

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:	Faculty of Medicine and Health
Subject(s):	<i>International Health and Development (Nuffield Centre, Institute of Health Sciences)</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Hospital Management
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	Postgraduate Certificate/Postgraduate Diploma/MA in Hospital Management

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

As the programme is being replaced in the current academic year with a new M Sc programme, this is not relevant.

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 did not see actual copies of reports, but the substance of previous reports was described to me.

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 aims and intended learning outcomes were clearly described and appropriate for the programme, and indeed accommodate students from a wide range of backgrounds and countries and with variable academic levels of achievement. The structure and content of the programme covered the ground required for competence in this subject.

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.*

I am not aware of any other Hospital Management programmes for developing countries in UK. There are several programmes for Health Services Management, and this Nuffield programme is comparable in level and in some respects more demanding.

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 modules in the programme have a variety of assessment methods, including traditional essays, reports, planning proposal, group and individual presentations, literature review, which together provide comprehensive assessment of the required knowledge and skills required for hospital management. Although I did not observe teaching, the quality of assignments indicated to me that the students had benefited from a rich and effective learning environment

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 range of assignments, as indicated above, provided ample opportunity for students to demonstrate their achievement of the Aims and intended learning objectives. As was to be expected, the academic standards varied. Of the seven students, one student was clearly Distinction material from the beginning, and achieved a Distinction overall. One student's marks improved noticeably as the course progressed, finishing with a Distinction level Dissertation (and an MA with Merit). Four others performed consistently at Merit level, with an occasional "wobble" and also finished with an MA with Merit. Only one student had substantial difficulties in meeting the academic standard: there were issues of potential plagiarism, which were effectively and appropriately dealt with by the Department, but meant that because of resits he scored only 50% in three modules, and his Dissertation was a bare pass. It succeeded because it kept to a strict framework, clearly the result of clear teaching, and the student himself commented "I received a lot of good advice and feedback from my dissertation guide".

I have no information about comparable courses.

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.

As this is my first year as External Examiner, I am not aware of enhancements which are new in this year.

Areas of good practice include a very detailed marking schedule showing clearly the objectives of each assignment and where marks are allocated to each section of the assignment. In addition to grade-related comments (good, very good, excellent etc) students are given very detailed feedback, both praising and pointing out omission or errors. I particularly liked the practice of saying "Other students also....." and "main areas for improvement were..."

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.

Because the Nuffield Centre is heavily involved in research, in both public health and health systems, staff are able to include current research findings in their teaching. The module in which students travel to World Health Organisation in Geneva ensures their exposure to health research at a global level; and the emphasis on literature review in that specific module and again in the dissertation ensures that they develop and practise research skills and understanding for themselves.

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

I have been mentored in this, my first year, by <>, External Examiner for the International MA programme in Health Management, Policy and Planning. This has been very helpful; we have had separate discussions to review my draft report to the Examiners Meeting, compared notes on some issues we both wished to comment on, and generally worked together

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.

The guidance was useful and sufficient. I did not feel the need to request additional 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.

I received all the appropriate documentation – course handbook, module descriptions, marking criteria and feedback formats .

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 was provided with all the assignments set, and considered that the level of the task set was appropriate. In the case of one module, where the assignments included a verbal presentation followed by a written report, I queried whether the tasks were sufficiently differentiated to avoid the possibility of students effectively submitting the same work on two occasions and gaining marks twice. This was discussed in the Examiners meeting and I am satisfied with the response.

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 was supplied with all the students' work, and as this was my first year and the number of students was small, I read them all. I asked for some means of viewing the assessed presentations, and later in the year arrangements were made for me to access the VLE – but through lack of time I did not, in the end, view the presentations.

I was not provided with copies of student work on which annotations had been made; all the markers' comments were on separate feedback sheets, but this was quite satisfactory.

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

The choice of subjects for the dissertations was not as wide as it could have been; five out of seven chose topics in the field of human resources, three of them on workforce management, and two on training issues. The weakest ones were the other two, one on hospital accreditation and one on implementation of strategic plans. But all were appropriate to a hospital management programme, and all were appropriately assessed, using a structured assessment and feedback sheet.

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 good, including the two Examiners Meetings held during the year, both which I attended. I have been sent the minutes and I am quite satisfied with the recommendations of the meetings.

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

No circumstances arose to require us to consider these issues.

Other comments

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

I have found the process straightforward and easy to follow – it has been an interesting year. I would especially commend the administrative staff in the Nuffield Centre, in particular <>, who has kept me fully informed and made whatever arrangements I requested.

I made some more detailed comments and suggestions at the final Examiners meeting, relating to some of the modules, which were discussed there. The only comment I would repeat here is that a dissertation of 10,000 words seems to me very short for a piece of research work at Masters level. I have recently completed an MA myself in another University, and the MA dissertation there had a limit of 20,000 words.

Since this programme is being replaced in the next academic year by an MSc programme in International Hospital Management, any more detailed comments would be unnecessary.

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UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

14 December 2015

Dear

External Examiner's report for Hospital Management 2014-15

As the School of Medicine's Director of Postgraduate Studies, I receive all the External Examiners' reports for the twenty five subjects offered at Master's level in 2014-15. Thank you for assembling your report for the programmes in Hospital Management.

I note that there were no urgent matters for attention. You comment that the academic standards and content of student work are appropriate for the level of award.

Good practice

You report that you were impressed by the range of assessment methods employed. You comment on the detailed marking schedule provided to students. This shows clearly the objectives of each assignment and where marks are allocated to each section of the assignment. In addition to grade-related comments students are given very detailed feedback.

I am glad to note that you were mentored by _____, the External Examiner for Health Management Planning and Policy.

Research-based curriculum

You note that some students travel to World Health Organisation in Geneva. This ensures their exposure to health research at a global level.

continues



Concern

I was glad to learn that you received copies of the previous External Examiner's reports. The Nuffield team is considering a reconfiguration of the programmes offered to international students. I am meeting the Nuffield team in January to discuss the outlines of their proposals.

Programme Leader's response

I have enclosed with this letter a response assembled by _____ Programme Leader. comments on the need for students to receive early feedback on written work.

Thank you so much for your first report as External Examiner. Your contributions to the programmes in Hospital Management are much valued.

Yours sincerely

Enc: _____ 10 December 2015

**Nuffield Centre for International
Health and Development**
Leeds Institute of Health Sciences



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Director Postgraduate Studies
School of Medicine
University of Leeds

10 December 2015

Dear

Re: Response to External Examiner's report (2014-15) – Hospital Management

I am pleased to provide the following response to the external examiners report 2014/15 for the Programme – Hospital Management.

This was [redacted] first year as external examiner for the programme and [redacted] report provides positive feedback that the intended learning objectives of the programme were met. While it is evident that there are no national benchmarks for this field the external examiner, from [redacted] extensive experience in hospital management both as academic and practitioner, indicated that the programme is comparable in level with several programmes for health service management.

[redacted] also commented positively on the assessment methods used in the programme, specifically on the use of combined assessments methods, i.e. traditional essays, reports, planning proposals, group and individual presentations, which [redacted] agrees, provide comprehensive assessment of the required knowledge and skills required for hospital management.

The external examiner commented that the cohort demonstrated, through their academic achievement, an acceptable range of academic ability. [redacted] suggested that discussions should be held with individual students, particularly weak students, to support them in improving their potential. This is already conducted through the process of personal tutoring where all students are provided with progress letters during the academic year and have the opportunity to discuss the progress with both personal tutors and the programme manager.

I wish to apologise for not providing [redacted] with the previous external examiners reports and responses as this was an oversight in the provision of documentation on the programme. Nevertheless, as mentioned in the report, the substance of previous external examiners' reports was briefed to [redacted] during the meeting with the programme leader.

Finally, I wish to thank [redacted] for [redacted] support during this first year as the external examiner for the Hospital Management. I also completed my third year as programme

leader at the end of the academic 2014/15 and the programme is now led by
. I continue as a deputy programme leader and to teach on the programme and
would be pleased to support both the external examiner and the programme leader if
necessary.

Best Regards,

Programme Leader, Health Management, Planning and Policy
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