

Form 'External Examiners - Leeds School Of Social Sciences' for External Examiners - Leeds School Of Social Sciences

Submitted By	
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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 Social Sciences Undergraduate

- BASCR Sociology & Criminology(UG)
- BASOP Social Psychology(UG)
- BASPS Sociology & Psychological Stud(UG)
- BSOC Social Policy(UG)
- SOCIY Sociology(UG)

External Examiner ID

33654428

Name Of External Examiner:

First Name

Last Name

Collaborative Institution:

Date of Main Progression and Award Board Attended:

2023-06-30

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

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

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

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

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)

Yes

A6a) Please expand below how they were/were not addressed: (required)

Ahead of the board I requested clarification on how the department was dealing with issues relating to the UCU Marking and Assessment Boycott and how these matched up with the university's revised regulations. The course director replied promptly with full information on modules impacted, marking and moderation procedures.

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:

Overall, I am impressed with the rigour and diversity of content displayed across the modules. Standards are consistent and marking, feedback and moderation is generally of similar high quality across modules. Students are challenged to engage with high level theories and to build practical skills and to critically engage with sociology as a living discipline. Modules keep topics updated and grounded in current disciplinary debates and there is a balance between push students intellectually and reinforcing the knowledge they already have to allow them take ownership of their learning. For example Protest and Social Movements is a challenging unit for Level 5 but students are introduced to topics that may be familiar to them from the media and news sources with the unit providing them with a range of critical frameworks with which to critique protest events and social movements from a potentially familiar starting point.

I would like to note that the Exploring Social Research course content tackles cross-paradigm research methods in a playful way, providing lots of opportunities for students to develop the practical skills needed to design a 'doable' research project that becomes a proposal for their dissertation. Alongside this, students are introduced to real world ethical and philosophical concepts and creative ways of tackling problems. The methods masterclasses in a methods fair setting is a great way of getting students out of the classroom and engaging with real world research conducted by experts.

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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)

Students show excellent grounding in the discipline of sociology. They can write to a high standard and critically engage with challenging material. Even those at the lower end of the scale generally show potential, even if their grasp of the assessment was not always evident. As there are many different types of assessments students should be well prepared for the world of work alongside and after their degree, drawing on collaboration and presentation skills, report writing and the ability to create visual tools to explain their work.

The one area students may struggle a little is in relation to applying social theory to real world contexts. This is challenging and requires advanced critical skills but it is something that is essential in any sociology degree and somewhat undervalued. The way students perform in these related units is similar to my experience of teaching social theory at different levels. This is a really important skill to have and it is heartening to see students are being pushed to be the best critical thinkers they can.

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)

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

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)

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)

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)

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)

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)

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

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

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

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)

Yes

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

No

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

Yes

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:

The department staff (including their excellent administrator) have been very welcoming and supportive of me in my new external examiner role. I have felt included and consulted where relevant. However, the university procedures have been difficult to navigate. I have not received any training or pointed to any online learning materials (see D5). It took many months to be fully active on the Hub and some university level emails have gone to my personal email and others my professional email meaning sometimes updates were missed. If I was unsure about anything I consulted the course director and administrator who have usually been able to point me in the right direction.

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?

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 want to thank colleagues for a well organised board meeting and to Lindsay for collating all the material and sending clear instructions.

I would like to note my solidarity with all lecturers involved with MAB, particularly those involved with dissertation marking and solo-taught modules and the complexity in administrating this. I also noted this in the board meeting. It is a difficult time for students and staff in this context who no doubt have built strong and trusting relationships and staff rightly want to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion factors are taken into account in marking and awards. Although most of the modules assigned to me do not appear to be impacted by MAB, apart from the joint dissertations, I would like to note my concern about the university-wide approach to award students an average mark rather than a grade directly related to a fully marked and moderated assessment with meaningful feedback from the subject specialist or dissertation supervisor. I recognise that the University has modified regulations to be able to proceed with awards and progressions for impacted students if 'learning outcomes are met', and I note that all processes were carried out in accordance with these less than ideal modified regulations.

A note of the joint dissertations: One or more of these may have been impacted by MAB. I want to acknowledge that while it must be disappointing for both student and supervisor to not have been able to mark such a significant piece of work those I reviewed appear to have been fairly marked with high quality feedback. While reassurances were given as to the attention to fairness it is unclear which, if any, did not have a second marker, as is usual.

I have enjoyed getting to know the teaching teams, administrators and the modules as well as having the pleasure to review interesting and varied work provided by students. I look forward to working with the department over the coming years.

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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