

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:

Food Science and Nutrition

Subject(s):

Nutrition

Programme(s) / Module(s):

MSc Food Science and Nutrition, MSc Nutrition
 FOOD5145M – Nutrition and health
 FOOD5405M – Prof development for employment and research
 FOOD5410M – Nutrition policy and practice
 FOOD5425M – Personalised nutrition
 FOOD5445M – Nutrition and health research
 FOOD5071M – Research project

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

None

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?

Not applicable

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

Not applicable

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 programme Aims and ILOs are appropriate and the programme is structured to meet these.
The academic standards are appropriate for M-level.

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 Aims and ILOs are compatible with those of other institutions and defined external bodies such as the QAA and the Association for Nutrition for the MSc Nutrition.

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.*

There is a range of assessment methods that are well matched to the Aims and ILOs of each module, which also test relevant transferable and professional skill sets.

Student performance was reflected in their marks. The quality of some dissertations was outstanding, with students demonstrating an ability to conduct research at a level not usually seen at M-level. The faculty are to be commended for this.

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.*

Students were given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the Aims and ILOs. Overall, their performance is comparable to that on similar courses. The diversity of the student group is a strength. Language is clearly a weakness for some international students as evidenced by the structure of their exam responses.

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

Not applicable.

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 faculty clarified and responded to suggestions put forward last year. Students were very positive about the programme.

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.

The academic content is firmly embedded in the research strengths of the group.

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 applicable.

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 guidance and support provided was excellent, as was access to staff and students.

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.*

All necessary documentation was available.

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?

I was sent draft examinations for review and the content and level 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?

Yes.

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

The choice of topics was appropriate and the standard of assessment and feedback was good.

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 were excellent. The Board was attended by nearly all staff and the discussions were open and transparent.

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

Yes.

Other comments

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

These are very good programmes that operate well at all levels.

Dear <>,

Thank you for your External Examiner's Report for the 2012/13 session. The MSc Nutrition and MSc Food Science and Nutrition students were pleased that they had had a chance to meet with you during your visit.

It was pleasing to note that you considered that the aims and learning outcomes of the programmes are compatible with those of other institutions and defined external bodies and we give students adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the aims and learning outcomes. Colleagues were particularly pleased with your observation that the quality of some dissertations was outstanding, with students demonstrating an ability to conduct research at a level not usually seen at M-level.

As you noted, there is some concern with English language abilities of some of the International students which does show in the structure of some exam responses. The IELTS entry requirement for the MSc programmes was recently raised and the University gives an English test on arrival at Leeds to determine if there is any help that is required for individuals. The School strongly recommends that International students attend any help sessions that are identified, unfortunately many students do not complete the sessions identified. In group work and in laboratory work, the School actively mixes students of differing nationality to work together – to encourage the use of English. The School will continue to work with those International students where some language deficiencies are identified.

The School thanks you for your work as an External Examiner and we have valued your comments and suggestions over the last year, and we look forward to meeting with you again in July,

Best Wishes