

## The University of Leeds

### EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2014– 2015

#### Part A: General Information

Subject area and awards being examined

Faculty / School of:	Medicine/Dentistry
Subject(s):	Dentistry
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Year 4
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	BChD, MChD

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*

There were significant issues with the examination standard which resulted in some questions being withdrawn after the examination. This resulted in one subject area (orthodontics) not being fully examined in this diet. Care must be taken when preparing the examination that all internal examiners are happy with the content of the examination questions.

##### **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*



**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 AILOs were met over the range of the examination which covers a broad range of topics within dentistry.

**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.*

Where there is a nationally agreed programme the subjects attained that level and are compliant with the GDC guidance 'Preparing for Practice'

**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 range of assessment methods are used which test the ILOs in an appropriate manner. From the student performance the teaching seems appropriate for the assessments given. There was an issue with the orthodontics teaching in the last academic year which led to the assessment issue noted. This has been addressed for the coming session with appointment of a new head to the section.

**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 performance of the students on this course was at an appropriate level and in line with comparable stage students in other dental institutions in the UK.

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

The evidence produced to support clinical progression was satisfactory.

**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.*

Since my last report the students have started an MChD course which is running in parallel with the BChD course for some students. The same programme is used for both with no increase in topics or attainment for the MChD

**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 curriculum includes components which ask the student to provide, through coursework, an evidence base view of their practice.

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

N/A

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

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.*

Yes

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

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 – however the external examiners (2) are specialists and rely on the internal examiners to set questions out of their specialist areas at an appropriate area. This caused the issue in the exam diet with the Orthodontic questions noted above. The external examiners can look at the exam process but not always the validity of the exam unless there are external examiners in ALL the covered subject areas. For the areas me and my colleague felt competent to comment on the questions were appropriate and any comments were taken on board.

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 – a full range of exam material was made available for the examiners to review.

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

Yes and Yes

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?

I was able to attend the meeting. The recommendations from the board were appropriate. However further issues arose with the electronic marking which caused some of the candidates grades from the board to be unsafe. I attended a further board meeting by teleconference where the new issues were addressed. The candidates were not disadvantaged by the issues arising from these assessment issues.

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

Yes – a full meeting reviewing the mitigation was held at which I was appraised of the circumstances and the board made appropriate recommendations. This was held before the exam board meeting.

Other comments

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

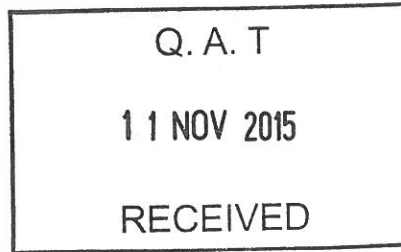
This diet of the BDS 4 was compromised by failures in the examination setting process. As mentioned above the external examiners working outside their specialist area require the internal exams team to ensure that the questions are appropriate for the attainment level of the candidates and that where SBA questions are used that there is no doubt as to what the SBA actually is! This has not been a problem in the past and I feel confident that the exams team will be extra vigilant next year.

It is worth considering a possible link between the significant increase in workload the staff are experiencing with the recently introduced modular course structure and these examination issues. Although each module has a moderate staff workload, the nature of dentistry and the limited staff resource means that most staff are working across two or three modules at the same time. If the modular course is to continue the university should consider whether more resource is needed to support the teaching.

School of Dentistry

University of Leeds  
Clarendon Way  
Leeds LS2 9LU

T  
F  
E dentistry@leeds.ac.uk



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

10 November 2015

Dear

Thank you very much for your constructive comments and continued support of the undergraduate programme at Leeds and I am pleased to see that on the whole you were happy with our assessment processes.

We have deliberated the comments you made in the 'urgent attention' box. As you were aware, there were issues with the orthodontic questions of the recent 4<sup>th</sup> year 'Child-Centred Dentistry' examination and I write to let you know that the following actions have already been instigated:

1. We have been able to appoint an academic lead in Orthodontics to the School at Professorial level (the appointment was made in the Spring of 2015, but of course it takes some time for the post holder to consider modes of action, in concert with his NHS Consultant colleagues)
2. We have developed a facility for broader exposure of future students to orthodontic information, which will continue to align with the GDC requirements in their 'Preparing for Practice' document
3. We have broken the clinical teaching groups into smaller groups of eight students
4. We are reviewing the schedule of Assessment Panels, to try to ensure that specialty-specific internal examiners (often with NHS commitments and a six-week rule on their availability for University meetings) will verify the appropriateness of orthodontic questions
5. Revision materials will be provided to the new 5<sup>th</sup> year (previous 4<sup>th</sup> year)
6. There will be re-assessment of orthodontic Intended Learning Outcomes of the new 5<sup>th</sup> year (previous 4<sup>th</sup> year) at their final examination

I do hope that the rapid implementation of these measures will reassure you that we are taking very seriously your comments and the need for action on them. Thank you again for your highly valued contribution to our portfolio of programmes and please do let me know if you have any issues with what I have suggested.

Yours sincerely,

**Dean of the School of Dentistry**