



The Open
University

Centre for Inclusion and Collaborative Partnerships (CICP)

External Examiner report template

An electronic copy of this report should be sent to:

cicp-external-examiners@open.ac.uk

Or, a signed hard copy sent to:

The Director, CICP, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA,
United Kingdom.

You should also submit a copy of this report to the institution.

Section A: General information

Institution:	Leeds City College
Programme:	Foundation Degree Children's Care, Learning and Development
Subject examined:	
Name of examiner:	Rosie Walker
Address:	
E-mail:	
Current year of appointment	3rd 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:
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1. The range of assessed material and information provided by the institution on which your report is based.
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I have been provided with course handbook and module handbooks for each module on the degree. I have been able to access Turnitin and all the student work for all modules to sample. I have been provided with all moderation forms. This has given me a good range of material on which to base my report.
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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 award is mapped to QAA Foundation degree qualification benchmark statements and acknowledges the distinctive features of Foundation Degrees in terms of developing practice for those employed in the sector. This is clear in the module and programme design. It is a topical and important degree which provides a good grounding for students working with children and families. The course is of a comparable standard to those at other institutions with which I am familiar. The programme teams have continued to develop a coherent programme with the core aim of developing competent and confident practitioners who will work with children and their families to achieve the best outcomes.

The assessments are set at the right level. The objectives of the programme are clearly articulated and Learning Outcomes and assessments are clearly aligned to these. If not already a member, it may well be that the degree would benefit from joining SEFDEY which would provide sector endorsement. It would be good to see some of the higher performing students submitting their work to the SEFDEY annual competition and having the opportunity to attend the annual conference.

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

Taken together the modules across the degree provide a very through grounding in all aspects of children's care, learning and development and provides a solid springboard for students' future career choices. The quality of students' work is comparable to programmes I am familiar with elsewhere.

4. The strengths and weaknesses of the students

A range of assessments allow students to present their work in different formats eg posters, presentations, micro teaching sessions. This allows for student flexibility in engaging with the learning and in allowing students to demonstrate their strengths and build confidence. The course is clearly enabling students to become confident and knowledgeable practitioners.

As ever within Foundation Degrees, areas for development across modules and cohorts include: accurate referencing; evidence of reading beyond assigned texts and use of robust sources as well as a greater development of a critical viewpoint.

The students are to be congratulated on some thoughtful pieces of work which are of a high standard and indicate impact on practice.

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

The quality of teaching is reflected in some excellent student work. Where students have really engaged in the modules and understood the task fully, they have received higher grades for their work. The students show developing confidence in academic writing as they work through the modules. The model of exploration of theory followed by practical application is one that allows students to explore how theory underpins practice and how to apply this to their settings.

There are some fails within modules and some students who need to resit modules. However, I do not think this is a reflection of the teaching because generally engagement is high and students appear motivated and enjoy tasks eg presentations, micro – teaching and posters. Also, there is a good spread of pass grades which indicates good teaching with students building on their feedback from Part 1 of assignments.

The current national/global situation is an unprecedented and difficult one for students at the moment trying to juggle several issues and this is more likely to be the reason for any less positive grades.

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

The degree offers exploration of a range of interesting topics which are of benefit to practice. Students have chosen current practice issues to explore within their assignments. The design of the curriculum enables students to link theory to practice and to develop clear progression from level 4 to 5.

Reading lists could be updated, particularly within the Safeguarding and Leadership modules which could use more current texts and reports to ensure currency within the modules. I have made some suggestions which the team may wish to consider.

The handbooks are clear and informative. The assessment criteria are clearly laid out for students and the curriculum learning made evident.

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

(i) design and structure

The arrangement of having two tasks within modules is helpful to students as they are able to put their learning into practice and reflect on this. Also, they are able to benefit from skilled and supportive feedback to facilitate their response to part 2 of the assignments. A range of assessments allow students to present their work in different formats eg posters, presentations, micro teaching sessions. This allows for student flexibility in engaging with the learning and in allowing students to demonstrate their strengths and build confidence.

Assignments are well spaced out throughout the academic year which is helpful for busy practitioners.

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

Learning outcomes provide plenty of scope for students to choose relevant topics to their practice and to consider these appreciatively to understand what works and why it works as well as considering how to develop within their practice. Grading and feedback are securely linked to Learning Outcomes.

(iii) marking

Feedback is fair and consistent, and helpful guidance given to all students on the scripts and overall feedback. Students who have failed are given comprehensive feedback on how to improve and there are pointers for improvement on all work including highly graded work. Grades are awarded fairly and a robust system of moderation is in place.

Feedback to the students could be proofread for minor errors as this is a role model for students proofreading their own work.

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

The students develop a portfolio of practice which allows them to showcase their developing practice. This helps students to look towards future graduate employability. Practice tasks are embedded within all modules.

9. The administration of the assessments, operation of examination boards, briefing of external examiners, access of external examiners to essential materials, etc.

The Exam Board was held online as well as face to face due to the current pandemic. It was well organised and professional and I was provided with all relevant materials in advance.

10. Have all the issues identified in your previous report been addressed by the institution?

YES/NO – please delete as appropriate

If no, please comment

I am unsure about this as I have received no feedback about this. It would be helpful to have some brief feedback about any steps that have been taken.

11. *(For chief external examiners or those with responsibility for the whole programme – if in doubt please check with the appointing institution)*

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 and sound across the provision.

12. Any other comments

The team are to be congratulated on their sensitive handling of academic issues raised by Covid19 and have made timely and pertinent changes to the course to make it possible for students to complete assignments.

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

Signed:

Rosie Walker

Date:

25.6.20