

MSc Architectural Technology and Design 2017/18 External Examiner's report summary

Please indicate in the relevant boxes 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.

Standards set		
"In my view, the threshold academic standards set for the modules/awards are appropriate."	Yes	No
	Yes	
If your answer is 'no', please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short.		

Student achievement			
"In my view, students' achievement is comparable with similar course(s) or subjects in other UK institutions with which I am familiar."	Yes	No	N/A *
	Yes		
Please provide any further comment on the comparability of collaborative provision.	<p>There needs to be further alignment in RBS' students' work and marking on some of the modules.</p> <p>It is suggested to undertake paired marking of cohorts in Leeds Beckett and RBS by the Module leaders and Tutors from both institutions to ensure a uniform marking and potentially for colleagues at Leeds Beckett to deliver lectures at RBS to ensure teaching contents, standards and markings are aligned. It will also be good if External Examiners would be given the chance to speak to students at RBS to seek their views of the course and their aspiration for the future after they graduates.</p>		
* Not applicable – if you are a practitioner and are not in a position to assess this please indicate here.			
If your answer is 'no', please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short.			

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Conduct of processes		
“In my view, the processes for assessment, examination and the determination of awards are rigorous and fairly conducted.”	Yes	No
	Yes	
If your answer is ‘no’, please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short.		

Areas of good practice
Any particular strengths or distinctive or innovative features in relation to learning, teaching and assessment.
<p>Everyone involved has been friendly, helpful and very efficient in making the process work. Coursework and exams documentation have been received in advance for me to review and provide feedback on. This helps making the visit on the day to be more efficient.</p> <p>The Virtual Learning Environment are well structured and assessments as well as feedbacks have been provided in advance for External Examiner review. The marks are consistent and clear marking criteria have been provided.</p> <p>It would be good to see more peer assessment incorporated into the modules.</p> <p>Staff have a great commitment to providing students with teaching that is relevant and appropriate for the profession of Architectural Technologist.</p>

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			
"In my view, the professional body requirements for this course have been met. <i>*Not applicable if the course is not a professional body course please indicate here.</i>	Yes	No	N/A *
	Yes		
<i>If your answer is 'no', please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short.</i>			

(a) The operation and conduct of the Progression and Award Board (and/or Module Board meeting you may also have attended).
<p>I attended the exam board for the BSc (Hons) Architectural Technology course at Leeds Beckett University on 14th June 2018 and the MSc Architectural Design and Technology course on 28th June 2018. Both were conducted in a professional fashion, efficient and in timely manner. All students were considered on merit, and appropriate awards were given. All students were treated fairly and justly.</p> <p>I attended the skype meeting for the RBS – BSc (Hons) Architectural Technology board on 22nd June and unfortunately felt that there were too many students under Academic Misconduct reviews, too many Chair's actions and that there are many awards that cannot be confirmed on the day.</p>

(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.)
N/A

(c) The overall performance of the students, in relation to that of comparable levels of work in other institutions.
<p>The work of students are of very good standard and comparable to other institutions I have been associated with.</p>

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

Students able to demonstrate high level of competency with their chosen CAD softwares. REVIT has started to be introduced to students in their first year of study (Level 4) which is really great as this will enhance their employability skills further.

It would also be beneficial to put more emphasis on current examples and solutions to architectural detailing, critical appraisal and analysis as well as academic research (especially for the BSc Architectural Technology course) to equip them further if they decide to further their academic experience further by applying for Postgraduate degree.

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

Very good marking criteria and good range of students' ability.

Further alignment of markings awarded to students' work at RBS is needed on some of the modules. It will also be useful to record students' presentation and for it to be uploaded online for moderation purposes.

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

There was a variety of assessment methods used, the subjects delivered were carried and appropriate for the modules.

I would also advice for Leeds Beckett and RBS colleagues to have a two ways collaboration in the teaching of modules at RBS, markings of students' work and perhaps to have peer assessment among students between Leeds Beckett and RBS to ensure transfer of knowledge and that teaching and learning experience are aligned.

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

Excellent organisation and support. I am able to access the VLE and able to confirm that each module has been laid out clearly and there's been a lot of information provided to students to aid them in their study. However, it would be useful for EE to be given more time to moderate RBS Students' work. Very good to see modules and students' feedbacks online.

(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.)

Module content and assessment are consistent throughout the modules I've reviewed.

For the Architectural Detailing module (L6), it would be good to get the industry to give sample of current work where students can provide analysis. Or perhaps to give real life example of a current refurb/retrofit projects where they will be required to provide technical detailing solution to it and comments on technical matters such as potential thermal bridging, waterproofing solution, air tightness, U values, etc (and where they can compare with the solutions in real life scenario have proposed). This will further encourage them on the critical analysis aspects.

For the MSc ADT: it would be useful to do a diagnostic test to determine what specific support would the non-cognate students need and also the use of Lynda.com. This will be a good opportunity to explore potential of international collaborative working with other courses. It will also be useful to carry out peer review for the Major Design Project, having those on September intake review January intakes' work during Crit/Session/Stage, for example.

For the Inclusive Masterplanning module: Airport as a case study is very good, but it would be useful to expand this further to include other buildings and to give them freedom to choose other buildings where they can expand their strategies further to buildings such as visitor centre, university buildings, library, leisure centre, etc. Perhaps use of Olympic Park in Stratford as another inclusive design case study? A walk-through of building use as case study would help students understand the building in greater detail. If this can be provided, it would be very useful for students. It would also be useful to incorporate Secure by Design and sustainability aspects too to the design project.

For Sustainable Refurbishment: this is a very good module but perhaps limit students' option to either domestic or non-domestic as technical resolutions and complexity differ depending on the choice of case studies? Awareness of BREEAM refurbishment?

It would be useful to give students guidance on working with long document/word formatting for academic writing to enhance their report formatting presentation and for efficiency. For example: guidance on how to create automated table of contents, cover page, automated captions, headings, sub-headings, page numbering, etc. awareness of BREEAM communities for sustainable masterplanning and inclusion of strategies for facilities/services such as rubbish collection, deliveries, emergency vehicles?

Involvement of external chartered professionals on crit and assessment would be very beneficial too.

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

It is commendable that staff (especially Programme Leader and Module Leaders) have close relationship with CIAT. It would also be beneficial for CIAT to come and talk to the students, for chartered CIAT to see and be guest judge for students' project and also to actively get students and alumni to be involved in AspirATion network too.

(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.

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(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).

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External Examiners' Report Checklist

Please comment for all boxes

Course Materials				
Did you receive?		Yes	No	N/A
a.	Course Handbook(s)?	√		
b.	Academic Regulations including any Professional Statutory Body requirements where appropriate (these may be included the Course Handbook)?	√		
c.	Module specifications (these may be in the Course Handbook)?	√		
d.	Assessment briefs/marketing criteria?	√		

Draft examination papers				
		Yes	No	N/A
a.	(i) Did you receive all the draft papers?	√		
	(ii) If not, was this at your request?			
b.	(i) Was the nature and level of the questions appropriate?	√		
	(ii) If not, were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?			
c.	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?	√		

Draft coursework				
		Yes	No	N/A
a.	(i) Did you receive all the draft coursework?	√		
	(ii) If not, was this at your request?			
b.	(i) Was the nature and level of the coursework appropriate?	√		
	(ii) If not, were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?			
c.	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?	√		

Marking Examination Scripts				
		Yes	No	N/A
a.	(i) Did you receive a sufficient number of scripts from both home and (if appropriate) collaborative partner students?	√		
	(ii) If you did not receive all the scripts, was the method of selection satisfactory?			
<p>Recommended sample sizes at Leeds Beckett University are as follows:</p> <p>a) Samples should be determined by a square root of cohort size, no smaller than 6, no larger than 15. However it should be borne in mind that not all work is assessed in a way that makes a square root sample possible and allowance should be made. For example in subjects such as the performing arts where there may be a requirement for an external to come and view a performance instead, or to visit the exhibition of art work.</p> <p>b) Samples to include all classification categories, and it is helpful to concentrate around the boundaries to include some fails.</p> <p>c) Samples to consist of internally moderated work, clearly evidencing the moderation process.</p>				
b.	Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate?	√		
c.	Were the scripts marked in such a way to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?	√		

Dissertations/project reports				
		Yes	No	N/A
a.	Was the choice of subjects for dissertations appropriate?			√
b.	Was the method and standard of assessment appropriate?			√

Coursework/continuously assessed work				
		Yes	No	N/A
a.	Was sufficient coursework made available to you for assessment from both home and (if appropriate) collaborative partner students?	√		
b.	Was the method and general standard of marking and consistency satisfactory?	√		

Orals/performances/recitals/appropriate professional placements				
		Yes	No	N/A
a.	Were suitable arrangements made for you to conduct orals and/or moderate performances/recitals/appropriate professional placements?			√

Module Board/Progression and Award Boards				
		Yes	No	N/A
a.	Were you able to attend the meetings?	√		
b.	Were the meetings conducted to your satisfaction?	√		
c.	Were you satisfied with the recommendations of the Module Board/Progression and Award Boards?	√		