

The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2017-18

QAT Received 29/11/2018

Part A: General Information

Subject area and awards being examined

Title and Name of Examiner:

Faculty / School of:

School of Chemistry

Subject(s):

Polymers, Colorants and Fine Chemicals

Programme(s) / Module(s):

*Polymers, Colorants and Fine Chemicals programme
COLO5162M
COLO5180M
COLO5244M
COLO5270M
CHEM5500M*

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

PGCert/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.

Exams:

Well balanced exams with questions that combine bookwork and applied examples
Good feedback is provided by including comments / corrections in exam scripts

Research projects (CHEM5500):

Very diverse projects that fit well within scope of MSc
Reports show detailed comments / good feedback from markers

Enhancements made from the previous year

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

I cannot comment as I did not assess last year's programme

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

It would be worth exploring the introduction of experimental work, for instance through lab practicals, before the projects start in order to prepare the students for experimental work.

Consider the impact of growing student numbers on number of staff supervising projects and maybe expand the pool of project supervisors.

Consider the introduction of a statement from each project supervisor on their involvement in the report writing to be sent to markers with the report. This statement would inform the marker on the level of autonomy of the student when writing the report.

Assessment sheet for final report: The difference between criteria 'Structure and Clarity' and 'Presentation' does not seem to be obvious to the markers as the same comments are often made in each section. Maybe combine both criteria or differentiate them further.

When marking exam scripts, a simple way to provide feedback is to include details of marks for each question, which are then summed up at the end of the question, to show where marks were lost.

For Examiners in the first year of appointment

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

For Examiners completing their term of appointment

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

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.

Overall the programme deals with a broad range of topics and link them well together. The structure is clear and well organised. The aims are broad which is desirable in this topic, and the learning outcomes are made clear to the students.

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

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)

Research seems present in lectures (as illustrated by some exam questions), but mainly in the research project. Projects are led by research active staff and focus on relevant and topical research area .

14.	Does the programme form part of an Integrated PhD?	N
-----	--	---

Please comment on the appropriateness of the programme as training for a PhD:

15.	Does the programme include clinical practice components?	N
<i>Please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum here:</i>		
16.	Is the programme accredited by a Professional or Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB)?	N
<i>Please comment on the value of, and the programme's ability to meet, PSRB requirements here:</i>		

Assessment and Feedback

17.	Does the programme design clearly align intended learning outcomes with assessment?	Y
<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>Assessment is by exam and report writing after the research project. Both assessment types are complementary and ensure a broad range of assessing students progress and learning. Exams are typically well balanced. Reports focuses on short research project and cover a range of topics relevant to the Master programme. The availability of staff makes it possible to offer a broad range of project topics, although growing students number may put pressure on staff hosting projects.</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
<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>		
<i>Overall the cohort seems strong with good performance both at exams and reports.</i>		
<i>Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make in relation to assessment and feedback:</i>		

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.	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
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
<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

Name of School and Head of School (or nominee)

Title and Name of Examiner:

Subject(s):

Polymers, Colorants and Fine Chemicals

Programme(s) / Module(s):

*Polymers, Colorants and Fine Chemicals programme
COLO5162M
COLO5180M
COLO5244M
COLO5270M
CHEM5500M*

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

PGCert/PGDip/MSc

Title and Name of Responder:

Position*:

Head of School

Faculty / School of:

Chemistry

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. 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 the complementary comments about the quality of exam papers, feedback provided on the reports and diversity of the research projects offered to the students.

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year**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:

Major revision of the programme has been undertaken. The new practical module has been created and will be introduced for 2018-19 session. We have also changed optional modules choices introducing Food Science modules and Chemistry based Advance topics as new Discovery themes in the programme. These changes will be implemented in 2018-19.

Assessment and feedback on final reports recommendations will be communicated to the MSc project module leader and implemented in the next cycle.

Implication of an increase in the student number on the staff working load will be considered and a wider participation of staff across the School to participate in the supervision of the research projects will be encouraged.

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:

Thank you for the complementary comments.

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 for the complementary comments.

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:

Thank you for the complementary comments

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:

Thank you for the complementary comments

Other comments

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