



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

<b>Institution:</b>	<b>Leeds City College</b>
<b>Programme:</b>	<b>FD &amp; BA (Hons) Leadership &amp; Management</b>
<b>Subject examined:</b>	<b>Leadership and Management</b>
<b>Name of examiner:</b>	<b>David Goodman</b>
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>E-mail:</b>	
<b>Current year of appointment</b>	<b>2020</b>

## 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.

<b>Please comment as appropriate on:</b>
1. The range of assessed material and information provided by the institution on which your report is based.
The range of assessed material was sound. This included reports, presentation slide packs, case studies and video recorded professional conversations/presentations. The sample, across all modules delivered, included a sufficient range of marks to establish that marking and the banding is in line with other institutions and national standards.
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.
Standards used within the programme are appropriate and are in line with the subject benchmark for Business and Management.
3. The quality of students' work, their knowledge and skills (both general and subject-specific) in relation to their peers on comparable programmes elsewhere.
FdA: I noted last year the diversity of marks across the year groups and in particular a group of weaker students in year one who are now year two (level 5). It seems that their performance has remained weaker although in semester 1 it improved slightly, however the impact of COVID-19 appears to have been significant and I suspect has hindered many level 5 students from submitting in semester 2. The level 4 intake has reduced in size and their performance was higher than last years level 4 group in semester 1, again semester 2 appears to have been impacted by COVID-19. Part time student work is of high quality and reflects my own experience of teaching similar students.  BA(Hons): At the top end of marking there is some excellent work submitted by the students. Overall, the range of student performance is comparable with other institutions.
4. The strengths and weaknesses of the students
Strengths: As noted above part time students seem to be performing better (although fewer in number). I suspect this may be related to their experience of work and while some of the full-time student appear to have part time jobs these seem to be at a lower level. It may be

a challenge for staff to draw out meaningful experience from some job roles but in some part time students this has been done well.

Students are continuing to engage with more valid and reliable sources towards building theoretical ideas and propositions. There were students who had been using very sound sources. The issue of pushing students beyond the first 'google' search is one I suspect every institution shares and requires continual reinforcement. Last year I suggested the teaching team could be more directive in terms of what sources they do and do not want to see used. A next step could be to modify marking rubrics to explicitly reward students who undertake independent research and evidence this using appropriate sources.

There has been progress within the dissertations. The literature included has improved and increased in scope however there were some confused sections on methodology. Staff correctly commented and provided sound feedback however at this point it is too late. The relationship between 'Research Methods' and the 'Dissertation' could be reviewed, in the former the poster presentations do illustrate the students have a basic understanding of methodology but my sense is this does not always 'feed' into the final dissertation.

#### Weaknesses:

The weaker students generally demonstrate less understanding of academic practice, both in terms of writing and presentation. I understand the 'skills' team is expanding and this further support should help reduce this issue.

The 'work related module' seemed to be challenging this year, this might be explained by the weaker cohort or COVID19 but I would suggest the module team reflect on the outcomes and possibly consider the assessment strategy.

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

The enthusiasm and energy of the course leader and team is clear, and I was able to meet the team in March and briefly discuss their areas of interest. As the team grows there should be opportunities to develop scholarship and research.

Feedback is consistent. A minor point was discussed with the course leader in terms of the use of in-text comments, some tutors used positive 'praise' and some did not, I think this could be developed, reinforcing good practice may have a positive impact.

The course team have been using a range of authentic assessment methods: professional conversations, group discussions, and role play. Their approach should be commended in using these activities and I must add that I think they met the challenge of 'switching' to online delivery very well.

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

This year I was unable to directly view content in Google Classroom but the range of curriculum is evident within student work. Notwithstanding minor comments above, re. 'work related learning' and 'dissertation' the overall structure of the programme is sound.

7. The quality and fairness of the assessments, in particular their:
(i) design and structure
The assessment strategy remains good. Each module, except the dissertation, has two assessments which typically contrast, this provides students opportunities to respond in different 'modes'. For example, a report and a professional conversation. The development of diverse assessments is to be encouraged and it is positive to see a range of activity including 'Dragons Den', group presentations, professional conversations, case study, reports and 'Mystery Shopper'. As noted this provides a range of 'authentic' activities reflecting the workplace.
(ii) relation to stated objectives and learning outcomes of the programme
Good. In addition, this relationship is typically reinforced within the feedback.
(iii) marking
Good. Marking schemes are applied well. A full range of marks are applied.
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.
I have noted above concerns on the 'work related learning' module. It is not clear from the assessments reviewed how much involvement employers have through the module suite, but this would be a logical place. Within the sample the strongest work discussed a very relevant and important topic in the workplace, but it did not connect directly to a specific workplace or employer. In the weakest piece the work was completely unrelated. There seems to be an opportunity to make the connection between the student's workplace more explicit. The course team could consider increasing the reflective component.
9. The administration of the assessments, operation of examination boards, briefing of external examiners, access of external examiners to essential materials, etc.
Administration of assessment: the course leader provided all the written work and non-written assessment, such as the videos of professional discussions in a timely and suitable online format.  The media content, videos and online recordings have significantly improved.  Operation of Exam Board: In the context of the first online broad, very good. Briefing: very good Access: very good
10. Have all the issues identified in your previous report been addressed by the institution?
Yes. There is clear incremental progress and development within the course and department.
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.

I can confirm for the FD Leadership and Management and BA (Hons) Leadership and Management modules 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

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

Signed:



Date:

30/06/2020