



Programme Specification

A statement of the knowledge, understanding and skills that underpin a taught programme of study awarded by The University of Sheffield

1	Programme Title	Medical Education
2	Programme Code	MDET01, MDET04
3	JACS Code	Not applicable
4	Level of Study	Postgraduate
5	Final Qualification	MEd
6	Intermediate Qualification(s)	PG Certificate, PG Diploma
7	Teaching Institution (if not Sheffield)	Not applicable
8	Faculty	Medicine, Dentistry and Health
9	Home Department	Academic Unit of Medical Education
10	Other Department(s) involved in teaching the programme	None
11	Mode(s) of Attendance	Part time
12	Duration of the Programme	3 years min – 6 years max (PG Cert 1 year min – 2 year max)
13	Accrediting Professional or Statutory Body (if applicable)	Academy of Medical Educators
14	Date of production/revision	Original programme launched 1996, revised 2000; revised 2010, revised March 2022

15. Background to the programme and subject area

Most practicing doctors have a responsibility to teach and mentor students or trainees. Yet until recently few received any formal instruction or ongoing professional development as teachers or educators. Indeed few formal programmes existed with this aim in mind.

The MEd course was founded in 1996 and it offers an opportunity for such professional development. The current course is derived from its predecessor, the MEd which was delivered by the Department of Continuing Education. It was designed originally for lecturers in further and higher education. In its current form, however, the course is aimed specifically at those in the medical professions who wish to enhance their personal and professional effectiveness as educators, and who would like to obtain a recognised post-graduate qualification in education specific to the fields of medicine. In 2010 the Post Graduate Certificate level of the course will be offered.

The course is aimed at professionals concerned with medical education, who see themselves, in some capacity or other, as an 'educator', whether their primary role is the delivery of teaching or some form of educational management or supervision. It is aimed at doctors involved in undergraduate, postgraduate and continuing professional education and training.

The primary requirement for entry is that applicants share the view that teaching and learning medicine, at whatever level, should, be a stimulating and lifelong undertaking and who see medical education as a major strand of their career.

16. Programme aims

- The immediate aim of the programme is to produce academically informed educators and practically strong educators within the field of medical education.
- The ultimate aim of the programme is to contribute to the improvement of undergraduate, postgraduate and continuing medical education, through the professional development of those who undertake the Programme.

17. Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding:

At Certificate level, candidates are expected to:	
CK1	Develop an understanding of learning and knowledge and how theories of learning inform practice in medical and healthcare teaching.
CK2	Develop knowledge of major policies governing the conduct of medical education and how theories of learning inform practice in medical and healthcare teaching.
CK3	Demonstrate an understanding of a range of appropriate teaching methods within medical education.
CK4	Develop an understanding of assessment, curriculum design, evaluation and feedback methods within medical education. Develop the skills of reflective practice and appraisal of professional development.
CK5	Demonstrate the skills of critical analysis of educational research.

In addition, Diploma level, candidates are expected to:	
DK1	Demonstrate a clear working knowledge of selected contemporary issues in medical and dental education and describe the origins, theoretical base & implications for medical/dental teachers of selected contemporary issues.
DK2	Demonstrate a sound knowledge of the differences between major approaches to research, and compare and contrast the strengths, weaknesses and utility of different methodologies in answering research questions.
DK3	Demonstrate the ability to design an educational research project.

In addition, Masters level, candidates are expected to:	
MK1	Demonstrate a clear knowledge of how to design and carry out a piece of small scale empirical research in the field of medical education.

Skills and other attributes:

At certificate level, candidates are expected to:	
CS1	Demonstrate the ability to plan, conduct and appraise self-selected teaching activities (ie ensure the physical environment is appropriate to the teaching activity; Seek evidence that learning is taking place; Devise strategies to cope with unanticipated needs; Display a positive attitude to all members of the learning group; Respond constructively to feedback on teaching performance; Use reflection to develop and improve teaching practice).
CS2	Demonstrate the ability to act as coach/mentor to a colleague and to advise and direct them in pursuit of specific goals.
CS3	Demonstrate the ability to reflect on both their own professional practice and the implications of what has been learned during the course for this practice.

In addition, Diploma level, candidates are expected to:	
DS1	Demonstrate the ability to critically review published educational research.
DS2	Demonstrate the ability to design an educational research project.

In addition, Masters level, candidates are expected to:	
MS1	Demonstrate the ability to design and carry out a piece of small-scale empirical research in the field of medical education. This research is disseminated via a 20,000-word dissertation, and refereed publications arising from such work are encouraged.

Throughout the course, candidates are expected to demonstrate transferable skills such as:	
TS1	The ability to reflect on their own professional practice in the light of information derived from the literature, their colleagues, their students and their own analyses of situations.
TS2	The ability to communicate effectively in clear written English. The ability to communicate effectively in clear spoken English (via presentations).
TS3	The ability to direct their own learning.

These skills are encouraged via all aspects of the teaching on the course, and candidates can expect coaching in these skills if required.

18. Teaching, learning and assessment

Development of the learning outcomes is promoted through the following teaching and learning methods:

Outcome	Abbreviated version	Teaching and learning activities
CK1	Develop an understanding of fundamental precepts of "learning.	activities include: directed reading augmented by seminars (using both internal and external speakers), practical exercises, small group discussions, student led presentations.
CK2	Develop a knowledge of major policies governing the conduct of medical and dental education.	As for CK1 Specific teaching and learning exercises include debates over the advantages and disadvantages of given policies and how they impact upon the key areas of teaching and learning practice, curriculum development and assessment strategies.
CK3	Acquire a theoretical understanding of reflective practice.	As for CK1 Specific teaching and learning approaches include the development of a reflective portfolio of learning and teaching experiences for each of the modules.
CK4	Develop a knowledge of appropriate teaching, learning and assessment strategies based on learning objectives and the context of delivery.	Teaching and learning activities are as for CK1. Specific teaching and learning exercises include a summative observed teaching session; the development of a formative and summative assessment approach.
CK5	Develop a knowledge of curriculum design, implementation and monitoring.	As for CK1. Specific teaching and learning activities include undertaking a SPICES analysis.
DK1	Demonstrate a clear working knowledge of selected contemporary issues in medical and dental education.	As for CK1.
DK2	Demonstrate a sound knowledge of the differences between major approaches to research.	As for CK1. Specific teaching and learning exercises include critique of previous MEd dissertations as well as selected refereed publications.
DK3	Demonstrate the ability to design an educational research project.	As for CK1. Specific teaching and learning exercises include formative presentations of personal research projects.
MK1	Demonstrate a clear knowledge of how to design and carry out a piece of small scale empirical research in the field of medical education.	Masters students are assigned individual supervisors and tutorial time is made available for advice and guidance.
CS1	Demonstrate the ability to plan conduct and appraise self-selected teaching activities.	As for CK1. Specific teaching and learning exercises include summative observed teaching sessions.

CS2	Demonstrate the ability to act as coach/mentor to a colleague and to advise and direct them in pursuit of specific goals.	As for CK1. Specific teaching and learning exercises include observed coaching and mentoring of fellow participants.
CS3	Demonstrate the ability to reflect on both their own professional practice and the implications of what has been learned during the course for this practice.	As for CK1. Specific teaching and learning exercises include the production of reflective portfolio, mentioned in CK3 above.
DS1	Demonstrate the ability to critically review published educational research.	As for CK1, specific teaching around critical appraisal and best evidence medical education (BEME).
DS2	Demonstrate the ability to design an educational research project.	As for CK1. Specific teaching and learning exercises include critique of previous MEd dissertations as well as selected refereed publications and specific teaching and learning exercises include formative presentations of personal research projects.
MS1	Demonstrate the ability to design, carry out and disseminate a piece of small scale empirical research in the field of medical education.	Masters students are assigned individual supervisors and tutorial time is made available for advice and guidance. Formative sessions refine the evolving research question.
TS1	The ability to reflect on their own professional practice in the light of information derived from the literature, their colleagues, their students and their own analyses of situations.	As for CK1.
TS2	The ability to communicate effectively in clear written English the ability to communicate effectively in clear spoken English (via presentations).	Students are given extensive feedback on written essays and are expected regularly to give presentations to the rest of the group.
TS3	The ability to direct their own learning.	As a high proportion of the course is studied at a distance students are expected, with tutorial assistance if necessary to, pursue a good deal of their learning individually. Students undertake at least one self-directed project over the duration of the course whose aims, objectives and resourcing they must decide for themselves.

Opportunities to demonstrate achievement of the programme learning outcomes are provided through the following assessment methods:

The predominant form of assessment on the course is through a written assessment. The length of the written assessments are approximately 4,000 words. All assignments should show evidence of wide and critical reading of the literature and reflection via personal comments on the implications of this reading or application of this learning to personal professional practice. Master's candidates must produce a 20,000-word dissertation in accordance with university guidelines and departmental 'Dissertation guidelines'.

The skills and knowledge required by the Teaching and Learning Practice module are assessed formatively via observed teaching sessions and summatively via a reflective essay and practical demonstration of formal teaching skills. To pass the latter assessment, candidates must acquire a testimonial from an approved assessor who has observed him or her teaching, or they may submit video evidence to the Academic Unit of Medical Education.

All assignments should show evidence of wide and critical reading of the literature and reflection via personal comments on the implications of this reading or application of this learning to personal professional practice.

19. Reference points

The learning outcomes stated in 2010 have evolved since the previous revisions in 2000 and the inception of the course in 1996 to reflect the following points of reference:

External:

National Policy. Changes in medical education on a national level, including policy directives from the General Medical Council (GMC) and the Post Graduate Medical Education Training Board (PMETB).

Higher Education Academy. Previously, the certificate level of the course was accredited by the Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, now the Higher Education Academy (HEA). The HEA is the professional body for all who teach and support learning in higher education in the UK. It exists to enhance the status of teaching, improve the experience of learning and support innovation. It also develops and maintains professional standards of practice. It is becoming the main source of professional recognition for all staff engaged in teaching and the support of learning. This accreditation expired in 2003 but we are actively in the process of seeking re-accreditation of the certificate level of the course, to commence in September 2010.

Students who complete the Certificate component (provided they opt for the Improving Teaching and Learning Practice, rather than the Self-directed module) are automatically eligible for membership of this body. Implicit in this accreditation is an acceptance that the certificate embodies and promotes good practice in seven core defined areas (teaching and support of learning, contribution to the design and planning of learning activities and/or programmes of study, assessment and giving feedback to learners, developing effective learning environments and learner support systems and reflective practice and personal development).

External examination. The course is examined annually by an external examiner. To date comments have been very favourable. Recommendations by the external examiner are discussed at Steering Committee and implemented whenever feasible.

Internal:

The University of Sheffield Learning and Teaching Strategy statement underpins the course

Internal evaluation. Student evaluation of the course takes place on an ongoing basis at both an overall and modular level. Student representatives sit on the Student/Staff Committee.

20. Programme structure and regulations

Students may exit with:

a Certificate in Medical Education (minimum one year, maximum two years of study)

a Diploma in Medical Education (minimum two years of study, maximum four years of study)

an MEd in Medical Education (minimum three years, maximum six years of study)

Please refer to the [Programme Regulations](#), [General University Regulations](#) and the [On-line Directory of Modules](#) for detailed information about the structure of programmes, regulations concerning assessment and progression and descriptions of individual modules.

21. Progression through the programme structure

The emphasis of study at Certificate level is on 'fundamental' concepts such as theories of learning and how they may be applied, the elements of professional development through reflective practice, the policies shaping medical and dental education, and the fundamentals of good teaching, curriculum development and assessment.

Students progressing to the Diploma phase build on this knowledge and study contemporary issues in medical, and the fundamentals of educational research in the context of medical education.

During the Masters phase students are expected to apply the knowledge and skills attained at Certificate and Diploma level and actually carry out and disseminate an educational research project.

Students must submit one portfolio assignment (usually of around 3000 words in length) for each module of the course. This must achieve a grade (50% or more) in order to be deemed a pass.

Students must pass all assessments associated with a particular phase of the course (Certificate or Diploma or Masters) in order to gain the respective award. Progress to Diploma or Masters level depends on having completed all assessments during the previous phase, or at least 3/4 of these assignments provided there are extenuating circumstances and they have given an undertaking to the Course Director to submit any outstanding work within a reasonable length of time.

Restrictions on progression are as follows:

Students have a maximum of two years to complete any one phase of the course (i.e. Certificate, Diploma or Masters). Overall, students must complete the programme within six years.

Students must attend 70% of study days in order to progress to the next stage of the course.

22. Criteria for admission to the programme

Detailed information regarding admission to the programme is available in the University's On-Line Prospectus at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/prospective/>

The course is primarily designed for doctors in possession of a medical first degree. We do admit others, and consider individuals without a medical qualification who have a professional interest in medical education.

Candidates would not normally be admitted without a first degree, however the main criteria for entry to the course is an interest in medical education as a main career strand, and individuals are considered on their own merits rather than on prior qualification or academic achievement.

23. Additional information

This specification represents a concise statement about the main features of the programme and should be considered alongside other sources of information provided by the teaching department(s) and the University. In addition to programme specific information, further information about studying at The University of Sheffield can be accessed via our Student Services web site at www.shef.ac.uk/ssid.