

The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2017-18 QAT Received 07/09/2018

Part A: General Information

Subject area and awards being examined

Title and Name of Examiner:

Faculty / School of:

School of Healthcare, University of Leeds

Subject(s):

MSc Nursing (Adult)

Programme(s) / Module(s):

HECS5285M; HECS 5286M; HECS 5152M; HECS3275; HECS 3276

Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):

MSc Nursing with Registration (Adult)

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.

- Marking and moderation process demonstrates good practice. The moderation process is clear.
- Feedback is developmental and it is clear to students what they have done well and where there are areas for improvement.
- The range of assessments is commendable and the students have produced some interesting and high quality work. I particularly enjoyed reading the dissertations and students have produced work using all assessment options provided. It is particularly commendable that M level nursing students are facilitated to undertake empirical research. I would also like to mention the neighbourhood study (HECS 3275), which I have recently examined for the first time. This is an interesting approach and provides the students with the opportunity to explore the biopsychosocial profile of a local postal district. I think this is an excellent way to facilitate students to engage and reflect upon their academic writing and thinking skills, and also to get them thinking about the wider contemporary public health challenges within the local area. I am sure this also introduces the students to population statistics and epidemiological research methods.
- Marking grids enable the students to fully understand the criteria they are being marked against.

Enhancements made from the previous year

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

None identified

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 identified

For Examiners in the first year of appointment

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

For Examiners completing their term of appointment

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

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
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 believe the aims, objectives and learning outcomes of individual modules are aligned appropriately to the course outcomes.

Including level 3 assessments in year one facilitates a period of time for students to develop the relevant theoretical knowledge, skills and attitudes required for clinical practice. It also enables development of academic writing skills in preparation for M level assessments. The M level-nursing programme at my institution is a 2-year course and so we do face challenges in relation to mentor expectations of what an M level nursing student is. Many students also struggle to demonstrate the appropriate academic standard for M level work and I wonder whether your extended course structure mitigates this somewhat?

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)

From the very beginning of the programme the range of assessments enable students to demonstrate their understanding, knowledge and application of research and the evidence base that underpins contemporary nursing practice. The dissertation module evidences that the students are well supported in developing their research & evaluation skills and the level is appropriate for Masters level study. I enjoyed reading the dissertations and I am pleased to see that students have the opportunity to conduct empirical research. I note that lecturers acknowledge excellent work and identify when this is of publishable quality

There is evidence that teaching staff are research active and that they are publishing within their areas of expertise. This identifies credibility to students. It is not clear how the staff research activities impact on teaching and learning.		
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>This course provides the students with the required skill set to progress to PhD level study. I have seen some excellent work and the students gaining higher-level grades are demonstrating a depth of knowledge in relation to research skills, including data analysis.</p>		
15.	Does the programme include clinical practice components?	Y
<p><i>Please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum here:</i></p> <p>Meeting with students has been a challenge as I only attend the September board and there were few students available. However, I will discuss how this can be organised when I attend the board in September. It may be possible to access students remotely. Alternatively it may be possible for me to attend some 'simulation / practice assessment sessions' and engage with students at this time? I have been able to access practice documentation. I have also requested (via MAB) access to the Skills Log, numeracy tests and evidence of completion of EU Directive requirements.</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>This course will have been validated by the NMC and therefore I am satisfied that it meets all professional requirements.</p> <p>I will discuss how the recent change to the NMC Standards for Education (2018) will be implemented when I meet with the team next.</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>I have seen evidence that a variety of assessment methods are used within this course. I believe a range of appropriate assessment methods are used to assess various components of learning (clinical skills and theory) of the course.</p> <p>The academic standards upheld by University of Leeds are in accordance with the Framework of Higher Education qualification. The quality of the course seems to be robust and appropriate for the level of study. The marking process is transparent and feedback is extensive & developmental</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>		

The work demonstrates a range of abilities in the student groups, with some producing excellent work and others clearly find academic writing more of a challenge. However, this is to be expected and I would have concerns if all students were achieving at the higher level and the range of ability reflects the expected distribution and composition of students studying at M level. Certainly within my institution we have had some challenges during the earlier stages of the course and find that we have to go 'back to basics' and provide lots of support to get them to the level required for M level study.

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

A list of submission dates for each module would be helpful so that I can allocate time in my diary. Sometimes your deadlines clash with the ones within my institution, which has at times resulted in me not always being able to respond to you in a timely manner.

I have been unable to access all marking criteria forms. Although it is clear that 2nd marking and moderation has taken place (and who did this) it is not clear whether there was any difference in grade allocations between markers and, if so, how the final grade was approved. In my institution a difference of +/-10% must be identified and the process employed to agree the grade identified.

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?	N
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?	N
25.	Were you provided with all draft examination papers/assessments?	na
26.	Was the nature and level of the assessment questions appropriate?	na
27.	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments on assessment questions?	na
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?	na
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

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

Other comments

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

I have found all academics and registry supporting staff within your institution to be very helpful & professional and would like to commend them for this.

Your VLE is easy to use and enable me to look at all material available to students, which is very useful in terms of assessing your quality assurance processes.

Name of School and Head of School (or nominee)*Title and Name of Examiner:*

Subject(s):

Nursing

Programme(s) / Module(s):

MSc Nursing with Registration (Adult)

Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):

MSc

Title and Name of Responder:

Position*:

Director of Student Education

Faculty / School of:

Healthcare

Address for communication:

School of Healthcare
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 your positive comments regarding the programme and the assessment processes. With reference to the neighbourhood study the students enjoy completing this and it does give them a greater insight into the health needs of the local community which is then strengthened by their community placements.

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

Each module and the programme is formally evaluated each year and small changes are made. No major enhancements have been implemented this year. The current 09/17 intake of students will be the last on this particular programme.

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:

None 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:

Responses to questions 1 – 7 are not applicable at this time.

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:

Thank you again for your positive comments. Enabling the students to study at level 3 before going onto level M is certainly beneficial in their development as whilst they are all graduates many are new to the University of Leeds and nursing.

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 programme team feels that it is important to have a range of assessments so that different aspects of student abilities can be assessed. It is also pleasing to note that the quality of the programme is robust and the marking process is clear and transparent.

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:

I am sorry to learn that you had difficulty locating the appropriate programme documentation or marking criteria relevant to your role. All the information and marking criteria for the assignments are contained within the module assessment pages on the VLE. Programme and module handbooks were sent to you at the beginning of your appointment and current versions are located in the programme and module areas on the VLE. If you can let me know what specific documentation you would like I will arrange for it to be sent to you.

I will arrange for a list of submission dates to be sent to you. Unfortunately the Programme Leader could not be available when you attended the School Progression and Award Board in September but I understand that had made arrangements for you to view examples of an EU portfolio and to log on to view the SN@P numeracy exam during your visit.

Other comments

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

I am pleased to learn that your experience of working with our support staff and the VLE has been a positive one, thank you.