

Individual Report

Exam board meeting: 29-Jun-2015

Intercalated BSc in Comparative Pathology, 2014/15

Dr Timothy Scase

The Programme

Please comment, as appropriate, on the following aspects of the programme:

1.1 Course content

The course content is very good and covers a wide breadth of subject matter. There is an excellent balance of fundamental pathological processes at a molecular and cellular level, together with some exposure to gross and histological changes.

Response from college requested: **NO**

1.2 Learning objectives, and the extent to which they were met

The learning objectives were met for the course.

Response from college requested: **NO**

1.3 Teaching methods

There was an appropriate mixture of didactic teaching, seminars, group discussions, problem solving exercises and practicals. The students were hence exposed to a range of different teaching methods.

Response from college requested: **NO**

1.4 Resources (in so far as they affected the assessment)

I have not been alerted to any resource issues.

Response from college requested: **NO**

1.5 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the Programme

The programme provides an interesting mix of topics and study methods, that together with the laboratory projects gives the student an excellent opportunity to extend their knowledge in this area. The exposure to research methods and cutting-edge course content will greatly enhance their career opportunities post-graduation.

Response from college requested: **NO**

Student performance

Please comment, as appropriate, on:

2.1 Students' performance in relation to those at a similar stage on comparable courses in other institutions, where this is known to you

I have previously examined a similar course at another university. The course material in this course is very comparable in both content and level of content, to that I have seen at other institutions.

Response from college requested: **NO**

2.2 Quality of candidates' knowledge and skills, with particular reference to those at the top, middle or bottom of the range

There was an expected range of abilities shown by the different candidates. Those at the top, provided some excellent essay answers and their project presentations and reports were clearly better than their peers that scored less well. The top candidates were generally more able to respond to questions about their projects and place their research in context of current knowledge. Those at the bottom of the range, showed a much less comprehensive grasp of the course content. Those candidates at the bottom of the range generally performed less well during the project presentations and were less able to answer questions about their projects and the methodology used in the projects.

Response from college requested: **NO**

2.3 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the students' performance

It was noticeable that some of the students did not fully understand the techniques that they were using in their research projects. Indeed, some of the students did not know the fundamental principles of some of the techniques or assays that were being used in their research projects. It may be beneficial for future students to be briefed about the types of questions that might be asked during their project presentations so that they might be more prepared to answer some of these relatively basic questions.

Response from college requested: **NO**

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Simon Priestnall

Course Director Response:

It is acknowledged that the length and variety of questioning during the assessed project presentations did vary and as a result some students got more questions than others. In an attempt to standardise this for the coming academic year we will introduce a set question number per student to achieve some parity. The type of questions will necessarily vary depending on the project and so it might not be possible to state exactly what will be asked although we will endeavour to keep the type of questions/topics as close as possible.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

Please comment, as appropriate, on:

3.1 Assessment methods (relevance to learning objectives and curriculum)

The assessments methods used were similar to those employed in the previous year. They again were appropriate. The written portion of the examination covered the majority of the course curriculum. The project presentations required myself as an external examiner to be involved in posing questions and marking the presentations themselves. While I was delighted to be involved in this process, and was generally impressed with the standards of the student presentations, the use of an external examiner in this way to directly examine the students, is not something that is done now on many of the other courses.

Response from college requested: **NO**

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Simon Priestnall

Course Director Response:

Although we greatly appreciated the External examiners presence at the oral examinations and his excellent questions and professionalism we acknowledge that this is no longer appropriate and will use 2 internal examiners, independent of the course, to examine the students in 2016 and subsequently.

Action Required:

Identify two independent internal examiners to assess oral presentations.

Action Deadline:

30-Apr-2016

Action assigned to:

Simon Priestnall

3.2 Extent to which assessment procedures are rigorous

The exam questions were of the appropriate difficulty and a broad range of different assessment procedures were employed.

Response from college requested: **NO**

3.3 Consistency of the level of assessment with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)

The level of assessment was appropriate and consistently applied.

Response from college requested: **NO**

3.4 Standard of marking

This was generally of a consistent and high standard. There was little disagreement between internal examiners, when scripts or projects were double marked.

Response from college requested: **NO**

3.5 In your view, are the procedures for assessment and the determination of awards sound and fairly conducted? (e.g. Briefing, Exam administration, marking arrangements, Board of Examiners, participation by External Examiners)

Yes.

Response from college requested: NO

3.6 Opinion on changes to the assessment procedures from previous years in which you have examined

As far as I am aware, the assessment procedures were the same as last year.

Response from college requested: NO

3.7 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the procedures

The procedures were very good.

Response from college requested: NO

4.1 Comments I have made in previous years have been addressed to my satisfaction

N/A

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: NO

4.3 I approved the papers for the Examination

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

All the exam materials were made available to me.

Response from college requested: NO

4.4 I was able to scrutinise an adequate sample of students' work and marks to enable me to carry out my duties

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

I read the exam scripts for those students at the top, middle and bottom of the range. I confirmed that the marking was of an acceptable standard and was consistently applied throughout.

Response from college requested: NO

4.5 I attended the meeting of the Board of Examiners held to approve the results of the Examination

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: NO

4.6 Candidates were considered impartially and fairly

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: NO

4.7 The standards set for the awards are appropriate for qualifications at this level, in this subject

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: **NO**

4.8 The standards of student performance are comparable with similar programmes or subjects in other UK institutions with which I am familiar

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: **NO**

4.9 I have received enough support to carry out my role

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: **NO**

4.10 I have received sufficient information to carry out my role (where information was insufficient, please give details)

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: **NO**

4.11 Appropriate procedures and processes have been followed

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: **NO**

4.12 The processes for assessment and the determination of awards are sound

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: NO

Completion

If you have identified any areas of good practice, please comment more fully here. We may use information provided in our annual external examining report:

Do you have any suggestions for improvements based on experience at other institutes? We may use information provided in our annual external examining report:

The course continues to be excellent and in particular provides the students with an opportunity to gain exposure to cutting-edge research and to gain an insight into what might be involved in undertaking a Masters or PhD. The instruction in research methods and the experience in critical analysis of data will be invaluable to their future careers.

The examinations were rigorous and a broad range of assessments were used to evaluate the students.

Response from college requested: NO

