

Postgraduate Programme Specification

Master of Public Health

This specification provides a summary of the main features of the programme and learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate where full advantage is taken of all learning opportunities offered. Further details on the learning, teaching and assessment approach for the programme and modules can be accessed on the University website and Virtual Learning Environment, GCU Learn. All programmes of the University are subject to the University's [Quality Assurance](#) processes.

1. GENERAL INFORMATION			
Programme Title	Master of Public Health		
Final Award	Master of Public Health		
Awarding Body	Glasgow Caledonian University		
School	School of Health and Life Sciences		
Department	Department of Nursing, Community and Public Health		
Mode of Study	Full-time Part-time Online Distance Learning		
Location of Delivery	Glasgow Campus London Campus		
UCAS Code	N/A		
Accreditations (PSRB)	N/A		
Period of Approval	From:	September 2026	To: August 2031

2. EDUCATIONAL AIMS OF PROGRAMME
The philosophy underpinning the Master of Public Health programme is to prepare and develop public health practitioners to be able to prevent disease, promote health, and protect the well-being of the public through education, research and public health practice and service. Public health practice is defined by the UK Faculty of Public Health (2014) under the three key domains of health protection, health improvement and health services. Underpinning these themes are the functions of public health intelligence, academic public health and workforce development. Despite global increases in life expectancy in the last four decades (GBD 2019 Demographics Collaborators 2020), there remains strong evidence that health inequalities continue to impact on public health efforts (ONS, 2022; WHO 2013). Exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the widening health inequalities continue to be a key public health challenge for the 21st Century, alongside an ageing population, increasing levels of chronic disease, migration and urbanisation, environmental damage and climate change and the economic crisis (BMA, 2021; McGowan and Bambra, 2022). The public health workforce is recognised as key in taking forward the public health agenda to help address these issues (WHO & ASPHER, 2020). In order to effectively facilitate this process, those working in the public health arena will require the appropriate and relevant knowledge, skills and attributes. United Kingdom (UK) wide, this commitment to the education and support of the workforce is acknowledged through the publication of the updated Public Health Skills and Careers Framework (Department of Health 2016) to help deliver the public health goals identified in the national Strategic Plan (Public Health England 2019). Key themes in the Skills and Career Framework (Department of Health 2016) are identified as public health action which is evidence based, focusses on joint working and holistic approaches, builds capacity and leadership

at all levels, outcomes driven, cost effective, sustainable and takes a system wide view. The curriculum of the Master of Public Health programme seeks to develop knowledge and skills in areas informed by public health competencies used by the Faculty of Public Health and the WHO-ASPHER in their curricula for training public health workforce (FPH, 2022; WHO-ASPHER, 2020). Consequently, students undertaking the Master of Public Health at GCU will be facilitated to develop the skills, knowledge and attributes to actively contribute, support and lead public health initiatives via a programme where the educational aims and objectives have been derived from these underlying principles.

The overall aim of the programme is to develop graduates who are able to deliver safe and effective public health practice.

The objectives of the programme are to encourage and enable students to practice in the manner that achieves the purpose of public health. The purpose of public health, as defined by the Faculty of Public Health, is "The science and art of promoting and protecting health and well-being, preventing ill-health and prolonging life through the organised efforts of society" under the three key domains of health improvement, healthcare services and health protection (Faculty of Public Health, 2022; 2010). The practice of public health involves efforts to improve the health of those members of the population who are at risk of poor health outcomes. Public health practice seeks to tackle wider determinants of health and wellbeing to address health inequalities and protect the population from hazards which impact health (Faculty of Public Health, 2022). Public health practice is therefore population based, emphasises collective responsibility for health and health protection and is facilitated through effective partnership working with the state playing a key role. The learning outcomes for the programme have been mapped to Phase 1 of the Faculty of Public Health's competency framework (2022) which in turn maps to the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework and Public Health Skills and Knowledge Framework (Department of Health 2016).

3. LEARNING OUTCOMES

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills, qualities and other attributes in the following areas:

A: Knowledge and understanding:

- A1 Demonstrate knowledge and critical understanding of the principles and practice of public health theory and how these relate to practice, locally, nationally and internationally
- A2 Contribute to the protection and improvement of people's health that is underpinned by knowledge and understanding of appropriate theory and best evidence
- A3 Demonstrate knowledge and critical understanding of research methodologies and prepare a research proposal that is relevant to public health practice
- A4 Demonstrate knowledge and critical understanding of quantitative methods used in public health practice
- A5 Demonstrate knowledge and critical understanding of the role of health economics in public health service provision
- A6 Demonstrate knowledge and critical understanding of appropriate theory and best evidence that acknowledges the role of social action in addressing the wider determinants of health
- A7 Undertake a small research study on a topic of relevance to public health practice and present a Master Dissertation that demonstrates knowledge and understanding of the research process

A8 Undertake research and development to improve health and well-being

B: Practice: Applied knowledge, skills and understanding:

- B1 Undertake critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of ideas, concepts, evidence and information.
- B2 Identify, clarify, explain and solve challenges associated with the advancement of knowledge in relation to the development and/or delivery of public health services
- B3 Search for and review research-based literature to underpin own practice and provide direction for further research and public health practice
- B4 Analyse and interpret information, evidence, knowledge and statistics
- B5 Undertake surveillance and assessment of the population's health and well-being

C: Generic cognitive skills:

- C1 Reflect on, and appraise, the actions of self and others in relation to the development and/or delivery of safe and effective public health services
- C2 Enhance understanding by synthesising and applying knowledge to familiar and unfamiliar situations and/or problems
- C3 Develop a broad and integrated understanding of the nature, scope, main areas and boundaries of public health practice in relation to self and others
- C4 Demonstrate skills in relation to promoting and protecting the population's health and well-being
- C5 Develop quality and risk management within an evaluative culture

D: Communication, numeracy and ICT skills

- D1 Work in a self-directed manner, taking responsibility for own learning and personal development
- D2 Develop communication and IT skills to underpin effective learning
- D3 Develop communication skills; written, oral and listening
- D4 Work effectively with others
- D5 Underpin professional development by integration of theory and practice
- D6 Develop enhanced awareness of connections between knowledge, skills and values in relation to self and others
- D7 Demonstrate critical thinking and problem-solving skills in a range of situations

E: Autonomy, accountability and working with others.

- E1 Demonstrate the importance of developing collaborative working skills to promote and support health and well-being
- E2 Demonstrate the skills required to develop public health programmes and services and reduce inequalities
- E3 Demonstrate skills in relation to policy and strategy development and implementation to improve health and well-being
- E4 Demonstrate the skills required to work with communities to improve health and well-being
- E5 Provide strategic leadership for health and well-being
- E6 Ethically manage self, people and resources to improve health and well-being.

4. LEARNING AND TEACHING METHODS

The programme provides a variety of learning and teaching methods. Programme and Module specific guidance will provide detail of the learning and teaching methods specific to each module.

Across the programme the learning and teaching methods and approaches may include the following:

- Lectures
- Seminars
- Practical classes
- Simulation experiences
- Groupwork
- Flipped classroom approaches
- Online learning

The above approaches may be delivered either in person or online as appropriate and determined at module level by the Module Leader.

5. ASSESSMENT METHODS

The programme provides a variety of formative and summative assessment methods. Programme and Module specific guidance will provide detail of the assessment methods specific to each module.

Across the programme the assessment methods may include the following:

- Written coursework (essays, reports, case studies, dissertation, literature review)
- Oral coursework (presentations, structured conversations)
- Practical Assessment (Placement, VIVA, Laboratory work)
- Group work
- Blogs and Wikis
- Portfolio Presentations
- Formal Examinations and Class Tests

The above assessments may be delivered either in person and online as appropriate and determined at module level by the Module Leader.

6. ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Specific entry requirements for this programme can be found on the prospectus and study pages on the GCU website at this location: www.gcu.ac.uk/study

The Course webpage specific to this Programme is: <https://www.gcu.ac.uk/study/courses/pg/mph-master-of-public-health-multiple-locations>

All students entering the programme are required to adhere to the [GCU Code of Student Conduct](#).

EU and international students with a student visa cannot study online, part-time or by Distance Learning in the UK. If an international or EU student holds an alternative immigration permission that permits part time/DL study in the UK, they can do so.

Admissions must obtain immigration status evidence they can study in the UK for the proposed duration of the programme structure. If this is a Skilled Worker visa, we require evidence of a signed consent letter from their employer as they are sponsored to work fulltime, and any part time study must not impact their ability to do their job

7. PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND AVAILABLE AND FINAL EXIT AWARDS¹

The following modules are delivered as part of this programme:

Module Code	Module Title	Core or Optional	SCQF Level	Credit Size	Coursework %	Examination %	Practical %
MMB724491	Advanced Research Methods (ARM)	Core	11	30	70%	30%	
MMB731010	The Principles and Theory of Public Health Practice*	Core	11	15	100%		
MMB725027	Epidemiology: Principles, Application and Evaluation in Practice*	Core	11	15	40%	60%	
MMB725021	Social Action Approaches in Public Health*	Core	11	15	100%		
MMB725024	Applied Statistics and Data Analysis for Public Health*	Core	11	15	100%		
MMB727020	Evidence Based Public Health*	Core	11	15	100%		
MMB731011	Health Economics	Optional	11	15			100%
MMB725019	Navigating the Policy Context	Optional	11	15	50%	50%	
MMB725030	Infection Prevention & Control in a Global Context	Optional	11	15	100%		
MMB724468	Master's Dissertation**	Core	11	60	50%	50%	
MMC131009	The Theory of Sexual and Reproductive Health	Optional	11	15	100%		

Students undertaking the programme on a full-time basis commencing in September of each year will undertake the modules in the order presented above. This may be subject to variation for students commencing the programme at other times of year (e.g. January) and/or undertaking the programme on a part-time or distance learning mode of delivery.

**Master's Dissertation- students are required to pass ARM to proceed to this module

The following final and early Exit Awards are available from this programme^{† 2}:

Postgraduate Certificate (PgC) in Public Health - *achieved upon successful completion of 60 credits from any combination of the above modules (excluding the Dissertation / Project Module)*

¹ Periodically, programmes and modules may be subject to change or cancellation. Further information on this can be found on the GCU website here:

www.gcu.ac.uk/currentstudents/essentials/policiesandprocedures/changesandcancellationtoprogrammes

² Please refer to the [GCU Qualifications Framework](#) for the minimum credits required for each level of award and the Programme Handbook for requirements on any specified or prohibited module combinations for each award.

Postgraduate Diploma (PgD) in Public Health- *achieved upon successful completion of 120 credits which must include 60 credits from core modules asterisked above.*

Master of Public Health- *achieved upon successful completion of 180 credits which must include all core modules from the list above and 1 optional module*

8. ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS

Students should expect to complete their programme of study under the GCU Assessment Regulations that were in place at the commencement of their studies on that programme, unless proposed changes to University Regulations are advantageous to students. These can be found at:

<https://www.gcu.ac.uk/aboutgcu/services-and-facilities/qualityassuranceandenhancement/regulations-and-policies>

In addition to the GCU Assessment Regulations noted above, this programme is subject to Programme Specific Regulations in line with the following approved Exceptions:

Case No 177

Details: Non-Standard Module Credit Size – 30 and 45 credit master's level modules.

VERSION CONTROL (to be completed in line with AQPP processes) Any changes to the PSP must be recorded below by the programme team to ensure accuracy of the programme of study being offered.			
<i>Version Number</i>	<i>Changes/Updates</i>	<i>Date Changes/Updates made</i>	<i>Date Effective From</i>
1.0	Post event- addition of new module (MMC131009)	July 2026	Sept 2026