

**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:	Faculty of Medicine & health
Subject(s):	<i>Psychology</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	MSc/PGDip Psychological Approaches to Health Modules: PSYC5310M; PSYC5320M; PSYCH5600M; PSYC5611M; PSYC5620M; PSYC5623M; PSYC5642M; PSYCH5651M; PSYC5670M
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MSc/PGDip Psychological Approaches to 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](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*

None

**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*

## 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 ILOs are appropriate and reflect the broad range of content and skills covered in the programme.

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 programme is unlike other health psychology based programmes nationally because this programme is not restricted by the British Psychological Society requirements for the accreditation of MSc in Health Psychology. However the level of work is comparable and appropriate.

### 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 assessment methods employed and very wide ranging which allows students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in a range of different ways.

There is quite large variability in the amount of assessment for different modules of the same credit weighting, and for some modules the number of assessment tasks might be able to be reduced while still assessing all of the ILOs.

The methods of marking and moderation were clear and the feedback provided to students was helpful.

Students were able to produce some excellent work indicating high quality teaching and learning.

### 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.*

Students demonstrated a range of academic standard which is comparable to other similar courses. Students achieving distinctions produced excellent work. Weaker students struggled a little particularly in demonstrating the breadth of knowledge required to gain good marks in the MCQ assessment tasks.

### 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.*

This is my first year as external examiner but I can comment on areas of good practice:

1. An excellent systematic review module PSYC 5320 M in which students have produced excellent and useful pieces of work and gained a really useful skill.
2. The identification of areas to improve in feedback given to the students, even where they have gained very high marks.
3. Assessment methods that really require students to apply their knowledge and skills e.g. Problem-based learning.
4. The course content is driven by the expertise and skills of the teaching team and this enables the students to receive teaching from true experts in the field. It also means that the content of the course at Leeds is unique.

### 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.*

It is clear through all of the modules that research is central to the curriculum. Students are taught advanced research methods including how to conduct a systematic review, and they use their knowledge and skills to undertake a research dissertation. The dissertation topics are broad and these reflect the research interests and expertise of the teaching team. It is also clear that critical evaluation of research is central to teaching and assessment of the course.

**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**

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.*

I received detailed information and was made aware of how to ask for additional information if it was required. I would like to thank the course administrator <<>> for <<>> work to ensure that I was provided with everything I needed.

**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

**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 and I sent comments which were considered by the relevant module teams

**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 - I received an appropriately sized sample for all modules. The scripts were clearly marked and annotated.

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

The choice of subjects appeared appropriate and the standard was good, particularly those that achieved the higher marks.

**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?**

I was able to attend and was satisfied with the recommendations. My comments were considered when deciding whether to raise the mark of a student with a borderline mark and additional circumstances.

**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**

This is an excellent Masters programme which makes the most of the skills and expertise of the teaching team.

07 February 2017

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Dear <<>>

**MSc Psychological Approaches to Health – External Examiner’s Report – 2015/2016**

I would like to apologise for the rather delayed response to your report but many thanks for taking the time to come to Leeds on 3rd November 2016 and for acting as our external examiner for MSc PATH for the first time. Thank you also for the constructive feedback you have given us on the course, assessments and procedures. We will take this on board and ensure we implement any improvements as we move forward. In particular, the more focussed feedback reports that you provided for each module have been passed on to the relevant module leaders who have found these extremely useful in terms of informing module developments for 2017/18 (when the first cohort of students on our new MPsync programmes enter their Masters year).

We note that you are happy with the organisation/administration, standards of teaching and the wide range of assessment on this Masters course. We have also noted your comments in relation to the possibility of reducing the number of assessment tasks for some modules while still assessing all of the intended learning outcomes (ILOs).

We are pleased that you found the performance of our Masters students to be equivalent to that of students on similar courses and that the students achieving distinctions produced excellent quality work that is worthy of this grade.

Thank you once again for your time and very helpful feedback. It was a pleasure to host you in your role as our external examiner for PATH. You are a great asset to our Exam Board, and your input is invaluable in maintaining our standards with Masters teaching.

Best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

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Head of School