

Carnegie School Of Sport

Undergraduate

- BASSS Sport and Social Sciences(UG)

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 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.

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

	Yes	No
"In my view, the threshold academic standards set for the modules/awards meet with the requirements of the relevant National Qualifications Statement's."	X	

If your answer is 'no', please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short:

Student achievement

	Yes	No	N/A*
"In my view, 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." *Not applicable – if you are a practitioner and are not in a position to assess this statement, please note here:	X		

Please provide any further comment on the comparability of collaborative provision

If your answer is 'no', please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short:

Conduct of process

Yes No

"In my view, the processes for assessment, examination and the determination of awards are reliable, rigorous and fairly conducted."

X

If your answer is 'no', please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short.

Actions from last year's report

(This will not be relevant if you are examining for the first time)

Yes

Areas of good practice/commendation

Any particular strengths or distinctive or innovative features in relation to learning, teaching and assessment:

A key aspect of the course, that I have not seen to the same degree of effectiveness elsewhere, has been the emphasis given to developing recognisable progression within modules and well as across and between levels. This is a characteristic across the course, so seems a design feature, and relies on both well developed formative assessment and high quality developmental feedback. While this may not necessarily be distinctive or innovative, it is a key strength that other courses within the school and beyond should look to develop in a systemic and integrated manner: I recognise that this may be more likely to be straightforward in a course with relatively small cohorts, but where there is a tendency to reduce the assessment burden through fewer assessment elements in each module, developmental feedback of this kind is essential.

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

	Yes	No	N/A*
"In my view, the professional body requirements for this course have been met. *Not applicable if the course is not a professional body course please indicate here.			
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).

Both the Boards I attended we well run and flowed, even as members adjusted to the virtual experience. This was especially important this year where these Boards were early in the School's cycle of Module and Progression & Award Boards so that each had significant precedential implications. There was considerable debate about the adjustments that would and could be made in line with the institutional guidance regarding the disruption of teaching in the latter third of the year, with the effect that for the most part principles were determined before specifics were considered. There was good attention to precedent within the Boards and awareness of the implications of decisions taken for other Boards.

One issue that may need further consideration at an institutional level arose out of two cases where the guidance on adjustments in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic was applied and over-rode decisions regarding academic integrity (plagiarism). There was considerable debate and general agreement at the Module Board that correct decisions were taken, and I am not questioning those decisions. It did, however, appear to be a gap in the guidance that may merit further consideration.

There does not seem to be a place in the report where more general comments can fit comfortably, so in the light of the course's closure there are I have several wider, more reflective points. I have already quite forcefully expressed, in my 2019 report, my disappointment at the decision to close the course. With the course closing I encourage the School to look to BASSS's innovative aspects and find ways especially to enhance in the remaining courses approaches to criticality that take students outside the dominant epistemological conventions of the sport industries. The decision to close the course has been accompanied by reductions in the school's portfolio and the elimination of modules, and here I note especially Sport & Leisure Identities with its breadth of vision, that contain the potential to build that deep criticality.

The scholarly sector – sport science/studies – is faced with two profound challenges: the first is the long term problem that after nearly 50 years of public health interventions we have made very little substantive impact on participation rates (and almost none in the last 25 years), and second, there is the immediate problem of 'physically/socially distanced' sport. Addressing both of these issues presents a notable challenge in terms of our learning and unlearning as teachers, scholars and researchers. We remain in our field at risk of not seeing the specific problematic characteristics of culture in which we and our students are deeply embedded, because we are deeply embedded. As such, we need programmes that develop the capacity to see and examine in its totality this culture and its effects. There is evidence from student work in the two graduating cohorts from Sport & Social Science that students in this course was developing insights that were not constrained by those dominant conventions and ways of seeing. Finding ways to incorporate those insights into the existing and developing portfolio may allow the School to remain a leader in innovation in the sector, and to produce future innovative leaders, and mitigate the risks of technocratic over-emphasis in a rapidly changing area.

(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.)

institutions.

The relatively small cohorts have the effect that a small number of stronger or weaker students can influence the overall course profile, but even noting that the student performance is as I would expect for students at their level, and consistent with what I would expect to see in comparable courses.

That said, and bearing out the point about cohort size, the 2020 graduating group did not demonstrate the same exceptional performance of the 2019 group. That is not to say that there was not very good work done in this group. Threshold standards were maintained, and many students were clearly challenged through both assessment and learning and teaching practices; most seemed to rise to that challenge, producing work that drew together relevant theory and practice, considered those in their socio-cultural contexts and in doing so disrupted many of the taken for granted presumptions of the field. This is exactly what the course should (and was designed to) do, and make its closure regrettable.

(d) The strengths and weaknesses of the students in general with respect to knowledge, conceptual grasp or application of skills.

One of the strengths of the students has been their ability to reflect on sports cultures and practices through wider contextualisation in a socio-cultural world and through consideration of related recreation and leisure practices. There is a range of modules focusing on issues such as globalisation and aspects of political economy, alongside others that build deep sociological understanding through a launching point in areas of practice students know well that have brought about this insight. In the light of this strength it is particularly disappointing to see the Sport & Leisure Identities module disappearing from the School's portfolio.

It is no doubt a consequence of the pandemic, but it seemed that this year's industry/sector engagement was weaker than might be expected. I note the impressive extra steps the course team took to support, where necessary, students in this work, and commend them for the adjustments made.

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

The assessment tasks were well designed and effectively integrated to the course objectives and progression through it. There was good use of formative feedback, including important development advice that was then drawn on in the summative commentaries. There was a good range of assessment types suitable for and consistent with module learning outcomes, that explored student knowledge and skills, were appropriate to the level of study, and that allowed students to develop their areas of interest and focus while not losing sight of the overall course objectives.

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

The curriculum was well designed and integrated effectively to build the course's learning objectives. The teaching team have done admirably in 2019/20 taking account of the School's reduction in staff numbers and the extra demands imposed by adjustments to accommodate remote teaching. Although the overall

results profile is weaker than the 2019 graduating group, this does not appear to be a consequence of teaching and resourcing as the grades seem consistent with the grade profile for this cohort in previous years.

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

From what I could see, My Beckett was used well for delivery of module and course information, with other platforms used for teaching and assessment tasks where necessary or more suitable. Under the circumstances of 2019/20, this seems appropriate, although a consistent cross-School approach might be better.

(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.)

I have provided more detailed comments to the School on individual modules. In all cases the module content was challenging while level appropriate with consistent models of and approaches to delivery and design of learning, teaching and assessment activities. I am confident that learning outcomes were achieved and threshold and higher standards were maintained, meaning that students overall profiles are an accurate indication of their achievements in line with the course outcomes.

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

The course included important elements of professional practice and sector engagement. These were more limited in 2019/20 as responses to the pandemic closed down much organised sports practice. The teaching team made good efforts to minimise these impacts, including through agreed assessment minor redesign.

All members of the course team are actively involved in research and scholarship in the field and continue to publish; in a teaching heavy context this is highly commendable.

(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.

Note comment above about guidance regarding academic integrity.

(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