

School of Film, Music and Performing Arts

Undergraduate

- BAFLM Filmmaking(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:

As over the last few years, the practice of awarding individual grades within collaborative working at Level 6 is really outstanding. The teaching team care about the course and their students and who go above and beyond to deliver the best teaching experience.

The Northern Film School consistently produces stunning films that are amongst the very best in the country.

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.	X		

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).

External Examiner's report summary

I am not attending the award board, but the operation of giving me remote access to students' work and Bb sites has been excellent. Thanks to all involved (IT, admin and academics).

(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.

As always, the best work at Level 6 is amongst the best in the country.

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

The range and quality of technical skills demonstrated by students continues to be very strong and unusually for an undergraduate course, the students are able to take roles across the whole production. The knowledge of the individual skills (camera, sound, production design, editing, scriptwriting, producing, directing, animation) in relation to the professionalism, the understanding of process, and the appropriateness of choice within a filmic setting, is evident and impressive.

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

Last year, I wrote that I was particularly impressed by the organisation of the individual assessment in the 60 credit Film Project at Level 6 but noted that staff spend three weeks ensuring the fair assessment of this, which is potentially unsustainable. I continue to be impressed with the level of dedication the staff show to their L6 students, but am aware that this high level organisation can be dependent on one or two key staff. I am aware that there are some staff changes happening next year.

The feedback forms are very clear, useful and enable students to understand exactly why they have been awarded their grade.

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

Last year, my comments were concerned with the staff student ratio being dangerously low. This year, due to Covid, remote meetings and the course leader leaving, I have had less detailed discussions, but I understand the move to the new building is going to be delayed for a year, which could be a good thing.

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

All good.

(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.)

FILM PROJECT. This is a 60 credit module that goes across both semesters of L6 and is the main filmmaking module for the students.

The Bb site is very easy to navigate and displays an immediate front facing response to student feedback, including a google form for students to ask any questions. This is excellent practice. Staff availability and timetabling are clear and have been adjusted in response to student feedback.

I looked at samples across the range.

The module handbook is thorough and gives a holistic view of the module, but it is a bit confusing because there is also a Screenwriting Module Handbook, which suggests there are 2 modules in one.

The production schedule is very clear. Under Module Content, there are only 3 areas; Documentary, Screenwriting and Sound. This feels rather unequal - where do the cinematographers, editors etc go? Also, the information in these comes across as rather disjointed as if each of these is a module in itself rather than parts of the same.

As last year, the assessment design, and use of feedback rubric is brilliant, and I would again, point out the outstanding marking approach which allows students to achieve the top marks even when working on a mediocre film.

DISSERTATION. This 20 credit module has a wonderful Bb site, full of friendly helpful advice from the tutors offering tutorials and inspiration throughout the module with a lovely shift towards supportive pastoral care during the Pandemic. I looked at a range of essays, and the range is varied and interesting, students clearly feeling confident to choose subjects they are passionate about. The best ones are excellent.

Looking at all three L6 modules for the first time, it is striking how much written work the students are being asked to submit and I wonder whether there is a way to vary the types of submission (film essay, video diary etc).

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

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING. This professional practice module is very well organised, and again, the Bb site is clear, useful and helpful. The swift change in direction this year was well communicated with calmness and control, which I'm sure was well received by the students.

(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.

I have no concerns in this regard.

(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