



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:	FD/BA (Hons) Art Enterprise	
Subject examined:	Art Enterprise	
Name of examiner:	Dr Danielle Child	
Address:		
E-mail:		
Current year of appointment	2019-20	

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 was given digital access to a range of sampled work for each element of assessment for all modules from level 4 through 6. Where relevant, there were also representative samples of assessments from each of the three pathways: Art and Design, Graphic Design and Illustration, and Fashion and Textiles. There was a lot of work included in the sample. The provided materials were clearly organised and included assessment briefs, module handbooks, and evidence of moderation for all of the assessments. The sample also included videos of presentations and photographic documentation of practical work. Despite the lockdown conditions, I was able to access a large amount of work that constituted a good representative sample.
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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 standards set are appropriate for the award.
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3. The quality of students' work, their knowledge and skills (both general and subject-specific) in relation to their peers on comparable programmes elsewhere.

The students' work is comparable with undergraduate arts programmes elsewhere. The studio practice and written work is commensurate with standards at similar institutions, with a particular strength in professionalisation skills for arts practitioners.
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4. The strengths and weaknesses of the students

During my time as External Examiner for Art Enterprise, I have witnessed a continual improvement in the standard of written work on the course. Students in all grade boundaries demonstrate skills in referencing and using research in their essays, particularly at level 6 in the Contextualising Practice module. Other strengths include professional skills such as branding and marketing their work (Collaborative Project, level 6, and Realisation, level 4), and also understanding the wider critical context in which the arts operates (Creative Economies, level 5). There is some particularly strong studio work in the level 6 cohort attaining appropriate marks in the mid-high first class bracket. One student from the Art and Design pathway, in particular, demonstrates a good understanding of the creative industry in which they intend to develop a career.
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In terms of weaknesses, students tend to achieve lower grades in the first assessment for the Public Exhibitions and Events module than the second. This first assessment asks students to reflect on an exhibition as a case study. The second is to plan and hold their own exhibition. This year, this had to be undertaken online, due to the College closing as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. I wonder if there might be some skills sessions or extra resources made available to support students in writing case studies/exhibition reflections. Something like Gilda Williams' *How to Write About Contemporary Art*, for example, includes a chapter on how to write an exhibition review for different types of publication (magazine, blog and newspaper), although there may be some resources more appropriate to writing case studies to draw upon.

In the samples that I looked at for the Fashion Practice 1 unit there appears to be an imbalance between the amount of supporting work and the quality of the final piece produced. Feedback, however, is constructive and should enable supported development in future assignments.

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

The quality of feedback from teaching staff remains strong across the board. Students are given good, constructive feedback and it is clear from the feedback that the teaching staff are supportive in assisting students' development in their chosen pathways.

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

The unit outlines and assessment briefs are well-written, giving thorough, clear advice on how to approach assessment tasks. Reading lists are also provided, where appropriate. As a key focus of the course is developing a career in the creative industries (i.e. 'enterprise'), there are some strong units that prepare students for things such as selling work and artistic products (Realisation, level 4), planning and working collaboratively with someone outside of the institution (Collaborative Project, level 6) and also looking critically at the context of the creative industries and art market (Creative Economies, level 5). The first two aforementioned modules do not take place 'in-house' (or as mock events), but require students to engage with the art world/creative industries/partners outside of the College, gaining valuable experience.

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

(i) design and structure

The briefs are well-designed and clear. Often modules include two modes of assessment each with a different format (i.e. presentation and essay) which gives the students an opportunity to play to their strengths

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

The objectives and learning outcomes are fair and the relationship between these and the assessed work is clearly noted on the student feedback. Some tutors write comments under the learning outcomes' headings to show how the work maps onto these for the students, which is good practice.

(iii) marking

The marking is fair. Feedback is of a very good standard. I have seen evidence of moderation for all of the assessments on the course.

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.

N/A

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

Given the current lockdown conditions, the exam board was conducted online. All communications regarding these arrangements were provided in good time. As noted above, I was given electronic access to a good range and amount of material in good time ahead of the exam board.

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

YES

If no, please comment

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 course is now developing its own identity. This includes the gradual introduction of the three distinct pathways, which allows students to develop within their own specialisms while learning more broadly about the creative industries and how to work within these. It has been noted that grades are improving, which signals perhaps, that the course is now attracting (and producing) a stronger student.

This is the first year that the new Fashion and Textiles pathway has been introduced. Although student numbers are small on this pathway at level 4, the feedback from teaching staff is of a good standard, which bodes well for the supportive development of student work over the coming years.

I also want to again note that, despite current conditions, Amy Fishlock was able to pull together a thorough and clearly organised sample of work – thank you – and the exam board was able to take place effectively online.

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

Signed: D. L. Child

Date: 26/6/20

