

## School of Art, Architecture and Design

### Undergraduate

- ARCHA Architecture(UG)

Please indicate, below, whether you agree with the statements about the threshold standards of Leeds Beckett University's awards, student achievement and the conduct of the University's assessment processes, using as a reference the framework for higher education qualifications and applicable Subject Benchmark Statements / Qualification Characteristic Statements. Please also list any shortcomings and areas for commendation. You should expand on any issues you mention here in the main report. If any boxes are ticked "No" the Dean of School or nominee will be alerted and will oversee the response from the Course Director.

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#### Standards Set

	Yes	No
"In my view, the threshold academic standards set for the modules/awards meet with the requirements of the relevant National Qualifications Statement's."	X	

If your answer is 'no', please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short:

#### Student achievement

	Yes	No	N/A*
"In my view, students' who have been awarded qualifications have had the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in course(s) or subjects in other UK institutions with which I am familiar." *Not applicable – if you are a practitioner and are not in a position to assess this statement, please note here:	X		

Please provide any further comment on the comparability of collaborative provision

n/a

If your answer is 'no', please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short:

#### Conduct of process

Yes No

# External Examiner's report summary

"In my view, the processes for assessment, examination and the determination of awards are reliable, rigorous and fairly conducted."

**X**

If your answer is 'no', please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short.

## Actions from last year's report

(This will not be relevant if you are examining for the first time)

N/A

## Areas of good practice/commendation

Any particular strengths or distinctive or innovative features in relation to learning, teaching and assessment:

Dedicated staff who rigorously provides theoretical and professional challenges for their students. This is seen in the variety of briefs, excellent theoretical and historical studies (Context modules), and willingness to tackle environmental and social problems of today. The design briefs in stage 2 and 3 provoked imagination, were scaffolded in various ways and show explicit understanding of pedagogical principles. I had conversations with professionals who are enthusiastic and show flexibility in regard to curriculum development and also, to change teaching to online in short notice.

## Main report

In this section you are asked to describe more fully how the University has or has not maintained threshold academic standards and the quality of the student experience in relation to the course(s) for which you are the external examiner, using as a reference the framework for higher education qualifications and applicable Subject Benchmark Statements / Qualification Characteristic Statements.

**Please complete all sections of the form fully and where not applicable please state N/A. Where applicable please also complete the sections for any collaborative provision sampled.**

If you are an external examiner for any of the University's Pearson Licensed Centre Programmes (HND/HNC level) provision, please also complete the section on page 9 sections l, m and n entitled "for External Examiners Associated with Pearson Licensed Centre Programmes."

## Professional Body Requirements

	Yes	No	N/A*
"In my view, the professional body requirements for this course have been met. *Not applicable if the course is not a professional body course please indicate here.	<b>X</b>		

If your answer is 'no', please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short.

also have attended).

Nothing to notify.

(b) The action, if any was required, taken in response to your report of last year. (This will not be relevant if you are examining for the first time.)

(c) The overall performance of the students, in relation to that of comparable levels of work in other institutions.

The cohort seems to be at the level of those you find in other institutions. The first year curriculum is designed to help to level the skill differences.

(d) The strengths and weaknesses of the students in general with respect to knowledge, conceptual grasp or application of skills.

The students respond adequately to the briefs and module requirements which are designed to develop different professional skills at the same time as they offer ingredients for personalised student profile regarding value systems or theoretical or methodological concepts. This is especially true in the first and second year students. The third year students should develop individual response to the briefs, but there are some examples of students who find it difficult to go deeper into the independent synthesis. This may be partly due to the strict briefs, which students choose as they find them comforting, or also it may reflect the covid-19 circumstances.

(e) The standards of the structure, organisation, design and marking of all examination papers and/or other forms of assessment.

All is conducted remarkably well, the requirements, outputs and aims are clear to the students, and thus, the feedback and assessment has to be considered adequate.

(f) The curriculum, teaching or resourcing of the programme of study as indicated by the performance of the students in the assessment

The structure of the studies was very clear to the students, as they familiarise themselves with the third year briefs in the second year vertical studio. Even if in future the vertical studios may be abandoned, the school building with its spaces is to enhance overall studio culture. Consequently, this makes the evaluation of the choices offered third year project easier. When interviewing they reflected well the differences of the years, and understood what each year is there for.

(g) Comments on the use of My Beckett (Virtual Learning Environment) within the course (if applicable).

n/a

(h) Module content, consistency of modules and module assessment across the course and the achievement of learning outcomes. (You may be asked by your School to provide detailed comments on the modules that you examine.)

The modules are constructed in intelligent way, with clear pedagogical policy for each year. The theoretical (context) modules are impressive with innovative creative practice components which is promising in terms of future developments of theory modules. Especially i would like to mention the opportunities of the third year 'manifesto' thesis which could be conducted with components or possibilities to choose creative practice content with accompanied theoretical background introduction instead of an option of a 6000 words essay.

The vertical design briefs seem to greatly benefit second year students who choose a appropriate spring term design unit after witnessing how each unit is conducted. The third year student seemed to be paralysed of the required or implied theoretical rigour, and are not supported to find individual methodology for the defined project as synthesis. Instead they seem to be dependent on the methodology guiding their first stage of analysis and precedent research.

The 'standard' functional proposals in stage 3 should be also given more merit as solving elegantly and professionally practical and technological problems of today is needed in these uncertain times of climate change.

(i) Areas of student/staff engagement in teaching and learning, scholarship, research or professional practice.

The group work within the modules is conducted well to enhance studio culture. The possibility to get real life experiences during study is connected to school's design office and its engagement, which offers remarkable opportunities to learn from professionals. The research areas are represented well in the modules' contents. The professional practice module is impressive, with its interdisciplinary components.

(j) The University welcomes external examiners' comments on its academic regulatory framework. Such comments may not have a direct bearing on standards set and achieved or the conduct of processes and so it may not be appropriate to include them elsewhere in this report or its summary. Please record any concerns or comments you may have here.

The university gives the students a possibility to refer and thus postpone their final submission. This was used extensively this Covid year which is fully understandable. This caused that the samples were reduced, and examiners are judging the school's educational rigour based on limited samples. This needs addressing, and during the examining visit I understood that scheduling is to be changed so that the spring term offers more time for design.

collaborative provision for which you have responsibility (in addition to those you may have indicated previously in this report).

n/a