

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:	School of Healthcare
Subject(s):	Psychotherapy and Counselling
Programme(s) / Module(s):	MA Psychotherapy and Counselling
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	Masters of Arts

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

No areas require urgent attention

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?

Not applicable

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 aims and learning outcomes are commensurate with similar Masters level programmes in other institutions.
The standards and competencies embedded in the MA represent rigorous practitioner training.
Additionally, the standards are appropriate for the award.

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 learning outcomes correlate with the QAA benchmarks for counselling and psychotherapy.

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.*

It is evident from student grades that the assessment methods appropriately test student performance against 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*

Student performance is comparable with cohorts in other HEIs providing similar M-level counselling training. Student achievement across the modules indicates a good level of competence and indicates a high degree of student engagement with tutors and their learning and teaching.

5. **For Examiners responsible for programmes that include clinical practice components, please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum**

Practice placements provide a central theme for trainee counsellors. The experience of applying theory into practice within a placement setting enables the student to develop their confidence and competence as a practitioner. Their learning is assessed through practice portfolios which appropriately assess different components of the placement experience (including the supervisory process and content, with comment from the student's supervisor; critical reflection upon practice; recording of sessional work). Tutor feedback on practice components provides valuable 'feed forward' comments as appropriate, links to the module learning outcomes, and supports students with ongoing practice development.

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.

Following subject review and module changes last year, none have been notified this year.
The MA continues to provide an excellent quality practitioner training and is a well-respected programme.

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 tutor team continue to contribute to the knowledge base in the counselling and psychotherapy field. There are opportunities for staff-student collaboration to translate dissertations into publishable papers in peer reviewed journals.

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

n/a

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 material was sufficient

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 tutor and admin team are excellent at providing relevant materials, including handbooks.

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?

Yes

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

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

Yes

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

Attending Board of Examiners meeting on 7th November 2016

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

Yes

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
University of Leeds
Leeds LS2 9JT



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Direct line: 0113

E-mail:
headofschool@healthcare.leeds.ac.uk

13 February 2017

Dear

Re External Examiner's Report 2015-2016 – MA in Psychotherapy and Counselling

I should like, on behalf of the team, to thank you for your supportive external examiner's report. As you know the programme team has changed substantially in this last year and the new team is determined to continue to deserve your commendation that we "provide an excellent quality practitioner training and is a well-respected programme". The team is particularly concerned to continue the "high degree of student engagement with tutors and their learning and teaching". The team is encouraged by your comment that "there are opportunities for staff-student collaboration to translate dissertations into publishable papers in peer reviewed journals," and is keen to translate these opportunities into published work with students wherever possible. I will pass on your positive comments to our administrative team.

Thank you for your attendance at the SPAB on 8th November 2016. The team plans to invite you to meet all the new staff team and hopefully talk to some students in the near future.

The team would like to thank you again for your active support and engagement with the development of the MA Psychotherapy and Counselling programme, and looks forward to continuing to work with you over the next year.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely