

University of the West of Scotland
Postgraduate Programme Specification

Session: 2022/23

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Named Award Title:	MSc Health Studies (Community Health)
Award Title for Each Award:	MSc Health Studies (Community Health) PG Dip with Specialist Qualification PG Cert Health Studies
Awarding Institution/Body:	University of the West of Scotland
Language of Instruction & Examination:	English
Award Accredited By:	University of the West of Scotland
Maximum Period of Registration:	
Mode of Study:	Full Time Part Time
Campus:	Distance/Online Learning
School:	School of Health and Life Sciences
Programme Leader:	Fiona Stuart

Admission Criteria

Candidates must be able to satisfy the general admission requirements of the University of the West of Scotland as specified in Chapter 2 of the University Regulatory Framework together with the following programme requirements:

Appropriate Undergraduate Qualification

Applicants should normally possess a degree or equivalent. In addition, applicants should possess a Postgraduate Diploma Specialist Community Public Health Nursing (Health Visiting/ School Nursing / Occupational Health) or a Postgraduate Diploma Specialist Practitioner District Nurse.

Other Required Qualifications/Experience

- Candidates will be registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Council as a Specialist Community Public Health Nurse (Health Visiting / School Nursing / Occupational Health) or as a Specialist Practitioner:

District Nurse.

Candidates will also be a Registered Nurse or Midwife on parts 1 or 2 of the Nursing and Midwifery Council professional register.

- Admission is permitted with relevant previous academic credit and/or prior learning. This will be in accordance with the University of the West of Scotland Regulatory Framework

- Applicants must have the language and literacy skills to understand and use the written materials utilised in the learning and teaching of the programme and be able to communicate clearly and accurately in spoken and written English as per University Regulatory Framework or Nursing and Midwifery guidelines*

Further desirable skills pre-application

Skills and experience in Information Communication Technology

General Overview

MSc Health Studies (Community Health) is linked to the MSc Health Studies programme as it adheres to the same design principles and has the same aim of developing highly knowledgeable and skilled post graduate practitioners with the skills and capacity to function at an advanced level. The unique difference of the MSc Health Studies (Community Health) programme is its focus on preparing nurses professionally for registration with the professional nursing body, the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), as well as the attainment of the academic qualification. As such the programme design observes both academic programme development standards such as the Quality Assurance Agency, Scottish subject benchmark statement for Specialist Community Public Health Nursing (QAA, 2009), and the benchmark statement for MSc degree characteristics (QAA, 2010), as well as the mandatory professional Standards of Proficiency for Specialist Community Public Health Nursing (NMC, 2004).

Entry to this programme is at an advanced stage following completion of one of the associated PgD programme pathways (see below). This is for the purpose of completion of the MSc Dissertation module only. This Programme Specification should be read in conjunction with the Postgraduate Diploma Programme Specification documentation for each programme within the MSc Health Studies (Community Health) programme, i.e.:

- Postgraduate Diploma Specialist Practitioner District Nurse
- Postgraduate Diploma Specialist Community Public Health Nurse (Health Visitor)
- Postgraduate Diploma Specialist Community Public Health Nurse (School Nurse)

In line with the approach of the MSc Health Studies programmes, the MSc Health Studies (Community Health) consists of core modules which are set within a framework of interrelated health themes, such as contemporary issues, role enhancement, evidence based practice and reflective practice. The postgraduate's development in terms of research, theory and professional practice will vary according to the academic exit award achieved and professional option undertaken. Three of the Postgraduate modules are core to the MSc Health Studies programme, supporting inter-professional and inter-disciplinary learning opportunities, with other modules being pathway specific.

Academically, the programme offers 3 exit awards i.e. Post-graduate Certificate (PgC), Post-graduate Diploma (PgD), Masters of Science (MSc).

- For the PgC award in Health Studies (Community Health) students are required to complete a minimum of 3 out of the 9 core modules (60 credits). This certificate is awarded to students who have commenced post-graduate study but are unable, for any reason, to continue with their studies that would lead to professional registration with the NMC. This programme is not recruited to directly.

- The PgD award will require the successful completion of 6 core modules (120 credits) that are dictated by the professional option selected. The modules are taught via on-campus and on-line learning, with the aligned 50% practice based learning hours undertaken on NHS premises and supervised by a registered Supervisor / Assessor in accordance with NMC learning and assessment standards (NMC, 2018).

The programme has been developed using a constructivist, 'spiral' model whereby initial learning is reinforced and consolidated, building progressively towards complex analysis. All teaching, learning and assessments undertaken by students are underpinned by current and developing research. Students undertaking the programme are prepared for the pivotal role they will take in leading and delivering quality based healthcare services. To ensure this, graduates will be expected to demonstrate that they have the fundamental knowledge and competency to work collaboratively with health and social care colleagues to address health inequalities and the motivation to add to the body of knowledge in this area. On completion of MSc Health Studies (Community Health), students are able to enter one of the Universities Doctoral studies programmes, for example, Doctor of Philosophy or Professional Doctorate.

A wide range of authentic teaching, learning and assessment methods are utilised within the MSc to enable learners to achieve the set learning outcomes for the programme. The methods are employed facilitate student development; building on the existing knowledge, skills and graduate attributes obtained during their undergraduate learning. A flexible and hybrid approach to learning equips students with transferrable skills, both academic and practical. The methods used range from traditional face to face lectures, tutorials, student-led seminars, group work and discussions, student presentations, problem-based learning, self-directed and guided study and personal development planning. Students will be supported and prepared during induction to engage with the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) Moodle and for the self-management required for the online learning approaching. They will be encouraged to routinely undertake course learning by participating with online modified lectures, to engage with other students via course discussion boards and to access course materials. There are inter-professional learning opportunities in each term of the programme, with the aim that the learning environment will reflect the current health and social care working environment. This provides students the opportunity to come together from professional programmes with the aim of developing an increased understanding and respect for the work of students from other disciplines and professions which in turn is seen to increase professional confidence (Saunders et al., 2012). The format of the workshops will vary from peer-assisted, student-led learning to topic specific discussion and debate.

A personal tutoring system is in place for students during the length of the programme. Students will be encouraged to access personal tutors for support, formative assessment and feedback regularly throughout the programme. Written documentation will be available to all students to ensure they are fully informed of the requirements of the programme i.e. programme specifications, programme handbooks, module descriptors, in addition to timetables that clearly illustrate learning milestones and submission dates for both formative and summative assessments. Curriculum delivery methods used are designed to encourage Masters' level study; essentially to promote critical and creative thinking skills and to develop decision making abilities. The programme will do this by focusing on enhancing the role of research-teaching links and by providing opportunity for students to review journal articles, research reports, perform literature reviews and to discuss and debate contemporary community nursing practice. One assessment method that typifies this focus is the requirement of students to produce a poster or contemporary paper, that once academically assessed can be progressed and submitted for conference presentation.

The programme offers a full range of assessment tools designed to enable student learning and test student knowledge. Formative assessment opportunities are available in each module within the programme. Summative assessment strategies include: written essays and reports; poster presentation; unseen examination; literature reviews; critical reflections; and research proposals. Students who proceed to the final MSc module will be assessed by dissertation. An inclusive approach is taken, one which recognises the diversity of the student body. Alternative methods of assessment are available including oral assessment and transcribing service. As this is a post-graduate programme it is recognised that the learning requirements of each student will differ and is dependent on their previous nursing and learning experience. Taking a student-centred approach, students will be enabled by their personal tutor to undertake learning needs analysis and to construct their unique learning development plan. The plan will reflect the student's individual learning needs and the core requirements of the education programme.

To satisfy professional requirements of the programme, modules with a practice component have a number of co-requisites, ensuring NMC proficiencies are met in order to successfully complete the module. This professional component of the modules will be assessed by practice based educators, known as Assessors. Academic credit for theory modules will be evidenced by written assessments at SCQF Level 11 and assessed by academic staff. During the length on the programme, students will have access to academic skills advisers to develop and enhance academic skills. Academic skills advisers offer support where students want to improve academic skills or need advice with specific issues, such as academic writing or exam preparation. Underpinned by the principle of inclusivity, students who have a recognised disability, or a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, will have access to disability support. This ensures students have the required support to maximise their potential. This can include special exam arrangements, note-takers, and assistive technology.

Graduate Attributes, Employability & Personal Development Planning

It is expected that students undertaking the programme will be equipped with the knowledge and skills to enable them to lead and influence others. It is anticipated that this will make them desirable to employers due to the unique contribution to change and development they can make in the work place. The programme is designed to ensure that students exit with a detailed and critical understanding of a range of specialised theories, principles and concepts influencing contemporary practice.

Inherent within the process of programme delivery are mechanisms which facilitate the development of transferable skills. It is part of the programme philosophy that students are enabled to learn for life, by learning how to learn; by being able to adapt and respond to change and by being change agents. Gaining a MSc can lead to a variety of career opportunities and destinations. The programme will offer enhanced employability prospects.

As a UWS graduate you will be: **universal**, with global relevance and insight determined by your abilities, skills and behaviours. Being a critical, analytical thinker will support you confidence and competence in professional practice; **work ready**, having completed a programme with both academic and practice requirements, you will be prepared for work in a complex and ever-changing health care environment - continually building on your knowledge and problem solving skills; **successful**, you will continue to succeed and build on the solid foundation of learning to achieve your potential.

Students enrolled at the University of the West of Scotland shall, through engagement with personal development planning (PDP) processes, become self-aware of their level of knowledge, skill and ability and how to develop them as lifelong/career long learners. This will be guided by the University of the West of Scotland's policy on the integration of PDP within programmes of study.

Work Based Learning/Placement Details

Practice based learning experiences in each of the professional options within the MSc Health Studies (Community Health) are evenly distributed throughout the programme of study, and make up 50% of the learning hours to Postgraduate Diploma level. Each practice placement is aligned to a module of theoretical learning, assisting students to link theory with practice and supporting the constructive development of the students' knowledge base, competency and confidence.

In line with professional standards for learning and assessment in practice, all practice placement experience is guided and supervised both directly and indirectly by a registered Assessor / Supervisor. Under this guidance and supervision, students will work towards achieving all the NMC proficiencies in order to meet the NMC professional requirements - to either gain entry to the NMC register as a Specialist Community Public Health Nurse or to record their award of Specialist Practitioner (District Nurse). This is dependent on the professional option chosen. The nature of supervision, either direct or indirect, will be dependent on the student and Assessor assessment of the student's level of competency.

All practice placement areas are approved and monitored for use by the University every 2 years.

Engagement

In line with the [Academic Engagement Procedure](#), Students are defined as academically engaged if they are regularly engaged with timetabled teaching sessions, course-related learning resources including those in the Library and on the relevant learning platform, and complete assessments and submit these on time.

Equality and Diversity

The University's Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Procedure can be accessed at the following link: [UWS Equality and Diversity Policy](#)

UWS are committed to advancing and promoting equality and diversity and aim to establish an inclusive culture, free from discrimination and based upon values of fairness, dignity and respect. The programme has structures, leadership and support practices in place that reflect this commitment.

Programme structures and requirements, SCQF level, term, module name and code, credits and awards ([Chapter 1, Regulatory Framework](#))

A. PG Cert

Learning Outcomes (Maximum of 5 per heading)

Knowledge and Understanding	
A1	
Practice - Applied Knowledge and Understanding	
B1	
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	

C1	
Generic Cognitive Skills - Problem Solving, Analysis, Evaluation	
D1	
Autonomy, Accountability and Working With Others	
E1	

Core Modules

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Name	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	

* Indicates that module descriptor is not published.

Footnotes

Optional Modules

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Name	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	

* Indicates that module descriptor is not published.

Footnotes

Criteria for Progression and Award

B. PG Dip
Learning Outcomes (Maximum of 5 per heading)

Knowledge and Understanding	
A1	
Practice - Applied Knowledge and Understanding	
B1	
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	
C1	
Generic Cognitive Skills - Problem Solving, Analysis, Evaluation	
D1	

Autonomy, Accountability and Working With Others

E1

Core Modules

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Name	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	

* Indicates that module descriptor is not published.

Footnotes

Optional Modules

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Name	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	

* Indicates that module descriptor is not published.

Footnotes

Criteria for Progression and Award


C. Masters

Learning Outcomes (Maximum of 5 per heading)

Knowledge and Understanding	
A1	Critically analyse the fundamental concepts, principles and theories that support specialist community nursing practice, and ascertain whether there are gaps in knowledge base
A2	Critically review the impact governmental, professional and local organisational policy and procedures has on the health and social care provision for communities
A3	Critically appraise the knowledge and research evidence that informs political, professional and organisational policy
A4	Recognise and critically examine the professional responsibilities and accountability mandatory for public protection and lifelong learning
A5	Critically appraise the associations of theory and evidence with practice and analyse the way this is interpreted and applied in the care context of community nursing.
Practice - Applied Knowledge and Understanding	
B1	Competently demonstrates a range of essential skills, informed by theoretical learning, designed to address the needs of individuals, families and communities.
B2	Apply principles and theories of leadership when working with or coordinating a multi-profession team to effectively address the needs of individuals, families and communities

B3	Demonstrate an understanding of research theories and principles and when there use is applicable in clinical governance processes.
B4	Demonstrate the skills to sustain safe and effective reflective practice for self and others by undertaking or facilitating learning needs assessment, clinical supervision and personal development planning
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	
C1	Able to organise and analyse complex information from a number of sources to synthesis a clear and accurate report both for practice and research purposes
C2	Creatively design and display numerical and written research findings to influence the knowledge exchange process with practitioners working with, or designing services for, individuals, families and communities
C3	Use a range of advanced and specialist skills to support and enhance research and professional practice
C4	Demonstrate a range of ICT skills in the use of information technology to record, inform and enhance professional activities.
Generic Cognitive Skills - Problem Solving, Analysis, Evaluation	
D1	Engage in ongoing critical evaluations of Specialist Community Nursing practice based on analysed evidence, values and principles central to working with individuals, families and communities
D2	Use problem solving activities to critically analyse results from needs assessment and to plan interventions involving one or multiple professional groups
D3	Demonstrate expertise and insight of current practice to critically analyse this through the use of evidence to influence policy development and lead practice improvement
D4	Demonstrate highly developed negotiation and facilitation skills which enable team members and multi-professional groups to safely debate the needs of individuals, families and communities in a defined area and to agree the best application of evidence to address these in practice
Autonomy, Accountability and Working With Others	
E1	Manage complex ethical and professional issues, demonstrating skills in decision making that support informed judgements based on research evidence and the principles and concepts of guiding ethical knowledge
E2	Exercise substantial autonomy and initiative in professional and research activities
E3	Demonstrate effective leadership to contribute to organisational policies and strategies

Core Modules

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Name	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	
11	NURS11010	MSc Dissertation (HLS)	60	 check mark	 check mark	 check mark	

* Indicates that module descriptor is not published.

Footnotes

Optional Modules

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Name	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	

* Indicates that module descriptor is not published.

Footnotes

The production of a research study or research protocol as part of the MSc Dissertation (HLS) module is the final component of the MSc programme. It is an opportunity for the student to demonstrate, through independent work, their ability to apply theoretical principles studied throughout the Master's Programme. Although the emphasis is on independent study, one to two academic staff members will act as academic supervisors with a model of joint supervision. The supervisors will ensure that there is an appropriate focus and will advise on the scope of the topic chosen as the basis for investigation.

Students are required to explore an area related to Community Health, to generate an appropriate title and protocol for consideration. It is expected that the chosen assessment will include either the demonstrated planning process for a study or the gathering of quantitative and/or qualitative data. In undertaking the production of the protocol or the investigation, students are expected to demonstrate a critical understanding of scientific research in a research report/protocol, in a standard format of a dissertation of approximately 13,000 - 15,000 words in compliance with School and University regulations regarding length. Students and supervisors are furnished with a comprehensive MSc Dissertation (HLS) module handbook outlining the requirements for the dissertation and for the role of student/supervisors.

The MSc Dissertation (HLS) module will normally take one year to complete as students usually undertake a protocol, although the research study option may be considered which will take two years.

Criteria for Award

On successful completion of the MSc Dissertation(HLS)module, the student will be eligible for the award of MSc Health Studies (Community Health).

Distinction will be awarded in line with Chapter 3 of the Regulatory Framework

Regulations of Assessment

Candidates will be bound by the general assessment regulations of the University as specified in the [University Regulatory Framework](#).

An overview of the assessment details is provided in the Student Handbook and the assessment criteria for each module is provided in the module descriptor which forms part of the module pack issued to students. For further details on assessment please refer to Chapter 3 of the Regulatory Framework.

To qualify for an award of the University, students must complete all the programme requirements and must meet the credit minima detailed in Chapter 1 of the Regulatory Framework.

Combined Studies

There may be instances where a student has been unsuccessful in meeting the award criteria for the named award and for other more generic named awards existing within the School. Provided that they have met the credit requirements in line with the SCQF credit minima (please see Regulation 1.21), they will be eligible for an exit award of PgCert/ PgDip in Combined Studies.

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