

The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT
ACADEMIC YEAR: 2010– 2011

PART A: GENERAL INFORMATION*Subject area and awards being examined:*

School of:	Subject(s):
Programme(s) / Module(s):	awards: (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc.)
Postgraduate Programme in Health Research	PG Cert/Diploma/MSc

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.

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?

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.

It has been a positive and engaging experience working alongside <<<>>> and his team as external examiner. A mature course at the outset, the team have been consistently responsive to ways to improve the delivery and assessment of teaching. Within the last four years, assessment and feedback has become more standardised, improving the student experience and helping the external oversight task. Earlier identification and support of weaker students has been enhanced. I think the investment made by the team has produced a substantial dividend, providing a commendable assessment process.

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 in previous years, the learning outcomes are clear for each module within the course and appropriate to the level of award. Standards of work expected within modules are clearly explained to students and there is a monitoring process to identify and help struggling students.

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.*

It remains the case that there is no national benchmark for the ILOs within this course. However, the content continues to compare favourably with courses provided in other institutions, and is particularly well adapted to the background and needs of its students who are drawn from a range of professional backgrounds.

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*

As before I commend <<<> and his small team for their process of assessment and feedback to students. At the PG Cert level this is really excellent and a model of good practice, particularly given the small staff base. Although it has not been possible to deliver an entirely consistent approach to PG Dip courses (with a wider base of providers) nonetheless good practice has been adapted appropriately in each instance.

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 methods of assessment are appropriate to the taught material and allow discrimination of stronger and weaker students. Academic standards are comparable to other institutions teaching at this level.

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

N/A

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.

<<<> has an ongoing dialog with providers of Diploma modules, fine tuning the content and the process of assessment and feedback. These changes have benefitted both students and the external examiner by providing greater transparency in marking and assessment. Begun last year and continued this year, there is now a more consistent turnover of assessment material enhancing the freshness and relevance of assignment work.

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.

Across the PG suite of modules, teaching materials are appropriately interwoven with practical and relevant examples from the published research literature and the lecturers' own research

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 material provided was adequate and appropriate. The course administration remains effective, handling issues in a timely manner.

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.*

The process and role remain clear.

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

As in previous years, the collation and presentation of assessed work for external examination has been excellent and helped greatly in completing the task (particular thanks for this). The system of assessment permits a high level of confidence when evaluating the standard of student work

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.

N/A

Other Comments

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

The Postgraduate Programmes in Health Research is a mature course providing a range of healthcare professionals and academic students with health research methods training through a sequential Certificate, Diploma and Masters accreditation approach.

At the end of four years as external examiner I would like to commend <<<>> and his team for their high standards and continuing improvements to the student learning experience - a notable achievement given their available resource.

MED020
School of Medicine
Learning and Teaching Office

University of Leeds
Worsley Building
Clarendon Way
Leeds LS2 9NL

T +44 (0) 113 343 7234
F +44 (0) 113 343 2597

12th January 2012



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Dear :

Health Research: External Examiner Report 2010/2011

I am writing to thank you for your 2010/2011 External Examiner Report the Health Research programme.

I have enclosed a detailed response from the Programme Manager to your report. The Programme Director, Dr David Owens, highlights the hard work you put into your role.

I understand that this is the final external examiner's report you will write for this programme. We are grateful for your hard work, and as Dr Owens pointed out, you have substantially improved the programme with your hard work and attention.

Yours sincerely



Dr Graham Law
Director of Postgraduate Studies

Enc. Response from Programme Manager

cc: Dr David Owens, Programme Manager
Dr G Barker-Read, AQST

