



University of London External Programme

MSc Infectious Diseases Programme Specification 2007-08

General Information	
Programme title	MSc Infectious Diseases
Final award	Master of Science
FHEQ level of final award	Masters 'M' Level
Associated programmes (including short courses)	Postgraduate Diploma Some individual Core and Advanced Modules may be taken as Short Courses
FHEQ level of associated award(s)	Masters 'M' Level
Awarding body	University of London
Lead College	London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
Programme Director	Dr Sara Atkinson
Mode of study	Distance learning. Students registered for the MSc in Infectious Diseases may also be permitted to study by Blended Learning. Blended Learning study enables students to combine study by distance learning with a period of full-time study at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Students registered for the MSc degree who have been allowed to proceed to the advanced modules may study up to two advanced modules at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. There may be certain restrictions to the choice of advanced modules available for Blended Learning study, the period of time in which the study of these modules must be completed and the number of students who can be registered for Blended Learning study each year.
Programme accredited by	Not accredited by any other body
Programme started	1998
Study year start date	September
Relevant QAA subject benchmarks	Not applicable
Registration period	Minimum period required is usually 2 academic years. Maximum period is 5 academic years.
Average time to graduation	About 3-4 years

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Teaching Institution attendance required?	No
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Admission Details	
Intake quota	None
Admissions requirements	<p>Students must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> hold a first or second class honours degree or equivalent, in a relevant discipline, from a university of other institution acceptable to the University of London in a Science subject (e.g. Biology, medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, pharmacy) or in another scientific discipline, which has, in the opinion of the University, included suitable preliminary training <p>For all applicants an advanced level of ability to work in English is required. Applicants may be required to pass or to have passed within the last five years, at the appropriate level, a test of proficiency in English acceptable to the University – for example a TOEFL score of 600 (or 250 in the computerised test) and a minimum of 5 in the TWE or a British Council (IELTS) overall score of 7 or over with a minimum of 7 in the written sub-test.</p> <p>Before proceeding to study for the MSc, all students must (unless special exemption has been granted by the Board of Examiners) have successfully fulfilled the requirements for the award of the Postgraduate Diploma in Infectious Diseases.</p> <p>Students should refer to the MSc and Postgraduate Diploma in Infectious Diseases Programme Regulations that are reviewed annually for current admission requirements.</p>
Possible exemptions	None
<p>Exemptions are given to students who have qualifications outside the University of London; students will be exempt from subjects but no mark will count.</p> <p>There is currently a limit on the number of exemptions that can be awarded - up to one third of a degree.</p>	
Credit and transfer/progression arrangements	<p>External Programme Short Course students who have already taken and successfully passed one or more appropriate Advanced Modules may have them credited towards fulfilling the requirements for the award of the MSc, providing that they register for the MSc within four years of completing these modules.</p> <p>In order to transfer their registration to the MSc degree from the Postgraduate Diploma students must have successfully fulfilled the requirements for the award of the Postgraduate Diploma in Infectious Diseases. At the discretion of the Examiners, students who have been examined in and have passed three modules only, may be permitted to transfer their registration to the MSc and proceed to the advanced modules.</p>

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Programme Outcomes	
Distinctive features of the Programme	The LSHTM has been active at the highest level in research, teaching and advisory work in public health and tropical medicine for many years. This distance learning programme is designed to make the LSHTM resources available to the many people who are unable to come and study in London. Many of the staff involved work closely with international aid agencies and have long experience of and contact with low and middle-income countries where infectious diseases are most prevalent.
Possible routes to further study	Successful completion of the MSc can equip or retrain students to progress to a postgraduate research study in the field or a related area.
Possible graduate employment routes	The programme is aimed not only at new graduates but also at health professionals who feel that their skills need updating in this rapidly evolving field. It is expected that those who achieve the MSc will have enhanced career prospects with the health professions.

Programme Content and Structure	
Learning aims, objectives and outcomes	<p>Building on the foundation of the Core Modules which comprise the Postgraduate Diploma in Infectious Diseases, the aim of the MSc in Infectious Diseases is to enable students to understand the biology of infective agents and their interaction with the host and to use this knowledge in combination with epidemiological and public health approaches to develop rational strategies for the control and treatment of infection</p> <p>Subject Specific and Intellectual Skills</p> <p>By the end of the programme successful students will have demonstrated achievement of the following learning objectives: (i) an in-depth understanding of the biology of infection in one or more of the areas of: Bacterial Infections; Nutrition and Infection; Parasitology; Viral Infections; Hospital Infection; Water and Sanitation; Diagnostic Methods; Immunology of infection; and/or (ii) understanding how epidemiological methods can be applied to the investigation of infectious disease in developing countries and how these methods can inform disease control and/or (iii) detailed knowledge of one or more of the following infections: AIDS; TB; Malaria and/or (for those with special interest in these areas) (iv) an understanding of the principles one or more of the following areas: Financial Management; Organisational Management; Human Resource Management; Health Care Evaluation; Advanced Health Economics; Health Promotion Strategies and Interventions; Medical Anthropology; Model Building for Health Care Decisions; Nutrition Policy; Environmental Health.</p> <p>Generic skills</p> <p>In addition all successful students will have demonstrated the ability to communicate effectively in writing, critically evaluate scientific papers, write a research proposal, carry out a literature review, understand the management of a research project and disseminate the results.</p>
Learning and teaching methods, including support, guidance, materials provided and study requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are provided with study guides for each module studied. Students are advised to work through the text, participating in self-learning activities, which are followed by feedback sections and self-assessment questions. • There are tutor-marked assignments including essays, short-answer tests and case-studies, to help students review their progress and receive tutorial feedback, and sample examination questions from which students can practice exam technique.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students have access to the WebBoard web-based conferencing system which they may use for technical and other types of discussion with their tutors and their fellow students • A registered student will also receive: Programme Regulations, Student handbook, some textbooks, readers (containing copies of recent articles etc.) and past examination papers and Examiners' reports. • Students also have access to a student-to student network - this allows registered students to communicate with each other and to provide mutual support.
Programme structure	<p>The MSc consists of the following: Four compulsory modules plus either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • five optional advanced modules plus the advanced module Research design, management and analysis and a Project report. <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nine optional advanced modules. <p>In any one-year students may study and be examined in a maximum of four core modules or nine advanced modules (or five advanced modules and the Project report). In order to proceed to the advanced modules and/or the Project report, students will normally need to have passed all of the four core modules, and receive a recommendation from the Examiners that they may proceed.</p> <p>At the discretion of the Examiners students who have passed only three core modules may be allowed to proceed.</p> <p>A student's selection of advanced modules is subject to the approval of the Programme Director. Some of the advanced courses contain background information which is useful to their studying other courses and so it may be necessary to take courses in a particular order.</p> <p>A student registered for the MSc degree in Infectious Diseases may also receive the award of the Postgraduate Diploma in Infectious Diseases provided they satisfy the requirements for that award.</p> <p>For additional information students should refer to the MSc and Postgraduate Diploma in Infectious Diseases Programme Regulations which are reviewed annually.</p>
Syllabus	<p>The four compulsory modules which comprise the Postgraduate Diploma in Infectious Diseases (qv):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles of Public Health, Biostatistics & Epidemiology • Principles of Biology • Biology of Infectious Diseases • Control of Infectious Diseases <p>Plus either</p> <p>Five optional advanced modules (refer to Programme Regulations for full list) Research design, management and analysis Project report</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Nine optional advanced modules (refer to Programme Regulations for full list)</p> <p>For additional information students should refer to the MSc and</p>

	Postgraduate Diploma in Infectious Diseases Programme Regulations which are reviewed annually.
Programme Regulations	For additional information students should refer to the MSc and Postgraduate Diploma in Infectious Diseases Programme Regulations which are reviewed annually. http://www.londonexternal.ac.uk/current_students/general_resources/regulations/index.shtml
Assessment methods, including the proportion of the different methods used	Each individual core module will be assessed by one two-hour unseen written paper. Each individual advanced module (with the exception of the Project report) will be assessed by one two-hour unseen written paper and written assignments. For each advanced module students will be required to submit one or more assignment which will count as part of the formal assessment. The mark awarded to each individual advanced module will be based on the mark obtained in the written paper and on the mark for the assignment and will be weighted 70:30. The Project report will be assessed by submission of a written report of approximately 7,000 to 10,000 words. For additional information students should refer to the MSc and Postgraduate Diploma in Infectious Diseases Programme Regulations which are reviewed annually.
Marking scheme and classification criteria	The MSc will be awarded with a grading of Distinction, Pass, or Fail. The calculation of the unseen written papers, assignments and the final result is provided in the Programme Regulations. Grade Class Equivalent A Distinction B+,B,C Pass D,E Fail For additional information students should refer to the MSc and Postgraduate Diploma in Infectious Diseases Programme Regulations which are reviewed annually.
Estimated study hours overall	In order to complete the programme in the minimum period a student should be prepared to study between 15 and 25 hours per week during the annual study calendar of 36 weeks.
Intellectual development (rationale of progression through programme)	Building on the foundation of the Core Modules which comprise the Postgraduate Diploma in Infectious Diseases (qv), the aim of the MSc in Infectious Diseases is to enable students to understand the biology of infective agents and their interaction with the host and to use this knowledge in combination with epidemiological and public health approaches to develop rational strategies for the control and treatment of infection.

Quality Assurance	
Particular indicators of quality	<i>Lead college (LSHTM) quality assurance procedures</i> The School is responsible for programme design, content and teaching, including the design and marking of student assessments. All proposals for new or significantly modified Study Modules are discussed in detail by the Programme Committee and then taken to the School's Learning and Teaching Policy Committee for approval. Examinations are set and marked by an Exam Board following detailed procedures laid down by the School for the conduct of all MSc examinations. The School has appointed a Dean of Studies (currently Professor Sharon Huttly) to oversee the procedures, practices and content of all five DL

	<p>programmes for which LSHTM is Lead College.</p> <p>An External Evaluator was employed in 2002/03 to review all three DL course; this process will be repeated at least every five years.</p> <p>External Examiner’s summary (2003): “The MSc/PGDip in Infectious Diseases has proven to be an excellent course which enables students with limited physical access to academic institutions to continue their education. It is supported by a strong team of tutors and a strong team of administrators. This is demonstrated through students’ results and progression. I am confident that this will continue in the future.”</p> <p>Selected extracts from summary report of external evaluator: “The School has devised three excellent courses. The students praise the content and the learning process – well-written and well-designed courses through which the students are learning important subjects and developing new skills. From the evidence I have, the School has successfully moved into providing Distance Learning and has got it almost completely right first time. This has been a remarkable undertaking. The replies are suffused with thanks to the School for the opportunities this has brought.</p> <p>The students universally praise the quality of the materials – the content is meaningful and relevant, and the learning processes (the exercises and the assignments) enable the students to grasp that content.</p> <p>The students report good tutoring, helpful feedback on their work and rapid responses from the Distance Learning Office.”</p>
<p>Methods of assuring, evaluating and improving quality and standards of the programme</p>	<p>The University of London statute 66 (2), states that: ‘Candidates granted degrees and other awards shall have attained the same academic standard irrespective of mode or place of study or examination.’ Degrees and Diplomas awarded to External students are, therefore, examined to the same standard as those granted to Internal students of the University.</p> <p>In support of this statute, the External Programme and individual Lead Colleges share responsibility for ensuring the quality of External provision. The Quality Assurance Framework for the External Programme defines this shared responsibility and covers areas including:</p> <p><i>The bidding process</i> External programmes must undergo validation & approval under Lead College mechanisms and with reference to national QAA benchmark statements.</p> <p><i>Student and programme management</i> This includes the admission, registration and progression of students, establishment of assessment procedures and appointment of boards of examiners.</p> <p><i>System wide matters</i> Academic policy and development is the responsibility of the External System Lead Colleges Committee, the membership of which is made up of representatives of all the Lead Colleges at Vice-Principal level. The qualifications framework for External programmes outlines the different levels of undergraduate and postgraduate study and the awards which may be made to External students.</p> <p><i>Systematic reporting and the review process</i></p>

	External Examiners make annual reports on assessment procedures and standards set and achieved. Annual Programme Reports provide annual summaries of programme information. These reports are considered and acted on as part of an annual review process.
Programme validation/approval	This programme commenced before the introduction of the current Quality Assurance framework for External programmes. Future programme approval or revalidation would be undertaken by the Learning and Teaching Policy Committee and reported to the Senate at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.
Appointment of External Examiners	External Examiners for External Programmes are nominated and appointed by the Lead College or Consortium, using approval processes which are parallel with those used for the appointment of External Examiners to Boards of Examiners assessing College-based students.
Student feedback mechanisms	External Programme-wide student feedback mechanisms are currently under development therefore no standard data is available yet.