

The University of Leeds

EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

QAT received 09/10/19

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2018-19

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

- There is a varied range of assessments throughout the course. These allow individuality and, hence reduce the opportunity for students to plagiarise from other students. The inclusion of exams also ensures that the students demonstrate their own level of knowledge and understanding.
- It is clear that the students know the criteria that they are being assessed against. The level descriptors are appropriate for this level of study.
- The marking and moderation process is transparent and students are provided with excellent developmental feedback.

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

I believe this course will no longer run after this year so n/a

For Examiners in the first year of appointment only

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 only

4.	Have you observed improvements in the programme(s) over the period of your appointment?	na
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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.

The course enables progression from level 6 to to M level work in terms of academic skills required at the higher level of study.

I have previously commented that in my institution “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?” However, I now question whether the challenges faced are related to the quality of the awards from some feeder universities, and the ability of the students, rather than the length of the course. It has been noted that this final cohort have generally not achieved as many of the higher-grade scores as previous cohorts did.

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 particularly enjoy reading the dissertations and I am pleased to see that students have the opportunity to conduct empirical research.

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?	Y
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<i>Please comment on the appropriateness of the programme as training for a PhD:</i>		
<p>This programme sets the students up well for future doctorate level study for some students. I have seen some excellent work, which has resulted in the teaching team actively encouraging and supporting students with publication. I have been particularly impressed with the knowledge and understanding in relation to research skills; including data analysis.</p>		
15.	Does the programme include clinical practice components?	Y / N
<i>Please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum here:</i>		
<p>Unfortunately meeting students has proved a challenge. Although staff have offered me this opportunity I have been unable to do this due some personal issues which have made travelling a challenge. However I have seen Practice assessment documents. The issues I have faced have now eased so maybe I will be able to meet students in this last phase of my role as your external examiner.</p>		
16.	Is the programme accredited by a Professional or Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB)?	Y / N
<i>Please comment on the value of, and the programme's ability to meet, PSRB requirements here:</i>		
<p>This course will have been validated by the NMC and therefore I am satisfied that it meets all professional requirements.</p>		

Assessment and Feedback

17.	Does the programme design clearly align intended learning outcomes with assessment?	Y / N
<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>I have now examined the full range of assessments and am impressed with the variety of assessment methods used. Assessment and outcome seem to be constructively aligned and the criteria against what the students are marked is clear. Feedback is constructive and developmental.</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.</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>		
<p>Throughout I have witnessed a range of outcomes, in terms of student grades. This is to be expected. I note that the staff have faced some challenges with the current cohort as many are finding M level work a challenge. We too find that some students need intensive support to achieve the required level of academic work and I think this is partly due to the increasing diversity of the student population and the reluctance of contemporary students to read and become autonomous learners.</p>		
<i>Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make in relation to assessment and feedback:</i>		
<p>I have found having the list of assessment due dates had helped me organise my time. Thank you for acting on my previous feedback.</p>		

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.

I was not always able to access the marking criteria forms

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?	N
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 / N
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?	See below
34.	Were you satisfied with the recommendations of the Progression and Awards Board?	
35.	Were you satisfied with the way decisions from the School Special Circumstances meeting were communicated to the Progression and Awards Board?	na

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

Due to personal issues I was unable to attend the progression board in September 2019.

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.

I would like to apologise for some delays in responding to communications and requests but, as alluded to already, I have had a challenging year. I would like to thank all staff for their consideration and patience with this. As we move forward into the last phases of this programme things should improve.

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:

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) 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

Thank you for your positive annual report regarding the MSc Nursing with Registration (Adult) programme. The different types of assessments throughout the programme enable appropriate knowledge and skills to be assessed as well as meet a variety of student learning styles.

The M level descriptors had been revised and implemented in the academic year 2018-19. The students have embraced the new descriptors and continue to achieve.

The Programme and Module leaders work hard to ensure transparency in the marking and moderation process so your kind comments are very encouraging.

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

N/A

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:

There is now only one MSc Nursing cohort who are due to complete the programme in September 2019. The programme will then be archived.

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:

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 for your comments regarding the Standards. Meeting students is often problematic due to their practice and university commitments etc but this can be arranged by the Programme Leader.

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 your comments regarding the moderation process. The School of Healthcare is currently enhancing its guidelines for moderation with the intention of making it more transparent.

We are sorry that you were not able to access the marking criteria forms which can be found on Minerva. Please do not hesitate to contact the Programme Leader if the problem persists in this academic year.

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:

Due to the non-commissioning of the programme for recruitment in 2016 no students completed the programme this academic year. All students in the 09/17 cohort progressed from Stage 2 to Stage 3 in September. This group are due to complete the programme in September 2020.

Other comments

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

We are pleased to learn that your personal difficulties are now beginning to be resolved and are very grateful that you have kindly agreed to extend your External Examiner role for a further year until all of the current students have completed the programme. Your input is valuable to the programme and is very much appreciated.