

School of Health And Community Studies

Undergraduate

- BCDAP Childhood Devt and Playwork (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:

The teaching and administrative teams are to be congratulated for their appropriate and timely response to the restrictions imposed by the covid-19 virus. Their effectiveness is clearly demonstrated in the excellent 2020 results and the successful completion of the year by nearly the entire student cohort.

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).

Despite the novelty of moving this meeting online it was carried out with due diligence, providing the

opportunity for all attendees to engage and jointly verify the accuracy of the marking process. It was well-chaired and operated to expected standards.

It was good to see course-wide recognition that covid-19 will have affected stronger as well as weaker students and subsequent application of academic judgement when reviewing individual student outcomes. The presence of the Dean to ensure compliance with 2020 covid regulations was welcome and good practice.

(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 remains my view that student performance in course work lies within expected norms for university grading systems.

Student performance varied with assignment but customarily within a limited and acceptable range of grade boundaries.

The results for each year group were good, demonstrating that students' needs have been met in difficult circumstances.

Generally, stronger and weaker students could be identified, and this continues to give confidence in the fairness of the assessments and marking schemes and processes across a range of types, and ultimately that the final degree levels awarded fairly reflect student achievement.

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

Knowledge, conceptual grasp and skills application varied across the student group but only occasionally did students fail to reach the threshold requirements for graduacy. When this happened, it was explicitly reflected in the marks and feedback given by markers and in my opinion the judgements were sound.

For the modules I moderated, students demonstrated an ability to reflect on their own learning in a sophisticated way drawing on supporting literature as relevant.

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

It remains my view that the course structure is excellent in terms of the horizontal and vertical connection between modules and in the array of assessment instances within many of the modules.

The staggered timings for hand-in support continuous student endeavour. The criteria for assessment are clearly set out within each module handbook and used to structure marker feedback providing clarity for the grading process.

There is evidence of feedforward with many students invited to arrange a tutorial to further discuss way to

improve elements of their work.

It is clear that, faced with the pandemic, there was a timely review of module content and assessment to enable students to achieve and progress to completion, a move especially challenging to any course with a practical element.

Overall feedback was very thorough, often from both first markers and moderators. It was good to see this acknowledging and taking into account the difficulties that students – and some in particular – were facing during the pandemic. For instance, when placements had been unduly affected, or no physical access to printed books reduced the range of source material readily available to students. It is important that this sensitivity is on record and that the students receiving their results were immediately aware that markers understood their difficulties.

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

The high levels of student attainment (in that very few marks fall below the 40% threshold) is to be commended and, I believe, reflects the supportive structures that an integrated curriculum and cumulative assessment elements create and the commitment toward students of the teaching team.

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

Used very effectively to support the entire student learning process this year, in addition to normative communication, submission and assessment processes. Impressed by the effective covid-response of making skills support, library contact and many other items easily accessible in online formats attached to the modules of study. Staff were notably careful to preface announcements with general wishes of wellbeing thereby demonstrating their 'care' to the students.

(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.)

As stated last year, I believe there to be a good fit between module delivery, assignments and assessment criteria and this leads to a creative and useful learning experience for students. There was evidence this year of timely minor adjustments to module assessments to enable students to demonstrate their knowledge base and achieve a successful outcome despite the curtailment of normal activities as a consequence of the covid-19 outbreak.

00302 HESC536 Experiential Learning L5 S2

Adjustment was particularly evident in this complex and practice-based module where the team worked together to ensure that students were able to achieve appropriate outcomes, firstly in making an adjustment to one of the assessment elements to enable personalisation of a reflection that normatively would involve engagement with the supervisor's report, secondly in taking individual difficulties with completing practice hours into account. There is evidence too, that the team ensured parity of results over the module through a complex system of cross-marking and cross-moderation enabling the more experienced staff to support the less experienced in finding the appropriate level. This is to be commended and provides real evidence of the teaching team working collaboratively to ensure positive

outcomes for both students and the University.

11909 HESC533 Childhood & Society: Rights and participation L5 S1

Good in-text feedback demonstrating careful reading and supportive practice with regard to students' future development. The overall feedback summaries also offered an appropriate level of detail, broken down by LOs and/or criteria for grading for those students who handed in on time and for most others, too. There was an absence of moderator comments on the assignments I sampled but it was clear that moderation had taken place and that the individual results were accurately established. I looked particularly at assignments with borderline marks sitting either side of pass/fail and grade boundaries and agree that the divisions have been accurately acknowledged. The similarity content for this assignment is particularly high and, at first, I did wonder if there was an error in the way that Turnitin was functioning, however unlikely. A more detailed examination suggests that many UK students are drawing on a limited range of policy documents and resources and are choosing to quote or partly restate the same key parts. It might be a useful exercise for academic skills development to challenge subsequent cohorts to rewrite material and further personalise it to achieve lower similarity scores and thereby a higher level of originality (but this may just be one step too far at level 5).

11907 HESC537 Play & Playwork: Working together L6 S2

That the students did so well is to be recommended given that their need to co-ordinate their activities and collaborate became an entirely online process due to the pandemic. It is notable that clear leaders emerged and that the students were encouraged to play to their strengths even though some had not been angling for leadership, or other roles that they needed to take on. The student accounts demonstrated that these L6 students have developed the teamwork skills needed to be successful playworkers, and that there was a recognition that some peers, inevitably, needed – and were given – support and encouragement from their colleagues, to contribute fully when their strengths lay in the presentation element that became an impossibility. Overall the reflections were very honest and insightful demonstrating that the students trusted that self-criticism would not, as can happen, be seen as a failing and lead to a lower mark.

11910 HESC645 Therapeutic Playwork L6 S2

The marking clearly applied set criteria enabling consistency and comparison across the student cohort. As previously, the marker provided a timely and very clear mark summary and some general comments that students (and examiners) could use to understand expectations for the module. This remains very helpful and enables an effective use of everyone's time. It also provides students with an overview that enables them to work out their own position and benefit from the breadth of information offered to the group – a useful approach as it offers feedforward even though it is the end of their undergraduate course. I believe this to be an appropriate method of feedback at level 6 and one that might be suitable for some other modules.

As last year, mark distribution clustered in the 2:1 division and this was an appropriate outcome based on the work sampled. There were no fails and one student achieved a first-class mark, in keeping with the quality of the submitted work.

11775 HESC648 Playwork Dissertation L6 S1 & 2

Detailed and thorough marking by both first and second markers highlighting general points and significant specifics. Care taken to help the weaker students understand how things could have been better even though this is a final piece of work. Synchronicity of views across marking that accorded with my own. Clear use of the well-thought out marking structure enabled consistency in styles of feedback. Comments reflected the marking criteria and expectations for levels.

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

Given that the course comprises a significant element of practical experience with the expectation of 360 hours in relevant settings, it was really important this year that the requirements were modified to acknowledge the difficulties consequent upon the pandemic, particularly its effect on the Experiential Learning modules. It remained evident that students draw upon these experiences to give substance to their theoretical learning, and good to see a practical component so clearly, and sensitively, embedded in an academic course.

(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 demonstrated a clear policy toward assessment during the international pandemic and this was clearly communicated in an accessible way, and was demonstrably put into practice, during teaching and marking and at the Awards Board where it was endorsed by the Dean of School's presence.

(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