Assessment and Feedback

17.	Does the programme design clearly align intended learning outcomes with assessment?	Y
<p>The assessment methods seem appropriate to the respective ILOs in terms of their structure and design. The modules are marked fairly and rigorously in line with good practice principles. The quality of the work produced by students across the modules is generally very good and indicative of the good academic quality of students on the programmes.</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>The students typically produced good quality work across the modules, with some really good pieces of work being evident among the samples I reviewed. Not being involved in other Business Studies programmes, I cannot comment on the relative performance of LUBS students to students on comparable programmes at other HEIs.</p>		
<p>I was impressed with the spread of marks on the modules I reviewed, with a good few firsts and few fails evident. Similarly, some of the in-text and generic/summary comments on coursework assignments were informative, which is something I've recommended previously there should have been done more. Finally, there was some annotation on some of the exam question answers I reviewed, which is something I recommended previously as being good practice for dealing with student queries regarding exam marks – it makes it easier to see where they went wrong and so justify the marks awarded; I hope the practice of annotating continues and becomes the norm for exam marking in the near future.</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?	Not all the time
30.	Was the choice of subjects for final year projects and/or dissertations appropriate?	I didn't review any dissertations

31.	Was the method and standard of assessment appropriate for the final year projects and/or dissertations?	N/A
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?	N
34.	Were you satisfied with the recommendations of the Progression and Awards Board?	N/A
35.	Were you satisfied with the way decisions from the School Special Circumstances meeting were communicated to the Progression and Awards Board?	N/A
<p>I was planning to attend the exam board but was unable to because it was on at the same time as the exam board for the programme I lead.</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):

Decision Research

Programme(s) / Module(s):

Programmes in this area related to the BSc Business Analytics and Optional/ Discovery Modules

LUBS178501 Intro to Effective Decision Making

LUBS276501 Advanced Management Decision Making

LUBS278501 How Managers Make Decisions

LUBS388501 Management Decision Making

LUBS389501 Applied Management Decision Making

LUBS395001 Current Issues in Decision Making

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

BSc & others

Title and Name of Responder:

Position*:

Director, Centre for Decision Research

Faculty / School of:

Leeds University Business School

Address for communication:

Leeds University Business School
University of Leeds
Leeds
LS9 2JT

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

Thank you for positive comments on our feedback to students who have failed assessments. Our aim in both cases is to help the student do better, either in a resit or in future work.

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

Thank you for noting our take-up of your earlier suggestions.

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 to note there are no urgent matters.

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:

We would very much thank you for your contribution to the success of our modules and your helpful comments.

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:

Thank you for your positive comments on our modules and programme; we agree that markers should be encouraged to make use of the full range of marks, and encourage markers to comment as time allows.

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 positive comments on our assessments and the standards of our students' work.

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 confirming a good quality process.

Other comments

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

We would like to thank you for supporting our students over the past 5 years, and for your helpful suggestions