

Part one: Programme Specification⁴

1. Course record information

Name and level of final award:	MSc Public Health Nutrition
Name and level of intermediate awards:	Postgraduate Diploma Public Health Nutrition Postgraduate Certificate Public Health Nutrition
Awarding body/institution:	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution:	Recognised Body
Location of delivery:	Cavendish campus
Language of delivery and assessment:	English
Course/programme leader:	Dr Claire Robertson
Course URL:	
Mode and length of study:	Full-time, one year
University of Westminster course code:	D09FPPHL
JACS code:	
QAA subject benchmarking group:	
Professional body accreditation:	Association for Nutrition (AfN) 2012
Date of course validation/review:	May 2010
Date of programme specification:	2013/14

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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.

2. Admissions requirements

Entry criteria

A good honours degree from UK University or equivalent from a non-UK university is required in a science or social science subject. Fluency in written and spoken English is a prerequisite for this course. A minimum of IELTS score of 6.5 or an equivalent UTESOL is required for the award with 6.5 in the written element. Candidates will be considered on a case-by-case basis, with preference given to those with related work experience.

Applications and selection

Applications are made to the Admissions Office of Cavendish Campus, using forms provided on paper or online from the University website. These are considered by the Course Admissions Secretary and/or Course Leader. If entry criteria are met, then a place is normally offered. Applicants may be invited to explore their suitability for the course by means of an interview where possible, or by a short piece of written work for which guidelines are provided.

3. Aims of the course

- To equip students with specialist scientific knowledge and practical skills to take an active role in public health nutrition in a range of settings
- To enhance students' professional competency, employability and development as public health professionals
- To provide specialist knowledge and practical skills in public health nutrition that will enable students to identify and critically analyze community and national nutritional problems of public health significance
- To develop skills in planning and evaluating policies and programmes to address these problems, focusing on over-nutrition, in a public health context
- To enhance the transferable skills that are in demand in professional life

4. Employment and further study opportunities

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, ie 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.

The course is designed to equip students with the specialist knowledge and practical skills of a public health nutritionist and so prepare them to work in a range of workplace contexts including community-based projects. Employment opportunities for public health nutritionists

are growing with new openings, for instance in health promotion and in the context of the NHS. The curriculum and skills policy is also designed to meet the professional competencies defined by the Association for Nutrition, the mapping of public health nutrition competencies on the National Standards for Public Health Specialists for the UK, and the common standards for training and curriculum developed as part of the European Master's Programme in Public Health Nutrition commissioned and funded by the European Commission.

Students who have completed this course have gone on to work for example with the childhood obesity programme MEND, as Obesity and Nutrition advisors in PCTs, as Scientific Advisors in Food Industry and as Research managers in academic institutions for example.

5. 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

- Demonstrate knowledge of the principles of human nutritional science
- Apply this knowledge to critically evaluate energy and nutrient requirements through the life-cycle
- Describe and analyze current patterns and trends in nutritional problems in varied international contexts
- Describe and analyze key features of the organization and delivery of public health and health care in the contemporary world
- Demonstrate an understanding of the evidence base for the current toolbox of efficacious interventions, focusing on low income countries
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of qualitative and quantitative research methods used in public health nutrition

Subject specific skills

- Critically appraise and summarize current scientific evidence on the relationships between diet, infection and disease
- Identify and synthesize both the qualitative and quantitative evidence that informs on nutritional situations and solutions
- Identify and apply the appropriate methods to assess nutritional status in populations living in different contexts
- Plan, implement and evaluate interventions to sustain or improve the nutritional status of populations or communities, focusing on high income countries and countries in transition
- Appraise the effectiveness of food and nutrition policies, especially those relating to high income countries and countries in transition
- Design and carry out a research project in a topic relating to public health nutrition

Transferable skills

- Group working
- Organization and problem solving
- Learning resources and information management
- Self-evaluation and autonomy
- Communication skills written and oral in a range of formats
- Data collection and analysis

6. Learning, teaching and assessment methods

The overall teaching and learning pattern is designed to promote active learning that draws upon real life experiences and also involves reflecting upon experience to help individuals recognize and develop an independent spirit of enquiry. A range of teaching methods are used, which include lectures, seminars, workshops, simulations, scientific problem-based learning, and self-directed learning. These are used in a structured way to support the development of specific areas of knowledge and understanding, practical and transferable skills.

In recognition of the need for continuing professional development in today's work environment, emphasis is placed upon developing transferable skills and skills for lifelong learning, for instance in the utilization of information and educational technology. The overall programme seeks to foster self-evaluation and autonomy and a significant part of each module is devoted to self-study and projects requiring completion by the end of the module. Critical analysis is a feature of all modules, but for those students taking the MSc this culminates in the research project which allows for students to pursue an individual academic enquiry into a selected in-depth area of study. In addition to individual and self-directed learning, there are also opportunities for group learning via group work and critical reading seminars for the debate and discussion of important papers. These allow for academic dialogue not only with staff, but also with peers.

The overall assessment strategy is designed to assess the learning outcomes of each MSc. To achieve this, a variety of assessment methods are used. The methods have been selected to develop and assess particular skills (subject specific as well as transferable) and knowledge in addition to specific learning outcomes. Details of these linkages along with individual assessment criteria are given in the individual module outlines, but key assessment methods used include:

- Critical essays/reviews
- Case studies/reports
- Scientific and technical reports
- Project dissertation

7. Course structure

This section shows the core and option (elective) modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Postgraduate students study 180 credits or 9 modules per year including the dissertation project.

The modular structure of the MSc course is summarized below. The 6 common core modules must be undertaken by all students enrolled on the MSc and they provide foundational skills and knowledge required for the discipline as a whole. In addition students can choose between two elective modules. However one of these elective modules might not be offered if insufficient students register for it.

All modules carry a weighting of 20 or credits except for the research project which carries 40 credits. The specific requirements for each level of award are described in section 7 below.

The topic of the project should be appropriate to the award, and must be agreed in advance with the module and course leaders.

Credit Level 7					Award Available		
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS	MSc (180 credits)	PGDip (120 credits)	PGCert (60 credits)
FIPH707	Food and Nutrition in Public Health Policy	Core	20	10	✓	✓	✓
FHHS703	Concepts and Principles of Human Nutrition	Core	20	10	✓	✓	✓
FSL700	PG Research Methods	Core	20	10	✓	✓	Option
FIPH708	Professional Skills for Public Health Nutritionists	Core	20	10	✓	Option	Option
FIPH703	Nutritional Assessment	Core	20	10	✓	Option	Option
FIPH704	Health Promotion in Nutrition	Core	20	10	✓	Option	Option
FIPH706	Prevention and Treatment of Obesity in Childhood	Option	20	10	✓ (option)	Option	Option
3BIO7N4	Communicating Science	Option	20	10	✓ (option)	Option	Option
FSL701	PG Research Project	Core	40	20	✓		

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

Academic regulations

The MSc Public Health Nutrition, and its intermediate awards (PgDip and PgCert) operate in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) in 2008.

All students should make sure that they access a copy of the current edition of the general University handbook called *Essential Westminster*, which is available at westminster.ac.uk/essential-westminster. The following regulations should be read in conjunction with Section 18: Modular Framework for Postgraduate Courses and relevant sections of the current Handbook of Academic Regulations, which is available at westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations

Award

To qualify for the award of **MSc Public Health Nutrition**, a student must have:

- obtained a minimum of 180 credits at Level 7;
- attempted modules worth no more than 240 credits; and
NB., A first attempt of any module will count as an attempt, and a re-attempt of any module that a student has failed will count as a further, separate attempt. Re-assessment following referral at the first sit will not count as a further separate attempt.
- satisfied the requirements contained within any course specific regulations for the relevant Course Scheme.

The University may award:

- a Masters Degree with Merit to a student whose marks average at least 60% across modules at Level 7.
- a Masters Degree with Distinction to a student whose marks average at least 70% across the modules at Level 7.

To qualify for the target award of **Postgraduate Diploma in Public Health Nutrition**, a student must have:

- obtained a minimum of 120 credits at Level 7;

To qualify for the target award of **Postgraduate Certificate in Public Health Nutrition**, a student must have:

- obtained a minimum of 60 credits at Level 7.

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.

Reference points for the course

Internally

The course draws upon the mission statement of the University and of the Faculty, and is an integral part of the Faculty 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
- Faculty of Science and Technology Mission Statement
- Faculty of Science and Technology teaching, learning and assessment strategies

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 Public Health Nutrition is not available from the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Education, reference has been made solely to the QAA Masters Degree Characteristics (March 2010) for specific guidance of M-Level academic outcomes. Alongside these guidance documents, professional benchmarks of the UK Association for Nutrition and the National Standards for Public Health Specialists for the UK have been used here alongside:

Hughes (2007) A Competency Framework for Public Health Nutrition Workforce Development. Australian Public Health Nutrition Academic Collaboration.

Dietitians of Canada (2009). Strengthening Public Health Nutrition in Canada

Professional body accreditation

The Masters in Public Health Nutrition has been accredited by the Association for Nutrition since 2012.

Quality management and enhancement

Course management

The course is managed on a day-to-day basis by the Communication and Dissemination Group which consists of the Head of the Department, all the course leaders and core theme leaders. This group meets monthly to monitor the provision and ensure issues raised by students, staff and the university are disseminated, discussed and actioned. This management structure is supported by the module leaders and lecturers.

The Faculty offers a range of undergraduate, postgraduate and short courses in the areas of psychology, electronics and computer science, biomedical science, human and health science, molecular & applied science and complementary medicine, all of which are the overall responsibility of the Dean of Faculty, Prof. Jane Lewis.

Course approval, monitoring and review

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 2001, and revalidated in 2003 and 2010. At all three time-points the panels 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 School 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 School 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 Schools' quality assurance evidence base.

For more information about this course you may contact the course leader: Dr Claire

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