# External Examiner’s Report

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<tr>
<th>Name of External Examiner</th>
<th>Philip Whitehead</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home institution and/or other professional/institutional affiliation of external examiner</td>
<td>University of Warwick</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date of report</td>
<td>June 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic year</td>
<td>2012/13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programme/Course/Module:</td>
<td>Home (✓ below if applicable)</td>
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For Quality Unit Use only:

| Date received in Quality Unit | 18 06 13 |
| Date circulated | 16 07 13 |
| URGENT PQEP item numbers |
| PQEP item numbers |
PART ONE: SUMMARY RESPONSE ON STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENT

If any matters raised here apply solely or particularly to any collaborative provision and/or programme(s) encompassed by this report please ensure that this is clear and that you identify the partner organisations(s) and/or programme(s) involved. Otherwise it will be assumed that all matters raised apply equally to all partner(s) and/or programme(s).

‘In the view of the examiners, the standards set for the awards are appropriate for qualifications at this level, in this subject.’
Is the above statement correct? (Yes/No)
YES
If you have stated ‘no’, or if you wish to give additional information, please do so below.

‘In the view of the examiners, the standards of student performance are comparable with similar programmes or subjects in other UK institutions with which they are familiar.’
Is the above statement correct? (Yes/No)
YES
If you have stated ‘no’, or if you wish to give additional information, please do so below.

‘In the view of the examiners, the processes for assessment, examination and the determination of awards are sound and fairly conducted.’
Is the above statement correct? (Yes/No)
YES
If you have stated ‘no’, or if you wish to give additional information, please do so below.
PART TWO: QUALITY OF PROVISION

This section of the report will be used to give the Programme Team (including staff at any partner organisation) further feedback on the quality being achieved in the programme, the effectiveness of the assessment processes, the quality of the student learning experience and the quality of student achievement.

If any matters raised here apply solely or particularly to any collaborative provision and/or programme(s) encompassed by this report, please ensure that this is clear and that you identify the partner organisations(s) and/or programme(s) involved. Otherwise it will be assumed that all matters raised apply equally to all partner(s) and/or programme(s).

It would be useful if you could identify areas of good practice as well as issues for action.

A. Academic Quality

Please give your views on the quality being achieved in the curriculum and the quality of provision being delivered, particularly curriculum content and teaching and learning strategies. Please indicate any specific action that you believe could be taken to enhance quality. If you feel that quality is at risk in any respect, please comment on any specific action that could be taken to address this.

PLEASE PROVIDE AN OVERALL RATING OF ACADEMIC QUALITY
Key: 1=Excellent 2=Highly satisfactory 3=Acceptable 4=Unsatisfactory 5=Very unsatisfactory

| Rating | 2 |

Please identify concisely below those major strengths and/or weaknesses (if any) in Academic Quality which in your view are sufficiently significant to warrant explicit attention, action and tracking by the appropriate part(s) of the University.

Significant Strengths

There were many very good assignments which linked theory and practice and demonstrated highly developed understanding of relevant concepts, theories and research methodologies with a wide range of relevant sources which were well understood and deployed to support arguments and discussion.

Significant Weaknesses

1. None

Minor points:
Encourage all students to state the word count for each assignment.
Encourage all students to distinguish between a bibliography and a reference list.
Encourage all students to include an abstract/ and or key words.

Please use the space below for further explanatory comments and/or any additional points you wish to raise.
B. Assessment Processes

Please comment on the appropriateness of the assessments in assessing the learning outcomes of the units (including work-based learning where relevant), the reliability of internal marking procedures and the effectiveness of the moderation processes.

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<th>PLEASE PROVIDE AN OVERALL RATING OF ASSESSMENT PROCESSES</th>
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<td>Key: 1=Excellent 2=Highly satisfactory 3=Acceptable 4=Unsatisfactory 5=Very unsatisfactory</td>
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Please identify concisely below those major strengths and/or weaknesses (if any) in Assessment Processes which in your view are sufficiently significant to warrant explicit attention, action and tracking by the appropriate part(s) of the University.

**Significant Strengths**

The marking of assignments struck me as being very effective in all cases. Formative feedback was detailed, thorough and clear and extensive feedback was provided. The latter focused on key features of M Level – criticality in relation to literature and coherence in argumentation and evaluation.

Procedures for assessment seemed to me to be clear and to be shared effectively with students.

I think that the marking is frequently of the highest quality. There are rich comments within the text and an excellent balance between (detailed) summative and formative comments on the assignment feedback sheets.

The ‘Advice for Future Work’ is a valuable part of the assessment process. The best feedback indicated precise action that should be taken to improve work.

**Significant Weaknesses**

1. None

Please use the space below for further explanatory comments and/or any additional points you wish to raise.

My judgements are based on the examination of 18 scripts including assignments and dissertations in January 2013 and 29 scripts in June 2013 covering in both reports EDU 3100, 4000, 4003, 4005, 4006, 4011, 4016, 4019 and 4021.

Many of the scripts in both samples had been moderated and I can report that the moderation process continues to be robust and transparent. I was able to comment on borderline scripts and final moderation for a number of scripts.

Use continues to be made of electronic submissions and I was able to view examples of scripts assessed through this method. The feedback given to students using this process was detailed, formative and, on the whole, extremely positive. Students have commented previously on the value and quality of the feedback given using the electronic submission. It will be interesting to see whether all staff will convert to this method of assessment.

I would argue that students on the MA/MEd programme continue to benefit from being taught by a dedicated and professional group of colleagues.
C. Quality of Student Learning Experience

On the evidence available to you, please give your views on the quality of the students' learning experience, including provision of student support and guidance and teaching and learning resources, indicating whether you have had the opportunity to meet students.

**PLEASE PROVIDE AN OVERALL RATING OF STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE**

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Please identify concisely below those major strengths and/or weaknesses (if any) in the Student Learning Experience which in your view are sufficiently significant to warrant explicit attention, action and tracking by the appropriate part(s) of the University.

**Significant Strengths**

There continues to be a consistently high level of individual support offered to students.

The University continues to provide a comprehensive range of support services which are used by students.

**Significant Weaknesses**

1. None

Please use the space below for further explanatory comments and/or any additional points you wish to raise.

Tutors continue to offer comprehensive support to their students. It is unfortunate that some of the weaker students do not take advantage of this support, or in a limited number of cases, appear to ignore the advice offered to them about improving their work.

D. Student Achievement

Please comment on the overall quality of performance being achieved by students.

**PLEASE PROVIDE AN OVERALL RATING OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

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Please identify concisely below those major strengths and/or weaknesses (if any) in Student Achievement which in your view are sufficiently significant to warrant explicit attention, action and tracking by the appropriate part(s) of the University.

**Significant Strengths**

Overall, the scope and range of student achievement and performance was in line with the work of students on similar programmes on which I work. As expected the general performance range was between acceptable and outstanding in all courses.

The team deserves credit for the consistency with which they engage with their students who present a wide range of academic, professional and personal needs.

**Significant Weaknesses**

1. None

Please use the space below for further explanatory comments and/or any additional points you wish to raise.

**Minor point:**

Encourage all students to take advantage of the excellent support, guidance and advice offered by individual tutors. Could the ‘Quarterly Research and Personal Development Meeting Form’ be used to monitor student activity in this area?

This is my final report as the External Examiner for MA/MEd. The experience of working with colleagues at the University of Bolton has been extremely positive and I have been very impressed by the dedication and enthusiasm of all tutors. At the same time, the administrative team have always been very responsive and welcoming. As I have indicated in previous reports, the whole team deserves credit for the way in which they work effectively with their students, and for their consistently effective advice, support and guidance as tutors.

**F. Are you satisfied that any previous comments made by you as External Examiner have been noted and responded to?**

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Comments: YES
Before you submit this report, please confirm that you have completed all sections, giving ratings where requested, and that you have, where appropriate, identified any specific collaborative partners and/or individual programmes to which the issues you raise particularly or solely apply.

Confirmed: (type YES)  

YES

Please return by e-mail to eereports@bolton.ac.uk

FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE PROGRAMME LEADER:

The issues and good practice raised in this report should be incorporated within the relevant Programme Quality Enhancement Plan (PQEP) and a copy of the plan sent to the External Examiner (with a covering letter) and (unless the PQEP is on QualTrack) to eereports@bolton.ac.uk by the end of November.