

FdA Young Children's Learning and Development (Hull and Harrogate) 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		
"In my view, the standards set for the awards are appropriate."	Yes	No
	✓	
If your answer is 'no', please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short.		

Student performance			
"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."	Yes	No	N/A *
	✓		
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 Bekett.			✓
* 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		
"In my view, the processes for assessment, examination and the determination of awards are sound and fairly conducted."	Yes	No
	✓	
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

- There is a clear and transparent IV process evident on the course, and very good consistency between the two campuses
- Feedback is thorough and formative
- Students are well supported in the development of research skills

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

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

The meeting was efficiently run; all paperwork was to hand and accurate ensuring smooth running of the process.

(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.)

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

It is pleasing to see that students at level 5 make good progress and achieve some good results, writing style is well developed by the time they move into their final year of study and the team have been able to award some good high marks for the cohort of students being examined. Standard of work is comparable to my own experience of students at this level of study.

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

Students are able to use their practical knowledge and skills to support their academic work, and at this level are beginning to show some appropriate skills in critical reflection. Assessments are appropriately designed to provide students with the opportunity to reflect and build on their first hand experiences, and good use of theoretical frameworks can be seen to demonstrate the relationship between theory and practice. Students are beginning to use a wide range of sources to support their work, although these are still largely web based.

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

The assessment of student work is carried out in a clear and transparent manner, and feedback is appropriately detailed to ensure that students are aware of how LO's have been met. Assessments have clear structure and cohesion and there is clear progression between assessments. A range of assessments have been used to allow students to demonstrate transferable skills.

The team would however benefit from considering what constitutes work in particular mark bands as some of the work appeared to be marked a little on the high side. However, I have acknowledged that this may have been the result of working with new staff members due to staff changes. I would suggest that as the team re-established itself further work is carried out on levelling of work. To avoid staff changes impacting on consistency in the future consider having some form of work exemplars.

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

Students generally perform well in assessments and there is support through the feedback they receive. Modules are appropriate to the work based nature of the course providing students with an excellent breadth of knowledge. There have been ongoing staffing issues this year which does appear to have impacted on the consistency of the programme, although this does not appear to have had a significant impact on this particular group of students who have performed well. However, it is important that this is addressed in the coming year, particularly with regards to students accessing a full range of tutor expertise and support.

(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.)

Feedback directly links to LO's and I know this is something the team have been working towards, students are clear in how their work has addressed each LO, and where there might be further areas for development. There is a good balance of assessments, and assessments are appropriate to the module outcomes.

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

The independent research projects undertaken by the students shows good variety in areas of study, and I particularly like the way in which research projects are built up allowing students to develop a good understanding of the process, this will be particularly relevant to those students going on to further study.

The teams work well together and there is a clear and transparent process for IV. Feedback sheets are consistently applied across all modules, and closely linked to the LO's ensuring that students recognise how their marks have been awarded.

(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).

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 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?	✓		