



University of the  
West of England

# **POSTGRADUATE MODULAR PROGRAMME**

## **MSc Clinical Research**

### **PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION**

Validation date July 2009

University of the West of England

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Section 1: Basic Data	Version 2
<b>Awarding institution/body</b>	University of the West of England
<b>Teaching institution</b>	University of the West of England
<b>Delivery Location(s)</b>	
<b>Faculty responsible for programme</b>	Health and Life Sciences: School of Health and Social Care
<b>Modular Scheme title</b>	Postgraduate Modular Scheme
<b>Professional Statutory or Regulatory Body Links (type and dates)</b>	
<b>Highest award title</b>	MSc in Clinical Research
<b>Default award title</b>	
<b>Interim award titles</b>	Postgraduate Certificate in Clinical Research Postgraduate Diploma in Clinical Research
<b>UWE progression route</b>	
<b>Mode(s) of delivery</b>	Fulltime and Part-time
<b>Codes</b>	
<b>UCAS code</b>	<b>JACS code</b> B790 and B990
<b>ISIS code</b>	<b>HESA code</b>
<b>Relevant QAA subject benchmark statements</b>	<i>QAA Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education (Section I: Post Graduate research programmes).</i>
<b>On-going/valid until* (*delete as appropriate/insert end date)</b>	
<b>Valid from (insert date if appropriate)</b>	
<b>Original Validation Date:</b>	
<b>Latest Committee Approval...</b>	<b>Date:...</b>
<b>Version Code</b> 3.1	

*For coding purposes, a numerical sequence (1, 2, 3 etc.) should be used for successive programme specifications where 2 replaces 1, and where there are no concurrent specifications. A sequential decimal numbering (1.1; 1.2, 2.1; 2.2 etc) should be used where there are different and concurrent programme specifications*

## **Section 2: Educational aims of the programme**

The MSc in Clinical Research is a strategic initiative from the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences which is responsive to current health policy agendas, as well as local and regional workforce needs.

The aims of the programme are to equip course participants with:

- a comprehensive grounding in research methods and approaches used in clinical research
- an understanding of the ethical and governance frameworks relevant to clinical research
- practical skills and knowledge to begin to conceptualise, design, conduct, analyse and interpret the results of ethically rigorous research inquiries with multi-disciplinary groups and within multi-cultural contexts.
- the confidence to apply core principles of the programme to develop proposals for research projects for external funding bodies
- a repertoire of sophisticated research skills and expertise enabling them to assume their responsibilities with increased confidence and competence and to support their transition into such posts and/or to aid career progression in this area

### 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

##### Learning outcomes

##### **A Knowledge and understanding:**

Students should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

1. Concepts, definitions, methodologies and methods used in clinical research
2. Processes for identifying, locating and evaluating evidence to support practice
3. Key elements of good practice in relation to planning, conducting and disseminating clinical research
4. The principles and theory of all aspects of trial methodology and governance, from design through implementation to analysis and publication
5. Core features of well-designed and well-conducted clinical trials
6. The distinctive contribution that qualitative research can bring to clinical research and of the range of approaches available for analysing primary and secondary qualitative research data
7. How to design an appropriate and feasible research proposal to answer a specific question relevant to your professional background and award programme
8. The principles of health economics as a basis for gathering and interpreting evidence
9. The principles of statistical design and analysis applicable to clinical research and basic types of study design and the relevant methods of statistical analysis
10. How to design and execute a self directed research study that will contribute to knowledge and debate in their discipline or profession

##### Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategies

##### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies:**

Acquisition of 1-10 is through lectures, seminars, workshops, web-based activities, action learning sets, personal reflection, formative assessments, personal study, reading and supervised independent inquiry

Additional support is provided through personal tutorials, cohort support mechanisms, use of UWE Blackboard, research training and Faculty research seminar series

Throughout, the learner is encouraged to undertake independent reading both to supplement and consolidate what is being taught/learned and to broaden their individual knowledge and understanding of the subject

##### **Assessment**

Assessment of student's knowledge and understanding is through assessed coursework (1-4, 7-10) through oral presentation through tasks undertaken under examination conditions(5-6)

## **B Intellectual Skills**

### **B Intellectual Skills**

By the end of the programme students will be able to demonstrate:

1. Critical appraisal skills
2. Critical and intellectual development
3. Analytical judgements
4. Synthesis of theory and practice
5. Evaluation
6. Independent learning
7. Problem solving skills
8. Open-mindedness

### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

Intellectual skills 1-8 are developed through lectures, seminars, workshops, web-based activities, guided reading, personal reflection, formative assessments and personal study/reading

### **Assessment**

To assess cognitive skills (1-8) a variety of assessment methods is employed throughout the programme, including written examinations, oral presentations and course work

## **C Subject, Professional and Practical Skills**

### **C Subject/Professional/Practical Skills**

On completion of the programme students should be able to demonstrate:

1. Systematic appraisal on the nature and application of research governance principles
2. Skill in critically appraising and evaluating a range of different research designs and methodologies
3. Advanced skill in the use of different techniques for analysing research data and verification processes
4. Problem solving skills and implement appropriate strategies in dealing with complex research issues
5. Independently design, execute, lead an ethically robust research inquiry through to the dissemination of results

### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

1-5 lecturers, workshops, groups activities, guided reading, reflection, web-based activities, seminars, personal reflections and supervisory meetings

### **Assessment**

Skills 1-4 are primarily assessed by course work, written examinations and project in the form of a research proposal

Additionally, skill 5 is assessed through the successful completion and submission of a 14000 word thesis

## D Transferable Skills and other attributes

<b>D Transferable skills and other attributes</b>	<b>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</b>
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Students should be able to:

1. Communicate and make complex ideas and concepts accessible and clear to a range of audiences
2. Systematically extract, evaluate and synthesise information gained from a range of primary and secondary sources
3. Work collaboratively as team member and independently
4. Use and harness IT and other media applications confidently
5. Problem solve, manage resources and deadlines
6. Be self-directed and resourceful
7. Effectively respond to challenges of conducting research in the 'field' and reformulate resolution strategies

Skills 1-7 are acquired through library resources, use of IT facilities, independent learning, working with peers, practical course work, workshops and in practice,

### **Assessment**

Skills 1-7 are assessed throughout the programme in the form of coursework, written examinations, oral presentations and completion of a thesis

## Section 4: Programme structure

- There are no optional modules on this award. With the exception of Health Economics and Understanding Statistics (each 10 M level credits) and the Dissertation (40 M level credits), all other modules are 20 M level credits each.

- Interim award requirements:

The combination of Epidemiology and Research Methodology, Critical Appraisal Skills and Good Clinical Practice in Research comprise the interim award of Postgraduate certificate (60 M level credits)

For a Postgraduate diploma award, students must complete the above modules and the following: *Research Project Skills, Clinical Trials: Theory and Practice, and Qualitative Research within Clinical Settings* (120 M level credits)

The award of MSc in Clinical Research will subject to the completion of all of the above modules plus a *Dissertation, Understanding Statistics in Public Health and Health Economics*. (180 M level credits)

### Postgraduate Certificate Clinical Research (60 M level credits)

- *Epidemiology and Research Methodology UZVS54-20-M*
- *Critical Appraisal Skills UZVRF3-20-M*
- *Good Clinical Practice in Research UZUSCU-20-M*

### Postgraduate Diploma Clinical Research (120 M level credits)

- *Research Project Skills UZVS56-20-M*
- *Clinical Trials: Theory and Practice UZUSCS-20-M*
- *Qualitative Research within Clinical Settings UZUSCT-20-M*

### MSc Clinical Research (180 M level credits)

- *Understanding Statistics in Public Health UFQETE-10-M*
- *Health Economics UZVS58-10-M*
- *Dissertation UZURBD-40-M*

<p><b>Compulsory modules</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Epidemiology and Research Methodology UZVS54-20-M</li> <li>• Critical Appraisal skills UZVRF3-20-M</li> <li>• Good Clinical Practice in Research UZUSCU-20-M</li> </ul>	<p><b>Interim Awards:</b></p> <p><b>Postgraduate Certificate in Clinical Research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credit requirements: 60 credits at level M</li> </ul>
<p><b>Compulsory modules</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical Trials: Theory and practice UZUSCS-20-M</li> <li>• Research Project Skills UZVS56-20-M</li> <li>• Qualitative Research within Clinical Settings UZUSCT-20-M</li> </ul>	<p><b>Interim Awards:</b></p> <p><b>Postgraduate Diploma in Clinical Research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credit requirements: 120 credits at level M</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Economics UZVS58-10-M</li> <li>• Understanding Statistics in Public Health UFQETE-10-M</li> <li>• Dissertation UZWS4V-40-M</li> </ul>	<p><b>Target/Highest Awards:</b></p> <p><b>MSc in Clinical Research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credit requirements 180 credits at level M from modules within the programme</li> </ul>



## **Section 5: Entry requirements**

Normally a good first degree (normally a 2:1 or above) in a subject area relevant to health

Engaged or have relevant professional practice

Formal letter of support from current employer or equivalent

Academic reference on the applicant's abilities to study at M level

Non-standard entry criteria

Exceptionally, students without traditional degree level qualifications may be admitted to the programme provided they can demonstrate the ability to achieve level M learning outcomes, as defined in the University Academic Regulations and Procedures (2008) for level M modules and in the Faculty scheme. Students, whose health and/or social care role requires them to undertake Masters level study, must demonstrate sufficient ability to achieve M level academic criteria.

Students seeking non-standard entry are normally assessed by interview and by consideration of written evidence. All non standard entry students will be expected to submit a critical appraisal of a given research paper (2000 words) and a piece of reflective writing (1000 words) on a current issue or challenge in practice and its implications for practice for consideration by the programme team. In assessing the students' ability, consideration will also be given to evidence of degree level performance including written outputs of research and professional activity.

## **Section 6: Assessment Regulations**

Wholly in accordance with the University Academic Regulations and Procedures

## **Section 7: Student learning: distinctive features and support**

- The MSc Clinical Research supports the career development of practitioners from a diverse range of disciplines and professional backgrounds.
- The programme is delivered by experienced lecturers/clinicians actively involved in research linked to clinical practice.
- The School of Health and Social Care has a vibrant, energetic and dynamic research culture to support students undertaking the MSc Clinical Research.
- Students will be encouraged to join in the School academic research activities and participate in the lunchtime academic seminar programme which involves speakers addressing a range of clinical issues and research methodologies
- Increased expertise in using a comprehensive range of research designs and methodological approaches to address clinical questions to improve patient/client health and/or care delivery.
- Opportunities to develop sophisticated skills and expertise in designing, conducting, managing, leading and in disseminating the findings of research.
- Increased confidence to contribute to the design, conduct, analysis, monitoring, ethics and evaluation of research studies within healthcare delivery settings.
- Being taught by researchers from a range of health care disciplines with a track record of research publications and outputs which are recognised by the RAE to be world leading and internationally excellent.
- Being part of a thriving and well established community of like-minded professionals and scholars who are available to support and facilitate you in meeting and achieving the programme learning outcomes.

## Section 8 Reference points/benchmarks

- Subject benchmarks (QAA Unit ...)

2004 Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education: Postgraduate research programmes (Section 1: Postgraduate Research programmes).

- University teaching and learning policies:

The programme has taken into account of University policies and specifically the UWE Code of Practice for postgraduate research programmes,. In addition, Faculty policies around Disability, Equality Protocol and Strategy, Learning, Teaching and Assessment policies, Research Governance and Ethics: Guidance and Good practice for Supervisors and Students, The Faculty Research Strategy (2005).

- *staff research projects:*

Please refer to the Faculty Research page, for staff profiles and publication database- <http://hsc.uwe.ac.uk/net/research/>

- Employer interaction/feedback: Meetings with key stake-holders across primary and secondary health care providers have been consulted and responses have been favourable with many also volunteering to contribute to either delivery or offer placements if appropriate eg Bristol Urological Institute.

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 Academic Registrar.