

**The University of Leeds**  
**EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT**  
**ACADEMIC YEAR: 2015– 2016**

**Part A: General Information****Subject area and awards being examined**

Faculty / School of:	Leeds Institute of Health Sciences
Subject(s):	Health Informatics
Programme(s) / Module(s):	MSc programme in Health Informatics.
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MSc

**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*

The Institute needs to have a clear succession and sustainability plan for this important course. At a time when the need for well-educated health informatics professionals is higher than ever (see Wachter Review, 2016), the course is under pressure from regional funding cuts. Although NHS England strategy places health informatics workforce development as a key priority, there is widespread ignorance in national commissioning bodies about 'real' health informatics (the broad interdisciplinary field taught in this course) as distinct from biomedical data analytics.

I recommend that the Institute seeks to engage with regional and national bodies to raise the profile of this course and ensure that it has suitable growth capacity and continuity of leadership as the current director approaches retirement.

**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?*

Yes

**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.

**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 has an excellent structure, covering the broad field of health informatics, with balanced content at varying levels. I judge that it successfully delivers its intended learning outcomes. The standards are appropriate for the level of the awards.

**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 syllabus is broadly aligned with the core content defined by the International Medical Informatics Association (IMIA) and, where applicable, the requirements defined by the American Medical Informatics Association (AMIA) – albeit the latter is aimed at clinicians. The level of study is consistent with that of similar programmes at other UK institutions.

**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 assignments provide an effective method of assessment. Students received detailed and helpful feedback. The quality of the inspected student work and the range of outcomes demonstrates that the standards of teaching and assessment are appropriate.

**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.*

Yes. The assignments offer opportunity for outstanding students to excel, some producing work of suitable quality for publication. The student work is of comparable quality to that seen in similar UK 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**

Not applicable.

**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.*

Not applicable.

**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 are required to critically engage with published research in their learning and assessment activities. The taught syllabus includes critical appraisal skills. The dissertation project provides students an excellent opportunity to demonstrate their research skills.

**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**

Not applicable.

**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.*

Sufficient material was provided and clarification was given as necessary by the departmental course administrator.

**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, with the exception that the web address given for the latest report template was incorrect. An email sent to the generic external examiner mailbox asking for clarification went unanswered, so the departmental course administrator resolved the issue.

**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.

**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. The sample was adequate and the annotations were clear.

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

Yes. As noted earlier, some of the dissertation work was suitable for publication.

**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?**

Yes. I attended in person and was satisfied with the procedure and decisions made.

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

Yes.

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

At the Committee of Examiners, I noted that it was unclear how the mark bandings on the student feedback form related to the precise mark awarded for the assignment. It might be helpful to have an explanatory comment on the form.

All unit assessments have precise instructions and clear student feedback in a structured assessment table. Two units (YCHI5040M Health Informatics Strategy, YCHI5070M Mobile Health) had slightly vaguer assessment criteria, which may be worth reviewing.

For the dissertation module (YCHI5090M MSc Health Informatics Project), I suggested that the course team might wish to consider whether the 25% weighting given to the poster and presentation element of the assessment might be disproportionately high.

I recommended to the course team that they track developments with the AMIA Advanced Health Informatics Certification (<https://www.amia.org/advanced-health-informatics-certification>), as that may provide a pattern for future Chief Clinical Information Officer qualifications in the UK. See Gadd C S, et al. J Am Med Inform Assoc 2016;23:851–854.

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**UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS**

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28 October 2016

Dear <<>>

### **External Examiner's report for Health Informatics 2015-16**

First, let me thank you for assembling the 2015-16 report for the programmes in Health Informatics. This is the first report that you have submitted.

#### **Urgent item**

I note that you have indicated an item for urgent consideration. I can confirm that the team is developing new modules in applied health data analytics. I understand that the Institute of Health Sciences is seeking to appoint new staff in this field. I agree with you that the development of the workforce in Health Informatics is imperative and I was saddened to learn of the effect of the Regional Education Board cuts on student recruitment to Health Informatics in 2016-17.

#### **Good practice**

You comment that the curriculum is broadly aligned with the core content defined by the International Medical Informatics Association. You attended a meeting of the Examination Committee and you confirmed that the standards of teaching and assessment are appropriate.

You note that the content of the programme is linked to research. Skills in critical appraisal and evaluation are integrated into the curriculum.

#### **Marking bands**

I enclose the response of <<>>, Programme Leader. <<>> notes the comments you make about the marking criteria, marking bands and assessment forms. I can confirm that the team has addressed these points and that this should ensure more consistency in marking in 2016-17.

Thank you so much for your report as External Examiner. .

Yours sincerely

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<<>>

Enc: <<>>, 25 October 2016

**Director of Postgraduate Studies**  
<<>>



25<sup>th</sup> October 2016

Dear

**RE: Masters Programme in Health informatics 2015/16  
Report of External Examiner,**

is the External Examiner for the taught postgraduate programme in Health Informatics. This is the first report he has prepared for this programme.

We are grateful to for agreeing to be our external examiner and for comments.

There are no urgent matters for attention in the process and standards of the programme however has stated concern about the succession and sustainability planning for the programme at a time when health informatics workforce development is a key priority in NHS strategy.

We are pleased that the programme is seen to be well structured, successfully delivering appropriate learning outcomes and meeting international standards. comments about the relevant and effective methods of assessment, and the detailed and helpful feedback to students are also very positive.

was very satisfied with the administration of the Examination Committee.

I have noted further comments which were discussed in the Examination Committee and these will be addressed. Clearer explanations for mark bandings will be included on the feedback forms, the assessment for YCHI5070, which will be a core module from 2016/7, will be reviewed and clarified. As will those for YCHI5040. Weighting for the poster and presentation in the Dissertation model will be discussed by the Programme Team and we will continue to align our programme with both national and international health informatics standards.

With best wishes

Programme Lead  
Masters in Health Informatics  
Yorkshire Centre for Health Informatics