

BA (Hons) Primary Education leading to QTS 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	
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' 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.			
* 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		
	Yes	No
"In my view, the processes for assessment, examination and the determination of awards are 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.		

Areas of good practice
Any particular strengths or distinctive or innovative features in relation to learning, teaching and assessment.

As in previous years, module leaders ensure that the internal moderation process remains a robust process – where grades have been changed through the standardisation process, this is clearly identified. Transparency in the assessment process remains a key strength for the team.

The Developing Creative Practice Through the Arts module is an innovative module, allowing students to work with external agencies. The assessments are creative and allow students to demonstrate a range of skills which will impact on classroom practice.

The course comprises a range of assessment types, a mix of essays, posters, portfolios, assessed tutorials. The mix ensures inclusivity and allows all students to demonstrate their potential.

Of particular note, is the new feedback strategy, this has been well received by students, and should yield more favourable NSS results as well as impacting positively on student outcomes.

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 *
	X		
<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).
Information regarding the Assessment Committee and the Board of Examiners was communicated well in advance to establish whether attendance was possible. The conduct of the Assessment Committee appears to be in line with university, quality assurance, procedures. The Committee meeting was run in a professional and swift manner. Staff present clearly knew their modules and issues surrounding particular students. No issues have been raised.

(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 is much more parity in the feedback afforded to students. Improvements can be seen in the clearer identification of feed forward comments across the modules moderated. Language used in qualitative feedback was more closely aligned with the grade awarded.

(c) The overall performance of the students, in relation to that of comparable levels of work in other institutions.
As in previous years, student outcomes appear to be strong with the majority of students gaining a 2:1 or 1 st class honours degree. Grades are comparable to the sector.

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

The modules moderated indicate that students have a good grasp of subject knowledge relevant to the content of the given module and in line with the associated T standards. Work indicated strong subject knowledge per se, curriculum knowledge and pedagogical knowledge. These different aspects of subject knowledge are evident within the assignments. Work moderated also showed that reflective practice is also strong. Students can clearly reflect on their own professional development, identifying both their strengths and key areas for development. The Professional Studies module, clearly prepares students for their NQT year with clear links between theory and practice evident.

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

'An Introduction to Subject Leadership' and 'Becoming a Subject Specialist'- the module teams clearly responded to feedback and have sought to align the different subjects - in terms of assignment expectations and feedback. These modules support development of skills required to lead a subject within the primary school.

Professional Studies – The range of assessments work well. EE comments have been taken on board with some comments now explicitly linked to Level 6 outcomes. Some aspects of feedback now relates to a synthesis of wider reading/theory and practice as stated in marking criteria – this was missing last year. There is greater consistency in terms of feedback compared to previous years. The PDP interviews continue to provide an opportunity for students to discuss progress against the T standards and to bridge the move into their NQT year. Both assignments allow students to evidence their developing personal philosophy of teaching and learning.

The assessment process continues to be secure. Assignments allow students to meet the stated Learning Outcomes for the given modules as well as making progress towards the professional T standards. Marking procedures remain robust and transparent. Standardisation is evident, with grades being moderated and adjusted as appropriate. Any change of grading is clearly demarcated in the paperwork.

In terms of quality of feedback comments, this now more consistent. Targets for future submissions, to help students improve their gradings/submissions are now more evident on most scripts.

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

Students achieve good outcomes on all the modules moderated. Few fail the assignments thus indicating that the students are aware of the marking criteria and minimum expectations. Content of the modules is current and seek to develop a range of skills and understanding. Of particular note is the emphasis on self-reflection and evaluation and links between theory and practice.

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

Samples were easy to access via the EE folder on My Beckett. NO technical issues were experienced this year.

(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.)

Full module reports have been provided to the relevant Faculty and Module Leaders. Overall the programme affords students a range of experiences, with innovative assessment types.

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

The impact of staff research and how this impacts on the student experience requires further attention in terms of more explicit identification. Within the modules moderated there was no explicit dissemination events of student research evident, beyond presenting to peers.

(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.

(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).

External Examiners' Report Checklist

Please comment for all boxes

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

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

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

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?	Yes		
	(ii) If you did not receive all the scripts, was the method of selection satisfactory?			
Recommended sample sizes at Leeds Beckett University are as follows:				
<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?	Yes		
c.	Were the scripts marked in such a way to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?	Yes		

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

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

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?	Yes		

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