

## Form 'External Examiners - Cultural Studies And Humanities' for External Examiners - Cultural Studies And Humanities

<b>Submitted By</b>	
<b>Began</b>	23 Feb 2024, 8:12 am
<b>Finished</b>	23 Feb 2024, 8:21 am
<b>Updated</b>	23 Feb 2024, 8:21 am
<b>Status</b>	<p><b>External Examiners - Shared with School</b></p> <p><b>Last Status Change:</b> 23 Feb 2024, 8:21 am by Kay Hartley</p> <p><a href="#">↻ Status change history</a></p>
<b>Actions</b>	<p><a href="#">Edit submission</a></p> <p><a href="#">Print submission</a></p> <p><a href="#">Delete submission</a></p>

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Introduction

### Cultural Studies And Humanities

#### Postgraduate

- MASHI Social History(TP)

External Examiner ID

33598225

Name Of External Examiner:

First Name

Last Name

Collaborative Institution:

Date of Main Progression and Award Board Attended:

21 Nov 2023

## 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)

N/A

## 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:

- Innovative assessments that stretch students in terms of writing for different audiences and purposes, which is good for employability as well as the development of Masters-level academic skills.
- Research-led modules in combination with an emphasis on public history, reflecting the professional practice as well as academic expertise of staff.
- Reflective pedagogical approach that takes account of overall student experience on the programme (rather than a piecemeal module by module approach) and a team willing to make modifications to improve the student journey.

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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)

As is usual, there is a spread of ability shown and this is usually down to a variance in how nuanced understanding of historiography is and the precision with which students are able to articulate their arguments. Time management may be an issue that is reflected in deferments but – especially in the present context of cost and living and other external issues – this may not be in the control of the programme team (or, indeed, the students).

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

9

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)

The programme clearly prepares students for further study in the subject through the dissertation and the academic rigour throughout the programme. With presentations, different forms of professional writing and creative assessments, as well as public-facing elements, students are also prepared for a range of professional careers. I would say that the team is sector-leading in this area in relation to MA History programmes nationally.

There could perhaps be more direct involvement from industry partners in places but as an external it is hard to know what 'wraparound' extra-curricular careers events and initiatives are taking place at a whole programme level rather than within modules and this may be enhanced by that.

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:

I have been consulted on a new module on public history and although the assessments were already very well-conceived, I was particularly impressed that the module leader followed up on an offer to talk further about the policy paper assessment, which I have some experience of using in a module myself. This, to me, shows the dedication of the team to continuous development and innovation.

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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)

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:

I have found logging in to the IT system difficult at times but I think this may be due to my own disability and (having consulted IT numerous times) the fact that my own institution uses Microsoft 365 and this causes sign-on problems. This is not a reflection on both the academic and administrative staff, who have been more than accommodating.

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?

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.

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?

I continue to be impressed with the range of research-led teaching and innovative assessments across the MA Social History. All marking and comments across all modules was fair and in line with sector norms. It is clear that this year there have been a considerable, unusually high, number of deferments. This may be just a cohort issue and I note that the team have recently made modifications to the programme and the assessment diet in order to support student attainment and retention. I don't doubt that staff have made real efforts to engage with these students.

### 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 have been external examiner since 2021. In this time, I have not seen any significant variations in academic standards. Deferments have been up and down but this has been over a time of unprecedented volatility, which I think perhaps disproportionately affects smaller postgraduate cohorts. It is difficult with smaller cohorts to discern an overall pattern but I would stress that what I have seen has been in line with my experience with Masters-level courses at my own institution.

My tenure has seen a number of new modules introduced as a result of staff changes and refreshing the curriculum to keep it relevant. I think that these changes have also made the overall programme more coherent. Modifications have been made to the number of assessments on each module and the length of dissertation. I was properly consulted in these changes and was very convinced by the argument put forward by the team in their proposals would bring their practice in line with sector norms for MAs and enhance student retention and achievement considerably.

As this is my last report as External Examiner, I would like to commend the Leeds Beckett History team for their commitment and dedication to student experience and support, often in difficult circumstances. The period of my time as external has coincided with a pandemic and ongoing industrial action which has put pressure on all in the sector, but particularly those in smaller departments. The programme team is model of a professional, considerate and collegiate team and the understanding, patience and kindness – as well as challenge and rigour – that they bring to their teaching is obvious from their feedback and the knowledge of their students as individuals in assessment boards. I would like to acknowledge them as sector-leading in both their research-led teaching and pedagogical innovation and reflection.

Email Address (required)

Date (required)

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