External Examiner's report summary

School of Film, Music and Performing Arts

Undergraduate

- MUSTE Music Technology(UG)

Please indicate, 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.

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Standards Set

	Yes	No
"In my view, the threshold academic standards set for the modules/awards meet with the requirements of the relevant National Qualifications Statement's."	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' who have been awarded qualifications have had the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in course(s) or subjects in other UK institutions with which I am familiar." *Not applicable – if you are a practitioner and are not in a position to assess this statement, please note here:	X		

Please provide any further comment on the comparability of collaborative provision

If your answer is 'no', please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short:

Conduct of process

	Yes	No

"In my view, the processes for assessment, examination and the determination of awards are reliable, 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.

Actions from last year's report
(This will not be relevant if you are examining for the first time)

Yes

Areas of good practice/commendation

Any particular strengths or distinctive or innovative features in relation to learning, teaching and assessment:

I was impressed by the innovation in terms of adjusting the approaches to assessment in light of COVID 19 restrictions. It was evident that the course team worked hard to ensure a good student learning experience in difficult circumstances and supported students that may have been struggling to adjust.

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

	Yes	No	N/A*
"In my view, the professional body requirements for this course have been met. *Not applicable if the course is not a professional body courseplease indicate here.			

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).

Under changes made to processes this year due to COVID 19 restrictions, I was not invited to the

Progression and Award Board. Instead, I consider student work, marks and discussed implications for students in detail with the Course Leader. I submitted my comments which were tabled at the Board.

(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.)

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

I was satisfied that the overall performance of the students was comparable to other institutions.

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

The overall abilities of students in terms of their technical knowledge, understanding and practical application of their skills was in line with other institutions. Some aspects of practical work was constrained this year under COVID 19 lock down restrictions.

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

In general, the marking was well organised. Whilst there are some excellent examples of assessment feedback (such as L5 Interactive Music and L6 Designing Sound, L6 Contemporary Music in Contexts and L6 Game Audio) there were instances where although the depth of feedback was good this was not consistent for all students (e.g. L4 Audio Production Portfolio, L5 Project, L5 Live Sound). I would urge the team to review assessment feedback and cascade best practice throughout.

Some modules were new but for more established modules I did not always find it easy to explore student performance in comparison to previous years and would ask that module leaders take a consistent approach to presenting this data in their reports.

Generally, I found there to be a good spread of marks but noted high numbers of non-submissions for some modules (L6 Game Audio, L4 Music in Contexts, L6 Designing Sound).

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

Although I was unable to visit this year and speak to staff informally as I normally would, I am confident in the way that the learning has been designed and the resources that are available to students. I look forward to seeing the new building and the potential that this holds for enhancing student engagement.

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

My Beckett was fine. I was able to explore learning materials and was satisfied with approaches being taken.

(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.)

The course continues to evolve and I am supportive of the changes that have been made. Overall, I am happy with the consistency across the various modules.
The Level 5 module The Music Industries involves remix element which is not aligned to a learning outcome. Having discussed this with the course leader I have suggested that the team may wish to consider amending the learning outcomes to reflect this element which seems to successfully engage the students.
There were some modules where the weighting of each marking criteria is not included. I would encourage the team to consider adding this detail to give greater clarity to the students.

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

It is evident that depth of subject knowledge and passion for music technology across the teaching team informs the ongoing development of the course. Outputs in terms of some excellent student work bears evidence of this.

(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.

No concerns.

(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

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