

The University of Leeds

EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2013– 2014

Part A: General Information**Subject area and awards being examined**

Faculty / School of:	Food Science and Nutrition
Subject(s):	<i>Nutrition</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	MSc Food Science and Nutrition, MSc Nutrition FOOD5145M – Nutrition and health FOOD5405M – Prof development for employment and research FOOD5410M – Nutrition policy and practice FOOD5425M – Personalised nutrition FOOD5445M – Nutrition and health research FOOD5071M – Research project
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MSc

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.

Alternatively you can post your report to: **Head of Quality Assurance**
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?

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.*

The programme Aims and ILOs are appropriate and the programme is structured to meet these.
The academic standards are appropriate for M-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.*

The Aims and ILOs are compatible with those of other institutions and defined external bodies such as the QAA and the Association for Nutrition for the MSc Nutrition.

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.*

Most assessments are by examination. Lab reports and written coursework are also used. All the methods test the different ILOs. The arrangements for marking appear good and there is consistency where double marked. The average marks for the MSc Food Science and Nutrition programme were high with most students achieving a Distinction or Merit level award. The average marks for the MSc Nutrition were more normally distributed. It would be helpful to know whether the entry levels for both cohorts were similar.

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.*

Students were given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the Aims and ILOs. Overall, the performance of the MSc Nutrition was comparable to that on similar courses while that for the MSc Food Science and Nutrition maybe higher and reflect the cohort. The diversity of the student group is a positive trait. Language was a weakness for a few international students, and was reflected in their written work and marks. Students noted they would have benefited from more support by appropriate people when doing lab work. They also suggested seminars for practical aspects – i.e. a more problem solving approach - would be beneficial for FOOD5405. As in previous years, students commented on the exam load in semester 2. Various options have been discussed by Faculty, and the current approach is deemed the best option. Given this, It may be helpful to keep reminding students why the assessment schedule is as it is. The nutrition students commented that the programme focused on public health rather than dietetics, suggesting they possibly do not understand the difference. A clarification of this up front may help them with their expectations.

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. 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.

The faculty responded to issues discussed last year. As in previous years, students were very positive about the programme. They noted that the feedback they received was good.

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 academic content is embedded in the research strengths of the group.

8. Where the programme forms part of an Integrated PhD, please comment on the appropriateness of the programme as training for a PhD

Not applicable.

For Examiners involved in mentoring arrangements

9. 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

10. 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.

As in previous years, the support provided was excellent and the response to any queries rapid and efficient.

11. 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 materials were made available.

12. 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?

Draft examinations were sent to me for review. The content and level were appropriate.

13. 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.

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

The choice of subjects were appropriate, as were the assessment methods. Over one-half of the students got distinctions for their dissertations. The team may want to reflect on whether the marks distinguish the best from the rest.

15. 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?

All arrangements were excellent. The Board was well attended and the discussion open and transparent. I was satisfied with the decisions made.

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

Yes.

Other comments

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

Both programmes are good and operate well at all levels. The dedication and enthusiasm of all staff is to be commended.



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

17/12/2014

Programmes: MSc Nutrition
MSc Food Science and Nutrition

Dear

Thank you for your recent External Examiner's report. Your positive comments on the programmes are appreciated by all of the School staff. As usual, the report was presented to the School Taught Students Education Committee.

We had noted that the MSc Food Science and Nutrition students had on the whole performed very well indeed, and this can be attributed to the very strong cohort. In fact contrary to previous cohorts, this Food Science and Nutrition cohort have commented that the programme was not as demanding as they had expected which reflected the strength of the cohort.

The School is aware with some of the problems that you have highlighted with FOOD5405M, and some changes have been implemented for the 2014/15 session to try to improve the student experience with this module.

As you noted there was comment about the split of examinations in January and May, and we have made endeavours to explain at an early stage the reasoning behind the examination arrangements. Thank you for all of your endeavours at all stages of the examination process and in particular for the valuable suggestions and observations that you have made throughout the year,