

## BA (Hons) Sociology 2017/18

### External Examiner's report summary

Please indicate in the relevant boxes 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.

| Standards set  |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| "In my view, the threshold academic standards set for the modules/awards are appropriate."                           | Yes | No |
|  | Yes |    |
| If your answer is 'no', please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short. |     |    |
|  |     |    |

| Student achievement  |     |    |       |
|--|-----|----|-------|
| "In my view, students' achievement is comparable with similar course(s) or subjects in other UK institutions with which I am familiar."<br><br>Please provide any further comment on the comparability of collaborative provision. | Yes | No | N/A * |
|  | Yes |    |       |
|  |     |    | N/A   |
| * Not applicable – if you are a practitioner and are not in a position to assess this please indicate here.  |     |    |       |
| If your answer is 'no', please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short.   |     |    |       |
|  |     |    |       |

| Conduct of processes   |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| "In my view, the processes for assessment, examination and the determination of awards are rigorous and fairly conducted." | Yes | No |
|  | Yes |    |
| If your answer is 'no', please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short.       |     |    |
|  |     |    |

| Areas of good practice   |
|--|
| Any particular strengths or distinctive or innovative features in relation to learning, teaching and assessment. |

In terms of good practice, the course utilises a varied range of assessments, which help to improve student skills (for example, wikis, group work, report writing, essays). Students are encouraged to consider the application of sociological theory to real life settings; this is a valuable aspect of the degree and enhances student employability. There is evidence of thorough and fair internal moderation.

## 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  |     |    |       |
|---|-----|----|-------|
| "In my view, the professional body requirements for this course have been met.<br><br>*Not applicable if the course is not a professional body course please indicate here. | Yes | No | N/A * |
|   |     |    | N/A   |
| 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).  |
|---|
| The Progression and Award Board was professionally conducted. It was appropriately chaired, allowing the teaching team to discuss their courses, modules and student achievement in some depth. |

| (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.) |
|--|
| No action was required from last year's report.  |

| (c) The overall performance of the students, in relation to that of comparable levels of work in other institutions. |
|--|
| The overall performance of the students is comparable to other institutions that I have worked in.                   |

| (d) The strengths and weaknesses of the students in general with respect to knowledge, conceptual grasp or application of skills.  |
|--|
| There was evidence of some high quality work. As mentioned in previous reports, the application of sociological theory to real life settings is well developed and evident within assessments. |

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

In terms of the work examined, the varied forms of assessments are well designed, organised and structured. Learning outcomes are clearly considered and meet the subject benchmarks.

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

Overall student performance is good, with a number of students having achieved 1<sup>st</sup> and 2:1 classifications. This suggests that the teaching team is able to successfully engage students and develop their sociological knowledge. Assessment and learning material is regularly updated, with a good use of VL. There has also been the introduction of a new module which appears to be popular with students. Module evaluations are also used to develop and improve teaching and student performance.

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

The modules examined make effective use of My Beckett to support student learning and assessment. Most modules have also made good use Turnitin. In particular, it was good to see the use of verbal feedback through Turnitin.

**(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.)**

There is consistency both within and across modules in terms of marking and grading of assessed work. Internal moderation is fair and consistent. Generally there is consistency in terms of student feedback, as most modules provide feedback with the use of Turnitin, with the exception of one module.

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

There is evidence that staff try to ensure variety in terms of assessments and module content. The assessments are thought provoking and engage students in applying theoretical knowledge and understanding to everyday life. Assessment feedback is detailed and aims to improve learning and skills development. There is good use of VLE, and a good standard of moderation across the modules.

**(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.**

No comment

**(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).**

n/a

**External Examiners' Report Checklist**

**Please comment for all boxes**

| <b>Course Materials</b> |  |            |           |            |
|-------------------------|--|------------|-----------|------------|
| Did you receive?        |  | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>N/A</b> |
| a.                      | Course Handbook(s)?  | yes        |           |            |
| b.                      | Academic Regulations including any Professional Statutory Body requirements where appropriate (these may be included the Course Handbook)? | yes        |           |            |
| c.                      | Module specifications (these may be in the Course Handbook)?   | yes        |           |            |
| d.                      | Assessment briefs/marketing criteria?  | yes        |           |            |

| <b>Draft examination papers</b> |   |            |           |            |
|---------------------------------|---|------------|-----------|------------|
|                                 |   | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>N/A</b> |
| a.                              | (i) Did you receive all the draft papers?                               |            |           | n/a        |
|                                 | (ii) If not, was this at your request?                                  |            |           | n/a        |
| b.                              | (i) Was the nature and level of the questions appropriate?              |            |           | n/a        |
|                                 | (ii) If not, were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments? |            |           | n/a        |
| c.                              | Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?              |            |           | n/a        |

| <b>Draft coursework</b> |   |            |           |            |
|-------------------------|---|------------|-----------|------------|
|                         |   | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>N/A</b> |
| a.                      | (i) Did you receive all the draft coursework?                           | yes        |           |            |
|                         | (ii) If not, was this at your request?                                  |            |           | n/a        |
| b.                      | (i) Was the nature and level of the coursework appropriate?             | yes        |           |            |
|                         | (ii) If not, were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments? |            |           | n/a        |
| c.                      | Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?              | yes        |           |            |

| Marking Examination Scripts   |  |     |    |     |
|---|--|-----|----|-----|
|   |  | Yes | No | N/A |
| a.  | (i) Did you receive a sufficient number of scripts from both home and (if appropriate) collaborative partner students? |     |    | n/a |
|   | (ii) If you did not receive all the scripts, was the method of selection satisfactory?                                 |     |    | n/a |
| <p><b>Recommended sample sizes at Leeds Beckett University are as follows:</b></p> <p><b>a) Samples should be determined by a square root of cohort size, no smaller than 6, no larger than 15. However it should be borne in mind that not all work is assessed in a way that makes a square root sample possible and allowance should be made. For example in subjects such as the performing arts where there may be a requirement for an external to come and view a performance instead, or to visit the exhibition of art work.</b></p> <p><b>b) Samples to include all classification categories, and it is helpful to concentrate around the boundaries to include some fails.</b></p> <p><b>c) Samples to consist of internally moderated work, clearly evidencing the moderation process.</b></p> |  |     |    |     |
| b.  | Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate?   |     |    | n/a |
| c.  | Were the scripts marked in such a way to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?                   |     |    | n/a |

| Dissertations/project reports |   |     |    |     |
|-------------------------------|---|-----|----|-----|
|                               |   | Yes | No | N/A |
| a.                            | Was the choice of subjects for dissertations appropriate? |     |    | n/a |
| b.                            | Was the method and standard of assessment appropriate?    |     |    | n/a |

| Coursework/continuously assessed work |  |     |    |     |
|---------------------------------------|--|-----|----|-----|
|                                       |  | Yes | No | N/A |
| a.                                    | Was sufficient coursework made available to you for assessment from both home and (if appropriate) collaborative partner students? | yes |    |     |
| b.                                    | Was the method and general standard of marking and consistency satisfactory?   | yes |    |     |

| Orals/performances/recitals/appropriate professional placements |   |     |    |     |
|---|---|-----|----|-----|
|   |   | Yes | No | N/A |
| a.  | Were suitable arrangements made for you to conduct orals and/or moderate performances/recitals/appropriate professional placements? | yes |    |     |

| Module Board/Progression and Award Boards |   |     |    |     |
|---|---|-----|----|-----|
|   |   | Yes | No | N/A |
| a.  | Were you able to attend the meetings?   | yes |    |     |
| b.  | Were the meetings conducted to your satisfaction?   | yes |    |     |
| c.  | Were you satisfied with the recommendations of the Module Board/Progression and Award Boards? | yes |    |     |