

Programme Specification

Course record information

Name and level of final award:	MSc Herbal Medicine
Name and level of intermediate awards:	Postgraduate Diploma Herbal Medicine Postgraduate Certificate Herbal Medicine
Awarding body/institution:	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution:	Recognised Body
Location of delivery:	Department of Life Science, Faculty of Science and Technology
Language of delivery and assessment:	English
Course/programme leader:	Dr Julia Green
Course URL:	westminster.ac.uk/courses/subjects/complementary-medicine/postgraduate-courses/september/full-time/herbal-medicine-msc
Mode and length of study:	1 year full-time 2-5 years part-time
University of Westminster course code:	W50
JACS code:	B342
UCAS code:	UKPASS code: 046481
QAA subject benchmarking group:	Health Studies (2008)
Professional body accreditation:	
Date of course validation/review:	Validated May 2010 Review 2015
Date of programme specification:	2014/15

Admissions requirements

The University will at all times seek to ensure equality of opportunity for all applicants as described in its Admissions policy. Applicants must be registered and insured practitioners who undertake the equivalent of one full day per week in practice. Additionally they should normally possess at least one of the following:

- BSc Honours degree, at 2:1 or above, in an appropriate complementary medicine or equivalent.
- A professional qualification of equivalent status and associated work experience
- An equivalent qualification which is deemed suitable by the course team, including relevant overseas qualifications.

Enquiries about the acceptability of these or other qualifications should be made to the Admissions Office (cav-admissions@wmin.ac.uk). (Please see below in relation to establishing equivalence of training.) Whenever possible, applicants will normally be interviewed and assessed for their suitability to join the course.

Competence in written and spoken English language for those whose first language is not English is required to at least IELTS 6.5 to include 6.0 in each element of the test.

We welcome mature applicants with work experience, training or study that can be matched against specific entry requirements.

Before beginning the course applicants will be required to sign that they have read, considered and agree to our Code of Professional Practice.

Establishing equivalence in relation to entry requirements

Assessment of equivalence for entry requirements will normally be made by admissions administrators in consultation with teaching staff.

Equivalence in respect to initial practitioner training:- Applicants who have gained their initial training in complementary medicine through a route other than the BSc (Hons) Scheme of complementary medicine degrees at the University of Westminster will be assessed in relation to the length and depth of the courses followed, and in relation to the orientation of the syllabus.

Applicants in this position will also need to demonstrate equivalence in health sciences, research and practitioner development. Professional accreditation of their course, the time since qualification and currency of practice will also be taken into account. If the level of study cannot be ascertained applicants will be asked to complete a written activity followed by an interview. Applicants may be required to complete a short course or modules from the undergraduate scheme to ease their transition to study.

Accreditation of Prior Learning

It may also be possible to have previous learning or experiential learning (work experience) assessed for exemption from part(s) of your course. More information can be found at <http://www.wmin.ac.uk/page-16694>

Aims of the course

The focus is to further the growth of students as scholar practitioners and enable them to develop as leaders in research, clinical governance and policy and practice within the herbal medicine profession whilst advancing their own professional practice and embedding lifelong learning into the community of practice.

The underpinning ethos is to produce graduates equipped with the knowledge, skills and practical experience to enhance their professional role in the field of herbal medicine. This is fostered through the focussed academic and professional experience in both the theoretical concepts and the diagnostic practice within students own practise.

The course aims to present appropriate clinical and analytical content in an integrated inter-professional dimension; to engender an understanding and appreciation of the importance and role of peer mentoring and supervision; to support research in a specialist area; to facilitate the development of a variety of transferable skills that will enhance professional and personal development and improve employment and further education prospects; to provide a forum in which to engage with contemporary issues and debates within the discipline and to develop critical analytical skills.

Employment and further study opportunities

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, i.e. employability skills. The University of Westminster is committed to developing employable graduates by ensuring that:

- Career development skills are embedded in all courses
- Opportunities for part-time work, placements and work-related learning activities are widely available to students
- Staff continue to widen and strengthen the University's links with employers in all sectors, involving them in curriculum design and encouraging their participation in other aspects of the University's career education and guidance provision
- Staff are provided with up-to-date data on labour market trends and employers' requirements, which will inform the service delivered to students.

This course is designed to enhance the skills of professionals already in practice and encourage diversity into other areas of work including the creation of multidisciplinary practices, working in other healthcare environments such as: the NHS, charitable organisations, private outpatient hospitals, GP practices, sports clubs and events, CM industries including herb production and homeopathic pharmacies. Graduates may continue in education, entering Ph.D. programmes or they may find employment in academia or research institutes, as well as management, marketing and development in Governmental and community healthcare provision and related industries.

Graduates obtaining the appropriate grade can progress to the University of Westminster's award: Professional Doctorate for Health and Social Care Professionals. (Validated 2009)

Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. These threshold statements of achievement and are linked to the knowledge, understanding and skills that a student will have gained on successfully completing a course.

Knowledge and understanding

On successful completion of the course, a student will be able to:

- 1) **Demonstrate** the ability to work critically with theoretical and research-based knowledge at the forefront of herbal medicine and its context within the wider scientific and health related community;
- 2) **Apply** skills of critical exploration, evaluation and analysis to the propositional, professional and personal knowledge acquired or self-generated through clinical practice;

- 3) Analyse, synthesise and engage in debate of contemporary issues in a collaborative inter-professional setting with other healthcare professionals and the wider scientific community;
- 4) Apply skills of peer supervision and mentoring to critically analyse how reflexivity informs clinical decision making and CPD.
- 5) Demonstrate originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the profession;
- 6) Apply knowledge of methodological principles and techniques of data collection to the design of a research project;
- 7) Process, analyse and critically interpret data gathered and formulate conclusions and recommendations demonstrating awareness of the wider literature.

Specific skills

On successful completion of the course, a student will be able to:

- 1) engage effectively in advanced academic study and critique of modern and traditional herbal medicine practice drawing on an extensive knowledge base and high level practitioner skills
- 2) explore and explain their clinical reasoning (cognitive and tacit) in the development of treatments for individual patients or specific health conditions across a series of consultations;
- 3) demonstrate and evaluate developed awareness of the interactions that take place in the practitioner-patient relationship by recognising and reframing the sensory information on which it is based;
- 4) review and challenge both modern and traditional concepts and practices in the light of the most recent scientific research, clinical theory and practice application;
- 5) engage effectively in group and individual mentoring and supervision and advance their practitioner knowledge and understanding, utilizing reflexivity through action learning to develop higher level reasoning;
- 6) act autonomously in framing and implementing new knowledge at a professional level;
- 7) undertake an independent research project and present findings in a professional format that is clear and coherent to publication standards;
- 8) **engage critically in current debates and issues within complementary medicine**

Key transferable skills

On successful completion of the course, a student will be able to:

- 1) act with initiative and personal responsibility as a facilitator and mentor within a peer group;
- 2) show self evaluation skills and the ability to reflect on self and others' participation;
- 3) manage complex and diverse sources of information effectively;
- 4) act autonomously in planning, implementing and evaluating tasks in complicated and unpredictable contexts;
- 5) communicate competently to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- 6) demonstrate problem solving abilities involving the application of knowledge and/or via information seeking;
- 7) demonstrate originality in their application of knowledge which is at or informed by the discipline or area of professional practice;
- 8) **show autonomy by acting as an independent and self-critical learner, managing requirements and undertaking research tasks with minimum guidance;**
- 9) effectively report information, ideas, research and clinical decision making.

Learning, teaching and assessment methods

The teaching and learning strategies which underpin this master's course acknowledge that you will have come to the course as committed practitioners wanting to extend your practice, as well as to take on the generic intellectual skills of higher level critique. Teaching will be grounded in case studies, where you will be drawing on your own experience, and focusing on the processes of your discipline and practitioner research.

Contact time will be spent primarily on critical debate and clinical experience. You will be expected to cover reading and research in your own time at home or in the library. We also recommend that you meet regularly with your fellow class mates. As you check your developing ideas against those of your peers you will be able to see the filters through which you view theory and practice.

A master's degree is challenging and at times arduous. In addition to scheduled classes we would recommend that you will need to do at least 3-4 hours of study for each contact hour.

Learning

The curriculum strategy for the course is to create a learning environment that acknowledges and builds on difference in individual starting points, and that is practice-led. Contact time is used to develop practice skills and to make sense of theory through practical problem-solving, followed by self-directed appraisal. The aim is to create an interactive environment, which is balanced by developing ability to manage learning through reflexive appraisal and goal-setting, with a view to embedding these skills into professional life. Learning occurs in relation to personal experience, but also from sharing and exploring the perspectives and experience of others.

The teaching and learning strategies built into these courses acknowledge that students will have come to the course to extend their current practise.

A key aspect of modern education is the use of technological resources to enhance learning. The University's virtual learning environment (VLE), Blackboard, is one of the primary ways in which technology is used. As students are expected to adopt skills of autonomy and self-directed learning, it is expected that a proportion of the study will be undertaken both on and off site through advanced utilisation of the Blackboard learning environment.

Teaching

Knowledge is taught through problem-framing and problem-solving. The Course views the student as being at the centre of the learning process and students are expected to take responsibility for their own learning, to further develop skills acquired by their previous study and to further pursue knowledge through active engagement with learning resources provided.

The Course utilises a variety of teaching methods and approaches, including a mixture of formal lectures, clinical encounters, tutorials (student-centred learning activities), facilitated peer-group seminars, individual mentoring, poster and oral presentations. These combined teaching approaches aim to both improve students' knowledge of complementary medicines, as well as helping to develop their critical faculties through an experiential approach. In addition, the key communication skills required by any professional therapist are developed throughout the course.

Assessment

The assessment strategy for the CM Masters Scheme reflects the principle that assessment should be appropriate to the situation in which the knowledge, skills and attitudes are eventually to be used. Engagement with the complementary medicine profession and inter-professional agencies is a key aim of the course and much of the assessment is geared to presentation of material at professional, publishable standards. Essential skills in critical thinking, communication, utilising resources effectively, team working and self-management are developed through all assessments. The strategy also addresses the needs of the profession by enabling you to demonstrate clinical competence through clinical practice

in the adjustment and creation of appropriate treatment plans for patients with complex illnesses. This second aspect is achieved in holistic assessments which integrate performance and professional attributes within an interdisciplinary framework.

Course structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Postgraduate students study 180 credits per year.

Credit Level 7				
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
7HRBM002W	Applied Phytomedicine	Core	20	10
1HRMB006W	Phytotherapeutics	Core	20	10
7HMNT015W	Research methods for Health Sciences 1	Core	20	10
Award of Postgraduate Certificate available				
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
7HRBM002W	Applied Phytomedicine	Core	20	10
1HRMB006W	Phytotherapeutics	Core	20	10
7HRBM008W	Researching contemporary issues in complementary medicine	Core	40	20
7HMDS001W	Clinical Reasoning	Core	40	20
Award of Postgraduate Diploma available				
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
7HRBM002W	Applied Phytomedicine	Core	20	10
1HRMB006W	Phytotherapeutics	Core	20	10
7HRBM008W	Researching contemporary issues in complementary medicine	Core	40	20
7HMDS001W	Clinical Reasoning	Core	40	20
7HMNT015W	Research methods for Health Sciences I	Core	20	10
7HMNT018W	Research methods for Health Sciences II and Research Project	Core	40	20
Award of MSc available				

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year.

Academic regulations

The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations

Support for students

Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce students to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which they will be studying, the Library and IT facilities and to the Faculty Registry. Students will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Students are allocated a personal tutor who can provide advice and guidance on academic matters.

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at their Faculty. Students can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books).

Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and printing services. They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught at their Faculty. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students access their course materials, and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students.

At University level, Services for Students provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. The International Office provides particular support for international students. The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support all students during their time at the University.

The Department of Life Sciences offers additional student support as follows:

- Every new student receives a copy of 'Essential Information', published by the University to cover various aspects of academic life including Course Frameworks, Regulations and Policies. This document also outlines all the support services and agencies available throughout the University;
- An Induction Programme for courses with opportunities to meet School staff;
- Course and module handbooks;
- All postgraduate students will take part in the Postgraduate Academic Tutorial Scheme (PATs) that aims to furnish students with the key skills required to successfully produce work at Level 7.
- In common with all courses within the Department of Life Sciences, the Course Committee will meet each semester with Student Representatives;
- Web-based teaching timetable which can be searched by day, slot, lecturer, course or module as well as Web-based examination timetable;
- Information Systems and Library Resources (ISLS) provides an introduction to their facilities during induction and also provide training opportunities for software packages and electronic database information retrieval, throughout the programme of study;
- Each student is assigned a Personal Tutor for personal and academic support for the duration of their study.

Reference points for the course

Internally

The course, in all its modes, draws upon the mission statement of the University and of the Department, and is an integral part of the Department Business Plan. It seeks to establish the quality and good practice in teaching and learning that are articulated through the University's policies and quality assurance mechanism.

The following University documents are referred to for guidance in planning and reviewing all courses;

- University of Westminster Mission Statement.
- University teaching and learning policies.
- University quality assurance handbook and Modular Frameworks.
- Handbook of Academic Regulations.
- School of Life Sciences Mission Statement.
- School of Life Sciences teaching, learning and assessment strategies.

The research and clinical practice of the School's staff have influenced not only the breadth of the curriculum on offer but also teaching and learning methodologies.

Externally

QAA and SEEC

The QAA suggest the EWNI (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) credit level descriptors be used as a point of reference. The South East England Consortium (SEEC) have set out detailed descriptors for knowledge skills and attributes at each academic level that have been adopted by the University as good practice.

QAA Subject benchmarks

Whilst specific subject benchmarks for Complementary Medicine have not yet been finalised by the QAA we have sought guidance from and made reference to the QAA honours degree subject benchmark for Health Studies (2008) and masters degree subject benchmark for Medicine (2002). In addition reference has been made to the QAA Masters Degree Characteristics (2009) for specific guidance of M-Level academic outcomes. Members of academic staff are involved in the preparation of subject specific benchmarks, and it is the intention of the School and the University to work within these guidelines once they are established.

Professional body accreditation

The National Institute of Medical Herbalists have been consulted with a view to recognising elements of the course as professional CPD. The equivalence of gaining an accredited award is a course entry requirement.

Quality management and enhancement

Course management

The course is managed on a day-to-day basis as part of the complementary medicine scheme by the Head of the Department of Life Sciences, Professor Annie Bligh, all the course leaders and core theme leaders. This management structure is supported by the individual course teams of module leaders and lecturers. The CM Scheme of undergraduate and postgraduate courses currently consists of Chinese Medicine: Acupuncture; Chinese Herbal Medicine; Herbal Medicine.

The Faculty of Science and Technology offers a range of undergraduate, postgraduate and short courses in the areas of complementary medicine as well as biomedical science, human and health science and molecular & applied science, computing and psychology, all of which are the overall responsibility of the Dean of School, Professor Jane Lewis.

Course approval, monitoring and review

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 2010. The panel included internal peers from the University and external subject specialists from academia and industry to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other universities and the relevance to employers. Periodic course review helps to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers.

The course is monitored each year by the Faculty to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the outcomes from each Course Committee, evidence of student progression and achievement and the reports from external examiners, to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. The Annual Monitoring Sub-Committee considers the Faculty action plans resulting from this process and the outcomes are reported to the Academic Council, which has overall responsibility for the maintenance of quality and standards in the University.

Student involvement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways. The most formal mechanism for feedback on the course is the Course Committee. Student representatives will be elected to sit on the Committee to represent the views of their peer group in various discussions. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the Course Committee.

All students are invited to complete a Module Feedback Questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced. The University also has an annual Student Experience Survey, which elicits feedback from students about their course and University experience.

Students meet with review panels when the periodic review of the course is conducted to provide oral feedback on their experience on the course. Student feedback from course committees is part of the Faculty's' quality assurance evidence base.

For more information about this course:

Please contact the course leader: Dr Julia Green on email J.Green3@westminster.ac.uk

visit the website at: westminster.ac.uk/courses/subjects/complementary-medicine/postgraduate-courses/full-time/p09fphem-msc-herbal-medicine#overview

Please note: This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. This specification should be read in conjunction with the Course Handbook provided to students and Module Handbooks, which provide more detailed information on the specific learning outcomes, content, teaching, learning and assessment methods for each module.