

Cultural Studies And Humanities

Postgraduate

- MASHI Social History(TP)

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:

The MA in Social History continues to provide a strong example of good practice in the sector with students excellently supported throughout the degree. Innovative features include novel and imaginative course and assessment design – especially the postgraduate conference on ENGS712 the forgery exercise on ENGS7106.

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.			
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).

The operation and conduct of the Progression and Award Board was effective and appropriate.

(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 overall performance of the students across the MA was good. There was some excellent work – with students on every scoring distinction marks on coursework and dissertations. The range of marks is comparable with other institutions. Given that this has been a difficult and unusual year, student marks have held up remarkably well across the board - a testament to the efforts that staff have made to support them.

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

The work that I have looked at demonstrated that in the options across the MA all students were able to acquire and demonstrate good levels of knowledge of the past, commensurate with that required at MA level for social history. The conceptual engagement of most students was also good – with coursework demonstrating how many students acquiring and deploying historical theory at a sophisticated level.

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

The structure, organisation and design of the assessment for the courses I looked at this year were all of an excellent standard. Marking was carried out to a high standard – all work was double marked and feedback engaged with student work at a high level. The level of positive feedback was very good and staff have offered students supportive criticism. Some small modifications were made to the marking process to accommodate the Covid situation.

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

The curriculum for the MA is excellent –and includes a number of creative and original options that allow the students to effectively develop their individual research interests.

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

My Beckett is well set up for the modules on the MA – materials are provided for the students and it is

clear and easy to use.

(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.)

Researching Cultures (ENGS712)

This is a well set up and presented course. It includes a good range of assessment methods (draft abstract, presentation and paper) and the 'Postgraduate Conference' is a good strategy for getting students to present their work in an engaging format. All marks are above 50 apart from one and one student has achieved a distinction – suggesting that the course is working well to support and engage students. All the students have been offered very good feedback and clear constructive criticism.

Victorians in Italy (HIST721).

This is clearly an interesting and engaging module – it is well set up and the 3,000 word essay is an appropriate assessment for the course. The course is obviously working well and all students have been able to achieve marks of over 50. There are also two distinctions and two high merits which demonstrates the course is engaging students effectively and working well for them. Good and clear feedback has been given the students.

ENGS706 Journeys and Discoveries: Travel, Tourism and Exploration, 1768-1996

This is a well-designed course with innovative assessment methods. It's good to see students on the course continuing to perform well on the course this year – the forgery assessment appears to be working particularly well to push students to produce excellent and creative work. Detailed and supportive feedback has been offered, and constructive criticism given.

HIST705 Nature, Culture and Society: Explorations in Environmental History

This is a good course that is laid out clearly and well, and the essay is an appropriate mode of assessment for the course. Students have achieved a good range of marks for the course and excellent work has been supported effectively – it was good to see that two distinctions had been achieved. The feedback for the essays is good and clear and constructive criticism had been supplied where necessary.

CRN 16648 Fame

This is a well-designed and engaging course that provides students with stimulating subject matter. Assessment is carried out through a presentation and an essay. Students have achieved a good range of marks across the course (50-68). Good feedback has been offered – giving positive comments as well as identifying areas for improvement. The work has been effectively moderated and in the one case a mark has been altered (on grounds of poor academic practice) a clear explanation has been offered. As a result of the Covid crisis a moderation/sampling approach was taken rather than complete double marking – this process has clearly worked effectively and was appropriate in the circumstances.

CRN 10525 Underworlds

This is an engaging course which is assessed through a single essay (an appropriate method of assessment for this kind of MA module. Students have performed well on the course with marks ranging from a 74 to 53, 3 students scoring 2:1s and 3 scoring 2:2s. Good feedback has been offered – giving positive comments as well as identifying areas for improvement. Moderation has been carried out effectively.

CRN 12630 Dissertation

The dissertation is assessed through a proposal (10%) and a longer research essay (90%) which provides a

useful structure for developing independent projects. For the proposals, double marking has been carried out very effectively and in the case of varied marks it has been made clear how agreement has been reached. The dissertations have also been second marked and good and clear comments provided. Marks (overall) ranged from 42 to 72. Despite the difficulties with academic work this year it was very pleasing to see that students had managed to produce some very good work and there was a particularly strong dissertation on the American revolution. Creative and innovative research topics had been developed including football and racism and the image of the allotment. Due attention has been paid to the difficulties students have faced in carrying out primary research during the Covid period, and appropriate allowances have been made.

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

N/a

(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.

N/a

(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).

N/a