

## School of Built Environment And Engineering

### Undergraduate

- BECIV Civil Engineering(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

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)

Yes

## Areas of good practice/commendation

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

None to make on this occasion.

## 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.

(a) The operation and conduct of the Progression and Award Board (and/or Module Board meeting you may also have attended).

I was not able to attend the Progression and Award Board but I have no reason to believe that it was not conducted in a proper and professional manner.

# External Examiner's report summary

(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.

It is not possible to make a comparison with other institutions because of the effect of Covid 19 on the delivery of modules, particularly in semester two, and on the assessments/

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

The students have a sound understanding of the modules.

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

I was happy to approve all the draft assessments prior to the outbreak of Covid 19. I wholly support the changes that were made to these assessments after the Covid outbreak.

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

In view of the exceptional circumstances the University has provided the students with all the available resources necessary.

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

The positive effects of the use of My Beckett has come to the fore as a result of the Covid outbreak.

(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 alternative assessments that were put in place have resulted in some modules at both levels 5 and 6 having a range of marks that are higher than those achieved in previous years. I refer particularly to Engineering Materials Chemistry, Fluid Mechanics, and Structural Analysis Techniques at Level 5, and the

40-credit module, Independent Project at Level 6. In the case of this Level 6 module I was concerned by the range of marks awarded; 12 in the first class band and three in the upper second class band, and none below that level. I felt that these marks were too high despite the effect of Covid and that this has inflated classifications awarded with all students being awarded either a first or upper second. I do not believe that these students should be disadvantaged and so I can confirm that I support the awards made, but with reservations. The School should conduct a review of the assessment process and look again at the 40-credit Project module.

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

No comment to make on this occasion.

(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.

This has been an extraordinary year and I would congratulate the University on the steps taken early in Covid outbreak to ameliorate the situation. It is becoming clear that at the start of the new academic year in 2020 the situation will again be far from normal and so I would urge the University to undertake a review of the procedures adopted in the last session. In a previous report I have commented on a trend towards grade inflation of final awards, and the results this year show a level of awards that I believe is not sustainable. As an External Examiner I can assure you that you will have my full support in reviewing your procedures.

(k) Collaborative Provision: please include here any comments you wish to make on elements of collaborative provision for which you have responsibility (in addition to those you may have indicated previously in this report).

Not applicable