

The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2018-19

QAT Received 04/02/2020

Part A: General Information

Subject area and awards being examined

Title and Name of Examiner:	Dr Katie Overy
Faculty / School of:	School of Music
Subject(s):	<i>Music</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	MA in the Applied Psychology of Music MUSS5931M Research Techniques in the Applied Psychology of Music MUSS5932M Case Studies in Applied Psychology MUSS5162M Dissertation
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MA in the Applied Psychology of Music

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.

Overall the work was extremely strong this year. There were some good research ideas, well executed, well presented, well referenced and well interpreted. The students showed a strong understanding of their topics and of the appropriate methods for the discipline. The quality of the dissertations showed the quality of learning that had taken place throughout the degree programme.

Enhancements made from the previous year

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

There seemed to be more consideration of theoretical frameworks this year, and the students seemed to be engaging with these in an interactive and genuine way, which strengthened the work.

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

For Examiners in the first year of appointment only

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

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?	<u>Y</u> / N
9.	Does the programme structure allow the programme aims and intended learning outcomes to be met?	<u>Y</u> / N
10.	Are the programme aims and intended learning outcomes commensurate with the level of award?	<u>Y</u> / 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?	<u>Y</u> / N

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

Overall, the programme continues to have an excellent structure, with dedicated teaching and strong work.

13.	Is the influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching clear?	<u>Y</u> / 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 entire degree programme is clearly based on current research in the field.

14.	Does the programme form part of an Integrated PhD?	Y / <u>N</u>
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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?	Y / <u>N</u>
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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)?	Y / <u>N</u>
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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.

As in previous years, the variety of assessment methods and quality of teaching, learning, assessment and feedback is evidenced in the strong student work.

18.	Is the design and structure of the assessment methods appropriate to the level of award?	<u>Y</u> / N
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19.	Were students given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the programme aims and intended learning outcomes?	<u>Y</u> / N
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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:

This was a strong cohort with very little poor work. I did wonder what support is available for non-native English speakers though – their writing style can undermine their work, making it difficult to assess.

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

As always, the feedback was detailed and extensive, with clear guidance re further improvement.

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?	<u>Y</u> / N
21.	Was the progression and award guidance provided sufficient for you to act effectively as an External Examiner?	<u>Y</u> / N
22.	Did you receive appropriate programme documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	<u>Y</u> / N
23.	Did you receive appropriate module documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	<u>Y</u> / N
24.	Did you receive full details of marking criteria applicable to your area(s) of responsibility?	<u>Y</u> / N
25.	Were you provided with all draft examination papers/assessments?	<u>Y</u> / N
26.	Was the nature and level of the assessment questions appropriate?	<u>Y</u> / N
27.	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments on assessment questions?	<u>Y</u> / N
28.	Was sufficient assessed work made available to enable you to have confidence in your evaluation of the standard of student work?	<u>Y</u> / N
29.	Were the examination scripts clearly marked/annotated?	<u>Y</u> / N
30.	Was the choice of subjects for final year projects and/or dissertations appropriate?	<u>Y</u> / N
31.	Was the method and standard of assessment appropriate for the final year projects and/or dissertations?	<u>Y</u> / N
32.	Were the administrative arrangements satisfactory for the whole process, including the operation of the Progression and Awards Board?	Y / <u>N</u>
33.	Were you able to attend the Progression and Awards Board meeting?	<u>Y</u> / N
34.	Were you satisfied with the recommendations of the Progression and Awards Board?	<u>Y</u> / N

35.	Were you satisfied with the way decisions from the School Special Circumstances meeting were communicated to the Progression and Awards Board?	<u>Y</u> / N
<p><i>Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make on the questions above:</i></p> <p>I've commented in two previous reports on the difficulty with navigating the administration of the materials to be assessed, from student work, programme details and feedback to overall class marks. This year, both other PGT external examiners also commented on these very time-consuming difficulties.</p> <p>I would recommend again that, where possible: a) a consistent labelling system is used for student work, feedback and class reports, such as surnames or student numbers, b) all work to be assessed by the external is located in the same place and c) the work to be examined by a particular examiner is clearly identified.</p>		

Other comments

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

I very much enjoyed reading the work this year. Overall, the programme provides an excellent grounding in the field of music psychology.

Part C: School Response to External Examiner Report**Name of School and Head of School (or nominee)**

Title and Name of Examiner:	Dr Katie Overy
Faculty / School of:	School of Music
Subject(s):	<i>Music</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	MA in the Applied Psychology of Music MUSS5931M Research Techniques in the Applied Psychology of Music MUSS5932M Case Studies in Applied Psychology MUSS5162M Dissertation
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MA in the Applied Psychology of Music
Title and Name of Responder:	Dr Oliver Thurley
Position*:	School Assessment Lead
Faculty / School of:	<i>Music</i>
Address for communication:	School of Music, University of Leeds, Leeds, LS2 9JT
Email:	o.thurley@leeds.ac.uk
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 obviously pleased with the student performance and Dr Overy's highlighting of this. Evidently thanks go to the teaching team for their part in providing a rigorous and supportive teaching programme.

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

The psychology teaching team's efforts to respond to past comments about integration of theoretical frameworks along with methodological study continue to strengthen student understanding and performance.

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:

N/A

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:

Given that this is Dr Overy's second year in post as external examiner for this programme, there was no need to provide an external examiner mentor on this occasion. Prior to Dr Overy's appointment, this programme was overseen by an external examiner with responsibility for a range of programmes offered by the School of Music and, as such, there were no previous external examiner reports for this programme specifically.

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 programme team strive to ensure that the programme content remains current and that students have optionality to pursue projects in topic areas that are of particular interest to them. As such, it is pleasing to note Dr Overy's comments about the programme structure and central positioning of current research within our modules and assessments.

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 are pleased that Dr Overy found the majority of the work to be strong, and that the feedback was detailed and extensive in providing guidance on further improvement. Language support for non-native English speakers is provided through the Language Centre, with additional programmes on academic writing (available to all students, as well as targeted ones) is offered through the Skills@Library programme.

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:

Due to logistical reasons, there were some challenges in providing electronic access to some modules in a timely fashion this year. The School is currently reviewing its assessment as part of the University's assessment mapping exercise and in-School discussions about our programme structure, as well as anticipating a move towards the greater use of online marking.

Moving forward we have addressed this through A) a unified method for providing feedback is provided through Turnitin, or where, necessary, through Grade Centre. As such, this provides a consistent format. B) all work is submitted via Minerva, using Turnitin where possible, or Minerva Assignments for formats not suitable for Turnitin. The only exception to this is performance exams, though where possible, these will be filmed and archived on Minerva. C) we hope to implement this through clearer communication channels between school and our external examiners.

Other comments

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

The programme team has enjoyed working with Dr Overy again this year and are grateful for her encouraging comments and patience with some of the logistical challenges we have faced this year.