



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:	BA (Hons) International Tourism & Aviation Foundation Degree Tourism and Aviation
Subject examined:	Aviation & Tourism
Name of examiner:	Derek Robbins
Address:	
E-mail:	
Current year of appointment	One

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 had access to a full range of assignments on each Module for each year of the programme. The sample reflected the range of marks awarded.

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 are appropriate for the awards and comparable to other Institutions of which I am aware. Marking standards are robust, second marking and moderation is transparent.
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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.

Overall students produced work of a high quality. This was particularly noted by the performance at Level 6 where the pass rate was 89% (one student deferred to the next Board) and 78% of the students achieved a classification of 2:1 or above. This reflects in my view a particularly strong cohort. It is noticeable that at Level 5 (Foundation degree awards) there was a similar pass rate (90%) with one student deferred to the next Board but the quality of the work has lower. This is fairly reflected in the robust marking standards where only 36% of the cohort achieved a mark of Merit or above.
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Whilst the students demonstrated good knowledge and wider reading one comment I have is that some assignments included overlong generic introduction sections prior to answering the specific question set.

One specific module where I did have some comments was the Dissertation. I found these formulaic. All of the dissertations I read:
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">i) All used on-line questionnaires and undertook quantitative researchii) The analysis in all cases was very descriptive rarely gets beyond the analysis of frequencies to each question. More evaluative analysis and awareness of appropriate statistical techniques would be beneficial and expected to achieve the higher grades.iii) All would benefit from narrower more specific Aims and Objectives. They tended to be very broad and the research question they were attempting to answer was not always clear. |
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iv) In my view they would benefit from a more detailed marksheet breaking down various chapters (Lit Review , Analysis) and indicating a mark for each component. This would help both the student and the external examiner understand more easily the reasons for the final mark awarded.

4. The strengths and weaknesses of the students

The students showed a good range of knowledge and of wider reading.

However there was a tendency for essay answers to have overlong generic introductions prior to addressing the specific question set.

Maybe students felt the need to cover as much of the content from the module as possible in addition to focusing on the specific question or task set.

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

The quality of teaching and learning appears high as evidenced by student performance, particularly at Level 6.

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

There were good examples of using specific detailed case study materials, including appropriate local examples (like Disaster Management scenarios at Leeds Bradford Airport).

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

(i) design and structure

The diet of assessment is mixed, varied and appropriate and tests a range of different skills. There is a strong mix of reports, essays, case studies, presentations, a crises management simulation and work related tasks. Personally speaking when the programmes are reviewed, which I believe is over the next Academic Year, I feel that the use of time constrained examination formats is a little under used (particularly at Level 6). The evidence from the Open Book examination at Level 5 in Leadership and Management suggests that students find this form of assessment challenging to demonstrate their level of subject knowledge in a time constrained, pressured environment.

There were some amendments required to assignments due to the Covid – 19 and the Campus closure, the most significant of which was substituting a written report in place of a group work submission for Crises Management. I was consulted on all proposed changes with an explanation as to how the Module Learning Outcomes would be met.

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

Assignments are carefully and thoughtfully defined to meet the Learning outcomes of each unit.

(iii) marking

As indicated in response to section 2 marking is robust and second marking is routine, clear and transparent.

As in all cases for a social science subject there is a degree of subjectivity in the marking. Whilst I felt that the internal marker was particularly robust in one semester 1 Module where I may have been slightly more generous the standards were appropriate across the whole programme.

In the light of my comments above (section 3) I felt that marks awarded for the Dissertation were on the generous side.

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.

There was a Work Related Learning Module which included an appropriate reflective assignment for the students which required them to apply theory to their practical learning experience.

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

I attended one Exam Board in Leeds on Wednesday 04 March.
I also attended a remote Exam Board (using MS Teams) on Wednesday 24 June
The conduct of both boards was exemplary and I had access to all the materials I required.
I did make one request at the Board on 24 June for assignment briefs to be included in the folders with the student work. I had previously been sent the Module Handbooks which included the assignments, but it would have been useful and convenient for the assignment brief to be attached (rather than having to refer back to previous documents).

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

YES/NO – N/A. This is my first year as External Examiner

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.

Confirmed. However as stated in response to question 7(i) I would review the balance of assessments tasks when the programme is scheduled for review.

12. Any other comments

None

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

Signed:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "David Williams", is written over a horizontal line. A second horizontal line is drawn below the signature.

Date:

17 July 2020