

# 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:	Medicine
Subject(s):	
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Discovery Modules PHLT1001 - The public's health: Medical, Social, Political PHLT1002 The Public's Health: Promotion, prevention, Protection
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

Efforts were made to go through the structure of the examination and the approach to answering questions with students in their final tutorial. This resulted in an improvement in examination technique which was reflected in the scores for the PHLT 1002 examination.

#### Enhancements made from the previous year

The main enhancement has been to introduce more flexibility in the marking scheme to reward answers that demonstrate knowledge beyond the expected key points. This resulted in greater variation between examiners in the scores awarded to individual questions noted mostly in the PHLT 1001 exam. However, rankings for questions and overall for candidates were consistent. Examiners agreed on good answers and their scores differentiated these from weak answers. There was less variation in scoring on the PHLT 1002 exam.

#### 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*

#### 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

## Standards

8.	Is the overall programme structure coherent and appropriate for the level of study?	<u>Y</u> / N
9.	Does the programme structure allow the programme aims and intended learning outcomes to be met?	<u>Y</u> / N
10.	Are the programme aims and intended learning outcomes commensurate with the level of award?	<u>Y</u> / N
11.	Did the Aims and ILOs meet the expectations of the national subject benchmark (where relevant)?	<u>Y</u> / N
12.	Is the programme(s) comparable with similar programmes at other institutions?	<u>Y</u> / N
<p>These modules are aimed at providing an introduction to public health for undergraduates who come from a wide range of disciplines. The areas covered reflect topics of public debate and allow students to understand the public health approach to these issues. The modules draw on the multi-disciplinary nature of public health practice which is well suited to the overall aim of the programme and address concerns of relevance to any students irrespective of the specialist course of study.</p>		
13.	Is the influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching clear?	Y / <u>N</u>
<p>There is scope to make more explicit links with relevant research within the University that has a bearing on the content of the module. Public health policy and practice is strongly influenced by research and this is implicit in the tutorials but could be made clearer.</p>		
14.	Does the programme form part of an Integrated PhD?	Y / <u>N</u>
<p>These modules would provide useful introduction for PhD candidates researching on topics of public health significance.</p>		
15.	Does the programme include clinical practice components?	Y / <u>N</u>
<p>Consideration could be given to providing shadowing opportunities or short placements in public health departments if these could be agreed with relevant organisations.</p>		
16.	Is the programme accredited by a Professional or Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB)?	Y / <u>N</u>
<p>Modules are introductory so accreditation not applicable.</p>		

## Assessment and Feedback

17.	Does the programme design clearly align intended learning outcomes with assessment?	<u>Y</u> / N
<p>The programme is intended to provide undergraduate student with an introduction to the subject and is assessed by short essay type questions. Each examination consists of 6 questions with candidates choosing 4 to answer. These are marked independently by two internal examiners. The questions cover the full range of the module content. There were instances where candidates attempted to answer questions based on their general knowledge without studying the course materials. These answers did not score well as students needed to understand the content in order to perform well.</p>		
18.	Is the design and structure of the assessment methods appropriate to the level of award?	<u>Y</u> / N
19.	Were students given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the programme aims and intended learning outcomes?	<u>Y</u> / N

The examinations tested more than factual knowledge and required the students to demonstrate an understanding of the issues. Strong students produced answers that showed sophisticated understanding of the topic and the ability to analyse different viewpoints and make a conclusion.

A weakness that was apparent in the PHLT 1001 exam was the inability by some candidates to respond coherently to a short essay format. This meant that although they could recall the information these candidates did not score as highly as they might because they failed to use the information to provide coherent answers. It was clear from the performance in the following sitting that addressing exam technique resulted in stronger answers.

*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 Examiners role, powers and responsibilities in the examination process?	<u>Y</u> / N
21.	Was the progression and award guidance provided sufficient for you to act effectively as an External Examiner?	<u>Y</u> / N
22.	Did you receive appropriate programme documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	<u>Y</u> / N
23.	Did you receive appropriate module documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	<u>Y</u> / N
24.	Did you receive full details of marking criteria applicable to your area(s) of responsibility?	<u>Y</u> / N
25.	Were you provided with all draft examination papers/assessments?	<u>Y</u> / N
26.	Was the nature and level of the assessment questions appropriate?	<u>Y</u> / N
27.	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments on assessment questions?	<u>Y</u> / N
28.	Was sufficient assessed work made available to enable you to have confidence in your evaluation of the standard of student work?	<u>Y</u> / 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?	<u>Y</u> / 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

Some questions are not relevant to my role for this module. I was provided with copied of scripts and marks by examiners. I attended Examiners' meetings to agree final marks and approve recommendations for whether candidates passed or failed the exam.

### Other comments

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

## Part C: School Response to External Examiner Report

### Name of School and Head of School (or nominee)

Title and Name of Responder:	<<>>
Position*:	<<>>
Faculty / School of:	<<>>
Address for communication:	<<>>
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](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

As in previous years, the external examiner was very positive about the breadth of the modules and that the areas covered reflect topics of public debate and allow students to understand the public health approach to these issues. The multi-disciplinary nature of public health practice is well suited to the overall aim of the discovery module programme and is relevant to students irrespective of the specialist course of study.

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

The external examiner noted that we have responded to his feedback from last year in terms of making the marking scheme more flexible to reward answers that demonstrated knowledge beyond the expected key points. While this resulted in greater variation in marks between examiners, it is reassuring that, as he points out, there was agreement as to what was a strong or weak answer. The problem of variation in mark was addressed by in depth discussion between the double markers to agree a mark when there was some variance.

#### 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:

The external examiner did not indicate any concerns

#### 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 external examiner did not indicate any concerns

### 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:

The external examiner suggested making more links to public health research conducted within the University. One of the disadvantages of the pre-recorded lecture format is that it is difficult to make small changes to lecture content. However, there is likely to be significant change to these modules in 2018/19 in light of a potential new BSc in Public Health course hence this suggestion will be borne in mind.

The external examiner suggested offering shadowing opportunities or short placements in public health departments. We offer this to students studying for the intercalated BSc in Applied health (Public Health) but it would be difficult to do this for students studying for PHLT1001 and PHLT1002.

The external examiner suggested making the lectures available to PhD students as an introduction to public health. We will be making some of the on-line lectures available in 2017/18 to level 3 and M level students studying for PHLT3125 and PHLT5125M

## 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:*

The external examiner noted that some PHLT1001 students were unable to respond coherently to the short essay format or who attempted to answer questions based on their general knowledge without studying the course materials. An important part of the examination preparation are three formative assessment questions which follow the examination short answer questions. Students receive individual feedback and the questions are discussed during the tutorials. Thus in 2017/18 the importance of participating in this process will be reinforced even more strongly. The greater attention to teaching students examination technique in PHLT1002, was reflected in the better examination performance that was noted by the external examiner.

## 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:*

The examiner noted that some questions were not relevant to his role for this module. As <> notes he was provided with copies of scripts and marks by examiners. <> participated in the Examiners' meetings to agree final marks and approve recommendations for whether candidates passed or failed the exam.

## Other comments

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

No comments were raised.