

School of Health And Community Studies

Undergraduate

- FDYCL Young Childrens Learning & Dev (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

The samples of work are comparable in standard to other Foundation degree work I am familiar with.

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 assessment tasks are all highly relevant and useful for students studying a foundation degree. Each task has been developed specifically with the focus of the module in mind and the varied assessment diet offers students a range of valuable opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding and academic skills in a variety of ways and through making useful links between theory and practice.

Some assessment tasks provide the opportunity for students to select specific focus based on their interests/practice and this is a real strength which encourages students to engage in a deep level with their learning.

I have noted much more consistency between module information and feedback given to students this year which is a real strength as it provides a clear framework for students to follow a coherent path through their study. Information presented to students in the module guide is comprehensive and clear and I think it is useful to have all the assessment details within this document for clarity.

It was really useful to receive part of the sample as a secure, online shared drive, this made accessing the sample and paperwork a more straightforward task. Some challenges with this process resulted in samples being sent as attachments as emails.

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

External Examiner's report summary

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

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).

In my view, the operation and conduct of the Progression and Award board was rigorous and fairly conducted.

(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.

Having considered marks on the sample of work I was sent and marks outlined on the moderation document, performance indicates an expected spread of marks.

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

Work awarded the highest grades was written following an expected academic style following academic conventions, demonstrated good depth of knowledge and understanding which was applied to practice where relevant and which had drawn upon a range of relevant academic literature. Work at the lower end of the scale tended to be more descriptive and relied on fewer academic sources. Overall I feel the standard of academic writing at all levels was really high and it was good to see all students have clearly had support in structuring academic writing as all had made a good attempt to introduce and conclude their assignments.

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

It is clear that a thorough and consistent process of assessment has taken place. Students are provided with useful annotations on their work and a general comment at the end. There was some variation in the depth and detail of comments and the extent to which they were specific or general varied slightly. For some modules clear and specific areas for development were given which is useful for students to feed

forward.

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

The course offers a varied and relevant curriculum which provides students with the opportunity to make some level of choice in the focus of their assignment. It is great to see students engaging in research as a reflective tool at level five and also good to offer students the choice between elective modules which allows them to study a more specialised route.

(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.)

Modules have a varied and relevant content which enables students to consider contemporary issues as well as the theoretical underpinnings of practice. Learning outcomes are clear in the module handbooks and it is clear where these link to the assessment task. The course team have worked hard to get samples for me under very difficult and challenging circumstances and I understand this has been an additional challenge for some semester one modules where, under usual circumstances I would receive physical samples. Where work or feedback has not been provided an explanation has been given for its absence and the internal moderation process has provided assurance that processes have been followed.

Child and Society

The module guide is clear and learning outcomes are split logically between two relevant assessment tasks although only the essay was available electronically for external moderation. Giving students an element of choice to select a written focus is a particular strength of the written assessment enabling students the opportunity to explore issues that may have particular interest to them.

I looked at ten examples of task two with marks ranging from 43% to 76%. Stronger pieces of work followed academic conventions to a high standard, with a clear structure, detailed introduction and conclusion and making reference to a good range of academic literature. Work at the lower end of the mark range tended to be more descriptive and lacked structure and depth. Where available, tutor comments and feedback is supportive, providing detailed inline comments focused on both the content of the essay and academic conventions such as sentence structure and punctuation. No presentation samples were available for moderation.

I would like to have seen examples of work with tutor comments for all pieces (I had access to three from the sample with detailed inline comments and a general comment). In particular it would be useful to see feedback given to those students gaining the highest and lowest marks to review the ways in which students are supported to improve their academic at both pass and distinction level. I understand after

reading the internal moderation comments that this has been provided to students and assume this was not available electronically. Some pieces of work would benefit from feedback around referencing conventions and accessing recent academic literature, particularly as students move towards potential level six study.

It is clear that an effective process of internal moderation has taken place and the moderation sheet provides a good level of detailed comments. Where there are significant differences between the first and second mark it would be useful for a brief explanation detailing how the final mark was agreed, particularly where marks may cross grade boundaries.

I wonder whether a couple of explicit feed forward points on each piece of work would benefit students and given them a focus for development. I agree with the marks and tutor feedback where available.

Health issues in childcare

A useful module incorporating a valuable report style assessment which fits well with the subject area. The module guide is clear and detailed and outlines all relevant information for the module. The task enables students to meet the learning outcomes well and offers itself well to a report style. It is a strength of the module that students are expected to evaluate the impact of policy on health.

I was sent a large sample of work with examples across the grade bands with the lowest mark at 42% and highest mark at 74%. Work at distinction level was structured well and made reference to a good range of wider reading which was critically evaluated to a high level. Work at pass level tended to rely on a much smaller range of reading and lacked the depth and detail necessary to explain key points to a high standard. I note one piece of work had a similarity report of 55% and wonder if any further action is taken in instances such as these?

In terms of feedback, I did note some inconsistencies. Not all piece of work in the sample had inline comments, the grade or the feedback on but I understand this is a result of the download rather than absent from the work. Where I did see feedback, comments on scripts did not always contain much detail. Although the overall comment at the end was very positive and specifically relates to how the student has met each learning outcome, some did not include areas for development which limit students in terms of enhancing skills in future work.

A clear process of internal moderation has taken place and detailed comments outlining the process are evident on the moderation sheet. I agree with the marks and feedback given for this module.

Play based learning

This is a very relevant module for the course which promotes reflection on pedagogical approaches and the importance of play as a medium to learn in early childhood. A sample of eight was offered for moderation and these sufficiently reflected the spread of marks in the module. The highest mark in the sample was 76% and lowest mark 48%. Stronger pieces of work reaching distinction level demonstrated good critical analysis of the literature, clear writing styles and a sound understanding of key concepts and theories. Work reaching pass level demonstrated good attempts but lacked clarity in terms of following academic conventions, relied on a more limited range of academic literature.

Unfortunately none of the scripts uploaded to the one drive have feedback and annotations but it is clear that a process of internal moderation has taken place and a clear documentation of this process is recorded. I agree with the marks given for this module.

Current Issues

This is an interesting module which offers students a useful opportunity to explore a contemporary issue of their choice. The module guide is clear with a good explanation of the assessment task and learning outcomes. It was noted that the grade band criteria grid included in the module guide appears to cover level four rather than level five.

A good range of interesting and relevant contemporary issues were included in the sample which contained five pieces of work ranging from 42% to 82% and including an example from each grade boundary. The stronger pieces of work effectively critically evaluated the literature and made reference to a wide range of wider reading. Pieces of work gaining lower marks were more descriptive and less explicit. Detailed tutor feedback was noted on all pieces of work through inline comments and a useful general summary comment at the end. A particular strength of the feedback highlighted areas students could have been more explicit in their writing - a skill that some students struggle, this is really valuable to students in order for them to feed forward. It would be useful for students submitting stronger pieces of work to receive pointers for development and also important to acknowledge a balance of strengths and areas for development in feedback for all weaker pieces of work.

A thorough process of internal moderation is documented on the moderation sheet, it was useful to see detailed internal moderator comments providing a clear justification for decisions here.

I wonder whether a couple of explicit feed forward points on each piece of work would benefit students and give them a focus for development that they could feed forward to future work.

Leadership and management

The module handbook is clear with a good level of detail around the assessment task, the suggested structure for the report is particularly useful guidance for students. The reflective element of the report offers a good opportunity for students to make links between theory and practice and to consider the competencies and skills necessary for effective leadership.

I moderated four pieces of work with marks ranging across the grade bands, the lowest mark given was a pass at 42% and the highest a distinction at 83%. Stronger pieces of work demonstrated a good knowledge and understanding of theories of leadership and incorporated an excellent level of reflection on skills, audits of skills and action plans and good use of the appendix. Work awarded lower marks tended to rely on a more limited range academic literature, lacked critical analysis and less reflection and application to practice. Feedback given across all grade bands is detailed and supportive, both on the script and in the detailed general comments. At all levels areas for development are made explicit to enable the student to feed forward into future work.

I did not see a moderation sheet for this module but am aware there have been a number of technical issues in getting work for this module to me. I agree with the marks and feedback given on this module.

Primary Education

The module handbook is clear and provides a good level of detail on the assessment task. The task is particularly appropriate for the module focus, providing a great opportunity for students to deliver a lesson and reflect on the process. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic it appears that some students were not able to proceed with the planned lesson and so completed a written account as an alternative. It would be useful to know the guidance given to students in these circumstances. I am not sure how LO 3: plan and present a lesson based on one of the core subject from the National Curriculum has been met by the alternative assessment work so further details on how the assessment has been adapted would be useful.

I received five scripts for moderation with a good spread of marks from 45% to 75%. Feedback highlighted strengths and areas for development on the scripts, some in more detail than others so it may be worth some discussion on level of detail expected here.

The general feedback comment was very detailed and constructive and it was particularly useful to see that specific areas for development were given. A clear process of internal moderation has taken place. I agree with marks and feedback given for this module.

Research project

A very useful module which offers level five students the opportunity to engage in research. The module guide is clear and outlines the requirements of the module well. The standard of the sample was very high with some excellent examples of research. Students generally have a good grasp of the process of research, the key methodological terms and have engaged with the literature to a good standard. Stronger pieces of work followed academic conventions well and critical analysis was evident throughout. Weaker pieces tended to be more descriptive and lack strength in terms of structure and use of the literature in a consistent way.

Differences in approaches to feedback were picked up during internal moderation and where inline comments consisted mainly of ticks it was suggested by the internal moderator that a more detailed comment was needed. In these particular examples the more limited feedback in terms of inline comments was compensated with a more detailed overall comment at the end which indicated strengths and areas for development related to specific learning outcomes and in some cases, areas for development which were made explicit, this is really valuable in terms of feeding forward. I think the module team would benefit from some discussion and agreement regarding a standardised approach to ensure increased consistency in future and to ensure that strengths of both approaches can be moved forward and incorporated.

It is clear that a rigorous and honest process of internal moderation has taken place and although areas for development pointed out in terms of approach to feedback it is reassuring that grades are agreed. I agree with the grades given and feedback provided.

Overall Strengths

The assessment tasks are all very relevant and useful for a foundation degree. Each task has been developed specifically with the focus of the module in mind and the varied assessment diet offers students valuable opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding and academic skills in a variety of ways.

I have noted much more consistency between module information and feedback given to students this year which is a real strength as it provides a clear framework for students to follow a coherent path through their study. Information presented to students in the module guide is comprehensive and clear and I think it is useful to have all the assessment details within this document for clarity.

It was really useful to receive part of the sample as a secure, online shared drive, this made accessing the sample and paperwork a more straightforward task. Some challenges with this process resulted in samples being sent as attachments as emails.

General suggestions for development

Some tutors provide explicit areas for development and improvement and I think this is valuable to students and could be perhaps incorporated for all modules to ensure consistency and to promote student engagement with the feedback.

I noted there are still some inconsistencies around expectations in relation to referencing wider reading, particularly around the construction of the reference list. Some students use bullets and numbers and there were a number of errors in use of italics etc. As part of the development of academic skills it would be useful for tutors to consistently point out areas for development in terms of improving referencing skills -for example page references for direct quotes, use of initials in citations, using up to date and relevant academic sources.

It would be useful for students to see the level at which they have met each criteria to receive their grade and I wonder whether a more detailed feedback grid adapted perhaps from the in the module guide would be relevant for this purpose.

In what way do graduate attributes as outlined in the module handbooks form part of the assessment? Is there particular criteria for assessing this and are students supported to develop their skills and demonstrate them in their work in this area?

Some module guides include a grid with level four assessment criteria instead of level five.

I noted that some written pieces of work had work count of 4000 words and others 3000 and wonder if there is a rationale for this difference?

Many thanks to all the tutors for ensuring the work was available for moderation in what has been an incredibly difficult and challenging academic year.

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

Engagement in research at level five provides a timely introduction to some of the principles and concepts of research and a valuable opportunity to explore chosen topics in more depth and detail. This approach to teaching and learning offers the opportunity for students to develop autonomy in learning and engagement in scholarly activity. Modules which are assessed through presentations provide students with useful opportunities to demonstrate communication skills which can be easily applied to professional practice. It is clear on all modules how they can be linked to professional practice which is particularly relevant in a foundation degree.

(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 here.

(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

