

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 Health Care, Faculty of Medicine and Health
Subject(s):	Nursing
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Mental Health Programme
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	BSc (Hons) Nursing, Mental Health

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

Not applicable

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?

I have been provided with copies of the programme review and module assessment reports

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

Not applicable

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.*

Aims and learning outcomes appear commensurate with the level of award. Evidence of incremental progression in learning outcomes is demonstrated between Year 1, 2 and 3 to develop a cohesive and comprehensive programme.

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.*

Yes. Learning Outcomes are mapped onto the NMC pre-registration standards to demonstrate on a modular level where the required knowledge and skills for the profession are developed. The programme is comparable with similar institutions and appears to provide a high quality learning experience for those who study it.

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 examine across a range of compulsory and optional modules for undergraduate nursing students at the School of Health Care. The assessment methods adopted are varied, stimulating and require students to develop a range of transferrable skills relevant for contemporary mental health nursing practice. The assessment for HECS 2193 is particularly innovative in the scope and focus of the assignment and would be worthy of further dissemination in the field.

The team have succeeded in streamlining students' assessment workload, including through the incorporation of Nursing and Midwifery Council compulsory requirements into the assessment and credit weighting for the module. This reflects a positive response to national trends in feedback from undergraduate students regarding assessment workload and a thoughtful balance between stakeholder requirements.

Submissions that I have viewed, even at the lower end of the grade bracket have consistently shown a high standard of referencing accuracy and incorporation of credible literature sources to support their discussion. This suggests good quality of support for the students in the development of their core academic skills. On the whole the pass rate, and range of grades achieved would suggest an excellent quality of teaching. Assessment strategy is appropriate for the intended learning outcomes

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 achievements of the cohort are of a good standard and compare favourably with other institutions. All modules viewed demonstrated a fair range of marks awarded with a student average grade similar to my own organisation. Overall there have been a low number of fail grades which reflects clear assignment guidelines, good student support and quality teaching. However, there may be a difference between organisations due to the 20-90 scale translation rather than the use of the full complement of marks.

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 don't feel able to comment on this fully at this point as I haven't viewed practice assessment documents (though I anticipate that I will be able to see these at the forthcoming exam board)

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 am not able to comment on this fully as this is my first year of appointment. However, I note that the module report for HECS 3254 (research module) refers to a significant improvement in the overall achievement of students this year following changes to the Level 2 research module. This suggested improvement is clearly reflected in a good average grade and a low percentage of fails.

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.

For this course, students are required to complete a 10,000 literature review based dissertation, this requires engagement with contemporary healthcare research and students to be able to demonstrate knowledge of different research techniques and approaches. All assessments encourage students to make links between the evidence base for mental health and nursing practice, as students' progress through the course facilitating a more analytical approach to this research. The impact of this may also be viewed in the student cohorts' ability to draw on a range of academic sources and support their arguments with contemporary evidence.

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

Not applicable

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

I was offered a mentor who made contact with me. However, I found the external examiner induction day comprehensive and all staff at the School have responded helpfully to any queries I have had, therefore I have not felt that I needed to make full use of the mentor support.

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.

University and School guidelines for external examiners have been made available in written form and sent in an electronic format. These have provided an important reference point when needed to clarify University guidelines. The induction day to the role provided by the school was excellent and assisted in developing insight into the roles, responsibilities and powers of the External examiner.

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.

The VLE has made these documents very accessible. Occasionally, I have discovered some modules that I have been asked to review have been missing from my access but when this has occurred and I have raised a query this has been dealt with promptly and efficiently.

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?

No but as far as I am aware the assignments have already been verified and there were no draft assessments or exams during the period that I have been examining.

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 sufficient number was identified. I also had all the results available so could choose to view more work via Turnitin should I have any issues or concerns

Detailed, specific and individualised comments were provided by all markers. I have been impressed by the consistent standard of this demonstrated across different markers. Occasionally I have identified that more "feedforward" could be given to students achieving 65 and above and I believe this has been addressed.

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

The choice of topics was appropriate, mental health students identified some interesting and fairly unique questions. There can be a tendency for dissertation students to pick popular topics and follow trends, therefore it was commendable to see less common and in some cases under researched areas were identified. The approach adopted to presenting the literature review, structured in accordance with an appraisal tool was more

unusual. However, this was managed very well and a good level of analysis and synthesis achieved overall, again suggesting clear guidance and good support.

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 process has been administered very well. Communication has been prompt and informative. I would prefer an email invitation alongside a written one to the board of examiners. I spend little time at my official work address/base and this would have enabled me to respond more promptly to the invitation. I am unable to comment on the recommendations of the Board of Examiners as I am due to attend this meeting next week.

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

I believe so

Other comments

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

School of Healthcare

Baines Wing
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Leeds LS2 9JT



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Direct line: 0113

E-mail:

22 February 2016

Dear

Re: External Examiner's Report – 2014/2015 – BSc (Hons) Nursing (Mental Health)

I should like, on behalf of the subject team, to thank you for your annual report for the 2014/2015 session.

The team is very grateful for your involvement with the programme over the past academic year and very much appreciates the support you have given and the constructive and timely feedback concerning our assessment processes. Your prompt response to correspondence and swift return of student work has greatly assisted with the smooth running of our examination boards.

Your comments are fair, helpful and have been welcomed by the module leaders. It is gratifying that you comment on the emphasis the team places on students' continued academic development and on the team's innovative approaches.

I note that you refer to the 20:90 marking scale and possible differences in performance between HEIs as a result of this. The 20-90 marking scale is a translation of the full marking scale not a restricted use of it. The scale was adopted several years ago after research at the University found that markers (particularly when marking non-examination style assessments) tended not to use the full range of marks. The scale is an attempt to address this issue. At the end of their course students are provided with a transcript of their results which are translated to the 0-100 scale thus allowing comparability of performance with students from other institutions. Should you wish to explore this further, please do not hesitate to raise this with the programme team.

The team looks forward to extending the collaborative working partnership with you over the coming academic year.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely,

Head of School of Healthcare

