

**The University of Leeds****EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT**

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2011– 2012

**Part A: General Information****Subject area and awards being examined**

Faculty / School of:	Biological Sciences
Subject(s):	Anatomy
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Anatomy in Relation to Medicine
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	Intercalated B.Med.Sci.

**Completed report**

The completed report should be attached to an e-mail and sent as soon as possible, and no later than six weeks after the relevant meeting of the Board of Examiners, to [exexadmin@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:exexadmin@leeds.ac.uk).

Alternatively you can post your report to: **Head of Academic Quality and Standards**  
Academic Quality and Standards Team  
Room 12:81, EC Stoner Building  
The University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT

**Part B: Comments for the Institution on the Examination Process and Standards****Matters for Urgent Attention**

*If there are any areas which you think require urgent attention before the programme is offered again please note them in this box*

I note that my comments were attended to concerning the ILL arrangements for students writing their dissertations and note that rapid and easy access to literature may still be a limiting factor in the students' resource environment. The students I spoke to during my visit in March are still not happy with the need to travel to Boston Spa or with the cost of retrieval of needed literature.

**Only applicable in first year of appointment**

*Were you provided with copies of previous relevant External Examiners' reports and the response of the School to these?*

N.A. 3<sup>rd</sup> year in post

**For Examiners completing their term of appointment**

*Please comment on your experience of the programme(s) over the period of your appointment, remarking in particular on changes from year to year and the progressive development and enhancement of the learning and teaching provision, on standards achieved, on marking and assessment and the procedures of the School*

N.A.

## Standards

### 1. Please indicate the extent to which the programme Aims and Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) were commensurate with the level of the award

- *The appropriateness of the Intended Learning Outcomes for the programme(s)/modules and of the structure and content of the programme(s);*
- *The extent to which standards are appropriate for the award or award element under consideration.*

- Suitable
- Suitable

### 2. Did the Aims and ILOs meet the expectations of the national subject benchmark (where relevant)?

- *The comparability of the programme(s) with similar programme(s) at other institutions and against national benchmarks and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.*

*Although there is a benchmark for core anatomy appropriate to a first degree in Medicine this is a highly specialised module with rather unusual aims and no benchmark that I am aware of is available. It meets certain aims of the GMC itemised in the 2009 revision of "Tomorrows Doctors" that relate to development of skills in basic medical sciences.*

### 3. Please comment on the assessment methods and the appropriateness of these to the ILOs

- *The design and structure of the assessment methods, and the arrangements for the marking of modules and the classification of awards;*
- *The quality of teaching, learning and assessment methods that may be indicated by student performance.*

- Entirely appropriate, fair and transparent
- Exceptionally good

### 4. Were students given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the Aims and ILOs?

- *The academic standards demonstrated by the students and, where possible, their performance in relation to students on comparable courses;*
- *The strengths and weaknesses of the students as a cohort.*

- Yes
- See below. Generally an exceptional group of students

### 5. For Examiners responsible for programmes that include clinical practice components, please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum

N.A.

### 6. Please comment on the nature and effectiveness of enhancements to the programme(s) and modules since the previous year

*It would be particularly helpful if you could also identify areas of good practice which are worthy of wider dissemination.*

The exceptionally high skill levels imparted in the dissecting room and the recording of images labelled with artistry using the Photoshop transparent overlay technology is a remarkable example of synergy between long established and up to date technology.

### 7. Please comment on the influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching

*This may include examples of curriculum design informed by current research in the subject; practice informed by research; students undertaking research.*

Student projects are based in current clinical need and the emerging literature as the dissections are planned to resolve debates regarding best options in specified clinical situations.

## For Examiners involved in mentoring arrangements

### 8. If you have acted as a mentor to a new External Examiner or have received mentor support please comment here on the arrangements

Not formally but extensively informally.

## The Examination/Assessment Process

9. **The University and its Schools provide guidance for External Examiners as to their roles, powers and responsibilities. Please indicate whether this material was sufficient for you to act effectively as an External Examiner.**

- *Whether External Examiners have sufficient access to the material needed to make the required judgements and whether they are encouraged to request additional information.*

Yes

10. **Did you receive appropriate documentation relating to the programmes and/or parts of programmes for which you have responsibility, e.g. programme specifications or module handbooks, marking criteria?**

- *The coherence of the policies and procedures relating to External Examiners and whether they match the explicit roles they are asked to perform.*

Yes

11. **Were you provided with all draft examination papers/assessments? Was the nature and level of the questions appropriate? If not, were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?**

Yes

12. **Was sufficient assessed / examined work made available to enable you to have confidence in your evaluation of the standard of student work? Were the scripts clearly marked/annotated?**

Yes

13. **Was the choice of subjects for dissertations appropriate? Was the method and standard of assessment appropriate?**

Very good match with student requests and academic value. Assessment was varied and apposite.

14. **Were the administrative arrangements satisfactory for the whole process, including the operation of the Board of Examiners? Were you able to attend the meeting? Were you satisfied with the recommendations of the Board?**

The administrative arrangements made by academic and support staff were very good.  
I was able to attend the main exam board and a number of specialised meetings (see below).

15. **Were appropriate procedures in place to give due consideration to mitigating circumstances and medical evidence?**

These were evidently in place but at times it might be better for external examiners to have more information about the nature of the circumstances so that their recommendations are more relevant/ responsive and less formulaic.

## Other comments

Please use this box if you wish to make any further comments not covered elsewhere on the form



3 October 2012

Dear

**EXTERNAL EXAMINER REPORT 2011/12: BSc Anatomy in Relation to Medicine**

Thanks for your comprehensive report on the above degree programme and for your positive comments regarding the fair, transparent and varied assessment strategies utilized as well as praising the quality of teaching. It is very important that staff who provide an exceptional student experience receive such feedback, not only from within Faculty but also from outside. As last year I'm pleased that you found our administrative and support processes efficient during your visits.

I note in 'Matters for Urgent Attention' that you comment again regarding the issues around ILL arrangements. has summarised the outcome of our investigations with the library since your report last year so I won't reiterate these here. Clearly this remains an issue but has put forward some suggestions to help ameliorate this for next session in response to your report.

I'm really pleased you comment favourable on the quality and clinical focus of the research projects offered to students on the programme. Thanks again for your efforts during the year and I look forward to seeing you in April next year. If you have any queries, please let me know.

With best wishes,

Faculty Director of Undergraduate Student Education

Enc

External Examiner:

Programme Area: **BSc Anatomy in Relation to Medicine**

Academic Year: **2011/12**

Date of Response: **August 6<sup>th</sup> 2012**

Dear

As Programme Leader and thus the representative for staff involved in the teaching and administration of the BSc Anatomy in Relation to Medicine intercalated degree I would like to thank you for producing a comprehensive External Examiners report which we have read with great interest. The programme team were very pleased with your positive response to the programme and that you identified no major problems with the aforesaid degree. We were pleased to see that you felt that the programme aims and intended learning outcomes were commensurate with the level of the award, as we have worked hard to achieve this. In addition we note your other positive comments with respect to the content, delivery and assessment of our degree programme, particularly with respect to the exceptionally good quality of teaching. We pride ourselves in anatomy on the quality of our teaching and this is at all levels from Lecturer to demonstrator. The joint PhD/Anatomy demonstrator posts that we have within the Faculty of Biological Sciences provide us with demonstrators who want to demonstrate anatomy and their knowledge and enthusiasm thus tends to shine through in the teaching sessions because of this.

You identified one matter for urgent attention, which was also documented in your report for 2010/11 with respect to interlibrary loan (ILL) arrangements namely:

*I note that my comments were attended to concerning the ILL arrangements for students writing their dissertations and note that rapid and easy access to literature may still be a limiting factor in the students' resource environment. The students I spoke to during my visit in March are still not happy with the need to travel to Boston Spa or with the cost of retrieval of needed literature.*

To update you, I contacted [redacted] who is our Faculty team Librarian on this matter. [redacted] contacted the Library's Head of Customer Services who responded with the following statement:

*"The Library charges £5 as a contribution to our costs in providing the Document Supply service. The full cost to the Library is in the region of £9 - £15.*

*As with all Library services it is a question of balancing costs. Were we to subsidise further the document supply element of our service, then that would impact on our ability to provide other services, for example journal subscriptions, or late night opening. Other libraries may of course choose to reach this balance differently."*

*I realise that this does not resolve the issues raised by your external examiner, and it seems unlikely that the current policy will be radically altered in the near future. I am however, very happy to pass on any further comments from staff, students or external examiners on this topic, so please do let me know if this crops up again."*

It therefore seems that for the foreseeable future students will have to pay these charges. As Programme Leader I will explain to the students at the start of the next academic session that the cost is heavily subsidised, and encourage them to travel to Boston Spa, in order to photocopy the articles which is normally considerably cheaper than ordering them via ILL. In addition I will suggest they organise themselves into groups so that they travel with maximal occupancy in any car in order to reduce travel costs.

As you know the programme continues to be a highly popular programme which draws applications from high numbers of well qualified students. Your comments and suggestions over the past three years have helped in shaping this degree programme into what it is, and I would like to thank you for this.

Finally in addition I would like to thank you on behalf of all of the staff associated with the anatomy degree programme for all of your input as our external examiner. We have appreciated the amount of time that you have spent looking at dissections, dissertations and examination scripts, meeting with staff and students and the detailed feedback you have given through a variety of mediums. I look forward to working with you again next year.

Best wishes,

Anatomy Programme Leader