

FdA Business and Management 2014/15

External Examiner's report summary

Please indicate in the relevant boxes below whether you agree with the statements about the standards of Leeds Metropolitan 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 Met	✓		
* 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
I am absolutely delighted at the embedding of '**formative assessment, feedback and feedforward**' for students on the programme. This was a suggestion in my report in 2014 and in February I visited Kirklees to review the use of the VLE to include formative feedback and peer feed forward activities. There was extensive evidence of the use of discussion boards to encourage and engage students in formative assessment. Excellent examples of student engagement with these formative activities. I also met with the students to discuss these activities and they were extremely pleased with them – not only the approach but also the feedback. The students made it very clear that the use of formative online assessments had (they perceived) enhanced their understanding of the module material and improved their efficacy. Super work, very well done to the team.

Continued use of blended approaches to learning approaches continue to be well balanced and really enable the students to engage in a range of learning experiences which develop skill and practice.

Continued excellent practice in provision of summative feedback: The student learning experience continues to be enhanced by the **quality of the assessment feedback**. I believe is an area **for continued commendation**. Annotations on the work are informative, clear and comprehensive. This offers the students authentic and specific formative guidance on areas for improvement in their work, ideally enhancing future quality in their assessments.

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 write a report (in addition to completing the Summary) in sections under all the following areas. Where applicable please also reference the sections to any collaborative / franchise provision you have sampled.

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

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

All boards have been well planned, with key dates given well in advance. The procedures are handled professionally with appropriate discussion of key points and marks. Adequate time for external examiner comment.

- (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.)

Embedding of formative assessment and feedback through the VLE has been a great success this year. Please see my earlier comments in areas for commendation.

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

The work is comparable with work in other institutions. And it is in line with level requirements and standards.

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

The student work appears to be more academically robust this year but still there is room for improvement in terms of students being encouraged to engage in a greater underpinning of their work with reference to a broader range of theoretical perspectives and critical writing (both appear to be hindering enhanced success and therefore achieving good results)

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

The design of assessments has been enhanced this year to include additional formative assessment using the VLE as a vehicle, which I feel has improved the assessment design. The marking of papers and assessments is a key strength area across the programme.

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

No concerns. It would appear that the teaching on the programme is fully achieving the intended outcomes.

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

Use of the VLE has been enhanced this year to provide formative assessment, feedback and feed forward. In my discussions with students in February 2015 it was clear that they perceived this has enhanced their understanding of the module content and their efficacy. I would encourage further use of the VLE for this purpose, and to house additional online academic skills information.

- (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 content is designed to enhance the employability (and career aspirations) of students. The module content is fit for purpose in the contemporary business and management field with good use of assessments that contextualise the learning in practice. This is an important construct of the programme and should be maintained and where possible enhanced.

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

I mentioned earlier the enhanced use of the VLE and formative assessment techniques using discussion board feeds as a vehicle for encouraging and enabling students to engage in critical review of the module content – I feel it is an area for commendation across the programme team. It is clearly enhancing student knowledge and importantly their efficacy with the material. It also allows the module tutors to gauge the level of understanding of students and take earlier interventions for areas of weakness.

(j) The University welcomes external examiners' comments on its developing 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.

I would encourage the team to consider enhancing the students ability to engage in greater depth of critical debate in their assessments. Perhaps embedding online academic skills formative modules into the programme.

(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/marking 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				
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		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?			✓

Recommended sample sizes at Leeds Metropolitan University are as follows:

- 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) Samples to include all classification categories, and it is helpful to concentrate around the boundaries to include some fails.
- c) Samples to consist of internally moderated work, clearly evidencing the moderation process.

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				
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		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				
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		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				
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		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				
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		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?	✓		