

BAH Fine Art for Design 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.		

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Areas for commendation

Any particular strengths or distinctive or innovative features in relation to standards and assessment processes
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The whole philosophy of the course is a distinctive mix of Art and Design with a Fine Arts, authorial ethos. It is I think an unique course title with some excellent practice. At its best the student's practice is of a high professional standard with distinctive and creative outcomes.

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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).

I was unable to attend the exam board in June however the previous board I attended was well organised and I have full confidence that the board was carried out the exam board with due process. I sent a non attendance form at the time.

(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.)

N/a

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

The work that I viewed is comparable with work in other institutions. It is in line with level requirements and standards in other institutions in which I have experience of previously.

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

The students' level of conceptual thinking was good on the whole with some very good ideas. The quality of thought was evident in the students Extended Critical Essay module, these were well presented and thoroughly prepared generally.

The practical skills evident in sketchbooks and process materials were of a good standard, comparable to others at a similar level.

The practical finished work is presented to a very good standard, with the best work exhibiting good level of professionalism. Overall the standard is very good, with students attaining appropriate levels of knowledge and skills relating to their chosen field of practice.

Support from workshops allow a high level of craft, the making skills exhibited were generally to a very good standard.

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

The students were happy with the structure, and organisation of assessment and expressed satisfaction with the level and quality of feedback. I am happy that the standards of assessment are rigorous and in line with other similar institutions.

The course seems well organised and the students were happy with assessment and understood the course structure and assessment procedures.

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

The curriculum, teaching and resources seem to be good. In particular the level of staff contact and feedback. The studios appear to be well organised and inviting workspaces. It is refreshing to see students who have studio workspaces sufficient for high quality practice.

The students expressed general satisfaction with the level of resources.

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

n/a

(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 good and appropriate to the level. The Major Project module is a 60 credit module which is large in my experience, but my observation of the students' work is that appears appropriate to the course rationale, in that it has allowed students to experiment in depth. To spend time honing and crafting their final pieces to a high standard.

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

The whole philosophy of the course is a distinctive mix of Art and Design with a Fine Arts, and authorial ethos. It is, I think, an unique course with some excellent practice.

The course itself is I think unique in the UK as a course title. Any concerns that the mix of disciplines might confuse students were dispelled when speaking to them on my visits. The staff are very good at explaining the rationale of the course and students have taken advantage of the time and openness of the programme to develop interesting work that questions the subject specific boundaries that are usually implied in an Art and Design split.

There is a good level of knowledge across traditional and digital media. A very varied aesthetic with sculptural, textile, digital photo montage and graphic arts outcomes. There is certainly no semblance of a "house style" and this is a positive observation.

At its best the student's practice is of a high professional standard with distinctive and creative outcomes. The small cohort allows for a high quality of staff contact and feedback. This should be seen as an unique selling point when the competition locally has large intakes of undergraduate students with relatively poor staff student ratios.

The best work does indeed play with the borders of Fine Art and Design territories.

(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.

My visit coincides with a move of the institution from degrees validated by Leeds Metropolitan University to the University of Teeside. I am not overly concerned about this move but obviously it will be interesting to see whether the change in academic regulations from one validating institution to another will make any substantive changes to standards set and achieved.

(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).

N/a

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 Metropolitan 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?	√		