



Programme Specification

A statement of the knowledge, understanding and skills that underpin
a taught programme of study leading to an award from
The University of Sheffield

1	Programme Title	Master of Public Health (Online)
2	Programme Code	HART109
3	JACS Code	B900
4	Level of Study	Postgraduate
5a	Final Qualification	Master of Public Health (MPH)
5b	QAA FHEQ Level	7
6a	Intermediate Qualification(s)	Postgraduate Certificate (HART82)
6b	QAA FHEQ Level	7
7	Teaching Institution (if not Sheffield)	Not applicable
8	Faculty	Health
9	Department	The School of Medicine and Population Health (Population Health)
10	Other Departments involved in teaching the programme	None
11	Mode(s) of Attendance	Online Learning
12	Duration of the Programme	2 years
13	Accrediting Professional or Statutory Body	Not applicable
14	Date of production/revision	January 2012, March 2015, March 2019, January 2020, February 2024

15. Background to the programme and subject area

The Master of Public Health (MPH) programme of study at the University of Sheffield has been designed with the needs of the Twenty-First Century public health specialist in mind, providing a global perspective. The programme content and the approach to teaching have been designed to address the needs of people who are seeking professional qualifications in public health, whether currently based in the UK or overseas.

The online learning MPH Degree provides a broad range of knowledge and skills required as a basis for multi-disciplinary public health practice. It is expected that students will be from a range of professional backgrounds and will bring their experience to the programme. Some of these students might be from clinical backgrounds such as (but not exclusively) medicine, dentistry and nursing. They may not be in clinical practice at the time of study. Other students may come from a wide range of non-clinical backgrounds, such as geography, social care or information sciences.

This programme builds on the strengths of the existing School of Medicine and Population Health MPH suite, and helps ensure its relevance and application to public health in a global context with the flexibility that online learning provides.

This programme will appeal to public health professionals already working but able to afford neither the time to attend an MPH programme in Sheffield. Besides overseas students, the MPH (Online) will also appeal to UK/EU students who are unable to attend regular face-to-face lectures, seminars or tutorials at Sheffield. In the UK, the programme will be relevant for those from a range of backgrounds wishing to establish themselves in careers in public health, for example public health registrars on the regional training programmes. With this in mind, the syllabus has been designed to also address the requirements of the Part A examination for Membership of the UK Faculty of Public Health.

Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma options are available, as well as individual units. Candidates may wish to utilise these to support their individual development needs.

16. Programme aims

- To provide critical knowledge and understanding of public health from different disciplinary perspectives.
- To equip students with the ability to critically analyse public health problems and develop practical solutions to protect and promote the public's health and tackle health inequalities.
- To enable students to understand and undertake applied health research and to apply key findings into public health practice.

17. Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding:

All learning outcomes apply to Masters' and Postgraduate Diploma level programmes.

Learning outcomes for the Postgraduate Certificate level are identified by a (*) symbol.

K1	A critical understanding of public health approaches and principles and how they apply to policy and professional practice.
K2	A comprehensive understanding of the research process and its application to public health policy and practice (*).
K3	A systematic understanding of the use of public health tools to protect and promote the public's health and tackle health inequalities.
K4	A critical understanding of health service organisations, management and economics and their relationship to different social, political and economic environments.
K5	A systematic understanding of the broader influences on health and health care provision.

Skills and other attributes:

S1	Ability to work independently to define and address public health problems.
S2	Critically appraise research literature and other public health evidence (*).
S3	Plan and utilise applied health research (*).
S4	Design, negotiate, and implement programmes and other interventions which protect and promote the public's health.
S5	Ability to work with others to analyse and address the broader determinants of health and advocate for health public policy.
S6	A critical appreciation of the normative and ethical aspects of public health research policy and practice.
S7	The development of reflective public health practice.

18. Teaching, learning and assessment

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

The MPH (Online) is delivered by online learning methods using high quality web-based materials, written by academic staff in the field of public health in the School of Medicine and Population Health. Each unit will provide opportunities for students to work with staff and as a group. The factual content of the unit will be provided in web format, and students will have access to a tutor from the School of Medicine and Population Health, and other students through the virtual learning environment. Materials will be delivered in a variety of formats which are known to enhance the online learning experience. These include screencasts, videos and podcasts, alongside guided reading, problem-solving and online self-assessments.

1. Distance learning

All of the essential programme content will be covered by online learning materials. These will be provided electronically and will be designed to work in environments of limited bandwidth, and intermittent electricity supply, to ensure equity of access to materials for all students. Each student will be presumed to have access to a good quality laptop or pc. The learning resources will consist of:

- (a) Directly written programme material.
- (b) Guided reading; students will also be encouraged to search and locate other appropriate learning

resources appropriate for independent study and learning.

- (c) Moderated discussions boards (asynchronous so students can contribute in their own time).
- (d) Synchronous discussions - these will be limited to approximately (pre-scheduled) one hour per week and will be moderated by TUoS staff.
- (e) Student activities and exercises- including self-assessment exercises.

2. Independent study

Independent study is required within all units in order to cover all the required knowledge and to ensure that the student can apply and use the knowledge appropriately. (K1-6, S1-5). Supervisors experienced in applied health research will provide tailored support and directed reading for individual evaluation projects and the research basis for the dissertation (which may involve the use of secondary data where research governance is a possible time constraint).

3. Dissertation

The dissertation is seen as an extended part of the independent study and will allow the student to develop ideas and undertake research in an area of public health of their choosing (K1-5, S1-5).

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

1. Formative assessments

Students will be given the opportunity to prepare written work and undertake self- assessment exercises. These will develop key skills and enable students to judge their progress and understanding before summative assessments.

2. Summative assessment

End of unit assessments vary according to the subject under study. Assessment methods include essays and critical appraisals of published articles from the international public health literature, using standardised frameworks that are taught as part of the programme.

3. Dissertation

The dissertation is seen as an extended part of the independent study and will allow students to develop ideas and undertake research in an area of public health of their choosing.

19. Reference points

The learning outcomes have been developed to reflect the following points of reference:

The needs of local authorities and the NHS as set out in current government public health strategic plans.

The work of the WHO commission on the Social Determinants of Health.

The emerging work of The European Agency for Accreditation in Public Health Education (APHEA – launched in 2011 following two decades of work on public health education).

The requirements of the UK Faculty of Public Health <http://www.fph.org.uk/training/Training.shtml>

The mission statement of the University of Sheffield as presented in the corporate plan.

The University Learning and Teaching Strategy.

20. Programme structure and regulations

Students may select: the Master of Public Health or the Certificate in Public Health, or indeed by taking individual units.

The Master of Public Health

In order to gain the key competencies of a public health specialist, candidates for the Master of Public Health Degree must complete the taught units (120 credits) and the dissertation (worth 60 credits). All taught modules are worth 15 credits and there will be 6 core modules and 2 optional modules.

Semester 1

- Critical Reflections in Global Health - Online

- Epidemiology Online

Semester 2

- Introduction to Statistics and Critical Appraisal Online
- Health Promotion Online

Semester 3

- Systematic approaches to evidence assessment Online
- Introduction to Research Methods Online

Semester 4 -select 2 of the following optional modules:

- Using policy to strengthen health systems Online
- Leading and managing health services Online
- Communicable disease control Online
- Further Statistics for Health Science Researchers Online
- Dissertation (usually to be completed over 2 semesters, with submission in September of Semester 4)

The Postgraduate Certificate in Public Health

Where students wish to undertake a more limited initial training in public health, perhaps with a view to gaining further qualifications at a later date, the Postgraduate Certificate in Public Health is available. Students take 60 credits from the taught units of the MPH degree- Critical Reflections in Global Health and Epidemiology are compulsory, the remaining 30 credits can be made up of any of the other taught modules.

Individual units

Individual 15 credit units will also be offered on an individual basis for continuing professional development (CPD).

Detailed information about the structure of programmes, regulations concerning assessment and progression and descriptions of individual units are published in the University Calendar available online at <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/calendar/>.

21. Student development over the course of study

The units are ordered to enable students to develop core knowledge of the subject area and statistical skills at an early stage. Critical appraisal research techniques are taught to support the development of a dissertation proposal.

22. Criteria for admission to the programme

Detailed information regarding admission to programmes is available from the University's Online Prospectus at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/courses/>.

The programme is suitable for candidates from a medical background and also from other health related disciplines. An honours degree at 2.1 is required, or a medical degree recognised in the UK, or a relevant professional qualification with usually at least three years' experience. International students will be required to attain the University standards on IELTS or TOEFL. Exceptional students aspiring to a career in research may be admitted on the basis of their academic record alone.

Students registered on CPD modules (HART009 and HART52) who wish to transfer to a certificate, diploma or masters' programme, and who do not meet our standard academic admissions criteria (honours degree 1st, 2:1 or 2:2 with work experience) must have a case submitted to Faculty that supports why they are eligible to join the programme. These students must also meet the department's English Language requirement

Students must have adequate access to the internet and email, and to Windows and Microsoft Office or fully compatible software.

23. Additional information

The School of Medicine and Population Health (SMPH) brings together a wide range of health-related skills including health economics, operational research, management sciences, epidemiology, medical statistics, and information science. There are also clinical skills in general practice and primary care, mental health, rehabilitation and public health.

The School is ideally placed to conduct applied and methodological health services research, consultancy and teaching programmes for health services staff, having its unique diversity of skills and experience and with its close contacts with the Department of Health and NHS health authorities and trusts. It is a natural partner of the NHS. SMPH's staff have in-depth knowledge of the NHS and many NHS staff have honorary appointments with SMPH. SMPH supports statutory health bodies overseas and has partnership arrangements with the far east, and, through its European Office, with other leading universities and institutions in Europe.

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 <http://www.shef.ac.uk/ssid>.