

The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2018-19

QAT Received 08/02/2020

Part A: General Information

Subject area and awards being examined

Title and Name of Examiner:

Faculty / School of:

Environment / Food Science and Nutrition

Subject(s):

Programme(s) / Module(s):

Food Biotechnology, Food quality and innovation, Food Science, Food science and nutrition

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.

Earlier in 2019 I visited the University of Leeds for the first time, and had a good discussion with the teaching team. I felt that there was a clear curiosity about how things are arranged in Wageningen and how that can also be of good use for UoL. Some of these discussions have already resulted in adjustments in the way that courses are taught, so in terms of teaching methods. I have also invited the teachers of UoL to visit Wageningen so that they can experience how it is to make knowledge clips and teach based on that instead of readers for example.

Enhancements made from the previous year

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

Last year I was not appointed yet; from the other examiner I understood that the points that he raised were addressed appropriately.

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

Not really.

For Examiners in the first year of appointment only

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 an External Examiner Mentor?	Y

For Examiners completing their term of appointment only

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
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

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

When comparing the course content, and course materials I would like to remark that the content is as you would find in Wageningen. The course materials are more 'classic' compared to Wageningen, but of good quality. The exams seem to be more directed toward factual knowledge and reproduction thereof. Overall, I think that the programs are well constructed, and of good level.

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

This is always a very difficult point, since the courses are directed toward acquiring knowledge, and the knowledge needed to do a research project may be rather different. It is also difficult to keep teaching material completely up to date with the newest developments in research. I do feel that a good effort is made.

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)?	Y / N
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Please comment on the value of, and the programme's ability to meet, PSRB requirements here:

I am not sure

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>When working with the teaching support team in Leeds, I was given all the information that I needed, and discussed some points directly with them. I think that the assessment methods are appropriate, and also well documented. I could easily follow how this was done. Also the final discussions with the group of teachers was carried out in a transparent way that did justice to the students.</i></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><i>Since this is my first year that is difficult to do. I think that this cohort performed well, but as mentioned it was the first time that I was an evaluator for UoL.</i></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>I feel that the team is very dedicated to the tasks that they need to manage.</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.	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?	Not sure if that happened

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

I did notice that the level of feedback varied quite a bit between teachers. Most teachers are actually very good in showing how they mark, but few gave only a number. So I had to consult the support team for that. But they were very good in supplying me with the information needed.

The organisation of the evaluation meeting works well, and really supports that evaluators in their work.

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):*

Food Science

Programme(s) / Module(s):

Food Biotechnology, Food quality and innovation, Food Science, Food science and nutrition

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

MSc

*Title and Name of Responder:**Position*:*

Head of School

Faculty / School of:

Environment/ Food Science and Nutrition

Address for communication:

Food Science building 1.21, University of 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) must be sent 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 pleased that a collaborative communication has been established and we are looking forward to establishing a mutually beneficial transfer of teaching and research practices. We fully appreciate the innovative approach adopted by Wageningen and your school and plan to adopt and incorporate some of the practices described. Your offer of a visit to promote the knowledge transfer is much appreciated and we similarly offer a reciprocal arrangement. Ongoing programme review will ensure that this practice is maintained and enhanced where possible. We highly value the External Examiners expertise and objective assessment of programmes and modules and will accordingly introduced new methods to engage students and to enhance our learning practices.

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

In accordance with previous year assessments we continually reflect upon the appropriateness of teaching and assessment methods in relation to learning outcomes at both programme and module level. To facilitate this process and to ensure a coherent university approach an assessment mapping process is under way engaging in the Leeds Expectations for Assessment and Feedback (LEAF). This acknowledges internal and external environments and ensures these are appropriate and consistent with the Higher Education Academy (HEA) aims. Our goal is therefore to ensure that the curriculum is delivered using the latest techniques with innovative digital learning mediums and aim to enhance student engagement, feedback and support and in benefitting from the experience provided by the newly appointed External Examiner. The DSE, Programme and module leaders are currently assessing learning outcomes and ensuring appropriate and efficient assessments are applied. The University and the School are committed to establishing effective, coherent and transparent teaching and assessment practices.

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 are pleased that no matters requiring urgent attention were perceived. This is clearly of primary importance to us in delivering a top class learning and research environment.

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:

No specific points were raised. We will ensure that programmes continue to provide the necessary support and resources to external examiners and will aim to provide module resources to assist in the effective assessment of our practices.

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 school and indeed the university are in the process of introducing online blended digital learning methodologies to enhance student engagement and satisfaction. This will address the 'classic' nature of the standard lecture/seminar delivery methods. Similarly, independent critical evaluation is a core university statement therefore we have paid particular attention to our examinations in that they are framed in an applied setting which require analysis, evaluation and integration of multiple sources of information in order to arrive at solutions. We appreciate the notification of this observation and will endeavour to address this finding.

Within our programmes we include research modules at both group and individual level. These aim to deliver current research material and offer the opportunity for students also to participate in the process in some manner. We aim to integrate current research into our programmes and appreciate the External Examiner comment that we are achieving this to a large extent. Also, through our Industrial Advisory Board we identify and implement appropriate strategies to equip our students with the necessary knowledge and skills required by industry.

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 appreciate the positive comments of the External Examiner and will ensure that we deliver information in a clear and effective fashion. Also we aim to ensure assessment and feedback remains high quality through programme review and LEAF. We continually review, reflect and modify our teaching practices to ensure blended and engaging modes of delivery are provided and which are appropriately assessed. Also, we also ensure equitable and inclusive practices are applied to establish a high baseline standard whilst providing the opportunity for students to demonstrate excellence.

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 have recently increased our practices in terms of evidencing sufficient and consistent marking and feedback is being applied. To this end, the University and School will be delivering feedback online and which are consistent with online marking criteria and rubrics.

Thank you for your positive comments relating to our progression and awards process which we aim to ensure is rigorous, robust, and fair. With our Student Education Services, we now provide a consistent and comprehensive range of data and information relating to the module content, results and assessment which we will endeavour to maintain and modify where necessary to ensure the effective practices which have been recognised.

Other comments

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

