



**UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON**

Programme Specification 2020–2021

Infectious Diseases

MSc
PGDip
PGCert
Individual courses

Important document – please read



IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR 2020-2021 ACADEMIC YEAR

Alternative Assessments during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Outbreak

In these unprecedented times, the University has and continues to respond quickly to the impact of COVID-19, which has resulted in changes to our assessment processes.

In line with our current General Regulations, the University may offer you alternative assessments where necessary. This includes holding online timed assessments in place of written examinations, which are usually held at examination centres. Please note that this statement replaces any published information relating to assessments or written examinations in any of our materials including the website. Previously published materials relating to examinations should therefore be read in conjunction with this statement.

The University of London continues to work towards supporting the academic progression of all its students. The University also continues to be mindful of the health and wellbeing of its students during this pandemic, whilst protecting the academic standards of its awards.

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Important information regarding the Programme Specification

About this document

Last revised: 21 May 2020

The Programme Specification gives a broad outline of the structure and content of the programme, the entry level qualifications, as well as the learning outcomes students will achieve as they progress. Some of the information referred to in this programme specification is included in more detail on the University of London website. Where this is the case, links to the relevant webpage are included.

Where links to external organisations are provided, the University of London is not responsible for their content and does not recommend nor necessarily agree with opinions expressed and services provided at those sites.

If you have a query about any of the programme information provided, whether here or on the website, registered students should use the 'ask a question' tab in the [student portal](#) otherwise the *Contact Us* button on each webpage should be used.

Terminology

The following language is specific to the Infectious Diseases programmes:

Individual units of the programme are called modules. Each module is a self-contained, formally structured learning experience with a coherent and explicit set of learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

Key revisions made

Programme specifications are revised annually. The Senate Postgraduate Teaching Committee of the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, as part of its annual review of standards, confirms the programme structure and the educational aims and learning outcomes, and advises on any development in student support.

Where changes have been made which may impact on continuing students, these are listed below. For all new students, the programme and general information provided in this document is correct and accurate and will be applicable for the current year.

Significant changes made to the programme specification 2020-2021:

No significant changes.

Programme title and qualifications

Postgraduate Degrees of the University of London may be classified. The award certificate will indicate the level of the academic performance achieved by classifying the qualification. The classification of the degree will be based on the ratified marks from the completed assessments.

The classification system for the Infectious Diseases programmes is as follows:

Distinction; Merit; Pass.

Specific rules for the classification of qualifications are given in the [Academic Manual Chapter 8b](#).

Programme title

Infectious Diseases

Qualifications

Master of Science in Infectious Diseases

Postgraduate Diploma in Infectious Diseases

Postgraduate Certificate in Infectious Diseases

Exit qualifications

Postgraduate Diploma in Infectious Diseases

Postgraduate Certificate in Infectious Diseases

An exit qualification is an intermediate qualification for which the student may not have registered at the outset but which may be awarded on completion of specific modules (or credit accumulated) in a longer programme of study, if the student leaves the programme.

Exit qualifications are awarded at the discretion of the Board of Examiners and once a student has accepted an exit qualification they will not normally be permitted to continue their study of the same qualification with the University of London.

Individual modules

There is also provision for individual modules to be studied on a stand-alone basis.

Qualification titles may be abbreviated as follows:

Master of Science in Infectious Diseases - MSc

Postgraduate Diploma in Infectious Diseases - PGDip

Postgraduate Certificate in Infectious Diseases – PGCert

Level of the programmes

The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (FHEQ) forms part of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education of the [Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education](#) (QAA).

The qualifications (including exit qualifications) are placed at the following Levels of the FHEQ:

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- MSc Level 7
- PGDip Level 7
- PGCert Level 7

Individual modules are offered at Level 7.

Relevant QAA subject benchmarks

Not applicable

Awarding body

University of London

Registering bodies

University of London and London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine

Academic direction

London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM)

Accreditation by professional or statutory body

Not applicable

Language of study and assessment

English

Mode of study

Flexible and online study

Blended learning

Students may also be permitted to study up to two elective modules by blended learning in place of distance learning modules. Blended learning enables a student to combine distance learning with a period of part-time study at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine. An additional fee will be payable.

Programme structures

The **MSc Infectious Diseases** consists of:

- four compulsory IDM1 modules; and
either
 - six elective IDM modules selected from a list of options; and
 - two additional elective modules selected from a list of options;
- or
 - three elective IDM modules selected from a list of options; and
 - two additional elective modules selected from a list of options; and
 - a Project Report.

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The **PGDip Infectious Diseases** consists of:

- four compulsory IDM1 modules; and
- three elective IDM modules selected from a list of options; and
- one additional elective module selected from a list of options.

The **PGCert Infectious Diseases** consists of:

- four compulsory IDM1 modules.

Full details of the Scheme of Award are included in the [Programme Regulations](#).

Maximum and minimum periods of registration

The maximum and minimum period of registration, from a student's effective date of registration, are:

	Minimum	Maximum
MSc	Two years	Five years
PGDip	Two years	Five years
PGCert	One year	Five years
Credit bearing individual modules	One year	Two years

Study materials are made available at the start of the academic year after registration and on payment of the applicable fee.

Credit value of modules

Further information about the credit systems used by universities in the UK and Europe is provided by the [Quality Assurance Agency](#) and the [European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System](#).

Where credits are assigned to modules of a programme, credit indicates the amount of learning carried out in terms of the notional number of study hours needed, and the specified FHEQ credit level indicates the depth, complexity and intellectual demand of learning involved. The details below indicate the UK credits and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) values.

For the Infectious Diseases programme, credits are assigned to the modules as follows:

- 15 UK credits or 7.5 ECTS credits for each module at FHEQ level 7
- 45 UK credits or 22.5 ECTS credits for the project at FHEQ level 7.

Each qualification equates to the following number of credits:

- MSc Infectious Diseases - 180 UK credits or 90 ECTS credits
- PGDip Infectious Diseases - 120 UK credits or 60 ECTS credits
- PGCert Infectious Diseases - 60 UK credits or 30 ECTS credits

One UK credit equates to a notional ten hours of study.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of prior learning is a generic term for the process by which we recognise and, where appropriate, award credit for learning that has taken place at an institution other than the University of London.

See the [General Regulations](#) (Section 3) and Programme Regulations for more rules relating to prior learning.

For the Infectious Diseases programmes the University of London may recognise your prior learning and allow you exemption from a compulsory module towards the qualification. This can only be considered at the point of application for the programme.

Further information on recognition of prior learning is on the [website](#).

Entrance requirements

Applicants must submit an application in line with the procedures and deadlines set out on the [website](#).

Entrance requirements for a postgraduate qualification, or individual module, vary. Full details are provided on the programme page under the Entry requirements tab.

All details of the programme specific entry requirements are given on the programme page, under the [Entry requirements](#) tab.

English language requirements

All applicants must satisfy the English language requirements for the programme. These are set out in detail on the programme page under the [Entry requirements](#) tab.

Where an applicant does not meet the prescribed English language proficiency requirements but believes that they can demonstrate the requisite proficiency for admission the University may, at its discretion, consider the application.

Internet access and computer specification

Students will require regular access to a computer with an internet connection to use the University of London's online resources and systems. A webcam may be required in the event that online timed assessments (if offered) are proctored, and in such a case, it is a student's responsibility to ensure that they have a webcam.

The computer should have at least the following minimum specification:

- a web browser with Cookies and JavaScript enabled (a latest version of Firefox or Chrome is recommended);
- a good internet connection;
- a CD/DVD-ROM drive (some modules only);
- screen resolution of 1024 x 768 or greater;
- sufficient internet bandwidth to enable downloading of essential learning materials that are up to approximately 50MB in size.

And the following applications installed:

- Microsoft Word (.doc and .docx);
- Microsoft Excel;
- a pdf reader.

Additional requirements

- Students may need to use a calculator.
- A headset/microphone may be required to participate in live webinar sessions online.

Students with access requirements

The University of London welcomes applications from disabled students and/or those who have access requirements. The University will make every effort to provide reasonable adjustments to enable those with a disability, learning difficulty or access requirements to have the same opportunity as all other students to successfully complete their studies.

The University is committed to managing the application procedure and the programme itself to ensure that services are accessible for all students and that an inclusive environment is created. Students with a disability, or others who may need access arrangements to assist in taking examinations, should complete the relevant section of the application form, or contact the [Inclusive Practice Manager](#). A separate room or other arrangements may be considered.

Requests are considered by a University panel, whose purpose is to ensure that students with disabilities and/or specific access requirements are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged by such arrangements when compared with other students. These considerations remain separate from the academic selection processes.

For further information, see [Inclusive Practice Policy](#)

Sources of funding and scholarships

Information about potential sources of funding and scholarships is updated annually and where available is included in the prospectus web pages.

For further information see the [website](#)

Educational aims and learning outcomes of the programmes

Educational aims

The main educational aim of these programmes is to offer a challenging scheme of study energised by the results of current research, which improves the students' ability to develop academic and practical insights into the biology of infective agents and their interaction with the host. It is intended that students will be encouraged to develop a range of transferable and subject specific expertise using their initiative and working out problems themselves.

These programmes are designed for recent graduates and health professionals who feel that their skills need updating in this rapidly evolving field. It is expected that successful students will have enhanced career prospects within the health professions. Completion of the MSc may allow students to progress to a higher research degree in science, public health or medicine.

The compulsory core modules aim to:

- develop knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of public health, biostatistics and epidemiology;
- increase understanding of the principles of biology and how these principles apply to the understanding of infectious diseases and their control;
- encourage independent critical and evaluative skills that can be used to apply independent scientific judgement;
- teach students a broad understanding of the methodology of research into infectious disease;
- facilitate self-development into professionally organized and interactive individuals by practising skills of selection, assimilation and communication.

In addition, elective modules aim to:

- increase the breadth and depth of knowledge of specialised fields within the general area of infectious diseases;
- enable students to develop a critical awareness of the current issues that dictate the direction of current research in infectious diseases;
- enable students to develop and apply knowledge of infectious disease biology, methodology and policy to systematically and creatively solve complex problems e.g. the design of control programmes.

Learning outcomes

For MSc, PGDip and PGCert students, the learning outcomes of the programmes are as follows:

Knowledge, understanding, intellectual and cognitive

Students who have successfully studied the compulsory core modules will be able to:

- understand how epidemiological measures and statistical methods can be used to evaluate threats and opportunities in management of infectious diseases;
- distinguish between different groups of pathogens;
- understand how the biology of the pathogen and the host interact to produce disease;
- understand how knowledge of the biology of infectious diseases can be exploited in disease control;
- explain the principles underlying a multidisciplinary approach to the control of infectious diseases;
- understand some of the political, social and economic factors which affect success and failure in the control of infectious diseases.

In addition, a student who has successfully studied the elective modules will be able to:

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- acquire and apply more advanced knowledge and skills in addition to those covered in the core modules to solve complex problems;
- apply knowledge of the biology of infectious diseases and host/pathogen interactions to the development of disease control strategies;
- critically evaluate the principles underlying a multidisciplinary approach to the control of infectious diseases.

In addition to the competences acquired from studying the compulsory core modules a student who has successfully undertaken the Project Report option will be able to:

- further develop and test a new hypothesis to either address gaps in knowledge or answer an original question in the field of infectious diseases;
- critically evaluate the research/scholarly works that form the basis of his/her original report;
- critically evaluate their own work including the methodologies used;
- develop their written communication skills by producing a well-structured and well written report in a prescribed style and standard.

Transferable skills

A student will be able to:

- use problem solving skills in a range of situations;
- use fluent and effective communication and discussion skills in a written context;
- have a capacity to handle ideas and scrutinize information in critical, evaluative and analytical ways;
- manage their own learning, including working effectively to deadlines.

A student who successfully completes the core (PGCert) modules will have the essential introduction to a variety of methods, approaches, facts and concepts to understanding the biology of infectious disease and its control.

MSc and PGDip students

MSc and PGDip students who study the elective modules will build on these foundations. These students will choose from a range of options that further knowledge in specific areas. MSc students may also apply the skills they have learnt to a particular problem and produce a Project report.

Learning, teaching and assessment strategies

The programme is primarily delivered using study guides that are provided for each module studied. These guides introduce each topic in the form of lessons, activities and self-assessment questions. The study guides include tools to aid development of the skills of information search, comprehension and analysis and the generation of original and thoughtful assignments. Some study guides are provided in the form of interactive CD/DVD-ROMs, printed booklets or online via the VLE and most are supported by textbooks and 'readers' which contain copies of journal articles.

Advice and practical information such as programme deadlines, study techniques, planning, preparation for assessment is available in the LSHTM programme-specific Student Handbook (which is available online to students after registration) and the [Academic Writing Handbook](#). Students manage their own learning and study schedule, but advice can be sought from the support team at any stage of the academic year.

Students submit assignments, including essays, short-answer tests and case-studies to be marked by tutors who will also provide feedback to help students review their progress. Students can also practice exam techniques. Students can also interact with tutors and fellow students via a web-based conferencing system. Students will be able to engage in dialogue, develop and negotiate conclusions with others, which are key components in the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and transferable skills. Students are encouraged to use the resources within the LSHTM library.

The majority of IDM modules are assessed by an unseen written examination consisting of questions structured to allow students to demonstrate that they have acquired appropriate knowledge and understanding. The way that students manage data, solve problems, evaluate ideas and the organizational skills they use to structure answers, allows the standard of intellectual and transferable skills to be assessed.

Elective module assessments also include an assignment. The assignment allows a student to carry out a more in depth study of the topic. Students demonstrate the skills associated with data collection, analysis, selection and producing a well-reasoned essay.

Some MSc students will also submit a project report, which will not only assess their knowledge but also their ability to plan, gather data, reason and produce a well-structured report.

For most modules students will be assessed by written examination and in some cases, also by coursework. Questions are structured to allow students to demonstrate that they have acquired appropriate knowledge and understanding. The way that students manage data, solve problems, evaluate ideas and the organisational skills they use to structure their written answers allows the standard of intellectual and transferable skills to be assessed.

Assessment criteria for the programme take into account the level at which these skills have been achieved.

Assessment methods

Core modules; IDM101, IDM103 and IDM104 (PGCert, PGDip and MSc) will be assessed by one two-hour and 15 minute unseen written examination. Core module IDM102 will be assessed by two written assignments.

The majority of the elective IDM modules (PGDip and MSc) will be assessed by one two-hour and 15 minute unseen written examination and a written assignment. The grade awarded for each module will be weighted 70:30 (examination: assignment).

The Project Report (MSc only) will be assessed by submission of one written report of up to 10,000 words. It should normally be submitted in the final year of the degree.

The written examinations take place on one occasion each year, normally commencing in June. These are held at established centres worldwide.

Find full details of the assessment and the scheme of award in the [Programme Regulations](#).

Individual modules

A student may choose whether or not to be formally assessed in the credit bearing individual modules for which they are registered. Students who choose to be formally assessed will be examined in the same way as students studying for a full qualification.

Full details of the dates of all examinations are available on the [website](#).

Student support and guidance

The following summarises the support and guidance available to students:

- [Student Guide](#): This provides information which is common to all students and gives guidance on a range of issues from the start of a student's relationship with the University of London through to their graduation.
- [Programme Regulations](#)
- [The Online Library](#): This provides access to a range of full-text, multidisciplinary databases where journal articles, book reviews and reports can be found.
- University of London library: Registered students may use the resources located within the Senate House library. A University of London email account and web area for personal information management.

Support and guidance from LSHTM

- The LSHTM Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle). This gives online access to the main module materials (which may also be sent in hard copy, depending on the module), module discussion forums, information on assignments, links to essential and recommended readings (where available), past examination papers and examiner reports, and study skills' resources.
- [LSHTM online library](#) resources
- Distance Learning Office staff are available to offer help and advice on administrative matters. Programme Directors can also be contacted for personal advice e.g. planning studies, advice on elective module options. Communication may either be via the online 'Student Support Help' discussion forum on Moodle or by email, and sometimes by Skype/telephone if needed.
- Each module has at least one Module Organiser (MO) and a team of tutors assigned to it. The tutor team provides academic support to those studying on specific modules, in the following ways:
 - assisting in interpreting and understanding the material presented by answering queries on the online discussion forums
 - grading and providing written feedback on assignments.

- The tutors are specialists in their subject area, and will change according to the module being followed at the time.
- A project supervisor works with students undertaking the project in the final year of the MSc.
- An LSHTM programme-specific Student Handbook, available on the LSHTM Moodle site, provides guidance on all aspects of the programme. It includes background information about the programme, advice on getting started, studying as a distance learner and organising study time, a description of the resources and programme materials available and how to access them, networking and support issues, procedures for assessment and examinations (including programme deadlines).
- Students are encouraged to exchange ideas with other students on the programme and to organise mutual support via email or other forms of communication. An online discussion forum 'Student Cafe' is available within the LSHTM Moodle site which is accessible to students only, while individual contact details can be made available through the Student Network Directory (subject to student consent). This contains contact details of other students on the programme so students can build up their own network if they wish (for example, to organise study groups).

Quality evaluation and enhancement

The University of London delivers the majority of its flexible and distance learning programmes through a collaboration between the University of London Worldwide and member institutions of the University of London. However some of the flexible and distance learning programmes draw solely on academic input from the University of London, and are delivered without academic lead by a member institutions. The policies, partnerships (where applicable) and quality assurance mechanisms applicable for the programmes are defined in the following key documents: The Quality Framework, the [Quality Assurance Schedules](#), [Guidelines for Examinations](#), [General Regulations](#) and, for each programme, [programme specific regulations](#).

Qualifications standards

All University of London qualifications have to align with the [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies](#) to assure appropriate standards for each qualification. In addition, every programme that is developed by a member institution of the University of London (or a consortium with representation by more than one member institution) will be developed to the same standard as would be applied within the institution concerned. Proportionate and robust approval procedures, including external scrutiny and student engagement are in place for all programmes. Learning materials are written and all assessments are set and marked by academic staff who are required to apply the University's academic standards.

Review and evaluation mechanisms

Some of the key mechanisms in place to assure the standards of all University of London qualifications and the quality of the student experience include:

- Annual programme reports: produced for all programmes in order to review and enhance the provision and to plan ahead;

- Independent external examiners: submit reports every year to confirm that a programme has been assessed properly and meets the appropriate academic standards;
- Annual student information statistics: prepared for all systematic reporting within the University of London;
- Periodic programme reviews: carried out every 4-6 years to review how a programme has developed over time and to make sure that it remains current and up-to-date.

Improvements are made as necessary to ensure that systems remain effective and rigorous.

Student feedback and engagement

The principal channel for collecting feedback from students is the Student Experience Survey. Carried out every two years, this collects feedback from the student body on a range of topics relating to the student lifecycle. The results are analysed externally and then considered in a number of different ways, including by the programme team, principal committees and the senior leadership team. Details of any resulting actions taken are published on the Virtual Learning Environment and the Student Portal.

Additionally, on completion of their programme of study students will be invited to take a survey that seeks to measure what they have gained from their studies.

There are also opportunities for students to get involved in governance. An undergraduate and postgraduate student member is appointed by the University to the majority of committees through an annual appointment round. Some programmes also recruit student members at the programme level. Students are frequently invited to take part in quality review processes such as Periodic Programme Reviews, Programme approval, Thematic Reviews, MOOC review panels and ad hoc focus groups. Opportunities such as these are advertised through social media and on the website. More information can be found on the [website](#).

Students can also apply to join the Student Voice Group, which meets four times a year to consider initiatives for enhancing student experience. Notes from these meetings are published on the Student Portal.

After graduation

Further study

Successful completion of the programme may serve as preparation for students who wish to go on to take further study in the subject area.

Graduate employment routes

It is expected that successful students will have enhanced career prospects within the health professions. Successful completion of the MSc may allow students to progress to postgraduate research in the field of infectious diseases.

The Alumni Community

Upon finishing a course of study, graduates automatically become part of the University of London alumni community, a diverse global network of more than one million graduates in over 180 countries, providing lifelong links to the University and to each other.

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Alumni are encouraged to keep in touch after they graduate and to become active members of the alumni community; in return they receive a number of benefits and services, including an extensive programme of events and engagement opportunities.

More information is available on the alumni [webpage](#).

Follow the alumni community on social media: [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#)