

BSC (Hons) Project Management 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.			
* 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.			

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.

I am generally happy with quality of work presented to me as an EE.

The variety of the assessment methods applied to this programme are well demonstrated using the appropriate QAA benchmarks. Generally, the allocated sample offered through the VLE External Examiner folder was well received in terms of marks, feedback and academic content expected for a *BScH Project Management* with some distinctive samples of work.

The samples demonstrated core skills and scholarship within the content of BScH Project Management, with numerous samples marking the higher-grade bands. Some excellent work was presented and this is represented of the mark, with strong theoretical underpinning, research design, tools and techniques relevant to profession and acknowledge new thinking and current practice, well done.

Students who did not achieve a pass mark did not meet the assignment requirements or the learning outcomes of the module analysis was reflected on during my discussions with the academic staff and module reports. The samples selected covered the full range of marks and was fair and appropriate.

A very positive facilitation and organisation of the modules. There is much evidence of good practice by the team the required TEF. There are many opportunities to demonstrate its success through the TEF and the positive impact on this programme.

Overall, I have seen some excellent pieces of work, that really engage with the student body. The epistemology and pedagogical design of such modules has good module design and supports the subject matter well. I particular enjoyed reading the student's portfolios.

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).

(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 my first examination board.

(c) The overall performance of the students, in relation to that of comparable levels of work in other institutions.
The quality of the work is compatible with other institutions

(d) The strengths and weaknesses of the students in general with respect to knowledge, conceptual grasp or application of skills.
In terms of the evaluation of the teaching and learning, there might be an opportunity to use more case study material, which is current with latest practices. It would good to see the student's reflection of tools and techniques, it may even help them to reflect on the theory.

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

These assessments give the student the opportunity to develop their knowledge; critical thinking and evaluation skills and those that produce good work are rewarded appropriately. The marking process follows the criteria set and the students are provided with very detailed feedback on how to improve their performance.

There is clear evidence of second marking and moderation. The modules curriculum appears to be up to date, using lots of contemporary examples to support the academic underpinning. The module handbooks with their schemes of work and reading are relevant and challenging and it is excellent to see how the tutors plan to integrate this within their teaching / learning content. Furthermore, students are referencing the core text, but less so on the more recent academic journals of the sector, as well as technological advancements within the theory

The samples reviewed appear to be compatible to other partnerships in terms of content of the programme and the student's uptake and understanding of the theory in practice is well documented.

As demonstrated with previous samples some very good pieces of work submitted, well researched and critical in approach, clearly appropriate for this level both in the critique of knowledge and critical application to context. The use of case studies is well received and reflects the currency of the themes within your programme.

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

I have seen a good spread of marks across the reviewed module. Some students were extremely good while others were weak. You will find this in across the different assessment modules. The marks given reflect this difference in effort. Guidance has also been provided by tutors' and it is up to the students to make use of this and build on it... Forward thinking feedback.

Students gaining higher grades were clearly able to articulate a sound critical argument in which was supported with a range of appropriate academic literature and the theoretical that is often missed in this discipline, purely to the practical nature of project management thinking.

Students often struggle with theory in practice and therefore case studies are key to the success of knowledge transfer from academic to student and practitioner to academic!

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

The use of the VLE: My Beckett and the commitment to both delivery and communication of subject matter is to be commended- Handbooks, module design, samples and support guides were invaluable to my role in order to make sure I can contribute to the success of the programme. Some of the assessments, group tasks were challenging and the feedback is key in to order to direct the student's learning objectives and understanding of the subject matter, feedback was more often than not supportive and conclusive, with some noticeable elements of

feeding forward good scholarship and contextualise of the student's work. I conclude that all module assessments were appropriate in relation to their aims and outcomes and clear instruction was presented in terms of the tasks and assignments within each module. It is clear that module/unit teams design and develop innovative/challenging assessments for the student's progression in line with the level of the award. As a result, it makes student's reflection in practice more in-line with the real world challenges of project management practice.

(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.)

I would encourage students to develop critical thinking and critical writing skills – there is a level of descriptive writing evidenced, but less criticality across students course work, this was highlighted and acknowledged in the marks.

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

Clearly teaching has been effective with enthusiasm and skill demonstrated through the students work. It has been particularly interesting and pleasing to see such a variety of novel yet appropriate methods of encouraging students to think beyond the bounds of their everyday experiences.

With regards to assessment many of the modules made use of electronic marking and in these cases the feedback to students was good detailing how their mark was achieved through the grading matrices /rubrics and also feeding forward the comments on how to improve in their scholarship and academic writing for future assignments, however, this needs reinforcing on a number of modules.

I saw evidence of some excellent students within the samples I received. Their work demonstrated sound understanding and awareness and they used literature effectively. Good use of case studies, critical reflection was demonstrated and the feedback was clear and to the point.

(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.

It would good to see the student's reflection of theory into practice far more, it may even help them to reflect on the theory, sepacially when reflecting on cases. A number of the exam scripts have applied this line of thought, but the evidence in the scripts is somewhat lacking in order to question the theory in practice.

- To continue to use the full range of marks available to students at assessment – to include those both at the top end and at the bottom end.
- To continue to support students to develop their critical writing and academic skills.
- To ensure that where students are encouraged to use appendices that they are not used as a means to extend their word count – i.e. students should be encouraged to synthesise their

literature and evidence more in the main body of their work and use appendices judiciously (see previous comments made to assessor).

(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

External Examiners' Report Checklist

Please comment for all boxes

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

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

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

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?	X		
	(ii) If you did not receive all the scripts, was the method of selection satisfactory?		X	
<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?	X		
c.	Were the scripts marked in such a way to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?	X		

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

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?	X		
b.	Was the method and general standard of marking and consistency satisfactory?	x		

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?	X		

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