

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

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

School of:	Leeds Institute of Genetics, Health and Therapeutics	Subject(s):	Nutrition, obesity and health
Programme(s) / Module(s):	MSc Nutrition, Obesity and Health	awards: (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc.)	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.

No

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 programme has developed over the years I have been examining. The programme contributes to produce good graduates in nutritional epidemiology and obesity. Research project work is often of a publishable quality and demonstrates strength of skills developed by students. Teaching materials are good and students are clearly encouraged to read broadly. I have been happy with the standards of assessment based on samples of work provided to me by the teaching team. Procedures have been at times negatively affected by a lack of administration but it is good to see that this has been recognised and support for the programme is available now that the teaching team have moved to the Dept of Food Science.

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.*

Learning outcomes and standards are clearly Masters 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.*

There are no specific benchmarks for the subject other than nutrition and health curricula against which the programme would map well. Also the benchmarks for postgraduate qualifications are embedded across the programme.

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.*

A variety of assessment methods are used which enable in most cases a diverse range of students to demonstrate learning. This approach in particular develops good skills through the assessment strategy providing the students with opportunity to demonstrate application at Masters level of research skills. In particular the research project module demonstrates this but other modules examined encourage application of skills at masters level.

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.*

Yes and performance is generally good across the programme. Where poor performance is noted it is usually due to circumstances to the student learner and/or a reflection of their ability.

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. 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.

There have been some changes to assessments set and these have enhanced modules.

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.

This programme is research informed and research led. Research skill development is a strong component of this programme and is featured both in the curriculum delivered for the core modules in nutritional epidemiology and obesity. Research projects link to staff expertise and enable statistical skills to be demonstrated. Many of the projects could lead to publications or at the very least dissemination by poster presentations at relevant conferences.

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.*

Yes

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.*

Yes

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

Yes

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

Yes – this was an action from last year and has been addressed.

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

Yes – from discussion of students I recognise this happens.

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.

Administrative support has been addressed and this has made a noticeable difference. The move of the programme team to the dept of food science is a good opportunity for the expertise to be harnessed in other programme areas. Whether the programme should be moved to this Dept has both advantages and disadvantages for the programme. The expertise of the staff in LIGHT complements the team in Food Science and is valuable to the programme. If this contribution can be managed to secure the excellent curriculum underpinning the delivery of the programme then the move of the programme to the Dept of Food Science would be a positive move, and in particular help with marketing and recruitment to the programme.

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



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

12th January 2012

Dear I

Nutrition, Obesity and Health: External Examiner Report 2010/2011

I am writing to thank you for your 2010/2011 External Examiner Report for the MSc in Nutrition, Obesity and Health.

It is particularly helpful to have your comments on the way that the programme has developed over the period of your appointment. I understand that you have indicated your willingness to act as External Examiner for a further year and hope that this will be possible.

The report is very positive about the overall quality of the programme and identifies research project work as a particular strength. The programme management team has worked particularly hard on this aspect of the programme and are pleased with the overall standard achieved. We have worked hard within the Faculty to ensure that the programme has been provided with an appropriate level of administrative support and are pleased that these efforts have also been recognised.

The programme management team have asked me to thank you for your continuing input to the programme. This has been critical in ensuring that the quality of teaching and assessment provided continues to be of a high standard.

Yours sincerely



Dr Graham Law
Director of Postgraduate Studies

cc: Dr Victoria Burley, Programme Manager
Dr G Barker-Read, AQST

