Open University Validation Partnerships

External Examiner report template

Section A: General information

Institution:	**Leeds City College**
Programme:	**FD Supporting Teaching and Learning**
Subject examined:	**Education- Teaching and Learning**
Current year of appointment	**2020-2021 (1st year of appointment)** **End of year report**

Section B: External examiner's report

The reporting structure of this section is intended to help draw out issues which may require attention by the Institution or the University. It should not be seen as limiting in any way the range of issues which may be addressed or the level of detail given. The report will be considered as part of the annual evaluation process and, as such, external examiners are encouraged to be as frank and open as possible, but avoiding wherever possible references to individual staff or students. External examiners' attention is also drawn to 'The Guide for external examiners of OU validated awards', which should be forwarded by partner institutions to their external examiners.

Please comment as appropriate on:
1. The range of assessed material and information provided by the institution on which your report is based to include confirmation that sufficient evidence was received to enable your role to be fulfilled.
This is the first year of carrying out an external examination of the FD Supporting Teaching and Learning programme. This report will focus mainly on the semester two level four and five modules with a brief synopsis of the year as a whole.

Scrutiny has taken place of both level four and five modules which included the marking of students work and feedback given, the IV process and written professional dialogue and the academic requirements and student focused communications within each module handbook.

It is good to see the IV processes being carried out between LCC and Keighley to ensure benchmarking of expectations and grades.

2. Whether the standards set are appropriate for the award, or award element, by reference to any agreed subject benchmarks, qualifications framework, programme specification or other relevant information.

The wording of the assessment criteria is set out in a way which builds evidence of academic learning and the skills required for industry and a positive academic career. These are listed in a manner which makes these links explicit for students to access. These are in line with the National Occupational Standards for teaching and the learning outcomes of the modules.

The formatting inconsistencies mentioned in my previous report appear to have been addressed and rectified.

3. The quality of students' work, their knowledge and skills (both general and subject-specific) in relation to their peers on comparable programmes elsewhere.

Many assessments include examples of students experiences or resources relevant to teaching and learning in practice. There is a high level of reflexivity in the assessment designs and this in turn ensures the students reflect upon their own practice, experience and learning. However, as with all programmes there is a spectrum in the individuals ability to do this and this is reflected within the range or student grades.

The assessment requirements are comparable with other courses of similar academic levels and the QAA expectations.

4. The strengths and weaknesses of the students

The range of student marks and abilities are in parallel with those seen in other HE institutions. Feedback given to students are inline with their level of ability and mark, for instance, formative feedback for those at the lower end of the spectrum and signposts to stretch the students at the higher end. Having the mark rubric included and accessible to students via Turnitin would help students to consolidate this feedback to a higher level and may well use this as a supportive guide when preparing for future assessments or resubmissions. I would urge that the rubrics are included in the future for this reason.

Referencing errors are addressed within in text and end text feedback for guidance on how to improve on these points in future submissions. However, in some modules this can be a little vague. Specific feedback and guidance for referencing errors for Level four students

would help to prevent the same errors appearing at Level five, which has been noted in this review.

As mentioned in my spring report, suggestions to help tackle this further would be to provide examples of correct referencing formats could be added to in text feedback rather than quick marks in places.

The inclusion of grade rubrics would also support the students to identify areas which is impacting upon their mark potential, for example, clarity.

Higher attaining students submit content which is informed, referenced, and demonstrates a knowledge and understanding of key theoretical concepts with links to real world examples in industry. This is commented on positively within feedback from lecturers.

5. The quality of teaching and learning, as indicated by student performance

Three students have been tracked across the year in their attainment from the beginning of the year to the end. This group consisted of: higher, middle and lower attaining students.

The higher attaining student was given feedback which suggested opportunities for stretch and grow. However, some referencing issues were not fully address with specific feedback. The student maintained a 70+ mark average across the year.

The middle attaining student was still displaying issues with clarity, SPaG, typos and referencing which was broadly addressed at the beginning of the year. I wonder if specific feedback with examples given would have helped to prevent this within the second semester.

The lower attaining student did have a mark increase from the beginning of the year to the end. The student responded well to elements of feedback. Again, to wonder if more specific feedback in the panel would help to extend the students understanding of the quick notes used. Most feedback is formative and supportive, although one comment from a marker of their work being 'weak' may impact upon the self-efficacy of a student who is struggling to meet the required criteria. Consideration of formative and supportive language for all markers might support student's confidence and therefore future intrinsic motivation. However, most feedback given was supportive.

6. The quality of the curriculum, course materials and learning resources

As stated from the spring report, schemes of work are linked well to ensure the delivery of the learning outcomes. Most recommended literature is current or seminal publications. However, this will need to be regularly reviewed.

7. The quality and fairness of the assessments, in particular their:

(i) design and structure

The assessments across both levels and semesters, offer students the opportunity to make and include resources and real-world applications. This will help students to prepare for industry whilst also providing a potential catalyst for analysis and reflection.

Feedback is done in relation to the assessment criteria, with strengths acknowledged and areas for development identified. Some of these feedback panels are lengthy due to the amount of feedback given. Therefore, using some formatting to bolden text in these areas may benefit students navigating their way through this and make developmental guidance more explicit and easier to access for lower attaining students. This is carried out in some modules but not all.

Internal moderation is thorough with dialogues clear to access. This suggests a robustness to this process. Not all final marks are logged within the tables to display which final mark was decided upon following professional conversations. However, this is documented within the IV comments. The IV's suggestions have been taken into consideration regarding the use of LO'd quickmarks to highlight to students where they are meeting the require criteria have been implemented across most modules and seem to work well.

(ii) relation to stated objectives and learning outcomes of the programme

Comments from previous board meetings and IVing are visible within feedback. More explicit links to assessment criterion and learning outcomes are seen within mark feedback, however, more links could be made within the schemes of work. Links are made to readings here, adding a few questions may help students to see the value in accessing recommended texts.

(iii) marking to include comments on whether marking scheme / grading criteria has been consistently applied

In some modules, highly detailed feedback was given from lecturers to students within their feedback panels. However, at times, it seems that some feedback is a generic copy and paste. An example of this would being Noted the need for the student to follow Harvard referencing conventions with no more detail. This same phrasing was seen in students feedback across Level four modules. This may have potentially led to the same errors appearing students work at level five.

As mentioned in my spring report, signposts to intext feedback to give examples of when something has been done well. This could also be applied to incorrect incidences of referencing for example and the correct version added, then quick marks used for following occurrences. This would strengthen the dialogue between the feedback panel and in text comments. Students may then engage more with these explicit and individualised signposts.

8. Where the programme has specific work-related learning outcomes (e.g. Apprenticeships and Foundation Degrees) please comment on the assessment and achievement of these outcomes, including employers' involvement where relevant.

Practical and professional skills are highlighted within the assessment criterion for modules this helps students to see the skills needed in industry. This also applies to the

transferable skills element.

9. The administration of the assessments, operation of examination boards, briefing of external examiners, access of external examiners to essential materials, etc.
Module handbooks, access to students work and feedback along with IV records have been made accessible prior to the June Exam Board. Any questions and requests have ben replied to swiftly.

10. Have all the issues identified in your previous report been addressed by the institution?
NA Some guidance from the previous meeting have been implemented. However, the grade rubrics are not currently in use or available to student. This will be monitored over the course of my support of the programme teams.

If no, please comment

11.
Please confirm that the assessment and standards set for the programme as a whole, including all its pathways, modules or individual courses are consistent and appropriate, and that the processes for assessment and determination of awards are fair, reliable and transparent across the provision.   *(For those with responsibility across the whole programme or for chief external examiners – if in doubt please check with the appointing institution)*

12. Any other comments
The course programme has undertaken a review over the Easter period of this year. This was done in consultation with colleagues from OUP, LCC, Keighley and myself. I look forward to seeing where these changes take the student journey in the next academic year.

Please ensure that you sign and date below, if sending a hard copy of this report

Signed:	
Date:	18.06.2021