

**The University of Leeds**  
**EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT**

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2016-17

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

Faculty / School of:	School of Medicine
Subject(s):	Human Disease
Programme(s) / Module(s):	MEDS1001; Understanding Human Disease
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	Discovery module offered as a component of different Bachelors awards

**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.*

Students were given opportunities for formative assessments in preparation for the final summative exam. The scanning and e-mailing of exam script, to me, facilitated my review of the scripts.

**Enhancements made from the previous year**

*Please highlight any enhancements made to the programme(s) or processes over the past year in this box.*

No specific enhancements identified during the past year.

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

**For Examiners completing their term of appointment**

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

Few students take this module so it would be inappropriate to place much emphasis on standards achieved during the past few years. However, throughout my time as External Examiner, including this cohort I have agreed with marks awarded and the module has effectively discriminated between students with clearly different levels of achievement. Each year I have been asked to comment on draft exam papers and my comments have been responded to. I have been provided (in a timely manner) with adequate assessment material to be confident that the assessment process has been fair and robust. I have seen ample evidence of second marking and the procedures of the Committee of Examiners have been in line with University regulations and procedures. The module team has shown good knowledge of the students on the module, and of their academic backgrounds, which I believe is important for a discovery module of this nature. The module team previously responded to my request to reduce the amount of summative assessment on the module.

## Standards

8.	Is the overall programme structure coherent and appropriate for the level of study?	Y
9.	Does the programme structure allow the programme aims and intended learning outcomes to be met?	Y
10.	Are the programme aims and intended learning outcomes commensurate with the level of award?	Y
11.	Did the Aims and ILOs meet the expectations of the national subject benchmark (where relevant)?	N/A
12.	Is the programme(s) comparable with similar programmes at other institutions?	Y
<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 Understanding Human Disease module is a well-designed module that covers a broad range of contemporary human diseases and is well-suited to the discovery module remit. The ILOs seem entirely appropriate for a discovery module designed to give students from non-science programmes the opportunity to learn about the causes of human disease. The ILOs are commensurate with FHEQ level 4 and are comparable to the FHEQ 4 learning outcomes in my own institution and other institutions of which I have knowledge or experience as an External Examiner. Since it is a single module there is no relevant benchmark statement.</p>		
13.	Is the influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching clear?	Y
<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>For a stage 1 (FHEQ level 4), discovery module of this nature I would not expect to see significant influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching but it is obvious that most of the subject areas are taught by academics with research expertise in those fields.</p>		
14.	Does the programme form part of an Integrated PhD?	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?	N
<p><i>Please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum here:</i></p> <p>N/A</p>		
16.	Is the programme accredited by a Professional or Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB)?	N
<p><i>Please comment on the value of, and the programme's ability to meet, PSRB requirements here:</i></p> <p>N/A</p>		

### Assessment and Feedback

17.	Does the programme design clearly align intended learning outcomes with assessment?	Y
<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> <p>The module assessment covered the breadth of the module and gave students the opportunity to meet the Aims of the module and to demonstrate achievement of its ILOs. The module assessment comprised short answer questions and the completion of two short essays from a choice of four. This format of assessment is appropriate for a FHEQ level 4 discovery module of this nature. Students were given opportunities for formative assessments in preparation for the final summative exam, which is good practice. However, the module leader reported low uptake of these formative assessment opportunities.</p>		
18.	Is the design and structure of the assessment methods appropriate to the level of award?	Y
19.	Were students given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the programme aims and intended learning outcomes?	Y
<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>A range of module marks were achieved by the students taking the module demonstrating that the assessment was discriminating. I am satisfied that the two candidates who failed the module, this year, genuinely deserved to fail based upon the responses they gave for both sections of the exam paper.</p> <p>Overall, the marks achieved accurately reflected student performance and the standards, albeit with a low sample number, were comparable to those at the same FHEQ level in my own institution and other institutions of which I have knowledge or experience as an External Examiner.</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> <p>I feel it would have been useful if the marked exam essays had been annotated in such a way as to identify, to me, where marks were gained and lost in relation to the indicative content provided. Contemporaneous annotation, by markers, could also prove useful if students wished to view their exam scripts or receive feedback on their exam performance sometime in the future. Whilst there was good agreement between the exam essay marks awarded by first and second markers it may be useful to develop generic criteria for the marking of essays to ensure continued consistency between markers.</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
21.	Was the progression and award guidance provided sufficient for you to act effectively as an External Examiner?	N/A
22.	Did you receive appropriate programme documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	N/A
23.	Did you receive appropriate module documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	Y
24.	Did you receive full details of marking criteria applicable to your area(s) of responsibility?	Y
25.	Were you provided with all draft examination papers/assessments?	Y
26.	Was the nature and level of the assessment questions appropriate?	Y
27.	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments on assessment questions?	Y
28.	Was sufficient assessed work made available to enable you to have confidence in your evaluation of the standard of student work?	Y
29.	Were the examination scripts clearly marked/annotated?	Y and N (see

		comment above)
30.	Was the choice of subjects for final year projects and/or dissertations appropriate?	N/A
31.	Was the method and standard of assessment appropriate for the final year projects and/or dissertations?	N/A
32.	Were the administrative arrangements satisfactory for the whole process, including the operation of the Progression and Awards Board?	N/A
33.	Were you able to attend the Progression and Awards Board meeting?	N
34.	Were you satisfied with the recommendations of the Progression and Awards Board?	N/A
35.	Were you satisfied with the way decisions from the School Special Circumstances meeting were communicated to the Progression and Awards Board?	N/A

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

As in previous years I was provided with a module descriptor and a draft of the final exam paper which included indicative content/marking schemes. I was also given the opportunity to suggest changes to the exam questions, most of which were implemented. Where my proposals were not acted upon the module leader provided a clear explanation for why this was so. Since only small numbers of students have taken this module, each year, I have been given the opportunity to look at all of the exam papers and thus sufficient material was provided to make the required judgements as an External Examiner. I was able to attend the Committee of Examiners meeting relating to this module. I was invited to input into the discussions of the Committee and I was satisfied with its recommendations. I do not believe that special circumstances had been presented in relation to any of the 6 students in this year's cohort but, in the past, where circumstances were known to exist it was clear that the intention was to communicate this information to the Progression and Awards Board.

#### Other comments

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

None

**Part C: School Response to External Examiner Report****Name of School and Head of School (or nominee)**

Title and Name of Responder:	<<>>
Position*:	Director of Classified Undergraduate Studies
Faculty / School of:	<i>Medicine</i>
Address for communication:	LICAMM, School of Medicine University of 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 [gat@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:gat@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**

We thank <<>> for <<>> supportive comments relating to our approach to formative feedback. As noted, we offer students the chance to measure their progress against the learning objectives through formative exercises on which feedback is given.

**Response to Enhancements made from the previous year**

This is the final year that the module runs as it is being replaced by an on-line module currently under preparation. This new module draws on our experiences from MEDS1001.

**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:*

N/A

**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:*

We thank <<>> for <<>> careful review of questions used in the assessment over the last three years and <<>> suggestions for reducing the amount of summative assessment in the module.

**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:*

We thank <<>> for <<>> constructive feedback on the module.

## 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:*

We take on board <<>> suggestion to include more annotation on exam scripts to highlight how marks have been gained or lost. To address the point about generic marking criteria we will consider adoption of suitable generic marking criteria as part of the ongoing University review of assessment and feedback approaches.

## 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:*

As this is a Discovery Module, special circumstances are considered by the student's home School. One of the failed students who failed MEDS1001 did apply for special circumstances, which were approved by their home School.

## Other comments

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

N/A