

Form 'External Examiners - Leeds School Of Arts' for External Examiners - Leeds School Of Arts

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Actions	<p>Edit submission</p> <p>Print submission</p> <p>Delete submission</p>

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**LEEDS
BECKETT
UNIVERSITY**

Introduction

Leeds School Of Arts Undergraduate

- ARCHA Architecture(UG)

External Examiner ID

Name Of External Examiner:

First Name

Last Name

Collaborative Institution:

Date of Main Progression and Award Board Attended:

2023-06-16

Introduction

External Examiners are required by the terms of their appointment to submit an annual report. The report will be considered in depth during course annual monitoring activity. A record of the University's responses to examiners' reports also forms part of the documentation for this activity. It is also used in compiling our annual report on external examining.

Your report will be widely circulated and shared with Students and therefore we ask you not to refer to anyone by name or in a way that allows identification of an individual.

Please complete all sections of the report unless they are not relevant (such as you do not examine Collaborative or Degree Apprenticeship Provision). This report must be **submitted within 28 days of the main Progression and Award Board** and failure to submit within the required timescale may result in termination of your tenure as an external examiner without good reason.

NO EXAMINING FEES WILL BE PAID IF YOU FAIL TO SUBMIT YOUR ANNUAL REPORT.

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Section A

External Examiner's Report Summary

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](#) applicable Subject Benchmark Statements / Qualification Characteristic Statements and [Leeds Beckett University regulations](#)

If any boxes are ticked "No" the Dean of School or nominee will be alerted and will oversee the response from the Course Director.

[\[HK1\]](#) Added Reference to correct section of Regulations in here.

Standards set

A1) "Threshold academic standards set for the modules/courses meet the applicable national academic standards." (required)

See 14.3.6a of regulations

Yes

Student achievement

A2) "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." (required)

14.3.6b of regulations

Yes

A2b) Please provide any further comment on the comparability of any associated collaborative provision:

Conduct of processes

A3) "Processes for assessment and the determination of awards are reliable, rigorous and conducted in line with the regulations at all times." (required)

see 14.3.6c of regulations

Yes

Professional Body Requirements

A4) Do the learning outcomes and assessment of the courses allow successful students to meet the Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies criteria at the appropriate level'. (required)

see 14.3.6a of regulations

Yes

Actions from last year's report

A5) In respect of your feedback, has any required action from last year's report been satisfactorily responded to? (required)

Yes

Issues/point for clarity during the year

A6) Did you raise any issues/point for clarity throughout the year? (required)

No

Areas of good practice/commendation

A7) Please outline any particular strengths or distinctive or innovative features you have observed in relation to learning, teaching and assessment:

One specific strength is in the way design projects have been evolved even if there are same project leaders, and their projects' structure has become familiar to me and is well known possibly to the students as well. There is a nice variety of projects depending which interests lie in the outset- ecological, socio-ethical, experiential, political or critical in general. Additionally, ethical framework is present in all year' briefs. Similarly, all project in all years take seriously ecological challenges which is commendable. This year there was no 'light' projects, thus all projects were equally challenging and require similar skillsets. This happens in very measured way without any of these hot topics or RIBA/ARB themes introduced in dry way, rather the opposite- they were delightfully woven into imaginative briefs. It was also evident that school does fortunately not have a studio or preferred 'style' as such but rather in all years emphasises each student's own approach. Lastly, live-projects were in offer in the second and third year which is commendable in bachelor's degree curriculum as they are tricky to manage.

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Section B

Academic Standards

Please advise on the Academic Standards for the Programme:

B1) Do the Courses and its modules continue to be coherent and generally up-to-date and at an appropriate level to enable students to meet the relevant aims and learning outcomes? (required)

Yes

B2) What do you believe were the strengths and weaknesses of the students in general with respect to knowledge, conceptual grasp or application of skills? (required)

Portfolios and coursework showed commitment to wide range of issues of contemporary society. architecture and culture. Inclusivity, and architecture of Anthropocene in the era of climate crisis was discussed in several projects or essays. The combination of conceptual and realistic functional design is achieved in the whole three year curriculum. During the interviews I met a few students who were underplaying their achievements, regardless of their project being in strong position. Oral representation is possibly a area which could be emphasised in Professional practice.

B3) Are the marking/grading criteria or marking schemes set at the appropriate level of study and have they been consistently applied including internal moderation processes? (required)

Yes

B4) Did students receive adequate and helpful feedback to inform their future learning? (required)

Yes

B5) In your view please indicate how well you feel the course prepares students for progression to managerial or professional employment or further study? (required)

0= not at all, 10= fully

7

B6) Please provide any further comments to indicate how the course could better prepare students for progression to managerial or professional employment or further study (if applicable)

If possible, oral presentation skills can be rehearsed during all years. The self-knowledge- whether a student is on the conceptual, theoretical side or on practical side of architectural profession with passion for technology - could be added into the portfolios as an obligatory reflective summary of the design project to support different individual approaches more explicitly. That would make the future job interviews easier.

Professional practice module changes have been discussed (add a new module in the second year, for instance) but not yet implemented, partly due to difficulties to get into cooperation within the other departments.

B7) Have you had the opportunity to comment on or contribute to a review of the course including any proposed modifications or enhancements to provision? (required)

Yes

B8) If you have answered no to any of the above or would like to add any further points of clarity, please expand in the box below:

Academic standards in technology module and theory modules are high, based on continuous amendments and reflective teaching practise. Both third year technology and dissertation support well the thesis design, even if it is not obligator to match theory essay and graduation project. To emphasise the conceptual thinking, project briefs could ask for quotations or supporting readings to show that architectural theory or history is not so far away from spatial or practical solutions.

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Section C

Assessment

Please advise on the Assessment Process for the Programme:

C1) The internal assessment / examination procedures are comparable with similar awards in the UK. (required)

Yes

C2) Procedures for the Exam Boards were fairly and rigorously conducted (including procedures governing extenuating circumstances, academic misconduct and borderline performance), and in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations. (required)

Yes

C3) The design and structure of the assessment methods used were appropriate; there was comparability within and across modules/awards in terms of level and their effectiveness in measuring the overall learning outcomes. (required)

Yes

C4) There was sufficient rigour in the achievement of learning outcomes in professional placements / work-based learning / work experience (where relevant).

N/A

C5) The moderation process is rigorous and there is consistency in marking standards. (required)

Yes

C6) The range of exam papers / assignments provided for sampling purposes and their appropriateness in terms of subject / level / learning outcomes were appropriate. (required)

Yes

C7) If You have answered no to any of the above or would like to add any further points of clarity, please expand in the box below:

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Section D

Organisation and Arrangements

Please advise on the organisation and arrangements for you undertaking this role:

D1) I was new in post this academic year. (required)

No

D2) The University has helped me to undertake my role effectively. (required)

D3) I am satisfied with the range of external examiner activities undertaken and with my involvement in assessment procedures at module level. (required)

D4) I am satisfied with the appropriateness and timing of information, of draft examination papers for approval and student work for moderation. (required)

D5) I am satisfied with the on-line induction training designed to familiarise External Examiners with the University's Regulations/Procedures concerning assessment.

Newly appointed External Examiners only

D6) I am satisfied with the level of support received from my mentor.

External Examiners new to the role only

D7) I am satisfied with the programme-level induction provided by the Course Director to familiarise me with the programme itself. (required)

D8) Are there any general or specific comments on the development and support offered by the University, especially improvements you would like to see:

D9) If You have answered no to any of the above or would like to add any further points of clarity, please expand in the box below:

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Section E

Collaborative Provision

Please indicate if you have been satisfied with the following:

E) Do you examine collaborative provision?

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Section F

Degree Apprenticeships

F1) Were you involved in the examination of Apprenticeship Provision?

Open comments

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Section G

End Point Assessment

G1) I have seen evidence that Apprentices have the opportunity to practice the assessment methods that will be used at End Point Assessment before undertaking the End Point Assessment.

N/A

G2) If you examine integrated apprenticeship provision, please provide specific comments on the suitability and content of End Point Assessment:

G3) If you have answered no to any of the above or would like to add any further points of clarity, please expand in the box below:

Where applicable, a copy of your report will be shared with the Chief External Examiner who is appointed to provide oversight of related modules and/or courses.

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Final Comments

Are there any other final comments you would like to make in relation to your role as External Examiner?

FIRST YEAR: First year curriculum has been in constant change and is now working smoothly as a whole- given both theoretically or conceptually oriented students, and more practical students modules to shine. I was delighted to see a compendium of line drawings in the end f year exhibition. The emphasis on hand-drawn projections gives all student a good grounding to later CAD drawings. Autumn project is loosely based on building parts found in Leeds during their communication module (museum of copies of elements) and the examples show that students can use museum precedents intelligently. I was glad to see elevations as well. The Spring semester design project (eat, pray, love et al) is now challenging enough with topical content based on immigrants or refugees finding home in Leeds. Its contextual emphasis with alternative site solutions and different compositional variation is in a very good place, but the final proposals in a very large site felt partly lost, maybe smaller sites would give students a better sense of the finesse of orientation, views and test the issues of publicity and privacy. It is notable, that school tolerates different formal approaches which is commendable.

Essays of 'liminal or transitional elements' tied well with the design project, and it was great to see how the theme was enthusiastically welcomed by students. They were thus able to tie the current state of a 'liminal' space to its historical or cultural variations- many of them were simply histories of 'bathrooms'. Second semester context introduction to core ideas or modern icons was also well measured.

SECOND YEAR: One of the favourite years for some students it is healthy curriculum with two design projects prepare students well to the third year. Communication, technology, and theory modules are well focused and support design well. Theoretical essay in the second semester is always an exception of the more conventional introduction to classic theories of architecture in the first year and second year's first semester. This year the 'Other Spaces' was studied, although some students found it possibly overwhelming. Thus, some essays felt a bit forced in regard of the conceptual rigour specialising in Foucault's concept 'heterotopia'. If you would like to continue with this theme, otherness could be defined through other theoretical frameworks as well, as it was mentioned in the brief (of wilderness in the era of Anthropocene, for instance). What stood out positively, was the allowance of personal viewpoints which became apparent in these dissertations. -All design work in the second year is practically spatially oriented (as the vertical studios fully exposed students to the spatial play as their method). -In technology, structural systems were well demonstrated by physical models. Department could continue to utilise workshop resources in all modules, why not in theory modules as well.

THIRD YEAR: In studio design, precedent study and research phase in general has always been a strength of students in LBU. This year, the design process has been presented in portfolio in a meaningful way, too, which is a definite progress in relation to last year. Iterative process in design puts emphasis on the spatial and tectonic side of architectural design which should continue till the end of any project, on different design tasks after the overall scheme is nailed. In many cases, iterative variations were also commented intelligently. In relation to some third year projects, I recommend also that all design projects should present a full set of final drawings, including elevations. Model making was excellent and few students mention workshop activities being their favourite mode of studying. Iterative models or optional early versions of the same spatial theme have become more pronounced in the projects which is commendable. Briefs vary from a distinctive forced method (Abstract Machine) or method of fim/photograph/cast related part-tasks (The Land in-Between), to more classical design briefs with socio-ethical emphasis (City-Zen Agency or Regenerative Ecologies') or more contextual (site-specific) briefs of Revive. This variety of briefs works well and in commendable; all briefs and their teaching /tutoring is reliable, equally challenging standard..

Live projects support well the more conceptual briefs, and I am pleased the Leeds Beckett university continues to support these activates which are challenging to organise..

Essays are always a strength of department. Dissertation writing is well resourced and in good balance. Topics vary healthily from more theoretical to precise critique of architectural practice or canon. In best cases essay (and technology coursework) were integrated to design. Again, more varied methods of writing with supporting model making or drawing/photographs/films or videos could give even more substance to already well founded dissertations.

A few students in middle range were unsure and uncertain about their future and willingness to continue studies in architecture, whereas in the upper end of the spectrum students showed great enthusiasm and enjoyment of their newly found skills and confidence. In reflection to this observation, I believe that Architecture Department have good possibilities to support all students by rehearsing oral presentation skills and communication in general. Professional studies or any tutorials may be a forum for giving changes to present groupwork or week's progress in less demanding circumstances in pin-ups.

End of Tenure Report

If you are at the end of your tenure as External Examiner, please provide an overview of the development of the programme during your term of office. This overview will be of value to the University, the programme team and to the incoming External Examiner.

Please include commentary regarding academic standards and student achievement across cohorts during the examiner's period of appointment:

This Section is only to be completed by external examiners at the end of their tenure.

I started by examining during the Covid year 2019-2020 which was a great challenge to any university. Nevertheless, the small school with close spatial relationship with Master and Bachelor students made the planning of hybrid teaching possible. Each year has shown how resilient and flexible the organisation is to quickly respond to challenges; for instance in the academic year 2020-2021 when Covid restricted teaching. The briefs quickly reflected the crisis situation.

During my time as an examiner, I have realised how well technology teaching has been organised and evolves constantly reflecting the ecological challenges. Students seem to enjoy their technology coursework, which is very often difficult subject to perform well in almost all architecture departments. Partly this fluency is a result of approachability of their lecturers and thus, they get help when needed. Because so many lecturers teach in design and in technology as well, students get to know teachers very well and many third-year students did choose their studio project based on the project leader. Students are very appreciative of your presence and support,

Over four years, I have realised that LBU architecture department loses a large number of students during their first year. That could be a result of the low expectation of first year students themselves who are then confronted with all-embracing nature of architectural discipline. Nevertheless, Architecture department has been experimenting with different first year curriculum or content changes over the years I have been involved.

My own expertise is in the first year curriculum which has bravely been changed every year in Leeds. Theory essays and technology have remain almost same during the years, but the representation module is now more integrated to design and I am pleased to see some precise and beautiful orthographic drawings on show. Conceptual experimentation using real world architectural elements is now working well with those who have more practical or more conceptual approach to architecture.

The cordiality and organisational excellency has given me great pleasure to get to know the department very well, despite two years of online examining. All the portfolios and samples are organised very well, and give a good possibility to read beforehand some of the portfolios or dissertations, and familiarise myself to the briefs. I especially enjoy interviewing and discussing with students, and the pace and timetabling worked very well in the last two years when examining took place in Leeds.

Email Address (required)

Date (required)

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