

## 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:	School of Food Science and Nutrition
Subject(s):	<i>Food Science</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	BSc Food Science and BSc Food Studies and Nutrition FOOD2031 FOOD2100 FOOD2191; FOOD2195; FOOD2045 FOOD3041, 304109; FOOD3100 FOOD3130; 3010; 3340
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	BSc

## 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

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?

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.

The structure and content of the Food Science Programmes is very well designed. The Learning Outcomes are very appropriate for the Programme, at all levels. Impressively, a high standard was achieved, particularly in the final year which produced an impressive number of first and upper second class degree awards. This was particularly apparent amongst students who had undertaken an Industrial Training Year. Overall, the students are not only tested in terms of theory but also have scope for creativity and application of theoretical knowledge in project related modules. The knowledge gained will be helpful to obtain jobs after graduating.

**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 intended learning outcomes of the programme are well aligned with similar courses in the UK including those at the University of Surrey. The degrees provide a range of appropriate topics and relevant Food Science and Nutrition modules with a strong component of basic chemistry and biology.

. At each level, modules build on the work covered in the previous year and the final outcome has resulted in very good and sound degree results. As mentioned above, students who undertook the Industrial Year Placements did particularly well due to further enhancement of knowledge and skills. The content of the degree meets the Food Science QAA benchmarks.

**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.*

The design and structure of the assessments including coursework essays and exams is carefully considered and appropriate, allowing students to achieve learning outcomes. Marking criteria were appropriate and were consistent across modules. The marking was fair and appropriate. The online degree classification system was fair and impressive as before, allowing each student to be considered fully. Student projects in the form of papers works very well and these were marked consistently, using the whole range of marks.

**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 students performed very well at all levels and particularly well in the final year where they are given good opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the Aims and ILOs. Final year students performed very well with a high number achieving Firsts and Upper Second classifications. I was able to sample fairly across all the modules and degree classifications. The marking was fair and consistent.

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

N/A

**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.*

I looked at a wider range of scripts and coursework this year which gave me a fuller picture of the degree courses covering Food Science and Nutrition. Comments made last year were taken on board and the wider marking range was used this year. The marks were also more consistent across modules and there was evidence of double marking.

**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.*

Many of the topics are taught by academics who undertake research in the area. The projects were very good, interesting and well written. The replacement of the traditional dissertation with the project written up as a scientific paper is useful and continues to be impressive, demonstrating a high standard.

Also a separate final year module that incorporates a group project, was challenging last year but was redesigned and ran very well this year with some high scoring groups who had detailed, comprehensive, well-written and well-presented projects.

313001 Food Research Recent Revelations is an interesting module but one which could be enhanced by incorporating searching questions so that marks are not given for a description of the theoretical principles only.

**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

- 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 received sufficient information throughout the year.

- 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.*

I received the Programme handbook, marking criteria and information for external examiners which were appropriate.

- 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?**

I received all the draft examinations papers in good time. The nature and level of questions was appropriate. The minor changes I suggested were addressed.

- 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?**

I had the opportunity to go through all the scripts and coursework, which were laid out efficiently for me, the day before the Exam Board. The scripts were clearly marked and there were helpful comments by staff to justify the marks. There were also some very useful module coordinator comments.

The availability of appropriate mark sheets was also very helpful. However, in one or two cases the mark sheet only gave the final module mark. It would be helpful to have the individual marks for each question and the mean mark on the mark sheet for each module. It is also recommended that module organisers double check the marks in the scripts with that on the mark sheets as 2 marks were swapped for students with similar student numbers. The names of the students should also be revealed on the script after marking, as numbers are harder to read than names.

Staff were helpful and available to discuss any points that arose.

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

The choice of subjects was aligned with the research undertaken by the different academic staff. They were interesting and appropriate and covered the breadth of Food Science and Nutrition, giving a good choice to students.

- 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 administrative arrangements were very good and I commend the team for the efficient organisation. The conduct of the Board of Examiners meeting was fair. Each student was given careful consideration showing commitment and dedication of staff. I agreed entirely with the recommendations of the Board.

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

Mitigating circumstances and medical evidence was discussed and acted upon fairly.

Other comments

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

I would like to commend a very dedicated Food Science and Nutrition academic team who have delivered very good courses resulting in impressive degree results. I would like to thank the efficient administrative team that made the task of external examiners smooth and pleasant.

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**UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS**

25<sup>th</sup> January 2016

Dear

Thank you for your recent External Examiner's Report. The School was pleased with the favourable comments that you have made with respect to the structure of the programmes, the learning outcomes and the assessments.

You have made a few points about the marks and mark sheets provided with the examination papers during your visit to the School. Module leaders have been instructed that all mark sheets must have a full breakdown of the module marks, and that all marks must be checked after entering them into the mark sheets. The School has a Teaching Enhancement Scheme group that has been considering a number of aspects of examination procedures in the School and one of the decisions is to have a standard formal mark sheet to be used for every module and another is to have a checklist for academics and administrative staff to ensure that all the correct submissions and checks have been made.

Your report also noted that the FOOD3130 module could be enhanced by incorporating more searching questions rather than questions asking only for a description of theoretical principles. Your comments will be passed on to the module leader and the module team with a clear brief to revisit the style of some examination questions to ensure that they require more thought and application of the theoretical principles in answers.

Once again thank you for the hard work with the checking of examination papers, meeting with students, checking coursework, examination scripts and the mark sheets. Additionally the School is grateful for the insight that you have shown and for the suggestions made to improve procedures.

Yours sincerely,

Head of the School of Food Science & Nutrition