

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

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**LEEDS  
BECKETT  
UNIVERSITY**

Introduction

### Leeds School Of Arts

#### Undergraduate

- INTAD Interior Arch & Design (4 IFY)(UG)
- INTAD Interior Architecture & Design(UG)

External Examiner ID

Name Of External Examiner:

First Name

Last Name

Collaborative Institution:

Date of Main Progression and Award Board Attended:

## 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

N/A

## 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)

No

A5a) Please expand below: (required)

1. "Orthographic drawing skills [...] could be developed further to enable students to describe their schemes with appropriate level of precision and detail [...]. Orthographic drawing fluency is a core skill in the industry."

Teaching of orthographic drawing skills should be further strengthened in Level 4 in order for the student to be confident in drawing plans and sections when progressing to Level 5. The final sections are the least convincing pieces of work included in the L4 portfolios; they should be based on a line drawing of the existing building with appropriate level of detail.

## 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:

The teaching team is enthusiastic and committed in creating an interesting, challenging, and up-to-date programme while being flexible in recognising and responding to the needs of a cohort impacted by the recent pandemic.

The briefs are well-organised and detailed. They provide a very clear description of each stage of the project and what is needed at the point of submission. This provides support to all students regardless of their abilities and engagement to complete their projects successfully.

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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)

#### Strengths:

Model-making is particularly strong in all three levels. Already in Level 4, the combination of model-making with careful photography produces beautifully expressive results. For example, Isobel Collier's portfolio presents a complex interior space; the physical model is constructed well and is photographed in way that expresses the complexity of the space. This way of working could be further developed if the photos of models are used as basis to create interior views through collage techniques to express materiality (texture, colour etc) and potential for occupation.

The introduction of the pavilion brief at Level 5, which involved 1:1 construction, strengthened further the "learning through making" culture of the course as it enabled the understanding of making at various scales.

The project briefs are topical and engage the students with current issues such as the homeless crisis and the sustainable production of food.

#### Weaknesses:

Orthographic drawing skills are not at the same high standard as model-making. This is obvious in portfolios such as Isobel Collier's in which the orthographic drawings do not do justice to a spatially complex scheme.

The interior views in Level 6 portfolios show little engagement with real materials. A better understating of materials, their qualities (colour, texture, thickness, sustainability) and their impact on the design proposal could be developed. This could start from Level 4 with the use of collage techniques to create interior views that communicate materiality, light and inhabitation and be gradually developed in Level 5 and Level 6.

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)

I am satisfied that the course builds up gradually the skills needed to students to move on to employment or further study. This includes brief development, design process, presentation skills, portfolio layout, model-making and drawing skills. Moreover, module IAD 6.1 asks the students to develop their own profile as future professionals, by asking them to create a visual identity (logo, CV, business card, letterhead, etc.); evidence their online presence (live webpage or chosen digital platforms); and start building their professional networks. These requirements incentivise the students to start thinking of life outside the university.

A smoother transition from study to employment would be facilitated by presentations by design practitioners that showcase potential future routes and provide a better understanding how industry works. From my previous visit, I got the impression that the course maintains good connections with alumni who provide feedback from the point of view of industry and placements for current students. This engagement with industry could be further expanded to include non-alumni practitioners. As part of their "building their professional networks" task, students could propose practitioners that they would like to invite for a talk or portfolio reviews. Connecting with practices and sending the students to present their portfolios in their premisses is another way to enable the students to build confidence on presenting their work in a professional setting and getting feedback from industry.

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:

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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).

Yes

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:

It was good to see that in response to my recommendation portfolio submission at the point of summative assessment has been implemented in all three levels.

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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)

Yes

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

Yes

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

Yes

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*

N/A

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

*External Examiners new to the role only*

N/A

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

Yes

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:

The university could consider if the timing of the exam boards for the Department of Architecture could be scheduled at an earlier date. The International students I met were affected negatively by the release of marks in late June.

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## Section E

### Collaborative Provision

Please indicate if you have been satisfied with the following:

E) Do you examine collaborative provision?

No

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## Section F

### Degree Apprenticeships

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

No

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?

The cohort graduating in summer 2023 is the one most impacted by the pandemic as their studies have been disrupted in the first academic year which set the basis for the rest of their academic life. The course leader and teaching team were aware of this disruption and made specific choices when preparing the briefs and sites for this cohort; for example, they selected a site for the final project with a clear geometry and structure that enabled the students to produce resolved final projects. As observed in other HE institutions, overall, the projects of the 2023 graduating students are not as strong as the ones from previous years; that said, high achieving students such as Anamaria-Claudia Csintalan presented sophisticated projects with a clear agenda and aesthetics communicated beautifully in a set of highly detailed final drawings.

The Level 6 students I met were happy with their studies and the support they have received throughout the course. They stated that Industrial Action undertaken by members of staff had an impact in their studies, especially regarding the delay in final assessment which created a real obstacle in confirming their places in MA courses or proving that they have completed their studies successfully. I understand that this late release of marks was not only due to industrial action, but also due to the timing of the board of studies scheduled at the end of June. Another issue mentioned was the cost of model-making materials and the general added costs required for presenting their work inherent to the course. I discussed this with members of staff who explained that the course already provides students with free essential materials. Students also voiced their worry about the introduction of a 9,000-word report in the final year, which they viewed as a daunting task. The length of the final report could be reconsidered in conjunction to the rest of the assessable elements in module IAD6.1.

The course is moving in the right direction in acquiring a more coherent profile by re-considering the content, its delivery, and its assessment at each level. The upcoming re-validation of the course is an opportunity to establish a more cohesive narrative for the course and reinforce its aims and ambitions.

## 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.*

Email Address (required)

Date (required)

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