

The University of Leeds

EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2012– 2013

PART A: GENERAL INFORMATION

Subject area and awards being examined:

School of: Programme(s) / Module(s): Year 1 Induction Health and Health Promotion Introduction to the Oral Environment Oral Disease, Defence and Repair 1 Anxiety and Pain Management Personal and Professional Development 1 Clinical Practice 1 Year 3 Clinical Skills B Illness and Wellbeing Undergraduate Project Child Centred Dentistry Personal and Professional Development 3 Communication Skills Clinical Practice 3	Subject(s): awards: (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc.) BChD / MChD
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The completed report should be attached to an e-mail and sent as soon as possible, and no later than 6 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.

Nil

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.

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.*

In the context of the parallel modular programmes examined, the learning outcomes were appropriate, laying the foundations for succeeding years.

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.*

In dentistry, outcomes for a registrable qualification are provided by the national regulator the General Dental Council. Learning outcomes examined in the modules under consideration were all comparable to those in use by other UK institutions teaching dentistry whose courses have been inspected and found sufficient by the General Dental Council. Pending access to the totality of the assessments through all the years of the complete programme, I am unable to comment as to whether the programmes as a whole address all of the regulator's stipulated outcomes. The overall quality of the candidates was again high and confirmed that the programme operates to the highest national standard. .

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.*

Use of mixed modes of assessment within modules, again provides a broad assessment of the candidates. This breadth of assessment together with the modular course design has by necessity demanded a large number of separate assessment events within the course. In previous reports I have noted that marking these assessments in the highly rigorous manner that had obviously been carried out, is a very significant task in terms of staff time and effort.

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.*

Again, the achievements of the students in written examinations of multiple formats are comparable in quality to the overall standard of similar programmes in other UK higher education institutions.

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

Clinical Practice 1 and Clinical Practice 3 modules had been taught and assessed in appropriate styles.

Clinical Practice 3 for instance was multi-mode assessed -

a/ Scenario Paper 40% of Exam- Criterion Referenced (Double blind Marking / Moderated). Some of the better candidates (circa 75) showing very good insight

b/ Case Reports 20 % of the exam Criterion Referenced (Double blind Marking / Moderated).

c/ OSCE 40% No Compensation

For instance in the OSCE, procedures for this examination were in line with the leading edge of best practice with Borderline Regression pass mark setting and active analysis/review of stations using psychometric data to ensure optimum reliability and validity.

6. 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.

N/A

7. 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 curriculum is innovative in pedagogic / educational terms. There is in most clinical courses only limited opportunity for students to undertake research. In the first three years of these courses critical thinking and scholarship are clearly fostered by the curriculum design and manner of assessment. As I understand it the Final Year Project in year 5 provides this opportunity. I have not yet been in direct contact with this component.

The Examination Process

8. 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 assessment processes were transparent, rigorous and fair at all times. I was given access to all relevant material.

9. 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?

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

All relevant documentation was available and staff were generous with their time in providing explanations.

10. Was sufficient assessed/examination work made available to enable you to have confidence in your evaluation of the standard of student work?

Certainly

11. Were the administrative arrangements satisfactory for the whole process, including the operation of the Board of Examiners?

Yes

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

Yes

For Examiners involved in Mentoring Arrangements

If you have acted as a mentor to a new external examiner or have received mentor support please comment here on the arrangements.

Other Comments

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

Overall

Taken individually all the assessments appear to have been conducted fairly and rigorously. Taken together the assessments examine the candidates across a broad range.

I was impressed by the volume of work that has been clearly put in to mark the assessments.

May I suggest thought is given on probable future challenges such as-

The volume of work that must be assessed under the current scheme is high compared to other institutions. This may be ameliorated by moving to electronic submission and double marking via web based system. Even with such measures in place, in other institutions resource to maintain workforce to carry out the assessments has come under severe pressure from career development inspired prioritization of research over teaching. There is only really limited scope to increase efficiency in manpower terms in using essays in high stakes examinations.

Curriculum mapping and examination blueprinting to accommodate "Preparing For Practice" outcomes for registration will require reflection on the reality of what is being assessed by each assessment component, and re-examination of programme specifications to ensure consistency.

Assessment of "group work" (eg Health and Health Promotion in first year) needs especial attention to ensure there is no possibility of advantage or disadvantage being given to candidates by the architecture of the assessment. "Group Work" may also attract scrutiny in GDC inspections when there may be questions regarding QA measures to ensure candidates cannot "slipstream" learning outcomes assisted by stronger team members. In the example of s Health and Health Promotion one "team" of group workers submitted identical projects and all received the same mark, which did not seem to be in the spirit of the programme specification of the Module.

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:	Faculty of Medicine and Health, School of Dentistry
Subject(s):	<i>Dentistry (MChD BChD)</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	1 st to 4 th year resit examination diets (See Sections for module titles)
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	<i>MChD BChD</i>

Name and home Institution / affiliation of Examiner

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.

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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

No matters requiring urgent attention arose in this examination diet

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.

All ILOs examined at this diet appropriate to level of the award at the stage of the relevant course concerned

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.

Regulatory and quality assurance benchmarks appear to have been uniformly attained.
Assessments in general comparable to those used in similar programmes elsewhere in the UK

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 assessment methods are all contemporary and effectively administered. Marking appropriately rigorous (NB these courses do not have a traditional I / II / II.2 /III classification scheme).
Teaching quality high- many of the re-sit candidates achieved very high marks.

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.

Standard comparable to other institutions I am familiar with (This was a re-sit diet)
Difficult to make strength and weaknesses comments as numbers sitting were low.

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

Clinical practice components and their laboratory precursors all at a fully appropriate standard

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.

OSCE- Borderline Regression pass mark setting and active analysis/review of stations using psychometric data to ensure optimum reliability and validity. Institution in general striving to introduce more rigour egg uniform standard setting 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.

As stated in previous reports the curriculum is innovative in pedagogic / educational terms. There is in most clinical courses only limited opportunity for students to undertake research. In the first four years of these courses critical thinking and scholarship at are clearly fostered by the curriculum design and manner of assessment. As I understand it the Final Year Project in year 5 provides this opportunity. I have not yet been in direct contact with this component.

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.*

All documentation made available in good time and requests acceded to.

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?

All questions available, comments heeded and questions 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 all materials available. Clear marking throughout.

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

N/A

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?

Arrangements efficient.
Meeting attended in person
Recommendations reasonable

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

I was present for the mitigating circumstances process. This was appropriate, humane and consistent.

Other comments

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

School of Dentistry

2012/13

University of Leeds
Clarendon Way
Leeds LS2 9LU



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

7 April 2014

Dear

Thank you for acting as an External Examiner for Year 1 of the MChD/BChD, BSc programme at Leeds. Apologies for the delay in our response.

We are pleased that you consider that the overall quality of the candidates was again high and that the programme continues operates to the highest national standard.

Thank you for the comments about the broad assessment of candidates provided by the use of mixed modes of assessment and the recognition of the time and effort necessary from staff in order to conduct these assessment processes rigorously. You suggest that we put thought into whether this is sustainable in the future, and I can assure you that these issues will be considered in our planning.

On the specific comment relating to "group work" and the Health and Health Promotion module, we intend to make the instructions and marking criteria clearer in order to specify which parts of the write up of the project should be done by the group and which **must** be individual work. This will probably be Introduction and Discussion individually written with the Aims & Objectives, Method, Results and Conclusions sections being written as a group. This would then reflect both the group-work and the individual strengths/weaknesses of the students.

It is with interest that we note your encouragement for the use "web based systems" for assessment. We have, since your visit, approved policy that written assignment submissions are made electronically. Also a paper has been submitted to senior management recommending the provision of mobile technology (tablet PCs) that would help facilitate engagement with such an approach. Your further comments on staffing and enviable workloads are noted.

We also note your comment with regard mapping (blueprinting) to the GDC "Preparing for Practice"; we have conducted such an exercise and we are the only School to have its GDC accreditation take place against the new learning outcomes for accreditation for registration. We, however, recognise the need for further work to refine what we have so far accomplished.

Thank you for your feedback on the examinations and for your really helpful and positive comments.

Yours sincerely,

Dean