

The University of Leeds

EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2018-19

QAT Received 09/07/2019

Part A: General Information

Subject area and awards being examined

Title and Name of Examiner:

<i>Faculty / School of:</i>	Faculty of Medicine and Health
<i>Subject(s):</i>	Psychology
<i>Programme(s) / Module(s):</i>	Programme: MPsych, BSc Advanced Psychology. MSc PATH
<i>Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):</i>	Modules: PSYC5900M, PSYC5901M, PSYC5902M, PSYC5906M, PSYC5907M, PSYC5908M, PSYC5912M, PSYC509M

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.

It is good to see rubrics/feedback sheets for each module. These help structure the feedback and ensure that the types and detail-levels of feedback is consistent across modules. However there is some inconsistency in their use. I would encourage all staff to feedback in the same way for the same module to ensure parity of the student experience.

Enhancements made from the previous year

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

Changes have been made to the criteria for borderline cases to be reviewed. It was good to see this being used in practice at the recent board.

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

N/A

For Examiners in the first year of appointment only

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

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

The feedback processes have improved so that students are now much more clear about what they need to do to gain a higher mark

Standards

8.	Is the overall programme structure coherent and appropriate for the level of study?	Y / N
9.	Does the programme structure allow the programme aims and intended learning outcomes to be met?	Y / N
10.	Are the programme aims and intended learning outcomes commensurate with the level of award?	Y / N
11.	Did the Aims and ILOs meet the expectations of the national subject benchmark (where relevant)?	Y / N
12.	Is the programme(s) comparable with similar programmes at other institutions?	Y / N

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

I looked at a range of the M-level modules on this programme along with . Undergraduate level work on the programme was assessed by and .

This is a well-designed programme that covers a wide range of skills and knowledge

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

The research interests and expertise of the staff who teach on this programme are clearly reflected in the content and skills of the course.

14.	Does the programme form part of an Integrated PhD?	Y / 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?	Y / 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:

Assessment and Feedback

17.	Does the programme design clearly align intended learning outcomes with assessment?	Y / N
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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.

The assessment methods are appropriate. They require good understanding and application of knowledge. Students are well-supported.

18.	Is the design and structure of the assessment methods appropriate to the level of award?	Y / N
19.	Were students given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the programme aims and intended learning outcomes?	Y / N

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:

The majority of students do well, and the most able excel. Some students at the lower ability levels struggle to apply their knowledge in some modules.

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

For some modules the same kinds of skills are assessed more than once e.g. poster presentation, group oral presentation. It is not clear what having these two types of assessment add. I would recommend that the course team review the skills and learning outcomes that are assessed over the course as a whole and consider whether all of the different types of assessment tasks are needed. The number of assessment tasks could be reduced in places.

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 / N
21.	Was the progression and award guidance provided sufficient for you to act effectively as an External Examiner?	Y / N
22.	Did you receive appropriate programme documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	Y / N
23.	Did you receive appropriate module documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	Y / N
24.	Did you receive full details of marking criteria applicable to your area(s) of responsibility?	Y / N
25.	Were you provided with all draft examination papers/assessments?	Y / N
26.	Was the nature and level of the assessment questions appropriate?	Y / N
27.	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments on assessment questions?	Y / N
28.	Was sufficient assessed work made available to enable you to have confidence in your evaluation of the standard of student work?	Y / 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?	Y / 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
<p><i>Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make on the questions above:</i></p> <p>Online feedback is being used in some modules but I couldn't always see these comments. Ways to share these with external examiners should be considered.</p> <p>It was not possible for me to properly moderate presentations. While I saw the feedback and marks and could agree that these looked appropriate and consistent I was not, for most modules, able to see the slides and/or video recordings of the presentations. This would be helpful in future years.</p>		

Other comments

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

Some of the student projects for MSc PATH were on topics unrelated to health (maths performance and anxiety). The research project is an important opportunity for students to focus and apply the theories and knowledge they have learnt from the programme to a specific research topic. I would strongly recommend that you put in place processes to ensure that students are matched with supervisors who are able to offer appropriate health-related topics, and that checks are made to ensure that the research aims and questions are appropriate for students on this health psychology course.

I would like to thank the course and module team for their excellent organisation of the examining process and communication about various aspects of my role.

Name of School and Head of School (or nominee)

Title and Name of Examiner:

Subject(s):

Psychology

Programme(s) / Module(s):

Programme: MPsync, BSc Advanced Psychology. MSc PATH
Modules: PSYC5900M, PSYC5901M, PSYC5902M, PSYC5906M, PSYC5907M, PSYC5908M, PSYC5912M, PSYC509M

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

MPsync, BSc MSc

Title and Name of Responder:

Position*:

Head of School

Faculty / School of:

Faculty of Medicine & Health/School of Psychology

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) must be sent 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

We are pleased that the development and utilization of new rubrics has been recognised. We will continue to develop these and ensure that module leaders provide clear guidance regarding how they should be applied when used across several markers. **In relation to the point around consistency of rubric use/feedback, we will ensure that module leaders for Systematic Review and Masters projects provide instructions to all markers regarding the method of marking (paper copies vs. online) and use of rubrics/feedback sheets prior to marking.**

Response to Enhancements made from the previous year

As noted, for borderline cases, students will in future be required to achieve the majority of their credits at the higher level to receive the higher award. This amendment reduces the subjectivity and possible bias associated with handling borderline cases.

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:

N/A

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:

N/A

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:

We are happy to read the positive feedback on standards particularly your recognition that the programme is well-designed and covers a wide range of skills.

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 acknowledge the general issue of over-assessment. **Changes have been implemented to reduce the assessment burden for Advanced Research Methods for the current (2019/20) academic year.** We will continue to monitor and assess the utility of the assessments across the programme and will consider additional changes for the 2020/21 academic year onwards.

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 recognise that, in some cases, assessments were forwarded to you without feedback and that presentation slides were not provided to enable you to assess the marking standards for these assignments. In future, exemplar assignments will not be forwarded to external examiners without additional checks from the Programme Manager.

Other comments

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

To address the issue of appropriate allocation of projects to students, academic staff members are required to specify whether the projects that they offer are appropriate for PATH, CDAD or both sets of students. While this approach has been used previously, programme managers now check the allocation of projects to pathways. In instances where the appropriateness of the project to the pathway is not clear, the programme managers/module leader seeks to clarify this with the project supervisor. Depending on the appropriateness of the project at this stage, the projects either go ahead as initially planned or revised, removed or re-allocated to the relevant pathway. We have implemented these changes for the current cohort of MSc students (2019-20).

We would like to thank you for the valuable and insightful comments that you have provided over the years. When possible, we have sought to implement your suggested changes and this has led to meaningful improvements in our programme.