

The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2016-17

QAT Received 12/02/2018

Part A: General Information

Subject area and awards being examined

Faculty / School of:	Healthcare
Subject(s):	<i>Independent and supplementary prescribing for nurses, midwives and pharmacists, postgraduate certificate in pharmacy practice.</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Independent and supplementary prescribing for pharmacists and diploma in pharmacy.
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	

Part B: Comments for the Institution on the Examination Process and Standards

Points of innovation and/or good practice

Please highlight areas of innovation or good practice within the programmes or processes you have been involved with in this box.
The magnitude of feedback provided to students is greater than other comparator institutions and therefore to be commended.

Enhancements made from the previous year

Please highlight any enhancements made to the programme(s) or processes over the past year in this box.
In response to my requests to rationalise the opportunities available to students to submit their work and have it reviewed at exam boards, the frequency has reduced. There was concern that this would generate problems for students who are mostly in full time work, to have sufficient flexibility to accommodate their learning and work through extensions. However, this has not been observed and I think that there has actually been a reduction in the number of students choosing to delay submission now that they have to wait longer for their next opportunity for their result to be ratified at an exam board.

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

For Examiners in the first year of appointment

1.	Were you provided with an External Examiners Handbook?	Y / N
2.	Were you provided with copies of previous relevant External Examiners' reports and the response of the School to these?	Y / N
3.	Were you provided with a External Examiner Mentor?	Y / N

For Examiners completing their term of appointment

4.	Have you observed improvements in the programme(s) over the period of your appointment?	Y / N
5.	Has the school responded to comments and recommendations you have made?	Y / N
6.	Where recommendations have not been implemented, did the school provide clear reasons for this?	Y / N
7.	Have you acted as a External Examiner Mentor?	Y/N

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

Whilst I have commented on the comprehensive feedback provided to students, an area for development was that this tended to be focussed at the end of the study period so I requested a greater focus on formative feedback with a view to raising quality and reducing the rates of re-assessment. The programme providers responded to this request and have introduced opportunities for formative feedback.

When I joined as external examiner, there was no recording of the OSCE stations and thus Quality Assurance (QA) of the marking process was challenging; at my request, the OSCEs are now audit recorded which enables, students to be marked by multiple assessors for QA and for me to better benchmark the programme.

Standards

8.	Is the overall programme structure coherent and appropriate for the level of study?	Y / N
9.	Does the programme structure allow the programme aims and intended learning outcomes to be met?	Y / N
10.	Are the programme aims and intended learning outcomes commensurate with the level of award?	Y / N
11.	Did the Aims and ILOs meet the expectations of the national subject benchmark (where relevant)?	Y / N
12.	Is the programme(s) comparable with similar programmes at other institutions?	Y / N
<p><i>Please use this box to explain your overall impression of the programme structure, design, aims and intended learning outcomes.</i></p> <p>The programme is similar in structure to its counterparts in other institutions; the ILOS are appropriate for the level of the award. The prescribing course does still perhaps offer more exit points than comparable courses at other HEIs.</p>		
13.	Is the influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching clear?	Y / N
<p><i>Please explain how this is/could be achieved (examples might include: curriculum design informed by current research in the subject; practice informed by research; students undertaking research)</i></p> <p>Whilst acknowledging the importance of research led teaching; I advise the programme team to be mindful of maintaining a curriculum that maximises relevance for the student in terms of best equipping them for practice as a pharmacist or independent prescriber rather than what happens to be the research interests of the programme team.</p>		
14.	Does the programme form part of an Integrated PhD?	Y / N
<p><i>Please comment on the appropriateness of the programme as training for a PhD:</i></p> <p>N/A</p>		
15.	Does the programme include clinical practice components?	Y / N
<p><i>Please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum here:</i></p> <p>This element of the curriculum adheres to national requirements in terms of work-based assessments and sign off by a designated medical practitioner.</p>		
16.	Is the programme accredited by a Professional or Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB)?	Y / N
<p><i>Please comment on the value of, and the programme's ability to meet, PSRB requirements here:</i></p> <p>The programme team for the IP course have been recently working with the GPhC in order to fulfil their requirements regarding quality assuring the OSCE assessments. The current programme does not use any formalised methods of standard setting for their OSCE such as Angoff or borderline regression and therefore may want to consider doing this in the future – given the small numbers of students Angoff is likely to be the only feasible approach.</p>		

Assessment and Feedback

17.	Does the programme design clearly align intended learning outcomes with assessment?	Y / N
<p><i>Please comment on the assessment methods and the appropriateness of these to the ILOs, in particular: 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.</i></p>		
18.	Is the design and structure of the assessment methods appropriate to the level of award?	Y / N
19.	Were students given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the programme aims and intended learning outcomes?	Y / N
<p><i>Please comment on 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:</i></p> <p>Student performance is comparable to some programmes and better than some programmes as the standards set are comparable/slightly higher than some programmes.</p>		
<p><i>Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make in relation to assessment and feedback:</i></p>		

The Progression and Awards Process

20.	Were you provided with guidance relating to the External Examiners role, powers and responsibilities in the examination process?	Y / N
21.	Was the progression and award guidance provided sufficient for you to act effectively as an External Examiner?	Y / N
22.	Did you receive appropriate programme documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	Y / N
23.	Did you receive appropriate module documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	Y / N
24.	Did you receive full details of marking criteria applicable to your area(s) of responsibility?	Y / N
25.	Were you provided with all draft examination papers/assessments?	Y / N
26.	Was the nature and level of the assessment questions appropriate?	Y / N
27.	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments on assessment questions?	Y / N
28.	Was sufficient assessed work made available to enable you to have confidence in your evaluation of the standard of student work?	Y / N
29.	Were the examination scripts clearly marked/annotated?	Y / N
30.	Was the choice of subjects for final year projects and/or dissertations appropriate?	Y / N
31.	Was the method and standard of assessment appropriate for the final year projects and/or dissertations?	Y / N
32.	Were the administrative arrangements satisfactory for the whole process, including the operation of the Progression and Awards Board?	Y / N
33.	Were you able to attend the Progression and Awards Board meeting?	Y / N
34.	Were you satisfied with the recommendations of the Progression and Awards Board?	Y / N
35.	Were you satisfied with the way decisions from the School Special Circumstances meeting were communicated to the Progression and Awards Board?	Y / N

Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make on the questions above:

As stated in my previous reports, the workload generated by these programmes is not commensurate (much higher) with that of other organisations, this was compounded by a change in administrative support for the programmes who is not as effective as the previous administrator. In terms of administration, e-mails with part papers would be frequently sent, example assessments may then arrive later (often needed to be explicitly requested) this compounded the high workload associated with supporting these programmes.

There are numerous progression boards in an academic year and thus often only very small numbers of students progressing – this makes it very difficult to benchmark as I cannot gain the full picture for the cohort in terms of mark distribution – there can at times be years between the first and last candidate progressing in a cohort with many progressing in dribs and drabs through this interval.

Progression boards were so frequent that it would not be feasible for me to attend.

Other comments

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

Overall I would like to commend the programme teaching teams for making every effort to support me in my activities as external examiner, and for designing and delivering challenging yet supportive teaching programmes. I wish you success with the future of the programmes.

Name of School and Head of School (or nominee)

Title and Name of Responder:	
Position*:	Director of Student Education
Faculty / School of:	School of Healthcare
Address for communication:	The University of Leeds LEEDS LS2 9JT
Email:	
Telephone:	

*If the individual responding to the report is not the Head of School please state their position within the School.

Completing the School response

The completed School response (including the full original report) should be attached to an e-mail and sent to the Pro-Dean for Student Education in the relevant Faculty. Following approval by the Pro-Dean for Student Education, the School must send the response (including the full original report) directly to the External Examiner. A copy must also be emailed to the Quality Assurance Team at qat@leeds.ac.uk. External Examiners should receive a formal response no later than six weeks after receipt of the original report.

Response to Points of innovation and/or good practice

Thank you for highlighting the amount of feedback provided to students. The team works hard to ensure that students receive feedback which is not only applicable to the work under consideration but provides them with guidance to help them develop and progress through future modules.

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

The team would like to thank you for your contribution to the on-going development of the programme and enhancement of processes.

Response to Matters for Urgent Attention

If any areas have been identified for urgent attention before the programme is offered again please provide a specific response to them here:

No issues requiring urgent attention were identified.

Response to questions 1-7 (and related comments)

Schools may provide a general response; however, where Examiners raise specific points these must be addressed individually:

The team is pleased to note that improvements to the management of the OSCE has enabled you to more accurately benchmark the programme.

Standards**Response to questions 8 to 16 (and related comments)**

Schools may provide a general response; however, where Examiners raise specific points these must be addressed individually:

With regards to research led teaching, the team believes its current research interests are relevant to practice and can be integrated into the curriculum, but will continue to ensure this relevance is maintained

With regards to OCSE setting, the team has received an educational innovation grant to enable it to implement standard setting using existing expertise from within the Faculty. This will initially be for the prescribing module but with a view to implementing for the Pharmacy Practice.

Assessment and Feedback

Response to questions 17 to 19 (and related comments)

Schools may provide a general response; however, where Examiners raise specific points these must be addressed individually:

It is reassuring to note that you are content with the standards of the programme and the performance of students.

The Progression and Awards Process

Response to questions 20-35 (and related comments)

Schools may provide a general response; however, where Examiners raise specific points these must be addressed individually:

Following feedback received the team has consolidated submission to exam boards to a maximum of 4 times a year, with the majority of Pharmacy Practice completions and half of Prescribing module results being presented at the June board, to which the new external examiner has been invited.

With regards to administration, the module leaders are now taking a more active role in signposting to the appropriate areas of the VLE to ensure relevant materials can be readily accessed

Other comments

Response to items included in the 'Other Comments' section of the report

The team wishes to acknowledge and thank you for your work and the on-going support you have provided to the prescribing module and the Pharmacy Practice programme during your tenure as external examiner.