

**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 Healthcare
Subject(s):	Midwifery
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Midwifery
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	BSc(Hons)

**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*

No major concerns

**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*

## 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.*

All learning outcomes are appropriate for the level of the programme and the professional requirements of the course

**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 LOs meet the requirements for the professional award and are commensurate with national benchmark statements. They are similar to other professional programmes with which I am familiar.

**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 assessments which I have moderated this year are well designed. They are suitably challenging and test the students achievement of the learning outcomes. Assignments are set at an appropriate level and test a range of both academic and clinical skills.

**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.*

On the whole students whose work I reviewed have achieved good standards in their assessed work with a good distribution of grades across the full available range. Weaker students struggled to meet the assessment task or to provide sufficient analysis of the topic area. Students are given fair opportunities to repeat assessments if a fail grade is recorded and receive good support to do so. They mainly achieve better results on the resubmission and are able to progress. Student performance equates with that seen in my own institution and elsewhere

**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 have had some opportunity to review the clinical portfolios completed by sign off mentor midwives and they appear to provide mentors with the appropriate guidance to formulate judgements of student performance against the assessment criteria. Mentors comments mostly reflect the grade awarded though this is an area that requires continual monitoring to ensure that there is clear justification for grades.

It will be important that I have an opportunity this academic year to visit clinical placements.

**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.*

The oral examination for the module HECS 3259 has worked very well. I received good communication from the module leader and had an opportunity to review the questions and scenarios prior to the examination. The standard of work from the students was of a high standard and the module leader provided a fair evaluation of the process of the examination which will allow for some minor adjustments for next year.

**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 develop a clear understanding of the research process and the impact of research on midwifery practice. This is evidenced by the pleasing results on the module HECS 2191. Students academic essays also clearly demonstrate a clear ability to access appropriate research literature and use this appropriately in their work.

**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

I was asked to provide mentorship to a new external examiner during this academic year and made contact with them at the beginning of the academic year. However they did not contact me for any advice or support. However I do believe that the provision of a mentorship facility is good practice.

## 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.*

A good range of guidance is made available to the external examiner via the website should I require further information.

### 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, all programme documentation has been provided and access to the VLE ensures that I have access to specific module information.

### 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?

The programme team have been proactive in providing assessment guidelines and examination papers/schedules and have been responsive to any comments I have made.

### 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?

Sufficient exam scripts, across the range of marks, are sent which enables a judgement to be made about the standard of student work. Written assignments are made available via the VLE and enables freedom to review a wide range of scripts. Administrative processes are excellent, I get advanced notice of work being sent and any issues are addressed in a timely manner.

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

This is an excellent assessment for the end of programme allowing students to study a topic of interest from their professional practice. Students choose a wide range of topics for dissertation and they are a pleasure to read. The marking process is very clear and the internal moderation process is robust.

### 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 organised and thorough in its decision making with a clear transparent approach to progress issues. All arrangements were satisfactory.

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

I had no direct input into these processes but am aware of a number of students who had mitigation considered.

## Other comments

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

School of Healthcare

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UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Direct line: 0113

E-mail:

8 February 2016

Dear

**Re: External Examiner's Report –2014/2015 – BSc (Hons) Midwifery**

I should like, on behalf of the team, to thank you for your very positive annual report for the above programme. The team is pleased you judge the programme to be appropriate for purpose and commensurate to other programmes you are familiar with.

The team has strived to ensure the assessments in the programme are well designed and, as you state, suitably challenging and meeting the learning outcomes. When devising the current curriculum the team streamlined the assessments and introduced new formats such as the oral exam for HECS 3259. It is pleasing to note that your prior involvement with and the recording of the orals so you could hear how students performed worked well. You are always welcome to attend the oral assessments should you wish. The team will make the minor adjustments to the process and guidance for examiners for next year. The research critique examination at the end of year 2 worked well and provided valuable feedback to students on their assimilation of research skills in our integrated curriculum. Your report predates the final classifications and I am pleased to report that the results were excellent with fourteen 1sts, twenty five 2.1 and two 2.2. The two students who completed in November both gained a 2.1. This is reassuring as there was some concern at the curriculum was developed about the potential impact of introducing large credit modules should a student fail as their resit mark would be capped at 40. The team will continue to monitor this.

It is pleasing to note that, while some students have produced good work at all levels, those that have failed have been able to improve their performance and succeed through their efforts and support and guidance from module teams.

The grading of clinical practice is a challenge at times. In our preparation of mentors and the updates the team emphasises how important it is that comments reflect the mark awarded. The team would be happy to facilitate your visit to clinical placements. Please contact the Programme Leader to arrange a mutually convenient time, the team advises that it would be best not to arrange this around the September SPAB as most students will be on leave at that time.

Thank you for your positive comments on the administrative processes.

The team has enjoyed working with you in the last year and looks forward to continuing to do so in the current session.

Yours sincerely

Head of School of Healthcare



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