

BAH Primary Education leading to QTS 2015/16

External Examiner's report summary

Please indicate in the relevant boxes below whether you agree with the statements about the standards of Leeds Beckett University's awards, the standards of student performance and the conduct of the University's assessment processes.

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 the Faculty or nominee will be alerted and will oversee the response from the course leader.

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

Student performance			
	Yes	No	N/A *
"In my view, the standards of student performance are comparable with similar course(s) or subjects in other UK institutions with which I am familiar."	*		
I have reviewed a sample of student work from the collaborative / franchise institution and in my view the standards of student performance are comparable with students studying the award(s) at Leeds Beckett.			*
* Not applicable – if you are a practitioner and are not in a position to assess national standards 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		
	Yes	No
"In my view, the processes for assessment, examination and the determination of awards are sound and fairly conducted."	*	
If your answer is 'no', please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short.		

Areas for commendation

Any particular strengths or distinctive or innovative features in relation to standards and assessment processes

Level 6 Dissertations

This module encourages students to identify issues about which they can then develop a personal voice. This encourages their development as reflective practitioners and gives them a focus which they can carry into their first appointment. The length of the essay enables good students to structure and develop their arguments and provides a vehicle to write powerfully and academically at this level. The assignments I examined were interesting, and appropriate to issues in the classroom.

Level 6 Vision

This is a very exciting module and is a real strength for the BA course. The Year 4 module provides students with good opportunities to establish and present their own vision for the profession which they are entering. It is particularly important to provide students with an opportunity to look beyond National Curriculum discourse and government directives and articulate their personal philosophy about a challenging profession. The assignment is complex, with group presentation, evaluation and a timed essay- all elements contribute to the Learning Objectives of the module

Main report

In this section you are asked to describe more fully how the University has or has not maintained academic standards and the quality of the student experience in relation to the course(s) for which you are the external examiner.

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 / franchise provision sampled.

If you are an external examiner for any of the University's Pearson Edexcel (HND/HNC level) provision, please also complete the section on page 8 sections l, m and n entitled "for External Examiners Associated with Edexcel Courses."

Professional Body Requirements			
"In my view, the professional body requirements for this course have been met. <i>*Not applicable if the course is not a professional body course please indicate here.</i>	Yes	No	N/A *
	*		
<i>If your answer is 'no', please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short.</i>			

(a) The operation and conduct of the Board of Examiners (and or Examination Committee meeting you may also have attended).

I am unable to comment on the conduct of the board as I was taken ill and was unable to attend. I was able to sign off the Award grids.

(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.)

The College has updated me with information on how modules are developing, in response to my external examiner report.

(c) The overall performance of the students, in relation to that of comparable levels of work in other institutions.

The students in this final year of their degree show mature understanding of the role of a teacher. The best assignments are a powerful demonstration of the importance of HEI ITE to create space beyond school-based training to envision a quality and delivery of education which demonstrates professional and academic understanding. The assignments are comparable with the levels achieved in other institutions where I teach or am an examiner.

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

The strongest students demonstrate an ability to inform their own thinking from academic reading. These assignments demonstrate the value of reflection in developing an understanding of education which supports their classroom teaching. Weaker students need to develop their understanding of education beyond the current National Curriculum brief and recognise the work of educational experts available nationally and internationally, who can critically inform and extend their understanding of current educational debate.

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

The students encounter a variety of different forms of assessment during their course. Each component contributes to the students' development. For example the requirement to engage with research methods for the dissertations enables students to develop deeper knowledge in a specific area of interest and also prepares students to consider returning to Masters –level work at a future date. Assessment and marking of the dissertations, for example, is very thorough and requires thoughtful moderation. Where students' work fell short of the required level of writing, this was made clear in the commentary and students were directed towards ways of improving their work.

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

The use of personal tutorials to guide students for their dissertations works successfully for many students, although some clearly would benefit from more individual engagement at the writing stage of their assignment and a reminder of writing and referencing conventions.

(g) Comments on the use of X-stream (Virtual Learning Environment) within the course (if applicable).

The VLR has improved considerably during this year, and I commend the tutors for their developing use of it.

(h) Module content, consistency of modules and module assessment across the course and the achievement of learning outcomes. (You may be asked by your Faculty to provide detailed comments on the modules that you examine.)

The module content is appropriate to the learning objectives of the modules. There is a clear development and spirality in the modules' relationship with other elements of the course.

(i) Areas of good practice you have identified – please expand on the key areas for commendation listed in the summary.

The use of a timed essay is less usual in current courses, but it provides the students with an opportunity to write persuasively in defence of their own thinking. Strong students showed ability to structure a well- balanced and controlled argument, using referencing to support their thinking. Weaker students' essays were less well-structured and weaker in argument, but students were able to present a coherent discussion of their chosen area. The use of a dissertation model remains an excellent opportunity for students to find and extend their own interests. Such opportunities are more viable in an HEI course, and although weaker students can struggle with research requirements, the experience of writing an extended piece should be maintained as a combined example of academic and professional development.

(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.

(k) **Collaborative / Franchise Provision:** please include here any comments you wish to make on elements of collaborative / franchise provision for which you have responsibility (in addition to those you may have indicated previously in this report).

External Examiners' Report Checklist

Please comment for all boxes

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

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

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

Marking Examination Scripts				
		Yes	No	N/A
a.	(i) Did you receive a sufficient number of scripts from both home and (if appropriate) collaborative / franchise partner students?	*		
	(ii) If you did not receive all the scripts, was the method of selection satisfactory?	*		
<p>Recommended sample sizes at Leeds Beckett University are as follows:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>b) Samples to include all classification categories, and it is helpful to concentrate around the boundaries to include some fails.</p> <p>c) Samples to consist of internally moderated work, clearly evidencing the moderation process.</p>				
b.	Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate?	*		
c.	Were the scripts marked in such a way to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?	*		

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

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 / franchise partner students?	*		
b.	Was the method and general standard of marking and consistency satisfactory?	*		

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?			*

Examination Committee/Board of Examiners				
		Yes	No	N/A
a.	Were you able to attend the meetings?		*	
b.	Were the meetings conducted to your satisfaction?		*	
c.	Were you satisfied with the recommendations of the Examination Committee/Board of Examiners?	*		