

FdA Young Children's Learning and Development 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 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

The PPD4 module feedback and annotations provided by the markers, to the students, is both extremely supportive and constructive in enabling and encouraging student progression and development of their learning. The moderator has identified this clearly on the moderation forms and agreed all grades.

The team also have a robust moderation process which has been clearly evident throughout the examination process addressing the issues that arose within the grading and moderation process.

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 any Mitigation Panel or Examination Committee meeting you may also have attended).

The February and June 2015 Boards were both conducted in a professional manner. A range of top, middle and bottom grade scripts were made available for all modules currently being undertaken by the students prior to the commencement of the boards. All of the required paperwork was made available and was accurate with the team answering any queries.

(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.)

Kirklees College has revisited the Scheme of Work and embed more methodology and clarification of the role of Action Research when introducing PPD3 and 4. It is evident that the students have a good knowledge of research data gathering methods but would benefit from further acknowledgement of how Action Research is used as a methodological approach.

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

The levels of work and overall performance of the students is comparable to the Foundation Degree work of other institutions.

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

The quality of the students work is demonstrated through the awarded grades, which clearly demonstrates the student's academic ability in relation to their level of knowledge, reflection and analysis.

It was noted that the students with the higher grade bandings were using a wider range of literature to substantiate their work. This is evidence of the college's investment in more current and relevant books and journals for the students as recommended in the EE report 2012 -13 and addressed in 2013 -14.

Students' knowledge and understanding of Action Research was not as evident as that of the methods of data gathering and would benefit from further input in this area.

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

Overall, the standard of the structure, organisation, design and marking of the student scripts and dissertations was sound as the moderation process addressed the issues that occurred. There is a good range of assessment strategies being used with the students. It was noted that the feedback and annotations for PPD4 were excellent in providing students with constructive feedback enabling further progression and development of their work. There was a range of sound feedback and annotations also provided within the other modules.

The assessment and moderation process was very robust with more scripts being moderated this year due to a disparity between the marking and moderation of some of the modules. New members of staff continue to be fully inducted and involved within this process.

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

The overall quality of the programme of study is good. This is confirmed by the range of grades that the students have achieved at the Boards.

As with last year it is evident that the team provide a range of support to the students both written and verbal taking into account the different needs of their students. This can be seen in the feedback and annotations that the students receive on their scripts.

This curriculum and assessment programme continues to suit the work-based learner's needs and the range of assessment strategies are relevant to the on-going professional and career development of early year's practitioners. However this year there were a number of referrals on the programme; having moderated these referrals I would agree with the grades awarded and the opportunity for retakes where agreed within the Board.

(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.)

There is evidence that the module assessments across the course supports the achievement of all the learning outcomes and provides consistency and continuity between the modules. The moderation process has clearly supported and acknowledged the achievement of these learning outcomes.

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

The PPD4 module feedback and annotations provided by the markers, to the students, is both extremely supportive and constructive in enabling and encouraging student progression and development of their learning. It clearly outlines how the student can develop their work in each area on the script enabling them to improve their grade for next time. The moderator has clearly acknowledged the markers feedback and annotations on the moderation forms agreeing with the grades. This has also been done on the other module but this particular module is outstanding.

The team has clearly used the moderation process to good avail (moderating a larger number of scripts than required) to address the disparity of grading between the marker and moderator ensuring parity of grading and using it to support new members of staff into this process.

(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.

(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?	✓		