

Individual Report

Postgraduate Certificate in Risk Analysis in Health and Food Safety, 2013/14

Dr Matthew Denwood

The Programme

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

1.1 Course content

I was impressed with the content of the course, particularly given this was the first year that it has run.

Response from college requested: **NO**

1.3 Teaching methods

The balance of online and classroom based teaching methods seems to have worked well. I understand that it is important for much of the course to be delivered online to allow students to participate more easily from abroad, but I also think a block of time to be spent on campus is beneficial.

Response from college requested: **NO** Whilst agreeing that time spent on campus is beneficial we are considering moving the course 100% online to ensure its long term viability.

1.5 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the Programme

Additional comments were provided and minuted at the examiners meeting

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

There were only 4 students, but they seemed to have performed well.

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

The candidates seemed to have a good grasp of the fundamental theory of risk assessment, although there was more variability in their ability to apply these concepts.

Response from college requested: **NO**

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

The students performed technically well, but the level of English language in the reports could use some improvement.

Response from college requested: **NO**

Assessment Process

Please comment, as appropriate, on:

3.1 Assessment methods (relevance to learning objectives and curriculum)

The assessment methods are appropriate, and I like the use of a practical element (use of @risk software) during examinations. One point discussed at the examiners meeting was to focus on more output oriented testing for the practical elements to allow for easier (and more defensible) marking structures.

Response from college requested: NO

We concur with the examiner's comments and will revise the assessments accordingly.

Action Deadline: CD by April 2015

3.2 Extent to which assessment processes are rigorous

The exams are double marked and there was good agreement between examiners. Some of the examination (and report writing) is conducted remotely, and the possibility of collusion was discussed at the meeting.

Response from college requested: NO

We acknowledge the examiner's point and will ensure in the future that the potential of collusion is minimized and summative assessment will be completed in a controlled and secure environment in the future.

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

It is consistent with the relevant standards

Response from college requested: NO

3.4 Standard of marking

There was good agreement between markers, and excellent feedback comments provided to the students. In my opinion the wording of the 17-point marking scale makes it extremely difficult to award marks outside the range of 48-75% (which was the range of marks given for this course), but this issue is beyond the control of the course leaders.

We note the examiner's comments but in the experience from other courses is that staff use the full range of marks.

Response from college requested: **NO**

3.5 Opinion on changes to the assessment process from previous years in which you have examined

NA

Response from college requested: **NO**

Assessment Procedures

Please comment, as appropriate, on:

4.1 In your view, are the processes for assessment and the determination of awards sound and fairly conducted?

Yes

Response from college requested: **NO**

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

NA

Response from college requested: **NO**

General Statements

5.3 I approved the papers for the Examination

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: NO

5.4 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:

Response from college requested: NO

5.5 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

5.6 Candidates were considered impartially and fairly

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: NO

5.7 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

5.8 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

5.9 I have received enough support to carry out my role

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: **NO**

5.10 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**

5.11 Appropriate procedures and processes have been followed

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: **NO**

5.12 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:

Encouraging a spirit of collaboration in the students (especially with such a small cohort) is very beneficial, and seems to have been done well with this cohort. Continued access to and participation in online forums is extremely important for courses that are partly distance learning. I would recommend making the skills-focussed elements of examinations as objective as possible, and possibly breaking some of the questions down into smaller sub-questions would help to achieve this.

Response from college requested: NO

We welcome this suggestion and will take this forward in subsequent years.

