

The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT
ACADEMIC YEAR: 2012– 2013

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

Faculty / School of:

Chemistry

Subject(s):

Chemistry

Programme(s) / Module(s):

MSc in Chemical Biology

Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):

MSc

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.

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

There are no matters for urgent attention.

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?

Yes

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

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.*

The learning objectives, structure and content of the programme are all appropriate.
The standard of the award is also appropriate.

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.*

The MSc programme in Chemical Biology and Drug Design at the University of Leeds compares well with our related MSc programmes at <>.

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.*

Student performance on the course is very good both in examinations and in the research projects.

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.*

The project presentations I observed were of a very good standard. All the students were engaged with their research project and achieved results varying from reasonable to very good and worthy of publication.

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

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.

This is my first year so I can not comment on the previous year.

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.

There is a large element of continuous assessment in the course modules which consist of course essays and seminars all based on current research. The students also carry out research projects.

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

I visited Leeds to discuss the course with member of staff in the department.

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.*

The material I received was sufficient for me to act effectively as external examiner.

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.*

I received appropriate documentation on the MSc course.

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 I received draft examination papers, the nature and the level of the questions were appropriate.

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?

Sufficient assessed work was provided for me to evaluate the standard of the course.

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

The choice of subjects for dissertations was appropriate. The research project counts for a large percentage of the final mark. Care was taken not to over mark the project and compensate for course marks less than first class.

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?

All arrangements were satisfactory including the Board of Examiners. I was able to attend the meeting and I am entirely satisfied with the recommendations of the Board.

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

Appropriate procedures were in place for the consideration of mitigating circumstances. In fact these were operating in the case of one student who was not able to give his presentation at the same time as the other students.

Other comments

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

One comment I would like to make on the continuous assessment of seminars. It is difficult to understand what went on in seminars if the student account does not contain any chemical structures. These should be added at least so that the subject of discussion can be understood.

The work of <> at Leeds provides a unique opportunity for the *in-silico* generation of hit compounds for the inhibition of important disease controlling enzymes. There can be no better place for an MSc in Chemical Biology and Drug design. With the demise of many big pharmaceutical companies the designing of new drugs becomes a task to be taken up by Universities and start-up

companies. The chemistry department at Leeds is a leader in University drug design and in the education of students in this vital field of research. The MSc programme is clearly influenced by this stimulating environment, I am very impressed with my first experience of the course.

School of Chemistry

University of Leeds
Leeds LS2 9JT



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

3 April 2014

Dear

Re: MSc Chemical Biology & Drug Design 2012/13

I am writing on behalf of the School of Chemistry to provide a formal response to your Examiner's report. I would like to thank you for your contribution over the past year and I am glad that you have enjoyed working with us; we have certainly valued your input greatly.

We are very pleased to receive your positive comments and also that you are supportive of the structure of the MSc in Chemical Biology and Drug Design, including our procedures for administering the course.

We have encouraged our students to include more detail of chemical structures in their course work submissions. You are correct to highlight the research in Structure-based Drug Design that is ongoing in Leeds and we make good use of SPROUT design software in our advanced medicinal chemistry module, during which all of the students are trained to use this software.

Thank you for your very helpful contributions, we look forward to seeing you again when you visit the School in September.

With best wishes

Head of School

Cc