Programme Specification

Section 1: Basic Data

Awarding institution/body	University of the West of England
Teaching institution	University of the West of England
School responsible for programme	School of Life Sciences
Programme accredited by	Chartered Institute of Environmental Health
Highest award title	MSc Environmental Health
Default award title	
Interim award title	PGD Environmental Health PGC Environmental Health
Modular Scheme title (if different)	
UCAS code (or other coding system if relevant)	
Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group(s)	
On-going/valid until* (*delete as appropriate/insert end date)	
Valid from (insert date if appropriate)	September 2009

Authorised by… **Date:…**

Version Code 2.0

Section 2: Educational aims of the programme

This programme provides vocational postgraduate education in environmental health for graduates who are interested in the promotion and protection of human health and welfare. The programme is designed to enable students to develop an in-depth understanding of the relationship between humans and the environment and to develop the knowledge, experience and skills to equip them for careers as environmental health practitioners in a public health context within public and private sector employment fields which includes, local authorities, NHS bodies, government agencies and industry or commerce. Students satisfactorily completing the programme and the required practical training and professional assessments of the accrediting body, the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH), are eligible to become registered Environmental Health Practitioners.

Students entering the programme must have a scientific foundation at graduate level that provides a basis to develop professional and advanced skills associated with the identification, assessment, evaluation and control of environmental health stressors and protection of public health. The scientific basis of the programme is developed and integrated in a multi and interdisciplinary context with the technological, legal, social, political, economic, managerial and educational considerations required for promoting and protecting health.

The programme is open to recent graduates and to those who are more experienced, for example those already working in the environmental health field. The range of student academic backgrounds and experience will be utilised in engaging students in issue and problem based learning and practical and group work situations. Upon graduation students will have acquired knowledge and have developed the necessary skills to be able to make a positive contribution to existing environmental health practice and respond to and initiate change in line with contemporary and emergent issues.

The general aims of the programme are to enable students

- to acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills to produce new ideas, concepts and solutions.
- to apply their learning in the workplace.
- to acquire professional and transferable skills
- to advance their learning
- to contribute to their career development in environmental health.

The specific aims of the programme are to:

- Provide the educational and resource environment which will enable students to develop:
    - an understanding of the subject of environmental health and its contribution to the promotion and protection of public health, from a holistic, multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspective.
    - explore the relationship between human activities and environmental systems and the consequent health outcomes, and appreciate the wider influences such as structural, societal and lifestyle factors on the promotion of sustainable environments and human health on a local, regional and global scale.
    - the ability to identify and judge risk and assess human health outcomes and select the most appropriate intervention option from a range of

possible solutions.
- the field, laboratory, investigative and analytical skills to undertake independent investigations and analyses of environmental health problems, and the presentational skills necessary to communicate their findings to audiences with a variety of backgrounds in a range of contexts.
- ability to work both independently and as an effective team member and to recognise the role and approaches to working with others, including other professionals and community groups, in tackling environmental health problems.
- study an area of professional practice in depth through a research project.

- Create a friendly and supportive atmosphere that will enable individual students to use the graduate learning experience at UWE and the Graduate School in the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences, to provide a postgraduate foundation for life long learning, continuing professional development and future careers
- Provide a curriculum that is enhanced by a balance of experience from research, consultancy and professional practice.

Section 3: Learning outcomes of the programme

The award route provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas:

A Knowledge and understanding

This sub-section summarises broadly what a student, on successful completion of the proposed programme (or at different stages within it) is expected to know and understand about the subject matter.

Learning outcomes	Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategies
A Knowledge and understanding of: • the need for both a multi-disciplinary and an interdisciplinary approach in knowledge and understanding of health and the environment, drawing from the natural and social sciences. • the discourses surrounding the concept of health and its representations and measurement and the diverse determinants of health • health as a human experience mediated by individual, societal and global contexts. • methods of acquiring, interpreting and analysing information and data with a critical understanding of the appropriate contexts for their use in practice • The contemporary issues at the	**Teaching/learning methods and strategies:** Learning outcomes are integrated across the programme, and are acquired through a variety of methods including lectures, field-based and practice visits (half- and whole-day visits, residential) practicals, case-studies and workshops, supported by handouts, case-study materials, Blackboard virtual learning environment, CD-Roms and other audio-visual material. Achievement of learning outcomes is through a range of teaching and learning strategies including: group work/pairs working; discussion and seminar participation and problem based learning. Additional support is provided through professional and academic subject experts in the field. Throughout, the learner is required to

forefront of studies on health and the environment and the sustainable and integrated approaches to management and resolution of problems. • The theoretical and professional rationales concerning health and environmental interventions • the use of research and practice based inquiry to create, interpret and apply knowledge in the disciplines and in their own contexts.	undertake independent reading both to supplement and consolidate what is being taught and learnt and to broaden and deepen individual knowledge and understanding of the subject. **Assessment:** Assessment of knowledge and understanding is through assessed coursework which includes projects, written reports, poster, reflective portfolios, examinations and presentations.

B Intellectual Skills

This sub-section indicates those intellectual (thinking) skills of which a student is expected to be able to give evidence on completion of the proposed programme.

B Intellectual Skills	**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**
• Critically evaluate current research and advanced scholarship. • Apply relevant theories to the analysis of and management of processes and outcomes. • Create, identify and evaluate options and provide original solutions to problems sometimes with incomplete data. • Challenge the status quo by demonstrating intellectual flexibility and lateral thinking. • Learn through reflection and critical evaluation on practice and experience. • Recognising the moral and ethical issues of enquiry and investigation and appreciating the need for professional codes of conduct • Evaluate methodologies, develop critiques of them and where appropriate propose new hypotheses. • Design and implement a research programme, analyse the findings, draw conclusions and make recommendations.	Intellectual skills are developed through discussion, reflection, group exercises, and critical analysis of published material, cases and problem solving, the research modules and independent project. **Assessment** A variety of assessment methods is employed. All assess a learner's ability to demonstrate intellectual skills, and their application. Testing of intellectual skills is through assessed coursework, project work, presentation, problem based case studies and written commentary, and the research project report.

C Subject, Professional and Practical Skills

This sub-section indicates subject-specific, professional or practical skills that are expected to be developed by a student successfully completing the programme.

C Subject/Professional/Practical Skills	**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**
• subject knowledge, technical and professional skills to analyse and solve the range of contemporary and emergent environmental health problems • analyse health and environmental information and data that may be drawn from a wide range of disciplines; • effective problem solving and decision making using appropriate quantitative and qualitative skills including identifying, formulating and solving problems; the ability to create, identify and evaluate options • plan, conduct, and report on investigations, including the use of secondary data. • collect, record and analyse data and information using appropriate techniques in the field and laboratory. • apply a range of disciplines to satisfy the needs of society for sustainable and healthy environments and the promotion of human health	Achievement of learning outcomes is through a range of teaching and learning strategies including: group work/pairs working; discussion and seminar participation and problem and practice based learning, supported by case-study materials, Blackboard virtual learning environment, CD-Roms and other audio-visual material. Additional support is provided through professional and academic subject experts in the field. Throughout, the learner is required to undertake independent reading both to supplement and consolidate what is being taught and learnt and to broaden and ground hislher individual knowledge and understanding of the subject within a practice context **Assessment:** Assessment is through assessed coursework and examinations which includes practical assessment, projects, written reports, presentations, poster and portfolio and research project

D Transferable Skills and other attributes

This sub-section indicates the general skills which successful completion of the programme is likely to enhance.

D Transferable skills and other attributes	**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**
• Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems • Act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks • Demonstrate interpersonal skills of effective listening, negotiating and persuasion • Demonstrate self-awareness and sensitivity to diversity in people and different situations. • Perform effectively in a team and project environment • Communicate effectively using a range of media including through reports • Seek , retrieve and use information effectively • Demonstrate the ability to make decisions in complex and unpredictable situations • Demonstrate the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development • Demonstrate learning through reflection on practice and experience.	Acquisition of skills is integrated through a range of teaching and learning strategies including:- Group work/pairs working; discussion; action planning; cases studies and role play, problem based learning. Students are assisted to develop literature searching skills via IT media and in the use of Blackboard for resources and interactive engagement with peers. **Assessment** All the transferable skills are encapsulated in all modules within the programme. Students will be encouraged to consider how they might apply them outside their experience of their current studies. Skills assessment is through formative and summative assessment.

Section 4: Programme structure

STRUCTURE DIAGRAM- All modules are compulsory

Students are required to complete all of the modules for the award of an accredited MSc.

Year 1	Environmental Health Principles and Practice (40) credits)	Pollution and Safety Management (20 credits)
	Epidemiology and Research Methodology(20)	Buildings, Housing and the Residential Environment (20 credits)
	Food Control (20 credits)	Research Project Skills (20 credits)
Year 2	Dissertation (40 credits)	

All Compulsory modules

Module Code	Name	Credits
USSJPT-40-M	**Environmental Health Principles and Practice**	**40**
USSJNR-20-M	**Pollution and Safety Management**	**20**
USSJPP-20-3	**Food Control**	**20**
USSJPS-20-3	**Buildings, Housing and the Residential Environment**	**20**
UZVS54-20-M	**Epidemiology and Research Methodology**	**20**
UZVS56-20-M	**Research Project Skills**	**20**
UZVS59-40-M	**Dissertation**	**40**

Interim Awards:

Post Graduate Certificate 60 credits

PGC in Environmental Health Studies is awarded on satisfactory completion of a total of 60 credits from the compulsory modules listed above
This interim award is not accredited by the CIEH

Post Graduate Diploma 120 Credits

PGD in Environmental Health is awarded on satisfactory completion of 120 credits from the compulsory modules listed above. This interim award is not accredited by the CIEH. Individual application may be made to CIEH to accept this interim award for a student's professional registration, where evidence is submitted by the student, of completing a suitable environmental health research project in an alternative degree programme and this is accepted by CIEH.

Award/s:

Master of Science 180 Credits

MSc in Environmental Health is awarded for students satisfactorily completing the whole study programme of 180 credits.

Section 5: Entry requirements

Entry is open to those who:

i. hold a first degree, normally of lower second class classification or above, in a science based discipline OR

ii. hold a first degree, normally of lower second class classification or above in other disciplines and can demonstrate that they have attained equivalence to the science foundation necessary for the programme.

Section 6: Assessment Regulations

2009-2010 Academic Regulations (Subject to professional variation as required by the professional body Chartered Institute of Environmental Health)

Section 7: Student learning: distinctive features and support

7.1 Curriculum Design, Content and Organisation

All students will be registered for the MSc in Environmental Health and will undertake all the appropriate assessments.

The programme will have a four-day induction event that will introduce the programme and its organisational context, prepare students for studying at Masters level, and distribute reading and other materials in advance of the taught programme. Students will have an introduction to university facilities for effective learning including the library, project room, virtual learning environment; computer aided learning facilities and safety in laboratories and fieldwork. Students will elect to study a full time or part time programme.

Full Time Study Programme

Students do not require employer sponsorship for placement training before undertaking this study programme. Students may seek and complete some initial training with a local authority environmental health service or other public or private organisation that includes environmental health work, before starting their study in September. This period of practice can be included as part of the CIEH required work based experiential learning portfolio. Students then undertake the full period of academic study for up to 24 months which includes two taught semesters and a research phase. Students may elect to submit their dissertation early in which case the programme can be completed in 15 months

Part Time Study Programme

Flexible part time study attendance patterns are available supported by on line learning resources enabling study away from the University. The part time programme is especially suited to students in work or those who are distant from the university. Typically part-time students attend on one day per week and undertake the full programme of study for up to 36 months which includes four taught semesters and the research phase. Students may elect to submit their dissertation early in which case the programme can be completed in 27 months

Programme Delivery

The programme is delivered in semesters, on two days per week according to the University calendar. Assessment periods occur at the end of each semester.
All students have to attend a number of study programmes delivered as one-week blocks. The induction, the field trip and practical food inspection are all delivered this way. These are compulsory studies for all students. Part-time students may need to make special arrangements to be absent from work for these weeks. Assessments (exams and seminars) are scheduled separately from study and students may need to make particular arrangements to attend.

The University studies are structured into modules incorporating the study of the main environmental health concerns, namely:
a. public health
b. food safety and health
c. occupational health.
d. housing and the residential environment
e. environmental pollution

Core modules in the programme deliver curriculum 2007 determined by CIEH as essential to accreditation. All modules are studied as part of the programme.

Work Based Learning

There is no minimum period for work based learning set by the professional body and no specific requirement about where this learning is undertaken, except that it must be relevant to environmental health related work in order that professional assessments can be passed. Work based learning can be undertaken in a variety of public and private sector organisations engaged with environmental health related work. Placement opportunities are publicised to students as they become available via notice boards and online placement support information.

Field and Practical Visits

A particular feature of the programme is the number of special visits and field trips included within the study programme, these have included a week long visit to Brussels to study the operation of the European Parliament and Commission in relation to environment and health policy and legislation; a practical food inspection course at Langford Veterinary School; field visits to an award winning landfill site; visiting a major food processing facility; a tour of historic housing and visits to local authority Environmental Health Services department.

7.2 Teaching Learning and Assessment

In line with the University's teaching and learning policies, this programme takes a student-centred approach to learning by allowing students to take control of aspects of their learning and providing a learning environment that stimulates active participation and engagement with the learning process and reflection on their knowledge, experience and practice.
The programme seeks to create an environment that will stimulate students to take responsibility for aspects of their learning, while tutors take responsibility for facilitating that learning. Module learning outcomes have been designed to ensure that students meet the overall programme learning outcomes on completion of the programme. All students learning will be undertaken through modules which integrate

the development of knowledge, understanding, intellectual and transferable skills. Students will be required to undertake additional reading to develop their knowledge and understanding, to prepare for study, practical, field and block study weeks and to enable them to define and complete their assessment tasks and to capitalise on their current and prior experiences with each other.

A variety of assessment methods is incorporated within the programme to cater for a diversity of student strengths and abilities. Although this document focuses on summative assessment, the course team recognises the importance of both summative and formative assessment activity, and feedback, as an integral part of the learning and teaching process. All assessments comply with the University Assessment Policy and 2009-2010 academic regulations.

7.3 Student Support and Guidance

Delivery of the programme will utilise appropriate academics tutors from FHLS together with a range of other learning resources and processes as indicated in the module specifications. Students will be issued with module information before the module starts including the module teaching and learning plan and the module assessment. Students will have access to on-line resources and the UWE library, which provides tailored services for remote and part-time students as well as a dedicated environmental learning resources room, technical and administrative staff support and the FHLS postgraduate study facilities. In addition a student advisor provides guidance to students in directing students to university resources and support services.

Section 8 Reference points/benchmarks

This specification sets out how external and internal reference points have been drawn upon in programme design.

1. QAA reference points

The programme has been developed in accordance with QAA statements on postgraduate qualifications, and in relation to QAA Masters level descriptors. As yet QAA subject benchmark statements are not available for disciplines relevant to Masters level for this programme. However, the structure of the proposed degree is fully consistent with the QAA position statement on postgraduate qualifications.

2. Other external reference points are academic subject and professional body engagements, Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, government bodies and agencies, the Health Development Agency and Skills for Health project and local government and other employer links. Specifically:-

   - Professional body engagements and new curriculum development. We will be seeking accreditation to the CIEH "Curriculum 2007. A curriculum leading to the registration of environmental health practitioners" (CIEH 2007). The Curriculum Matrix provides an indication of how the programme relates to Curriculum 2007.
   - Public health workforce and capacity development – The Health Development Agency (2003) – "Environmental Health 2012: A key partner in delivering the public health agenda",
   - Consultation on standards for specialist public health and for public health practice standards Skills for Health UK (2003)
   - Staff external activities and key contact inputs to Geography Earth and Environmental Sciences subject centres.
   - Staff external activities and academic and professional practice input to environmental health at national regional and local level.

3. Internal reference points are the FHLS programme team academic and professional practice expertise and experience together with the FHLS planning objectives for postgraduate development supported through a Faculty Graduate School and postgraduate facilities. Specifically:-

   - FHLS academic strengths in the environmental health core subject areas and in multidisciplinary public health which is being strongly advanced and supported by government.
   - FHLS established professionally accredited and vocational environmental health, environmental sciences, public health and occupational safety and health undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.
   - FHLS applied interdisciplinary research, consultancy and professional practice and educational training and development which supports national and regional government agencies (FSA EA, HPA), the health sector, local authorities, the professions, business and industry through Faculty Research Centres

4. QAA precepts and Masters level descriptors

The programme has been designed to reflect the QAA precept that there is a balance between a strong and effective skills base relevant to the expectations of future

employers and knowledge of current theory, practice and research.
The programme emphasises the development of both personal and professional skills, in particular those of the CIEH professional curriculum and employers as essential for the practice of environmental health. The programme takes as its foundation knowledge base that provided by a first degree in science. It builds upon this base to develop a critical awareness and reflection in students that encourages a flexible, creative and original approach to practice. A framework that is both constructed and elaborated by advanced understanding of established and evolving theoretical paradigms, research and practice based evidence and awareness of professional and ethical guidelines enables this approach.

The programme is designed to develop a holistic, interdisciplinary approach to the study of environmental health throughout the programme of study and evident from the breadth of the subject matter, the range of subject specialisms of the tutors involved and the existence of integrating 'issues' , case study and problem based learning. Human health : environment interactions are investigated in an holistic context requiring sophisticated understanding of certain issues and intervention approaches which are studied in depth in the core modules, for example; climate change and local air quality; indoor environments, land contamination; food hazard analysis and risk, residential regeneration and sustainable communities, health incidents and protection, workplace risk assessment. This is underpinned by the project module.

The QAA Masters level descriptors reference the programme learning outcomes and enable students to have demonstrated the following knowledge and understanding:

- systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current environmental health problems and of new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of knowledge as applied in professional practice contexts.
- comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research, advanced scholarship or practice;
- originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in an interdisciplinary and practice context;
- conceptual understanding that enables the student:

  - to evaluate critically current research ,advanced scholarship and practice in the discipline; and
  - to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.
  - to initiate and respond to change

holders of the qualification will be able to demonstrate skills that**:**

- deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist, non-specialist and lay audiences;
- demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level;
- continue to advance their knowledge, understanding and practice, and to

develop new skills to a high level

and will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment and contribution to society at large requiring:

  - the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility;
  - decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations;
  - consideration of the holistic influences on people and organisations;
  - independent learning ability required for life long learning and continuing professional development.

The University's mission statement

The programme aims to support students across a spectrum of activity and foster an appreciation of the impact of human activity in environmental systems and the wider determinants of health. The programme seeks to deliver a relevant and practical curriculum which leads to high quality employment outcomes for our students who are then able to make a positive contribution to society, through the promotion and protection of public health and effective management of environmental resources.

One of the strengths of the programme is the participation of students from a variety of cultures and experiences. We support this diversity by recognising the different needs of students and valuing their active participation and engagement. Team work projects, block practical courses and fieldtrips encourage inclusivity and an appreciation of others cultures and beliefs, whilst the university's committee structure including student representation at all levels encourages an appreciation of democracy and a feeling of ownership and responsibility. The needs of the South West and wider region for environmental health skill and career development are explicitly supported by this programme

University teaching and learning policies

In line with the University's teaching and learning policies, this programme takes a student-centred approach to learning by allowing students to take control of their learning and to develop individual participation and autonomy in learning and provides a stimulating and collegiate postgraduate environment facilitated through tutor support and the faculty's Graduate school. Module learning outcomes have been designed to ensure that students meet the overall programme learning outcomes on completion of the programme.

A variety of assessment methods are incorporated within the programme to cater for a diversity of student strengths and abilities. Although this document focuses on summative assessment, the course team recognises the importance of both summative and formative assessment activity, and feedback, as an integral part of the learning and teaching process. All assessments comply with the University Assessment Policy and MAR.

Research, consultancy and professional practice.

Staff in the faculty are research and professionally active and consequently programme development, formal teaching and project work is underpinned and informed by current research and practice. Thus all staff contributing to the

programme have an established record in supervising postgraduate research-based projects, and students may have the opportunity to carry out their projects working alongside research staff. Furthermore, there is on-going and developing interdisciplinary research which is encouraged and maintained by Faculty Research centres. Professional practice and research development in the subject is informed through close work with the accrediting professional body, the CIEH and its advisory committees at national regional and local level and bodies such as the FSA, HPA and HSE

Conclusion

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of individual modules can be found in module specifications. These are available on the University Intranet. Programme monitoring and review may lead to changes to approved programmes. There may be a time lag between approval of such changes/modifications and their incorporation into an authorised programme specification. Enquiries about any recent changes to the programme made since this specification was authorised should be made to the relevant Faculty Administrator.