

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:

School of Healthcare

Subject(s):

Breast Imaging

Programme(s) / Module(s):

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

CHE/Cert Mammography programme
PGDIP, MSc Breast Imaging (in transition)
PGC, PGDIP, MSc, Diagnostic Imaging**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
All urgent matters were discussed immediately and all matters have been successfully dealt with. No new matters need to be entered here or discussed further.

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

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

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.*

As per my previous report, it remains my opinion that the ILOs are well suited to each of the modules under consideration and that these match the assignments/ course work/ examinations that have been designed. This is true for the newly constructed MSc Breast Imaging module consolidation. Again most of the students have used these to construct their work and have thus been able to achieve good outcomes and good grades. Clear fails are seen where students have either failed to address the learning outcomes and/or the guidance given for the structure of the assignment/ dissertation.

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.*

These ILOs and aims continue to meet the national benchmarks for relevant subjects under review. No further adjustments were needed as there have been no changes in the international guidelines for breast imaging

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.*

The methods of assessment remain well suited to testing the learning outcomes for each of the modules and the majority of the assessment methods are interesting and challenging. Some of the assessments during this academic year were of a particularly high standard and for these I recommended that the module leader (with the student) adapt and publish these pieces of work. The clinical assessments continue to be challenging and at a level commensurate with the seriousness of possible clinical errors that may arise due to poor performance of the radiographer. Examiners are particularly careful to note where poor practice may be an issue in clinical work and in dissertation work which helps to reduce the theory-practice divide.

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.*

As in the previous year of examinership, there were a wide range of grades seen in each of the reviewed modules, from fails to high grades. There were a pleasing number of exemplary students in a number of the modules. Students were given explicit instructions and a range of learning outcomes for the module to comply with in order to achieve the grades. The wide range of grades suggests that students did have an adequate opportunity to demonstrate their skills and achievements commensurate with these aims and outcomes. I had the opportunity to view a number of dissertations this year from high achievers to failed students and these dissertations exemplify the how the modules challenge students and allow them to demonstrate their achievement of explicit Aims and ILOs.

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

The assessments are challenging within clinically related assessments and assignments. As in previous reports and as above, I note that where the possibility of clinical errors has the greatest implications for practise, students were suitably challenged. In addition, the marking scheme and baseline level of competence is strictly enforced without deviation from minimum competencies.

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.

All marking within all the modules that I examine is robust, clear and to be commended. The pieces of work are double marked with examiners agreeing all marks in advance of these being sent to me. The Rubrics are well constructed and can be adapted for multiple pieces of work with ease for the examiner. Where an inconsistency was noted with one examiner, discussion was initiated immediately in the department and I was informed of the outcome of the discussions. I was satisfied with the result of the discussions both as external examiner and for the student. The consistency of examiner grading is difficult to achieve and all examiners in the modules that I externally examine are to be commended.

The transition of the programme to consolidate the MSc Breast Imaging together has from an external examiner standpoint been successful. Students are achieving the goals set and from my standpoint, the transition appears to have been smoothly achieved.

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.

I have seen a greater number of dissertations in this year than in previous years and the most of the research has been of a good and consistent quality. There have been a pleasing number of different research methodologies employed and the research has been ethically and thoroughly performed by most of the students. The results achieved have added to the body of knowledge in breast imaging which is an essential goal of research. Students have been enthusiastic and efficient in the data collection and most of the dissertations have sought to bridge the theory-practice divide which is another essential goal for research. As noted previously, the module co-ordinators are to be commended that most of the modules require some level of research into international and national standards in order to complete the assessment which in itself improves the research capabilities of the students.

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

N/A

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.*

All information has been supplied on a CD for reference and is available on the website. This information is sufficient and effective. Staff are very willing to answer any questions via email and respond very rapidly to any query.

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 information was supplied and updated for this year of external examinership.

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?

All papers and electronic assessment material were made available in advance of the examination time. All questions from the external examiner regarding the material were answered quickly by the examiners to enable feedback to be given prior to the examination date. Changes were made commensurate with the comments and/or negotiated between the examiner and the external examiner.

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?

A good volume of work reflecting the spread of marks and/or scripts of particular concern was sent to me for examination. The scripts of particular concern were discussed via email both before being sent and after being examined. All scripts were clearly marked by at least two examiners and the agreed mark was clearly shown on the marking Rubric and feedback sheets for the student. The marking system is particularly robust and students can be in no doubt how to improve subsequent submissions. I am confident that the mark achieved by the student is reflective of the standard of the work for each student. Where I felt the examiners had not given a reflective mark, I was able to discuss this with the examiners by email and my comments were taken into account.

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

A high number of dissertations were seen and these were both interesting and appropriate for the level of learning and research (see comments earlier in this report). The method of assessment was appropriate to the learning outcomes.

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?

Meeting attended last year just after the report was made on the 20th September 2012. The meeting this year is later on the 11th November 2013. I am satisfied that all due process was followed.

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

Students with medical circumstances/ extenuating circumstances were annotated on the marksheets where the submission had been delayed for course work. No other circumstances (such as disability access routes to education, dyslexia etc) that were known to the examiners when marking the papers were made known to me (I am happy with this level of confidentiality and do not want to see these, although a simple annotation can be made on the mark sheet if relevant). I had no need to query any of the grades that were given any special leniency due to circumstances as all marking appeared fair.

Other comments

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

No further comment is needed. All discussions with the team in Breast Imaging have been fruitful and interesting. I am satisfied that the programme is challenging and achieving the goals for education in Breast Imaging in helping to bridge the theory-practice divide.

Baines Wing
University of Leeds
Leeds LS2 9JT



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

6 February 2014

Dear

**Re: External Examiner's Report 2012-2013
MSc, Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate in Diagnostic Imaging**

I am writing on behalf of the Programme Management Group for the above programme to thank you for your complimentary external examiner's Report for the academic year 2012-2013 and for your hard work and support towards the success of our programme, particularly in regard to the successful transition of the Breast Imaging in to the Diagnostic Imaging programme.

The group is reassured to note that you consider the programme to have the required standards for the level of award and that the quality of the teaching, learning and assessments are very good.

As you have now completed your term of office as an external examiner for our programme, the Programme Management Group would like to thank you for your support and constructive external scrutiny of our programmes over your period of office.

Yours sincerely,