External Examiner's report summary

School of Health And Community Studies

Undergraduate

- BSTHC Therapeutic Counselling
- COUNC Interpers and Counsell Skills
- DTHER Therapeutic Counselling (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:

External Examiner's report summary

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)

N/A

Areas of good practice/commendation

Any particular strengths or distinctive or innovative features in relation to learning, teaching and assessment:
See later comments on strengths of the MA Programme in relation to wider professional field

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.	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).

External Examiner's report summary

Thoroughly prepared for, very well-managed and discussions always conducted fairly, with Chair holding in awareness relevant University regulations and impact of decisions on individual students. Board shows due respect for external examiner's comments and feedback, in line with regulations covering examiner's role and responsibilities

(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.

Performance of students at postgraduate level comparable with those on similar practice-based programmes at level 7

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

Strengths - all those dissertations examined demonstrated high levels of commitment to the topics they selected and desire to make a contribution to psychotherapeutic practice

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

The rubric for what is expected at different levels of performance on the module (Research in Practice) is clear and transparent

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

The curriculum is relevant, resources appropriate and regularly reviewed. Commitment to ensuring students are supported in the development of research skills, as applied in psychotherapeutic practice.

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

Superb access to VLE (not always the case, and particularly in current 'Covid' climate). As an external kept informed when system down and fully able to access all student work and closely attend to assessment, feedback and marking conducted by faculty

(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.)

This is a specific, 'top-up' module for therapeutic practitioners to extend their practice interests in and through developing research skills. It is widely recognised that inspiring counsellors to develop a 'research attitude' is still a work in progress (see next comment)

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

There are very few MA 'top ups' available for BACP students and qualified and accredited counsellors. In this regard, the School is at the forefront and to be commended. I would encourage the School to consider strategically how it might meet the needs of advanced members of the counselling community, in providing doctoral level programmes, such as a D Prof. This would position the School at the forefront of inspiring a research attitude across the career lifespan

(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.

This is my second Board, as a newly appointed examiner to the School (yet very advanced in QA and QE and examining - as an Assessor for a Regulator in psychology and Psychotherapeutic Professional Body). I am again impressed at how the Boards are chaired, executed and above all, done so finely balancing the impact of decisions made on individual students, whilst holding regulations in awareness. This certainly reflects a dialogic and relational-centred practice, core philosophy that underpins the programmes for which I am an examiner (and in the wider field, assess). And to be commended

(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).

Non-Applicable