

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):	
Programme(s) / Module(s):	FOOD5016M, 5405M, 5055M, 5071M, 5115M, 5125M, 5206M, 5235M, 5241M, 5270M, 5405M, 5445M, 5472M, 5481M.
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MSc Food Science, MSc Food Science (Biotechnology) and MSc Food Quality and Innovation

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

There are no matters for urgent attention identified

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?

While I haven't received directly these reports, the School has arranged for the visit to happen at the same time another external examiner. This has provided me with a relevant feedback from previous years.

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.*

The programme learning outcomes are appropriate for the award intended and the content of the programme and structure provides the students with an excellent learning opportunity, both in diversity (with the different options) and in depth (reflected in the application of research expertise in the advanced training of students). The standards and student achievement is of high level and demonstrates the work of a group with a high commitment towards the student achievement.

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 programme aims and ILOs are of equivalent if not superior level than equivalent programmes I have experience of internationally.

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.*

I've revised the exam scripts and solutions prior to the exam season 14/15 and reviewed the marking of students during my visit.

The programme has a very rigorous methods of assessment, which in my view are complete and address the ILOs. There are innovative elements of assessment as well, particularly in the integrated (or "capstone") modules which are very welcomed.

The marking and classification of awards was reviewed and discussed with the head of studies and to the best of my knowledge has been done carefully and with attention to the individual student.

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 academic standards achieved are higher than equivalent programmes that I know internationally and nationally. The students receive a very strong training in general food science with a particular strength on the areas of expertise of the departments. The integrated product development and the research project showcase a high level of integration of the training and the ability of the students to use the skills.

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.

This is my first year as external examiner and the principal elements that I've found in the programme that are worth wider dissemination are:

- 1) the high quality of the final year project work and the support offered. I found excellent projects in many different areas of research, from colloidal science (which was to be expected) to optical systems and nutrition.
- 2) the ability given to the student to choose different profiles that will yield specialisations. The student's choice allow to accommodate different professional profiles in one MSc programme.
- 3) the integration of the product development project and the multidisciplinary approach taken provides students with an excellent opportunity to develop the NPD skills.

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 influence of research in the Curriculum is clear:

- 1) it is reflected in the different specialisations that the MSc has (Nutrition, biotechnology, new product development...)
- 2) it complements the training of the students in the capstone modules
- 3) it is clear by the addition of new topics and exam questions in the modules taught

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.

I was given access to

- 1) exam scripts and solutions prior to evaluation for comment
- 2) students answer books, elements of assessment and final year projects
- 3) met extensively during my visit with the lecturing staff
- 4) Met with the DSE from the School, who provided detailed information on the programme and duties
- 5) The School facilitated that my visit would be together with the second external examiner, who provided information as well on the previous years

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?

This year I was provided with the semester 2 drafts as the semester 1 were reviewed by my predecessor.

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, I was provided with extensive assessed and examined work and I have confidence on the assessment that I've made. Probably more time will be needed to be able to cover all the material more extensively.

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

The choice of subjects for dissertation mirrored the research expertise of the School, which I find well and appropriate as it is one of the most successful schools in the UK in terms of research
The methods of assessment for the dissertation were rigorous and opportunities were given for all students. Extensive discussion followed to provide appropriate assessment to any student in difficulty in the dissertation in a fair way

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 very impressed by the standard of care and detail showed at the board of examiners that I attended. I was satisfied with the recommendations and care of the board to each individual student and the procedures taken.
As this is my first year I don't think I am in a position to make a recommendation, but I will explore with the head of education that attendance to the board includes a complete set of all the examiners following regulations. This has not affected the results of the board but I am sure it will increase the quality of an already very good process.

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

Yes. Students with personal circumstances were given due consideration in a fair way.

Other comments

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



25th January 2016

Dear

Thank you for your valuable input into the whole examination process over the past year. The School has now received your report and it has been considered by the School Taught Student Education Committee and teaching staff.

It was pleasing to note that you considered the MSc programmes at Leeds to provide an excellent learning opportunity, and that the ILOs are at least equivalent to other programmes. The School welcomed your positive comments on the assessments and range of assessments, and your recognition of the academic standards and the integration of research in the curriculum.

The School takes great pride in the provision of both individual research projects and in the product development projects, and so it was particularly pleasing that you have noted this provision as good practice.

It has been noted, as you mentioned in your report, that the complete set of examiners should attend the Examiner's Board, and new instructions will be given to all staff. Although it is inevitable that not all examiners will always be able to attend the Boards, it will be made clear that an appropriate deputy must be present with a complete report on the examination performance and marks.

Thank you once again for your hard work during your visit and the suggestions that you have made about our examinations, assessed work and examination processes. I look forward to meeting you again during your visits in the present academic session.

Yours sincerely,

Head of the School of Food Science & Nutrition