Open University Validation Partnerships

External Examiner report template

Section A: General information

Institution:	Leeds City College
Programme:	FD and BSc (Hons) Cyber Security and Networking programmes
Subject examined:	Cyber Security and Networking programmes
Name of examiner:	Dr. Pooneh Bagheri Zadeh
Address:	
E-mail:	
Current year of appointment	Fourth year

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 year Corona Pandemic introduced lots of challenges in delivering modules in most Higher education institutions. Despite the challenges, I received Course handbook and the modules' description at the beginning of the year. All information relating to the process and regulations were clear. In moderation process before the exam board, an electronic copy of all assessments in each module from both year 1 and 2 were provided with a sample of exam and coursework scripts.
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.
This year due to restrictions introduced by government due to COVID19 pandemic, there were some changes applied to the modules' delivery plan and assessment. All modules' learning outcomes are appropriate for the modules' level. The staff responses to the situation were very good and the overall the level of students' performance was satisfactory.
3. The quality of students' work, their knowledge and skills (both general and subject-specific) in relation to their peers on comparable programmes elsewhere.
Although lots of challenges faced by both academic staff and students due to the Covid-19 pandemic, students' performance at all levels were very good and in line with other computing courses in other higher education institutions in the UK.
4. The strengths and weaknesses of the students
Despite of changes in mode of delivery and assessments in some modules, students seem to perform better in assignment type work than the exam this year again.
5. The quality of teaching and learning, as indicated by student performance
Overall, the quality of teaching and learning seem to be similar compared to the past two years in all levels.
6. The quality of the curriculum, course materials and learning resources
Based on module descriptions and learning outcomes, the curriculum kept the same level of quality

compare to the previous year.
7. The quality and fairness of the assessments, in particular their:
(i) design and structure
A good range of assessment methods were designed to meet the new needs in the course including, exams, and course-works. Overall, the range and weight of assessment components across the modules are good and in line with other higher education practices and standards.
(ii) relation to stated objectives and learning outcomes of the programme
The students are assessed by coursework and exam and the methods of assessment in all modules covered a good range of learning outcomes. In module handbooks, the information on types of assessment and the expected learning outcomes being examined have been clearly highlighted.
(iii) marking to include comments on whether marking scheme / grading criteria has been consistently applied
The exam and assignments were mostly marked by first and second markers and the standard of the marking scheme seems to be appropriate according to the regulations set by the Open University. In most modules a good e-feedback on students' work were given.
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.
N/A
9. The administration of the assessments, operation of examination boards, briefing of external examiners, access of external examiners to essential materials, etc.
The course team have been helpful and supportive from the start of my external examiner role. I received very good support and evidence to help me moderate and assess the modules' appropriateness to the level of study, and the assessments' suitability and feedback on students' work.
10. Have all the issues identified in your previous report been addressed by the institution?
No
If no, please comment
I am very pleased to see that a module pack is created for individual modules and most of them were almost complete. It is a good practice if module leaders also create a module report along with the module pack.
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)*

This is my final report as the external examiner for the courses and I am very pleased to say that there has been a significant improvement in the quality module delivery, assessment, and feedback.

This year, due to Corona virus Pandemic, most Higher education institution went on lock down since just before Christmas. The academic staff worked well to provide enough information for the students to work off campus and provided alternatives to the assessment methods. Overall, this is a very well-structured course with very good staff.

Modules' description and contents are appropriate for the level of study. Assessments are appropriate, and a good range of assessment methods used in different modules. Students' marks were faire and consistent and a good range of marks were presented across the modules. Some very good feedback was provided to the students.

12. Any other comments

In my last year's external examiner report, I recommended that each module should have its own module pack, consists of: a copy of exam and/or Coursework scripts with and without answers, assessments marking moderation form including names and marks for students with first and second marking, Samples of marked students' work and feedback, Students' marks– a spreadsheet or list of unconfirmed marks prior to Exam board, Students' module evaluation statistics and comments from the students (if available) and finally Module leaders' report. I am very pleased to see a module pack is created for each module and most of them were almost complete. The items still missing from the module packs are: Students' module evaluation statistics and comments from the students and specifically Module leader report. The module leader's report should discuss the following details:

(1) Final marks and statics of marks (it is good to have a visualised form of marks' statistics, e.g. bar or pie chart).

(2) Good practices and factors affecting students' performance and experience in the current run of the module.

(3) Comments on the effectiveness of the summative and formative feedback given to the students

(4) Any recommended / planned changes, based on module leader's own experience or the students' feedback.

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

Signed:	Pooneh Bagheri Zadeh
Date:	03/09/2021