



Programme Specification

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Programme title	MSc Research in Health Practice
Awarding Institution//Body	University of Bath
Teaching Institution	University of Bath
Programme accredited by (including date of accreditation)	n/a
Subject Benchmark Statement*Subject Benchmark Statement:	None available at present for this subject area.
Date of Specification preparation/revision	
Applicable to cohorts	
Programme Approved by	

Synopsis and academic coherence of programme

The Pg Certificate Research Methods in Health Practice and Pg Diploma and MSc in Research in Health Practice is a modular, postgraduate (M) level programme which has been designed to meet the professional needs of a range of health practitioners who are interested in developing their skills as researchers in practice.

The programme offers the flexibility to enable students to build their knowledge and skills in designing and conducting programmes of research.

The programme has the following underpinning principles:

- Evidence based
- Problem solving, practice-orientated approach
- Emphasis on reflective practice
- Designed to support the needs of those working in multi-professional teams

Educational aims of the programme

Pg Certificate Research Methods in Health Practice and Pg Diploma and MSc in Research in Health Practice aims to:

- Provide postgraduate level education and continuing professional development (CPD) in a flexible manner to meet the individual learning needs of health and social care practitioners drawn from a broad practice base
- Develop a culture of research on and in practice to enhance and improve the patient and service user experience
- Explore the challenges and issues presented by multi-professional working in different practice contexts
- Encourage students to access, appraise and utilise the best sources of evidence
- Develop and nurture a philosophy of reflective practice

Structure and Content:

The Programme seeks to develop the participants' knowledge of a range of research techniques and approaches to research design. This is achieved through completion of M-level units in research-oriented subjects and designing and planning for practice-based research, including a thorough assessment of the implications of their research, and specifically, ethical considerations.

Students will study individual units and accumulate credit toward the award of Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma. On successful completion of the Diploma, students can take a further dissertation 'unit' to achieve the award of MSc. See appendix A for a chart illustrating student study options.

Programme Format and Structure

The programme has been developed primarily to provide a supportive and motivating learning environment to enable working practitioners to develop their research skills to enable them to conduct small scale research projects that impact on practice.

Pg Certificate Research Methods in Health Practice

For the award of Pg Certificate Research Methods in Health Practice candidates must complete 30 credits in year 1 (see Appendix 1).

Pg Diploma Research in Health Practice

For the award of Pg Diploma Research in Health Practice candidates must complete 60 credits across units in year 1 and year 2 as stated in the table above. All compulsory units in stages 1 and 2 must be taken and the remaining credits may be chosen from the options listed in stage 2 (year 2) (see Appendix 1).

Students must demonstrate satisfactory completion of programme level learning outcomes 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11 and 12.

MSc Research in Health Practice

For the award of MSc Research in Health Practice candidates must complete 60 credits as above as well as the Masters Project and Dissertation (HL50088) (see Appendix 1).

Students must demonstrate satisfactory completion of programme level learning outcomes 1-12.

Transfer of Professional Doctorate students to the programme

If students have been registered on the Professional Doctorate Programme but choose not to continue on that programme, they may submit their research idea in the form of the assessment for HL50089 and then transfer to the second year of the Masters programme.

In addition, students registered on the Professional Doctorate in Health Programme who fail Unit HL60083 (Research project preparation and planning) of that Programme of Study (a D-level unit) may resubmit their coursework to be assessed as suitable for submission for Unit HL50089 (Research in practice-preparation and planning) (M level) and use this credit in contribution toward one of the taught masters level awards available within the programme.

Continuing Professional Development

It is intended to offer students maximum flexibility to allow them to study individual units without progressing to one of the awards and to allow students to take breaks between units if they wish. The students studying modules on a standalone basis for continuing professional development (CPD) will have the choice to undertake the final unit assessment to gain credit for the unit and will be provided with a 'certificate of completion' and a transcript confirming the credit that they have obtained.

• Knowledge & Understanding:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Select, value and use a range of research methods, techniques and approaches in different contexts, as appropriate and evaluate their appropriateness, reliability and representativeness, (assessed by coursework) <i>[Pg Certificate, Pg Diploma, MSc]</i>2. Make informed judgements on complex issues in professional, health related and other specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data (assessed by coursework) <i>[Pg Diploma, MSc]</i>3. Design and obtain the necessary ethical approvals to conduct a piece of small scale research, (assessed by coursework) <i>[MSc]</i>.
• Intellectual Skills:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Locate, critically evaluate and utilise evidence from published sources (evidence-based practice) <i>[Pg Certificate, Pg Diploma and MSc]</i>5. Design and evaluate small scale research projects <i>[Pg Diploma/MSc]</i>6. Undertake a small scale research project and write up the findings in the form of a dissertation <i>[MSc]</i>
• Professional Practical Skills:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">7. Demonstrate high level communication skills through the development of effective working relationships with both patient/client groups and other health professionals <i>[Pg Certificate, Pg Diploma and MSc]</i>.8. Use evidence available at the forefront of practice to inform practice activity and decisions and to be aware of the value, relevance and reliability of such evidence (assessed by coursework) <i>[Pg Certificate, Pg Diploma, MSc]</i>9. Apply and evaluate critical reflection as a tool for practice and professional enhancement <i>(assessed by dissertation) [MSc]</i>
• Transferable/Key Skills:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">10. Present complex ideas effectively, and in a range of ways, to communicate practice developments to a broad public (assessed by coursework) <i>[Pg Diploma, MSc]</i>11. Use web based learning technologies to develop and fulfil a negotiated personal development plan (assessed by contributions throughout the programme) <i>[Pg Certificate, Pg Diploma, MSc]</i>12. Reflect on practice as a researcher and improve as a result of this experience (assessed through coursework and dissertation) <i>[Pg Cert, Pg Dip, MSc]</i>

Summary of assessment and progression regulations

Progression Regulations and Awards

Part time distance/e-learning.

Certificate: Minimum One Year Maximum Three Years

Diploma: Minimum Two Years, Maximum Four Years

MSc: Minimum Three Years

Maximum Five years for the MSc

Summative assessment will vary between units but will typically include some of the following:

- Written assignments of 3000 words
- Compilation of Portfolios of evidence of research work in practice
- Individual presentations (for details please refer to individual unit templates)

Students will normally have 12 weeks from the commencement of their unit to submit the assessment for units HL50079, HL50082 and 24 weeks for unit HL50105.

Units to be studied for the Pg Dip will normally be studied in sequence, depending on the availability of units from the other programmes.

There will be a Board of Examiners for Units held at the end of each unit. To enable participants to progress within a cohort, they will be allowed to progress on to the next unit of study whilst waiting for confirmation of marks from a Board of Examiners for Units. Participants will not, however, be permitted to progress on from that unit until the marks from the outstanding unit have been received. This will prevent participants from studying a large number of units without receiving feedback and advice on their progress. A Board of Examiners for programmes will be held twice a year to enable participants to deal with matters of progress.

Maximum and Minimum periods of study

The minimum period of study will be 1 year for the Pg Cert, 2 years Pg Dip and 3 years MSc. The maximum period of study for the MSc will be 5 years part time.

Assessment Procedures and Marking Criteria

General Principles:

Marking Scheme and Criteria

Range	Category	Criteria
70 and above	Distinction	Work of excellent standard reflecting outstanding knowledge of material and critical ability and a high level of competence in clinical areas
40-69	Pass	Work with well-defined focus, reflecting a good working knowledge of material and its critical assessment and a safe level of competence in clinical areas
0.39/0	Fail	Lacking in basic knowledge and critical ability or in clinical competence

Units which have been marked as Designated Essential Units (DEUs) cannot be condoned. Units that are not DEUs may be condoned if the student achieves the condonable threshold (35%-39%) and they have not exceed the maximum number of units that may be condoned (20% of the taught units) which equates to 12 credits for the Diploma and 6 credits for the Certificate, Dissertation/Project Credits cannot be condoned..

All units of this programme will be assessed at the M level. There are no professional body or statutory requirements embedded within the regulations for the programme.

Pg Certificate

The programme of units for the Pg Certificate are all compulsory.

Pg Diploma

Units HL50090 and HL50159 are compulsory. The student can undertake Health Policy in an International Context (HL50158) **OR** choose the remaining 12 credits drawn from existing M-level programmes offered by the Department for Health or related departments which have a health orientation.

Credit will be awarded for successful completion of a unit. This is normally defined as attaining 40 or above for each unit studied, as described above. Where a unit's assessment is made up of more than one component - the student must pass each component of the assessment. There is no compensation of marks between units.

Award Criteria

Award of credit

Credits will be awarded for successful achievement of the learning outcomes specified for each taught unit. This is normally defined as the achievement of at least 40 of the total marks available from the summative assessments. If the unit is marked as a non-DEU (i.e. not a designated essential unit) it may be possible for the student to receive credit if the student achieves the condonable threshold (35%-39%) and they have not exceed the maximum number of units that may be condoned (see above assessment procedures).

Awards will be determined solely on the accumulation of the appropriate amount/ volume of credit - there are no specified alternative weightings within the programme.

Criteria for distinction award

Postgraduate Certificate

A Postgraduate Certificate is awarded when a student gains at least 30 credits at M level. A Pg Certificate with Distinction is awarded when a student gains an average of at least 70 overall. A Pg Certificate with Merit is awarded when a student gains an average of at least 60 overall.

Postgraduate Diploma

A Postgraduate Diploma is awarded when a student gains at least 60 credits at M level. A Pg Diploma with Distinction is awarded when a student gains an average of at least 70 overall. A Pg Diploma with Merit is awarded when a student gains an average of at least 60 overall.

An MSc is awarded when a student gains at least 90 credits at M level.

An MSc with Distinction is awarded when a student gains a taught stage average of at least 70 and at least 70 in the dissertation.

Consequences of Failure - Taught components

Deferral: A student may be permitted to make a first attempt at an individual assessment/examination if they have requested deferral from that unit. Requests should be made to the Director of studies before the due date for the assignment. The Director of Studies will consider the implications of deferral for the student's progress. If a request for deferral is not received prior to the due date for the assignment and the assignment is not submitted then the student will be deemed to have failed the unit.

Referral: A student is permitted one further attempt, following initial failure, at an individual assessment/examination. The Programme Board of Examiners, having due consideration for the academic standards of the award, will determine the nature of the re-assessment requirement.

In this instance the threshold standard for the assessment will be 40 and marks following referred assessment will be recorded on the transcript but will not be carried forward for the purposes of grading the award. If the unit is marked as a non-DEU (i.e. not a designated essential unit) it may be possible for the student to receive credit if the student achieves the condonable threshold (35%-39%) on re-assessment and they have not exceed the maximum number of units that may be condoned (see above assessment procedures).

Dissertation/project credits (DPC) - can only be retrieved if the fail mark is in the range 35%-39%.

Re-submission should normally be within 12 months of notification of failure. Students will not be permitted to re-sit the whole programme. Credit for units will be given a 'lifetime' after which it will no longer count towards an award. This lifetime will normally be 5 years from commencement of the Unit unless otherwise stated in the Unit Description.

Progression

TSA Rule: Progression to the MSc dissertation phase will be permitted normally only after students have satisfied the following criteria:

full and successful completion of the taught part of the programme with an overall taught stage average of at least 40%, **SRUs rule:** All units required for successful completion of a stage must be passed at either the first or second attempt, (or in the case of non-DEUs condoned after marginal failure on the first or second attempt) before progression can be permitted. Please see the table above for the list of stage required units for each stage.

Maximum retrieval rule: no more than 18 credits for taught units (TSC) towards a Master or Diploma award may be retrieved after failure by means of passing supplementary assessment. A maximum of 12 credits for taught units (TSC) towards a Certificate Award may be retrieved after failure by supplementary assessment.

Schedule for Board of Examiners and Timings of Re-assessment

Once assessed work has been marked/moderated and viewed by the external examiner, all marks are considered by a Board of Examiners for Units (BEU) – these typically meet at the end of each unit. Once the marks have been officially agreed by a BEU, they are then collated and subsequently considered by a Board of Examiners for Programmes (BEP).

Decisions on condoning and/or supplementary assessment requirements will be made at the first available full BEP *during* the taught stage to avoid the student having to wait until they have completed all their taught units – typically at the end of each year. Any decisions regarding condoning and/or supplementary assessment requirements will be based on the Persistent Generic PGT Rules *for the whole taught stage* (<http://www.bath.ac.uk/registry/nfa/nfaar-pgt-appendix-11.pdf>). It should be noted however that, very occasionally, any decisions made *during* the stage may have to be reconsidered at a subsequent BEP, depending on the students' performance during the remainder of the stage, taking into account the timeframe in which supplementary assessment has to be completed. Interim sub-BEPs *may* meet at specific point(s) during the taught stage of the programme (typically in enter month) to monitor student performance.

BEPs meet at the *end* of the taught stage to make formal progression decisions. Dependant on the submission date for dissertations, formal award decisions (including progression with resubmitted dissertations, exit with a lesser award, and failing) may be recommended at other BEPs.

Details of Work Placements Requirements / Work Based Learning / Industrial Training Requirements

A significant element of the research project undertaken by participants will be based in their work or practice base. This work will be facilitated by a practice-based mentor and supervised by an academic supervisor from the University of Bath.

Details of Study Abroad Requirements

Details of Professional Accreditation

Admissions Criteria including APL/APEL arrangements

Generally candidates must be able to satisfy the general admissions regulations of the University of Bath for a postgraduate award. Normally we would require an honours degree, ideally at 2:1 or its equivalent from a recognised overseas institution (and normally 2 years post qualification, graduation or registration experience in an appropriate practice context.).

Those applicants whose first language is not English must be able to demonstrate a satisfactory level of both spoken and written English. This will normally take the form of scores of at least 6.5 on all elements of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), or of a score of at least 580 on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) (paper) or 237 in the computer-based test.

Specifically Candidates must normally have a post in practice within a health, social care, education or clinical/medical context.

Accreditation of Prior Learning

Students who have studied units from postgraduate programmes offered by other institutions, but who have not completed that programme and received an award, may be eligible to transfer credit for this prior learning. This is considered on a case by case basis but as a minimum the course or programme in question must be recognised by the providing institution as being at M level. All requests must contain an element of assessed work.

An accreditation Sub Committee will be established within the Programme, chaired by the Director of Studies, to oversee this activity, and guidance on the preparation of Portfolios of Evidence (if relevant and appropriate) will be provided to applicants and the external examiner. The university's standard guidelines on proportions of credit which can be recognised from other institutions will apply.

Details of Support Available to Students

Department and Programme Specific Support Information

The following support will be available to students:

- Access to Personal Development Adviser on-line and academic supervisor (via email and online discussion boards) and by telephone and in person where appropriate
- Support from Unit convenor through individual feedback and moderation of discussion boards
- Peer support from other participants as part of the in-built programme activities and facilitated discussion
- Programme co-ordinator support via the VLE, email and phone;
- Introductory and Full Programme Handbook
- A variety of learning resources accessed via a programme Virtual Learning Environment, including:
 - Learning resources in text, digital, video and audio format
 - Online reflective logs
 - Online PDP system and support
- Web-based support individual support via VLE including 'chat-room' for academic and peer support
- Programme web page; University's postgraduate prospectus.