

BSc (Hons) Quantity Surveying including overseas provision 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 leader.

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.			
Note: I am a practitioner, however;			
In my view the marking of the franchise courses needs to be much more consistent with the home course. Whilst there was an improvement on the previous year it was still apparent that the marking on these course was more generous, given the standard of work than those marks awarded to the Home students.			
The marking of the of the home course was consistent and accurately reflected the quality of work presented.			
* 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.

The structure and quality of the course modules appears to be aligned with current industry good practice. With a few, all exams and course work appeared to have a clear structured marking system which had been applied. Students received feedback based on this marking criteria. The greater use of online marking course feedback and moderation was been a great advancement on this course from last year albeit this is not consistent across the whole of the course as yet.

The new course director appears to have brought greater organisation of the course and clearly has knowledge of current strengths and weaknesses and therefore areas to develop.

Last year I noted that it was good to see feedback from module leaders which included constructive suggestions at how the course may be improved or adapted to meet current industry standards. It was apparent this year that some of the suggestions have been taken on board.

One area which still needs further consideration is the structure and content of the measurement and estimating modules. It needs to be brought more upto date with current measurement and estimating practices and integrate into the course latest technological advances which students will need to have experience of once in practice.

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.	Yes	No	N/A *
*Not applicable if the course is not a professional body course please indicate here.	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 Board of Examiners (and or Examination Committee meeting you may also have attended).
<p>I consider the Board of Examiners I attended was conducted in a professional and robust manner. Where concerns were raised these were carefully considered and chairs actions taken as appropriate.</p> <p>I was concerned at the number of students on the franchise courses which were under investigation for plagiarism. This is something that the University need to look at carefully for the future.</p> <p>At the main board in June there was an instance of a Cohort been missed from the exam board (QS Year 2 part time). This was picked up and addressed but the University need to have measures in place that ensures that this cannot happen again.</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.)
<p>As noted above, I have seen clear improvements on last years process. It was evident that recommendations of external examiners and of the course leaders have been taken on board and the course developed.</p> <p>The introduction of work been put on My Beckett has also made the External Examining process easier and more robust.</p>

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

I am a practitioner so N/A but I was satisfied with the quality of work relative to the standards I would expect to see from students currently employed within the industry.

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

The structure of the course appears to be giving the student a good grasp of the requirements of the industry. The submissions I saw were of a reasonable standard and seemed to evidence (certainly with the more able students) a depth of knowledge and understanding. There is still work to do around ensuring students are equipped with latest industry practices in respect of measurement and surveying and more onus need to be put onto introducing and developing student aptitude in the various software used within industry.

As noted last year there is a considerable amount of time dedicated to certain practices which are largely outdated in industry e.g. building up of rates in estimating and calculation of centre lines and mean girths in measurements. Whilst it is important the students understand the principles and have an understanding of such calculations they does seems a disproportionate amount of resource dedicated to these elements

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

I was satisfied with the quality of the structure and marking of the course work and examinations. Marking criteria was clearly identified and appeared to have been applied. There were some inconsistencies in the visibility and consistency of moderation relative to some of the modules but I consider this to be the exception. The use of My Beckett has made the process of moderation and marking much more transparent for the External Examiner which is appreciated.

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

I did not witness any teaching of the study material but was satisfied with the performance of the students in respect of the home provision.

I consider that the franchised provision fell significantly short of the standards on the home provision students. As I noted last year this was not reflected in the marking although I did note some improvement on the previous year

(g) Comments on the use of X-stream (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 Faculty to provide detailed comments on the modules that you examine.)

Modules content and assessment seem consistent throughout. Please refer to my comments at (d) above in respect of measurement and estimating.

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

Primarily this relates to the interdisciplinary modules or Experiential Learning. The coursework I witnessed in these modules demonstrated significant engagement between the students and industry. This was more marked with the part time students as would be expected but on the whole the quality of material produced from the moderated papers and other examples I witness on the home course was high. I was less impressed with submissions on the Franchise 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.

I was impressed t the conduct of all the exam boards I attended and there are clear evidence that a robust framework is in place in ensuring that the conduct of the whole assessment process is carried out in a fair and transparent process. Whilst I am concerned at the number of students under investigation on the franchise course it was evidence of a system which works.

(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)?	Y		
b.	Academic Regulations including any Professional Statutory Body requirements where appropriate (these may be included the Course Handbook)?	Y		
c.	Module specifications (these may be in the Course Handbook)?	Y		
d.	Assessment briefs/marketing criteria?	Y		

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

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

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?	Y		
	(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?	Y		
c.	Were the scripts marked in such a way to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?	Y		

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

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

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?			N/A

Examination Committee/Board of Examiners				
		Yes	No	N/A
a.	Were you able to attend the meetings?	Y		
b.	Were the meetings conducted to your satisfaction?	Y		
c.	Were you satisfied with the recommendations of the Examination Committee/Board of Examiners?	Y		