

## 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:          | School of Healthcare |
| Subject(s):                   | Midwifery            |
| Programme(s) / Module(s):     | Midwifery            |
| Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc): | BSc(Hons)            |

**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](mailto: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*

N/A

**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?*

No

**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.*

All learning outcomes are appropriate for the level of the programme and the professional requirements of the course

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 meet the requirements for the professional award and are commensurate with national benchmark statements. They are similar to other professional programmes with which I am familiar.

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.*

All assessment tasks are clearly designed to demonstrate student's achievement of the learning outcomes. Assignments are set at an appropriate level and test a range of both academic and clinical skills.

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 majority of work reviewed during this academic year was of a good standard. Where students work was weaker the numbers affected were small. Weaker students lacked the capacity to address the assignment task or demonstrate sufficient analysis of their topic. Student performance equates with that seen in my own institution and elsewhere.

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

I have not had an opportunity to visit clinical areas during this academic year but hope to avail of this opportunity in the next academic year. I have had some opportunity to review the clinical portfolios completed by sign off mentor midwives and they appear to provide mentors with the appropriate guidance to formulate judgements of student performance against the assessment criteria. Mentors' comments mostly reflect the grade awarded though this is an area that requires continual monitoring to ensure that there is clear justification for grades.

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.*

Unable to comment as this is my first year of appointment.

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.*

Not yet able to comment

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

## 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

## 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.*

A good range of guidance is made available to the external examiner via the website. The External Examiners day held by the School was an excellent opportunity to obtain further information and ask questions of the programme team. The team are also very open to answering any queries I may have.

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.*

Yes, all programme documentation has been provided and access to the VLE ensures that I have access to specific module information.

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?

Yes, draft papers were reviewed and these were sent accompanied by module descriptors. Papers were well constructed and addressed the identified learning outcomes. The assessments provide appropriate challenge for students with a range of assessment tasks to test a wide range of academic skills.

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?

Sufficient scripts, across the range of marks, are sent which enables a judgement to be made about the standard of student work. Administrative processes are excellent, I get advanced notice of work being sent and any issues are addressed in a timely manner.

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

Students choose a wide range of topics for dissertation all of which have clear clinical relevance to their practise. The quality of dissertations was generally good with some students addressing the systematic nature of literature reviewing very successfully and producing excellent reviews. Those students achieving lower marks did not demonstrate the same understanding of the review process and where less systematic in their approach to the assessment task. This assessment is very appropriate and provides students with skills relevant to their professional development.

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?

The Board of Examiners was well organised and thorough in its decision making with a clear transparent approach to progress issues. All arrangements were satisfactory.

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

I had no direct input into these processes but am aware of a number of students who had mitigation considered.

**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**

27 January 2015

Dear

**Re: External Examiner's Report –2013/2014 – BSc (Hons) Midwifery**

I should like, on behalf of the programme team, to thank you for your first annual external examiner's report, which covers both the old and new undergraduate midwifery pre-registration curricula. The team found it very helpful to meet with you at the External Examiners' Day and the recent School Progression and Award Board. Your understanding and rapid responses have been greatly appreciated by the team.

The team is pleased that you are satisfied that the programme meets the requirements for the professional award, is commensurate with national benchmarks and is comparable with other institutions as was student academic performance. Students do comment on guidelines; and the team strives to make them as clear as possible. The team is pleased that you found the assessments varied, appropriate, challenging and easy to follow.

The team agrees that the assessment of clinical performance by mentors is an issue and is monitoring this; it is hoped that the recent changes you approved will have greater clarity and aid more accurate interpretation by mentors. The team would be happy to arrange a clinical visit for you sometime this next academic session, and could perhaps time this to coincide with your attendance at an OSCE.

The programme leader has passed on your appreciation of the administrative processes and how well they function to the support team.

The team looks forward to working with you over the next three years.

Yours sincerely,