

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:	Healthcare
Subject(s):	Pharmacy
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Pharmacy Practice Programme Supplementary and Independent Prescribing Course
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	PG 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?

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

The PG programme under went revalidation in 2010, after which changes were made to the start of the period of study and the order under which some modules are studied. These changes were based on feedback from stakeholders. Over the past academic year the team have begun to work more closely with the student's workplace to give students experience of work base learning and feedback on their clinical practice to support the taught content of some of their modules. This experience enhances the student's learning and helps them to see the relevance of taught material. Students rarely fail their assessments, however few students achieve a mark of over 70. More guidance could be given to students help them obtain higher marks. Feedback is very thorough and specific to each piece of work, general feedback relevant to other similar assessments will help students improve in the future.

Prescribing – no changes have been undertaken during my period as external examiner. Standards achieved are high and comparable to those of similar courses. Marking and feedback is of a high standard.

The school has kept me informed of when student's work is being sent out and responded to any questions in a timely manner.

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 outcomes, structure and content of the postgraduate programme are appropriate. Expectations of students are high. Standards are appropriate to the award.

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.*

NA

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 PG programme is assessed by reflective essays, critical appraisal of patient care plans and oral presentations to peers, which are appropriate at this level. These types of assessments allow students to reflect on their development as practitioners and demonstrate an understanding of the evidence base and application of knowledge to practice.

The prescribing programme uses written exam papers, OSCEs and portfolios which are appropriate and allow students to demonstrate application of knowledge and competence in the work place.

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.*

On the PG programme students rarely fail their assessments, however the majority of marks are often in the 50-59 range with only a few students achieving over 70. I would encourage the team to use the whole range of the mark scheme. Work from weaker students has a poor structure, lacks critical appraisal of an adequate evidence base and breadth and depth of reflection. Stronger students demonstrate good skills of critical appraisal, evaluation and analysis, and there is clear linking of ideas.

On the prescribing course students perform to a high standard in their written exam papers, OSCEs and portfolios.

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

On the prescribing programme clinical practice is assessed by portfolio which is entirely appropriate.

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.

On the PG programme work place tutors are required to feedback to students on their ward performance using a structured feedback form, this feedback is used by the students to inform their reflection on practice.

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 PG programme is at masters level and thus the curriculum is informed by current research in pharmacy practice. All assessed coursework at certificate and diploma levels requires reference to primary reference sources and is consequently based in current evidence base. A small number of students complete the masters stage of the programme by undertaking practice research.

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

NA

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.*

Adequate guidance has been given.

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.*

Current module handbooks are not always sent with work for moderation, but these have been sent upon request.

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 have seen draft examination papers for the prescribing programme, questions are appropriate any comments I have made have been responded to adequately.

I have seen draft OSCE papers for the PG programme, again any comments have been responded to. Questions are 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?

I have been sent significant amounts of student's work for both programmes over my time as external examiner and I am confident that I have been able to evaluate the standard of student's work. Scripts have been clearly marked and annotated.

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

For the dissertations I have seen, student's have chosen a practice based subject which is appropriate. Method and standards of assessment have been appropriate.

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?

Yes to all

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

N/A

Other comments

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

Baines Wing
University of Leeds
Leeds LS2 9JT



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

24 January 2014

Dear

Re: External Examiner's Report 2012-2013

Thank you for your comments on the pharmacy practice and prescribing courses.

I am pleased to inform you that the school is moving towards online marking and feedback for the coming academic year, which should allow feedback to be annotated to specific sections of essays. Initial student feedback from other areas of the school is favourable and we are hoping that this will enable students to engage better with feedback

The school wide marking criteria was reviewed and adjusted last session year so that marking criteria are no longer broken down into coverage/analysis/presentation, and this may explain why essay feedback in modules completed in the latter part of the year has been less clearly linked to marking criteria than previously. The programme team will reflect on how feedback can be more clearly linked to the criteria set out in assignment guidance, which may also help more students to progress to a distinction. The programme leader, will also feedback your comments to encourage markers to use a fuller range of marks. It is however pleasing to note that of the 12 completions this year there were 7 merits and 3 distinctions.

On behalf of the prescribing modules and the pharmacy practice course, I should like to thank you for your continued support and effort in checking and commenting on examination papers and reviewing submitted work, which has been greatly appreciated by the teams. The teams have found your term of office as external examiner to have been very beneficial to them and they wish you the very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely