

**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:

Subject(s):

Programme(s) / Module(s):

Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
|                                 |  |
| <i>Masters of Public Health</i> |  |
| Masters of Public Health        |  |
|                                 |  |
| MPH                             |  |

**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?*

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*

N/A

## 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.*

From reviewing the course documentation and having had the opportunity to review various elements of assessment I am able to confirm that the aims and learning outcomes are commensurate with the level of award.

**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 course is of a comparable standard with other Masters in Public Health programmes

**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.*

Modules utilise a variety of assessment methods including coursework, examinations and a dissertation. Marking and second marking is systematic and I was able to review marks from both assessors. A standardised classification system is used to award pass merits and distinctions. Student feedback in the course management teams and via the PTES show high quality of teaching. Student performance is of a good standard.

**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 dissertations reviewed this year did not appear to have been as strong as the previous cohort. Marking was fair, feedback detailed and transparent. Students are comparable to other MPH students.

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

NA

**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.*

As this course will suspend recruitment the course team have worked hard to ensure that students are able to complete the programme.

**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.*

Students undertake a dissertation and I would expect that staff would encourage them to publish where appropriate.

**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**

N/A

**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.*

I was provided with a variety of documentation on appointment to the post of external examiner from the central administration of the University and from the School itself. The School has been very efficient at keeping me updated and the involvement of the external examiner within the course management has been of particular benefit. Some Universities provide courses for new external examiners to support their role and this may be an area worthy of consideration for future new appointments.

The material provided was sufficient to enable me to fulfil my role. The Course director was always helpful in clarifying issues when requested.

**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 this has been carried out via use of the Blackboard platform on a regular basis and I would applaud their paperless approach to working with me.

**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?**

NA

**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?**

Scripts and marks were uploaded onto Blackboard where I was able to access student work. The majority of module convenors are excellent at providing clear and detailed feedback to enable the student to develop.

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

A wide variety of dissertation topic areas and methods were presented from this cohort of students. The dissertations were predominantly student driven in the development of ideas and the examples I viewed had a practical public health application. The standard of assessment was appropriate and all dissertations were double marked and there was a high degree of alignment between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> marker. Detailed comments were provided for the students. The course team may wish to provide examples of well-structured dissertations to students to support their final presentation of the dissertation.

**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 run and being invited to the management committees is very helpful in my role. The availability of dissertations for viewing was delayed this year. A 1 week window ahead of the exam board would be helpful at this time in the year. Overall however the course has excellent administration, management and leadership.

**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**

Students value the staff input into the programme and have been very supportive in management meetings. As the course has been suspended it is vitally important that the remaining cohort of students continue to be supported until the end of their programme.

**School of Medicine  
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T: <>  
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**UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS**

<>

8 January 2015

Dear <>

### **External Examiner's report for Master in Public Health 2013-14**

As the School of Medicine's Director of Postgraduate Studies, I receive all the External Examiners' reports for the eighteen programmes offered in 2012-14. First, let me thank you for assembling the 2013-14 report for the programmes in Public Health. I note that your report states that there are no matters requiring urgent attention.

#### **Good practice**

You note that the student performance is good and that there is a variety of assessment methods. I was glad to learn that the programme team value student evaluation highly. In student questionnaires the quality of the teaching on this programme achieves high scores. Each student has a plan for completing the programme and the programme team has discussed this with all remaining students.

You used the Blackboard VLE to sample student work and mark sheets. I appreciated your comments on this paperless approach to assessment.

#### **Standards**

You state in the standards section that the learning outcomes and programme content are appropriate for postgraduate study in Public Health.

#### **Programme Leader's response**

I have enclosed with this letter a response assembled by <>, Programme Leader. <> has addressed the issue about the delay in issuing the dissertation marks.

#### **Administration**

I note that you commented that there was excellent administration, management and leadership.

*continues ...*

Thank you for your positive report and I am confident that the Leeds team can maintain the high standards of delivering education in Public Health.

Yours sincerely

Director of Postgraduate Studies

<>



<>

<>

Enc: <> 18 December 2014



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Leeds  
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18<sup>th</sup> December 2014

☎ + 44 <>  
✉ <>

Dear <>

**Re: External Examiner report for the Master of Public Health Programme 2013/14**

Firstly, thank you again for your continued input into the Public Health programme and for agreeing to act as external examiner whilst our current cohort of students completes the programme. As you are aware, a decision has been made to withdraw the MPH programme following the suspension of recruitment in 2013/14 and the majority of our students are due to complete their programme of study by the end of 2015/16 academic year. You note in your report that we have worked hard to ensure students are able to complete their programme and I will remain cognisant of the needs of the students to ensure their experience isn't adversely affected by the withdrawal of the programme.

I am pleased that you have noted the high standard of teaching across the programme and the generally excellent feedback given to students on their assessed work. One of my aims last year was to address the variation in the level and standard of the feedback given between modules and, whilst there still remains some room for improvement, we achieved a consistency at an appropriate level for most modules. I will not be complacent though and strive to ensure we maintain this standard for the remaining duration of the programme.

You note that the dissertations this year did not seem as strong as for previous cohorts. Unfortunately, we had no students this year who achieved a distinction for their dissertation so we were unable to award our annual prize. However, I am confident the level of support students received to complete their dissertation was high and you comment on the fairness and consistency of the marking. Your suggestion to provide future students with examples of well-structured dissertations was helpful. We have a library of past dissertations and for the next year I will highlight some in each of the project types as examples of good practice.

I apologise for the delay in releasing the dissertation marks and feedback for your scrutiny. There is always a tight turnaround time to ensure dissertations are marked in time for students to graduate at the winter ceremony. However, there is factored in ample time within this for them to be double marked by academic staff and then scrutinised by the external examiner. I will ensure for future years that the timetable for internal marking is adhered to by our academic staff so that you can receive marks and feedback for scrutiny with ample time before the exam committee. I thank you for your understanding this year and for ensuring due process was completed in time for the exam committee.

Finally, thank you for your positive comments on the standard of administrative support and the management and leadership of the programme. We will strive to maintain these standards as we address areas that would benefit from improvement. I look forward to working with you in the upcoming year.

Kind regards

<>

MPH Programme Leader

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