

# 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 Food Science and Nutrition
Subject(s):	<i>Food Science</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	BSc Food Science and BSc Food Studies and Nutrition FFOD 2030; FOOD2031; FOOD 2045; FOOD2100 ; FOOD 2175; FOOD2192; FOOD 2196; FOOD2045; FOOD 3010; FOOD3041, FOOD3100 FOOD3130;; FOOD3330; 3340; FOOD 3050
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	BSc

#### 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?*

N/A

#### 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 Food Science Programmes are very well structured with appropriate Aims, content and Learning Outcomes at all levels. As in previous years, the students achieved a high standard, particularly in the final year with a high number of First and Upper Second class degree awards; this was noted particularly for students who undertook the Professional Training Year. Students were tested in terms of theoretical knowledge and for showing initiative and creativity in practical projects. There was good opportunity to work in small teams; however, most assessments were based on individual performance which is appropriate. The training, knowledge and skills obtained from the Food Science courses are highly relevant for graduate employment.

On 9<sup>th</sup> February 2016, the External Examiners met with a selection of Final Year students who were very enthusiastic about the course. They particularly like the in-depth studies in the final year; this was in contrast to the Second Year which has a large number of modules which the students found a little overwhelming. This situation, similar to other University second

year courses, could perhaps be looked at to address the concerns of students, without compromising the Aims and the Learning Outcomes of the Degree courses. However, most of the students who undertook the Industrial Year in the third year, commented on the usefulness of the course in their year out.

**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 Intended Learning Outcomes of the Programme are well aligned with similar courses in the UK including those at the University of <<>> and the University of <<>>. The degrees provide a range of appropriate topics and relevant Food Science and Nutrition modules with a strong component of basic chemistry and biology.

Modules at each level build on the work covered in the previous years, resulting in students with a rounded and sound knowledge, and achievement of good degree results. Students who undertook the Industrial Year Placements did particularly well due to further enhancement of knowledge and skills. The content of the degree meets the Food Science QAA benchmarks.

**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 design and structure of the assessments that include exams, coursework essays and projects is carefully considered by the academic team and appropriate, allowing students to achieve learning outcomes and be tested at the right level. Marking criteria were appropriate and were consistent across modules and the marking was fair. For one new module, 3041 (high mean mark) it was suggested that the questions be more focused to allow discussion in more depth, appropriate for the final year level. The degree classification system is fair and impressive, allowing each student to be considered fully before making the awards, prior to ratification. Student projects presented in the form of papers were impressive as before and were marked consistently, using the whole range of marks.

**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 students performed very well at all levels and particularly well in the final year where they are given good opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the Aims and ILOs.

Final year students achieved a high number of Firsts and Upper Second classifications. I was given all of the examination scripts, essays, projects and mark-sheets, and ample time to sample and check fairly across all the Food Science modules and degree classifications. The administration and organisation of the papers was very well done and helpful for the external examiners.

**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.*

I looked at a very wide range of scripts and coursework for Level 2 and 3 this year which provided a full picture of the Food Science and Nutrition degree courses. Comments made last year were taken on board and the wider marking range was used this year. The marks were also more consistent across modules and there was evidence of double marking and appropriate comments in the margins to justify marks.

**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.*

Many of the module topics are taught by appropriate academics who undertake research in these areas. In particular the projects reflected the research area of the supervisor. A wide range of topics covering Food Science and Nutrition were selected by the students, who approached them enthusiastically. Most of the projects and assignments were very good, interesting and well written. The replacement of the traditional dissertation with the project written up as a scientific paper has continued to work well, providing a very useful and appropriate way of communicating project findings. The results this year were also impressive and showed a high standard of work. FDP Projects reflected a clear interest and team effort by students who came up with innovative products/processes resulting in very good projects.

**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 was able to make a few suggestions to the new External Examiner when we were assessing the scripts and projects prior to the Board of Examiners meeting. However, the Administrative and Academic staff were at hand to answer most of the queries really efficiently.

## 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 sufficient information throughout the year. The Administrative and Academic staff were very helpful at all stages.

### 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 the Programme handbook, marking criteria and information for external examiners which were appropriate.

### 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 received all the draft examinations papers in good time. The nature and level of questions were appropriate except for one new module FOOD 3041 where questions could be more focused to allow the students to answer questions in depth; this would be more challenging and appropriate for the final year. The minor changes I suggested were addressed.

### 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 had the opportunity to go through the scripts, projects, and coursework which all were laid out efficiently for the External Examiners, the day before the Exam Board. The scripts were double marked and clearly marked with helpful comments by staff to justify the marks. This year the individual marks for each question and the mean mark on the mark sheet for each module were provided as requested last year. It would be helpful if the names of the students are revealed on all of the scripts after marking, as numbers are harder to read than names, when checking against the marksheet. It would be helpful to attach both mark-sheets for each project to the project. There were also some very useful module coordinator comments.

The checking of papers and the Exam Board was very smooth and fair, with total involvement and commitment of staff to their students.

Staff were very helpful and efficient and available to discuss any points that arose.

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

The choice of subjects was aligned with the research undertaken by the different academic staff. The topics were interesting and appropriate, and covered the breadth of Food Science and Nutrition, providing a good choice for students.

### 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 excellent and I commend the team for the efficient organisation for both the interim and final exam boards. The conduct of the Board of Examiners meeting was very fair. Each student was given careful consideration showing commitment and dedication of staff. I agreed entirely with the recommendations of the Board.

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

Mitigating circumstances and medical evidence were discussed and acted upon fairly.

## Other comments

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

I would like to commend a very dedicated Food Science and Nutrition academic team who have delivered excellent courses resulting in impressive degree results. I would like to thank the efficient and excellent administrative team for making the work of the external examiners smooth and pleasant.

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**UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS**

Dear

Thank you for your latest external examiner's report. Colleagues in the School have been encouraged by your very positive comments concerning teaching, curriculum, marking and administration.

You have raised an issue with the way in which the dissertations were presented during your visit which is valid. The research papers will be attached to the comments from each of the markers and the dissertations will be separated by programme to allow better access to selected student papers. You have further requested that all papers are de-anonymised to help find selected papers. This is not done in most cases as it is quicker for staff to enter marks via student number – however the papers can be identified by the seat numbers and so the seating plan will be provided to allow easier selection of particular candidate's scripts.

The module leader for FOOD3041, who was able to discuss the scripts with you in June, agrees that the questions on FOOD3041 allowed the students to give very broad answers rather than the focused answers that were expected. The module has been reviewed and a number of changes have been made to ensure that the examination will be more demanding and will require in-depth answers.

Thank you once again for your work and comments, and I look forward to meeting you again at the next assessment board.