

**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:	Faculty of Medicine and Health, School of Medicine, LIME, Division of Women's & Children's Health
Subject(s):	Child Health
Programme(s) / Module(s):	PGDip Child Health MSc Child Health
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	PGDip/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.*  
My report last year gave deserved praise for many aspects of this programme and I still have this view.

**Enhancements made from the previous year**

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

**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, but I do raise two points for serious consideration at the end of my report

**For Examiners in the first year of appointment N/A**

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

**For Examiners completing their term of appointment N/A**

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 an 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*

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## 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)?	Y
12.	Is the programme(s) comparable with similar programmes at other institutions?	Y

*Please use this box to explain your overall impression of the programme structure, design, aims and intended learning outcomes.*

I think the PGDip Child Health is an appropriate qualification for the first part of the course (two years). It is essentially a taught course, with frequent assessments and opportunities for reflection. It would be hoped that paediatricians in training elsewhere in the country achieve similar knowledge and skills. However, the PGDip Child Health ensures that for Leeds trainees the knowledge and skills are achieved; and the course requires considerable commitment from the student.

For the MSc, a Dissertation has to be completed in a third year. The student is still working as a paediatrician in training so this third year cannot be considered a full time research year. In this regard it is therefore not the same as a research MSc in a non-medical subject where the scope and output is more substantial. The amount of time the student can devote to the Leeds MSc Child Health is however comparable to other MSc programmes elsewhere in the UK for doctors who have to combine their day to day clinical work with the research requirements.

13.	Is the influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching clear?	Y
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*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)*

14.	Does the programme form part of an Integrated PhD?	N
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*Please comment on the appropriateness of the programme as training for a PhD:*

**N/A**

15.	Does the programme include clinical practice components?	Y
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*Please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum here:*

I am not involved in assessment of this.

16.	Is the programme accredited by a Professional or Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB)?	Y / N
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*Please comment on the value of, and the programme's ability to meet, PSRB requirements here:*

I do not know the answer to this question

## Assessment and Feedback

17.	Does the programme design clearly align intended learning outcomes with assessment?	Y
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*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.*

<p>Whilst the Leeds PGDip Child Health and MSc Child Health have much unique content and teaching methods, the academic standards required are very similar to those of my own University and other Universities where I have examined. I am confident that Leeds does not have unrealistic expectations of students at this stage in their career; but nor does it allow poor performance to be overlooked.</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>For the most part, the students are able and comparable to trainees in paediatrics at other UK Universities and NHS Trusts.</p> <p>There are some students who do not seem to me to show full commitment to this degree and yet are still awarded a degree. If students can pass with only partial commitment, this tends to be self-perpetuating because word gets round to other students. I comment on this in more detail at the end of my report.</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 Examiner's 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?	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.	<p>Was sufficient assessed work made available to enable you to have confidence in your evaluation of the standard of student work?</p> <p>I am not involved in assessing all course work. Where such course work contributed to the final mark I had to agree with the rest of the Board. I was satisfied from specimen candidate answers shown to me with scores allocated and reasons given that those examiners were working according to the handbook guidelines.</p>	Y
29.	Were the examination scripts clearly marked/annotated?	Y
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?	Y
<i>Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make on the questions above:</i>		

**Other comments**

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

1. I have continued to have discussions with the course organiser about the requirement for a student to submit a research protocol for the PGDip Child Health, even when they have no intention of proceeding to the MSc and undertaking the research project.  
This seems to me to be a waste of everyone's time – mine (for those candidates usually present mediocre work), the clinical supervisor and the academic course organisers.  
However, I agree that some further understanding of research should be demonstrated and I have suggested that such a candidate should report back on the research activity which is taking place in their NHS Trust. They could also comment critically on a child health project being undertaken or recruited to in their Trust.  
This would enable the candidate to show that they had knowledge of NIHR, understand the duty on all doctors to participate in research and inform their patients of any research projects relevant to them, understand ethics procedures through the Health Research Authority etc etc.

2. Candidates can fail or not submit up to four module assignments but still be awarded a degree if they achieve sufficient credits overall.

3. Candidates can re-submit their module assignments if they fail them and I think this is appropriate. However they are also allowed to fail their re-submission or indeed not re-submit and still be awarded a degree.

I think these last two allowances (2. and 3.) are not appropriate. The PGDip and MSc Child Health are taught degrees in order to demonstrate competence in paediatrics and child health. This requires the University to set clear standards and the student to show commitment to achieving these standards and competences. The fact that a candidate can fail up to four module assignmentsw (or not submit at all) and then to fail again or not re-submit and still be awarded the degree, seems to me to be contrary to acceptable academic and professional practice.

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

**Points of innovation and/or good practice**

I have not been made aware of specific changes or innovations this year.  
 The good practice I noted in the first year report has continued.  
 The Leaders of the Course are extremely committed and provide excellent support to the trainees.  
 I would also commend the administrative support given to the students and the trainers and to me in my examiner role

**Enhancements made from the previous year**

Nil specific to add

**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*  
 NO

**For Examiners in the first year of appointment**

1.	Were you provided with an External Examiner Handbook?	Y / N
2.	Were you provided with copies of previous External Examiners' reports and the School's responses 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 an 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

## Standards

8.	Is the overall programme structure coherent and appropriate for the level of study?	Y
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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)?	Y
12.	Is the programme(s) comparable with similar programmes at other institutions?	Y

Please use this box to explain your overall impression of the programme structure, design, aims and intended learning outcomes.

The structure of the Course covers the curriculum for a Paediatric Trainee.

It is intended to provide trainees with a wide experience prior to further specialisation within paediatrics. This aim is met by a well structured course covering all the appropriate areas.

I meet the trainees at vivas for either their dissertation proposals or to examine their completed dissertations. They appear to be very positive about the course.

They also recognise the high demands they face undertaking study on a rigorous PGDip/MSc alongside their strenuous work commitments.

13.	Is the influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching clear?	Y
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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)

The taught modules are updated to reflect evidence based practice.

I examine the students' dissertation proposals and the completed dissertations.

The vivas provide verbal and later written feedback to the trainees. Trainees are also supported by supervisors.

The dissertations are marked appropriately with emphasis on appraisal of the literature, design of the work undertaken, analysis of the results and discussion of results.

The trainees have the opportunity to learn about research methods.

14.	Does the programme form part of an Integrated PhD?	N
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Please comment on the appropriateness of the programme as training for a PhD:

15.	Does the programme include clinical practice components?	N
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Please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum here:

16.	Is the programme accredited by a Professional or Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB)?	N
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Please comment on the value of, and the programme's ability to meet, PSRB requirements here:

## Assessment and Feedback

17.	Does the programme design clearly align intended learning outcomes with assessment?	Y
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*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.*

Trainees are assessed at the end of each module.

Assessment tasks are designed to be practical and to be useful in their clinical practice e.g. designing information leaflets, teaching sessions etc.

Assessment of dissertation proposals and completed dissertations is undertaken by internal and external examiners in a structured format.

The range of student performance varies as would be expected from exceptionally good to poor. Feedback is detailed and appropriate. Additional support is offered if appropriate for students. If resubmission is needed this is fairly assessed. Learning outcomes are clear to trainees as are marking guidelines.

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

*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:*

*The students are assessed at an appropriate level for Level 7 trainees*

*Achievement is good overall and in line with other Courses I am aware of.*

*Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make in relation to assessment and feedback:*

### The Progression and Awards Process

20.	Were you provided with guidance relating to the External Examiner's 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?	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
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
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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?	Y
<i>Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make on the questions above:</i>		

**Other comments**

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

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**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 [qat@leeds.ac.uk](mailto: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**

We thank \_\_\_\_\_ for the comments noting the Course Organiser's enthusiasm and the quality of administrative support provided by the SESO and colleagues.

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

Not applicable

**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:

Not applicable

**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:

Not applicable

**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 very positive comments regarding the standard of academic support and assessment.

**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 thank \_\_\_\_\_ for positive comments regarding the mapping of the programme to the RCPCH level 2 training requirements for paediatric trainees.

### 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:*

We are pleased to see that \_\_\_\_\_ was able to adequately assess all relevant aspects of our programme as external examiner.

We thank \_\_\_\_\_ for enthusiasm and diligence in the role as external examiner, for the considerable reading and reviewing required, and for the wisdom and advice she has provided to the Course Management Team.

### Other comments

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

Not applicable.