External Examiner's report summary

School of Computing, Creative Technology and Engineering

Undergraduate

- BGAME Games Design(UG)

Please indicate, below, whether you agree with the statements about the threshold standards of Leeds Beckett University's awards, student achievement and the conduct of the University's assessment processes, using as a reference the framework for higher education qualifications and applicable Subject Benchmark Statements / Qualification Characteristic Statements. Please also list any shortcomings and areas for commendation. You should expand on any issues you mention here in the main report. If any boxes are ticked "No" the Dean of School or nominee will be alerted and will oversee the response from the Course Director.

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Standards Set

	Yes	No
"In my view, the threshold academic standards set for the modules/awards meet with the requirements of the relevant National Qualifications Statement's."	X	

If your answer is **'no',** please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short:

Student achievement

	Yes	No	N/A*
"In my view, students' who have been awarded qualifications have had the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in course(s) or subjects in other UK institutions with which I am familiar." *Not applicable – if you are a practitioner and are not in a position to assess this statement, please note here:	X		

Please provide any further comment on the comparability of collaborative provision

If your answer is 'no', please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short:

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Conduct of process

	Yes	No	
"In my view, the processes for assessment, examination and the determination of awards are reliable, rigorous and fairly conducted."	X		

If your answer is 'no', please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short.

Actions from last year's report
(This will not be relevant if you are examining for the first time)

Yes

Areas of good practice/commendation

Any particular strengths or distinctive or innovative features in relation to learning, teaching and assessment:

The module materials provided for review demonstrate systems similar to those at the University of Westminster. As was the case last year, the sample content provided for each module was substantial and gave a clear indication of the level and nature of the work being achieved by the students as well as the assessments being set.

This year there was a clearer correspondence between learning outcomes and aspects of module assessment. This may be as a result of acting on prior feedback, or possibly more module information being available to me at the time of reviewing. Clearly indicating the learning objectives helps the students focus their learning and helps moderators (and module leaders) ensure the assessment content is appropriately focused and to a specific point.

Main report

In this section you are asked to describe more fully how the University has or has not maintained threshold academic standards and the quality of the student experience in relation to the course(s) for which you are the external examiner, using as a reference the framework for higher education qualifications and applicable Subject Benchmark Statements / Qualification Characteristic Statements.

Please complete all sections of the form fully and where not applicable please state N/A. Where applicable please also complete the sections for any collaborative provision sampled.

If you are an external examiner for any of the University's Pearson Licensed Centre Programmes (HND/HNC level) provision, please also complete the section on page 9 sections l, m and n entitled "for External Examiners Associated with Pearson Licensed Centre Programmes."

Professional Body Requirements

	Yes	No	N/A*
"In my view, the professional body requirements for this course have been met.			

*Not applicable if the course is not a professional body courseplease indicate here.			
If your answer is 'no', please provide a brief statement (bullet points) of the respect(s) in which they fall short.			

(a) The operation and conduct of the Progression and Award Board (and/or Module Board meeting you may also have attended).

I did not attend the progression board this year, but the quality of information provided by the School was excellent. Any questions regarding the academic procedures, module reports, or administrative issues were promptly responded by the Admin and the Course Team. Over the past four years, the quality and consistency of interaction with External Examiners has significantly improved.

Over that past four years, all administrative, academic and procedural issues raised in my previous Annual Reports have been responded to. The individual 1-to-1 meetings with Module Leaders has significantly improved the interaction regarding the background and nature of any academic and operational issues with the courses and Modules.

(b) The action, if any was required, taken in response to your report of last year. (This will not be relevant if you are examining for the first time.)

(c) The overall performance of the students, in relation to that of comparable levels of work in other institutions.

The student performance is comparable to other BSc programmes in Computer Games, such as Teesside University, University for the Creative Arts and University of Westminster. The degree is clearly working towards improving its relevance towards employability within the games industry. The course team are clearly engaged in demonstrating the relevance of the taught content to the target industry. The encouragement of industry links appears to be developing to the benefit of the course, and the potential profile of the course appears to be improving.

It is my considered opinion that students on comparable students on similar programmes at other HE institutions in the UK perform at a comparable level.

(d) The strengths and weaknesses of the students in general with respect to knowledge, conceptual grasp or application of skills.

Students demonstrated high levels of knowledge and skills in the use of modelling techniques and interactive game design/implementation using both a general computer high level language and professional software packages. The projects are carried out to a very good standard, some of them deserving the distinction grade.

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After four years as External Examiner I have observed a number of significant changes in the programme. New staff have been recruited, and a greater level of industry involvement has been implemented. The level of applied coursework introduced to increase student engagement has increased. The technical skills, specifically programming have been improved, and the overall quality of student performance improved.

(e) The standards of the structure, organisation, design and marking of all examination papers and/or other forms of assessment.

The design and structure of assessments, specifically around coursework, has been rationalised into multiple assignments set out in a standard grading and marking rubric. Student feedback has been positive on these changes over the past three years. There is definitely a greater focus on applied project work.

The internal procedures for moderation for assessments and examinations are well documented and recorded on the Blackboard platform. The effectiveness of moderation appears to be robust and fairly implemented.

Overall, the level and nature of feedback to students is good, and dependent upon on the specific coursework assignment. The feedback is either by written or verbal responses to individual students. In a number of cases, in terms of project work, vivas are given by the student(s) with direct feedback from a panel of academic staff, peer groups, or industrial practitioners.

(f) The curriculum, teaching or resourcing of the programme of study as indicated by the performance of the students in the assessment

With the stabilisation of the course programme after of period of minor/major changes to the modules and the course structure, a number of examples of teaching innovation and good practice are starting to emerge within the School. A greater involvement of industrial practitioners in course work, project sponsorship, and placements is evident across the course.

Overall the level of integration of the teaching team seems to be providing a greater degree of cohesion of the programme.

(g) Comments on the use of My Beckett (Virtual Learning Environment) within the course (if applicable).

I did not have any issues with the VLE and staff ensured that I had access to everything in good time to be able to view and access all module boxes.

(h) Module content, consistency of modules and module assessment across the course and the achievement of learning outcomes. (You may be asked by your School to provide detailed comments on the modules that you examine.)

Compared to the previous year in all the modules there is consistency on the assessment criteria and marking schemes and how these are presented to the students.

It is clear and evident that an improved student progression level has been achieved in most modules and across years.

(i) Areas of student/staff engagement in teaching and learning, scholarship, research or professional practice.

I am not aware of any scholarship, research or professional activities.

(j) The University welcomes external examiners' comments on its academic regulatory framework. Such comments may not have a direct bearing on standards set and achieved or the conduct of processes and so it may not be appropriate to include them elsewhere in this report or its summary. Please record any concerns or comments you may have here.

The programme leader has been cooperating very well with me and I always had sufficient time to look at the material. I have received academic regulations for taught programmes, samples of coursework/project reports, project/assignments forms, feedback to students, plus student's project demos from the programme leader. I was given the opportunity to comment on the moderation, marks, and feedback to students. I have reviewed all modules, samples of coursework, feedback to students, etc. I believe that I have got sufficient materials.

(k) Collaborative Provision: please include here any comments you wish to make on elements of collaborative provision for which you have responsibility (in addition to those you may have indicated previously in this report).

N/A