

EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2016-17

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

Faculty / School of:	Leeds Institute of Health Sciences
Subject(s):	Health Informatics
Programme(s) / Module(s):	MSc programme in Health Informatics
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MSc

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 programme makes good use of students' professional experience to frame coursework and the dissertation.

Enhancements made from the previous year

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

New module added: YCHI5055M Health Data Analytics and Visualisation

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

The Faculty ethical review process seems to be operating very inefficiently and causing significant problems for part-time and distance learning students in particular. I saw several cases where students had to defer modules due to months of delay in the ethical process. I recommend that the Faculty consider an expedited light-touch approach ethical review for simple non-intrusive studies such as interviews, focus groups and surveys that would be typical for health informatics students. This approach would be in line with national practice, such as the proportionate reviews introduced by the Health Research Authority.

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

This is a well-established programme that has operated and developed well over the years that I have observed. The standards are what I would expect of M level health informatics education and broadly in line with international guidance. Marking and feedback to students is thorough and helpful. The administrative procedures of the School have been efficient and rigorous, so it will be a great loss to the team when the current course administrator retires soon.

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 programme structure is excellent and the learning outcomes are appropriate for the field and level of study. In my judgement, the course successfully delivers its intended learning outcomes and the standards are appropriate for the level of the awards.</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>Students are required to critically engage with published research in their learning and assessment activities. The taught syllabus includes critical appraisal skills. The dissertation project provides students an excellent opportunity to demonstrate their research skills, often by applying their learning in workplace-based study.</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>		
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>		
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>		

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 assessment methods are effective and suitable for the intended learning outcomes. Students received detailed and helpful feedback. The quality of the inspected student work and the range of outcomes demonstrates that the standards of teaching and assessment are appropriate.</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>The students demonstrated a typical range of performance for M level courses. Unsurprisingly, the written English of some international students is less than ideal, but I understand that University policy favours a relaxed approach to this.</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>Student feedback is very detailed and thorough.</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?	Y
22.	Did you receive appropriate programme documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	Y
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?	N
26.	Was the nature and level of the assessment questions appropriate?	Y
27.	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments on assessment questions?	N
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?	N/A
30.	Was the choice of subjects for final year projects and/or dissertations appropriate?	Y
31.	Was the method and standard of assessment appropriate for the final year projects and/or dissertations?	Y
32.	Were the administrative arrangements satisfactory for the whole process, including the operation of the Progression and Awards Board?	Y
33.	Were you able to attend the Progression and Awards Board meeting?	Y
34.	Were you satisfied with the recommendations of the Progression and Awards Board?	Y
35.	Were you satisfied with the way decisions from the School Special Circumstances meeting were communicated to the Progression and Awards Board?	N/A
<p><i>Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make on the questions above:</i></p>		

Other comments

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

It would be useful to map the programme learning outcomes to the IMIA educational requirements (doi: 10.3414/ME5119). These recommendations are likely to form the basis for accrediting the NHS Digital Academy curriculum.

Name of School and Head of School (or nominee)

Title and Name of Responder:

Position*:

Faculty / School of:

Address for communication:

Email:

Telephone:

	Director of Postgraduate Studies <i>on behalf of</i> the Director of Student Education
	Faculty of Medicine and Health School of Medicine

*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. 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 are grateful to _____ t for continuing to be the external examiner for the Health Informatics programme and for _____ comments.
The School is pleased that the programme is seen to make good use of students' professional experience to give context to their coursework and dissertations.

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

The new module "Health Data Analytics and Visualisation" was well received by the students and further enhancements are planned for when it is next delivered.

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:

We thank _____ for raising the issue of ethical approval for student projects, as this has been a difficult process for many students this year, and has led to a number of them requiring extensions to their MSc Project submission deadline. The School welcomes _____ suggestions as to how the ethical approval process might be improved for students. This matter is also being raised within the Leeds Institute of Health Sciences.

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 School is pleased that the programme is seen to be in line with international guidance. The effective and rigorous administration has been ably provided by the SESO, who is due to retire at the end of 2017.

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 are pleased that the programme is considered to be well structured, with appropriate learning outcomes and standards.

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 are pleased that the feedback provided to students was seen as helpful, detailed and thorough. The comments on written English reflect the recently introduced guidance to mark for content and meaning in written assignments, rather than focusing on grammatical issues. Inclusive marking is a University wide policy.

In a University-wide student survey conducted July-August 2017, Health Informatics obtained a score of 100% student satisfaction. This was a remarkable achievement for student evaluation and demonstrates the excellent student experience of those studying Health Informatics at Leeds.

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:

Other comments

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

recommends that the Programme Team map the programme learning outcomes to the IMIA educational requirements, to demonstrate their alignment. I shall ensure that this exercise is an action point in the Annual Programme Review.