

MA Education with Special Educational Needs 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			
	Yes	No	
"In my view, the threshold academic standards set for the modules/awards are appropriate."	X		
<i>If your answer is 'no', please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short.</i>			
In relation to other programmes of similar nature the academic standards on the MA are appropriate. There are some assessment methods that indicate that students are afforded innovative methods of learning through, for example, online forums where they can integrate their thinking and communicate with each other thus developing critical perspectives of relevant topics.			
Student achievement			
	Yes	No	N/A *
"In my view, students' achievement is comparable with similar course(s) or subjects in other UK institutions with which I am familiar."	X		
Please provide any further comment on the comparability of collaborative provision.			
<i>* Not applicable – if you are a practitioner and are not in a position to assess this please indicate here.</i>			
<i>If your answer is 'no', please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short.</i>			
I was the course director for the MSc in community youth work for over 15 years and the student achievements are of a similar nature to those from Leeds Beckett.			
Conduct of processes			
	Yes	No	
"In my view, the processes for assessment, examination and the determination of awards are rigorous and fairly conducted."	X		
<i>If your answer is 'no', please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short.</i>			
Feedback and diligence from tutors indicates that the process of assessment is rigorous and thorough. I particularly commented on this in some of my feedback to staff. The feedback is additionally fair, supportive and transparent to students.			

Areas of good practice
Any particular strengths or distinctive or innovative features in relation to learning, teaching and assessment.
The use of individual presentations is to be commended as students share interesting topics with each other on issues and problems facing those in the educational world. This aspect of the course, i.e. the ability of students to interrogate and investigate topics of interest is a particular strength of the course and encouraged by staff. I would like to commend this aspect of the programme and encourage its development and continuance in the future.

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. *Not applicable if the course is not a professional body course please indicate here.	Yes	No	N/A *
			X
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).
I missed the Progress and Award Board as I was in the USA.

(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.)
There were no major issues in my report last year.

(c) The overall performance of the students, in relation to that of comparable levels of work in other institutions.
There were some students who could have scored much higher in their assignments and dissertations with some coaching or guidance in relation to academic rigour. Maybe some training in this area for 'weaker' students or those with English as a second language.

(d) The strengths and weaknesses of the students in general with respect to knowledge, conceptual grasp or application of skills.
The course, as already alluded to, affords the participants the opportunity to both learn about relevant topics relating to education and additionally to investigate disparate topics that interest them. Some of the student material I read was fascinating and insightfully reflective. The review of literature around

some topics was very informative and was clearly stimulating educational enquiry among the students.

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

The continual assessment process suits the needs of students on the MA in Education. The modules are well thought out with relevant focus and material to stimulate analysis, knowledge and understanding relating to both general educational issues and those specific to the student body.

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

The variety of modules on offer is intensive and indicative of postgraduate study. Students who follow this curriculum, teaching and resourcing should be of benefit in their respective organisations when they return to integrate their learning through critical insight, knowledge and understanding of topics taught and assimilated.

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

Having read a variety of assignments from all modules it is clear that the topics, i.e. leadership and management, inclusion and special education, international contexts, social change, policy and practice, professional development, coaching and mentoring, social history, reflective practice are all relevant to the development of a more critical and informed educational practitioner wherever they are based or indeed wherever they are employed. The knowledge and understanding of students is clearly enhanced by studying these topics including the independent study module and dissertation.

(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 read various assignments for each module. The content is consistent with modules from my own University in terms of learning outcomes, assessment and student involvement. They are taught in less didactic format thus enhancing ownership of the learning and the learning process.

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

The dissertation topics indicated to me the professional areas that students wanted to investigate and develop. The topics were innovative and interesting. Some were obviously specific to students and required some dexterity when looking for specific literature. Tutor comments indicated the need to be innovative when researching an obscure topic. Staff should be commended for allowing students to research topics that pose difficulty for academic study.

(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 comments in this area.

(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).

I am unaware of any collaborative provision.

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		