

Programme Specification Definitive Document

1. Basic Information

1.1 Awarding Institution:	Plymouth Marjon University
1.2 Teaching Institution:	Plymouth Marjon University
1.3 Locus of Delivery:	Plymouth Marjon University
1.4 Final Award Title:	Master of Public Health (MPH)
1.5 FHEQ Level:	7
1.6 Programme Title:	Master of Public Health
1.7 Mode and Duration of Study:	Part Time – 3 years
1.8 School:	Sport, Health and Wellbeing
1.9 HECoS Code:	100648
1.10 Collaborative Provision Arrangement:	N/A
1.11 Admission Criteria:	Normal University entrance criteria apply (please refer to the website for further details). International students will be expected to meet the English language requirements of IELTS 6.5 or equivalent.
1.12 Accrediting Professional Body/PSRB	N/A
1.13 QAA Subject Benchmarking Group(s):	QAA Master’s degree characteristics
1.14 Other External Points of Reference:	Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ). Public Health Skills and Knowledge Framework (2016) and the UK Faculty of Public Health Curriculum.
1.15 Language of Study (for learning, teaching and assessment):	English
1.16 Work-Based Learning Arrangements:	Whilst there is no specific work placement module, students will have the opportunity to collect & analyse data in real life situations within the public health context.
1.17 Arrangements for Distance Learning:	E-learning technologies used to support work-based learning at a distance.
1.18 Original Date of Production:	2016
1.19 Date of Commencement:	September 2017
1.20 Review Date:	By August 2023

2. Programme Outline

The Master of Public Health (MPH) at the University of St Mark and St John is designed to provide a rich applied and academic experience for postgraduate students aspiring to work in public health. Public health is an interdisciplinary area which aims to prevent disease, prolong life and promote health. It addresses broad issues that can affect the health and well-being of individuals,

families, communities, populations, and societies. This programme is aimed at graduates and professionals from a range of backgrounds and will develop your knowledge, skills and capabilities in key areas such as health surveillance, intervention, leadership and policy development.

The programme is both for students who want to enter the field of public health and for those already working as a health professional who want to progress their career. There will be opportunities to engage with employers and real-world projects and for those already in employment there will be opportunities to network and develop their understanding and competences.

‘Within the discipline of Health Studies, there are many different degree titles. For example: Health, Health Studies, Health and Well-being, and Health Sciences, in addition to more applied titles such as Health Promotion and Public Health. The aim of Health Studies is to critically examine health and the determinants of health in a wide variety of contexts. This includes local, national, international and global aspects and perspectives, with the focus of study extending from the health and well-being of individuals and families, through communities, to the health of populations at national and international level’ (QAA, 2016, p.7).

The MPH programme provides an advanced, contemporary education in public health theory, practice and research. Its contemporary interdisciplinary approach to the study of public health draws upon the social, human, environmental, biomedical and political sciences, based upon the socio-ecological model of health. The programme seeks to prepare students to work effectively within challenging, competitive and ethically contested public health contexts, to become effective change agents within modern society. In 2016, the curriculum was mapped against the international (APHEA) professional competencies and updated in line with these (Appendix 1 & 2).

Students will benefit from teaching and support delivered by highly experienced academics and supported by public health professionals in conjunction with Public Health England-South West (PHE-SW), and the Office of the Director of Public Health Plymouth (ODPHP).

2.1 Integrating Sustainability into the Curriculum

The concept of sustainability focuses on achieving human well-being and quality of life, pursued through the maintenance, care and equitable use of natural and cultural resources.

https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/esd_artwork_050412_1324.pdf

Economic, social, environmental, cultural and psychological sustainability are all seen as key in light of contemporary discourses of uncertainty, complexity and risk (Huckle 2008, Sousa 2011, Sterling 2013). Issues of sustainability are therefore integral to study and research in public health generally and this programme specifically. The programme team will aim to enable students to participate in discussions and actions linked to sustainability which embrace the University’s thematic concepts of global citizenship, employer engagement and digital scholarship. This emphasis is influential pedagogically in terms of delivery of the programme. In this context the programme team will also, for example, reduce our impact on the environment, through the use of e-learning, e-submission and e-books.

3. Distinctive Features

Only 4 MPH programmes in the UK have so far been validated by the international Agency for Public Health Education Accreditation (APHEA). In recent years APHEA have become the international agency for insuring quality in public health education and have accredited institutions in the USA, France, Israel, Australia and Holland. The curriculum content of this

programme has been mapped against the APHEA core subject areas (Appendix 1). This is aligned with the APHEA guidelines for curriculum content (Appendix 2). The MPH programme is also aligned with master's degree generic level descriptors (Appendix 3); the 9 key competences of the Faculty of Public Health; and the Public Health Skills and Knowledge Framework 2016:

http://www.fph.org.uk/learning_outcomes_framework.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-health-skills-and-knowledge-framework-phskf>.

A distinct feature of the MPH programme is the support from ODPHP and in particular PHE-SW. PHE-SW and ODPHP will be providing specialist expertise from their network of public health professionals in the delivery of specialist modules. Module delivery from professionals working in the field will enable the students to understand how theory can be applied to practice in real life situations. Students will also have the opportunity to collect and analyse data within real life public health scenarios in the South West of England in conjunction with the ODPHP and PHE-SW. This will no doubt enhance the opportunity for student employment in public health.

Each module on the MPH will have an assigned module leader and a named academic and professional lead. Hours will be allocated on a module basis in line with the Universities resourcing model. The weighting of the delivery by academics and professionals will be approximately 50%.

Another distinctive quality of the programme will be the diversity of the student population. The programme intends to attract applicants from a wide range of cultural, demographic and professional backgrounds, whose experiences serve to enrich the educational experience for students and staff. Given such diversity, the teaching and learning will be student centred and supported via Personal Development Tutors, and Module and Programme Leader support.

4. Programme Aims

The programme aims to:

Provide an advanced, contemporary education in public health theory, practice and research, which seeks to advance skills and capabilities to work within challenging and competitive public health contexts.

The programme objectives are to:

- Provide an education that is relevant to the contemporary global public health field.
- Introduce students to an interdisciplinary public health landscape informed by political, economic, human and social science perspectives.
- Prepare graduates for future and concurrent academic, professional and managerial careers, within evolving global, national and local public health contexts.
- Prepare graduates with commitment and zeal towards supporting vulnerable and socially disadvantaged groups, tackling inequalities and promoting environmental sustainability.

5. Programme Learning Outcomes

Knowledge & understanding:

By the end of this programme students should be able to demonstrate:

1. Depth and systematic understanding of knowledge in the core disciplines of public health, to real world public health problems, locally, nationally & internationally.

2. An ability to manage the implications of public health ethical dilemmas and proactively formulate solutions for them.
3. An ability to critically evaluate appropriate policy responses to public health problems.
4. The ability to work with frameworks and theories for managing change at individual, community, population and organisational levels of working within public health.
5. A comprehensive understanding of techniques and methodologies for the assessment of health and wellbeing; including approaches to identifying and measuring risk and the communication of risk.

Intellectual skills:

By the end of this programme students should be able to demonstrate:

6. The ability to critically interpret and communicate a range of data and evidence for effective public health practice.
7. The ability to critically assess key public health functions.
8. A level of conceptual awareness to critically evaluate qualitative and quantitative methods for measuring, analysing and interpreting health and wellbeing needs and outcomes, and argue alternative approaches.
9. Initiative and originality in problem solving key public health issues.
10. Competence in autonomous planning, task implementation, and decision making in complex areas within public health.

Practical skills:

By the end of this programme students should be able to demonstrate:

11. The ability to operate in a public health context and address complex and unpredictable issues.
12. The ability to exercise initiative and personal responsibility in public health practice.
13. Ability to use evidence and technical expertise in solving public health problems systematically, informed by concepts and practices relevant to the field of public health.

Transferable / key skills:

By the end of this programme students should be able to demonstrate:

14. The ability to communicate effectively using a range of communication methods showing sensitivity to the specific needs of the potential audience.
15. The ability to use collaboration, negotiation and influencing skills in effective and ethical ways within a group situation.
16. Construct effective relationships with others including peers, experts and lay audiences.
17. Competence in undertaking research tasks within public health contexts.
18. The ability to reflect and be self-aware, recognising your own strengths, limitations and personal and professional learning and development needs.
19. The ability to systematically organise and communicate advanced information evidencing appropriate proficiency in English language, using criteria developed for specialist audiences in unpredictably complex contexts (level 7).

6. Learning and Teaching Methods

A range of learning and teaching approaches are utilised on these modules to enable flexible student-centred learning. Many modules have a significant practical component that underpins

the theoretical element. Teaching and learning on this programme will utilise a combination of the following:

Method	Description
Case Study	A process or record of research into the development of a particular person, group, or situation over a period of time.
E- Learning	Computer, digital, technical and network enabled transfer of skills and knowledge, using electronic applications and processes to learn.
Experiential learning	The process of learning through experience, more specifically defined as "learning through reflection on doing".
Group Critique	The presentation of work in progress to peers and/or staff / professionals in order to experience constructive criticism to enable development.
Critical reflection	Students engage in critical reflective practice and activities to highlight areas of academic, personal and professional strength and weakness.
Directed study and reading.	Time set aside by the teacher for learners to study a particular subject.
Guest speakers	Using specialists from the field to present to students. Typically refers to when a learner, guest speaker, explains or shows some content to a learning audience; similar to a lecture.
Independent learning	Activities where an individual learner conducts research, or carries out a learning activity, on their own.
Lectures	Subject introduced and delivered by the teacher in a specific time which transmits information.
Peer group study	A learning event in which one learner, or a small group of learners, helps other learners with a particular subject.
Seminars	A group of about 15 people following up something that has already been introduced on the course, often within a lecture. Can involve reading of an essay or paper followed by discussion.
Tutorials	One-to-one teaching based on the learner's work. Can also be used for pastoral care.
Work based tasks	Learning events which take place within a working environment enabling learners to develop 'real' skills and practices.
Workshops	A group of people engaged in intensive study or work in a creative or practical field.

6.1 Learning Enhancement

The students have a wide range of learning opportunities that are rooted in practice and experiential learning. The state-of-the-art facilities and current industry professionals in the form of permanent teaching staff and guest lecturers enables students to engage in the most relevant applied learning possible.

6.2 e-Learning

The course delivery team recognise the increasing contribution that digital resources make to the learning experiences of students and will work closely with the University Technology Enhanced Learning Team (<http://sites.marjon.ac.uk/elearninghelp/>) to continually review and improve the use of technology in our course content.

All lectures are recorded via the Universities Panopto lecture capture system and will be available for students to access via the virtual learning environment.

The course will make use of a range of digital tools across many elements of the teaching and learning experience from the use of online, blended learning packages and Virtual Learning Environments to e-submission and assessment tasks that are digital in nature. This will be achieved in partnership with students at all times to ensure that the range of tools and the subsequent skills required are appropriate and fully supported.

The course is designed to develop students' digital academic skills but also their abilities to function at a high level in the workplace so there will also be opportunities to develop digital competencies in areas such as communication & collaboration, identity and information management.

7. Modes of Assessment

Method	Description
Portfolio	A collection of assessments covering the learning outcomes of a module, which usually takes several different forms such as essays, reports, presentations and task sheets, digital media.
Systematic review	This will involve searching the economic evidence base to locate a small number of published economic evaluations of public health interventions. Students will then construct generic arguments for how decision makers could better allocate resources for health improvement.
Presentation	Formally assessed presentations on either a specific theoretical topic or practical work in progress that are given in seminars/workshops by individuals or small groups of students.
Reflective essay	Critically analyses an intervention along with the processes and the theories presented within a presentation.
Report	A structured written response to an event or activity which critically analyses the processes and outcomes and makes recommendations.
Podcast	A digital audio file made available on the Internet for downloading to a computer or mobile device.
Seen examination	This entails writing an essay under examination conditions, where students are asked to critically discuss a public health issue from a multidisciplinary perspective. Prior to the exam, students are provided with recent newspaper/magazine articles that raise different topical, contemporary public health issues.
Project	A project that demonstrates candidates' knowledge and understanding of epidemiological concepts, focuses on quantitative techniques including a structured critical appraisal of an abridged, unseen research paper, and interpretation of the statistical results
Dissertation	Detailed individual research or a sustained practical project, which is contextually grounded. All independent projects are negotiated with and supervised by an appropriate tutor.

N.B. All modules will include formative assessment opportunities to support learners. This will help students to plan and discuss their main assessment task for each module. This will take place via tutorials and small group discussions.

8. Exemptions to University Regulations

N/A

9. Work-Based Learning/Placement Learning

Placement learning is integrated into the MPH through the dissertation module. Students will have the opportunity to undertake their dissertation research in real-world environments, located in current public health initiatives and practices within Public Health Plymouth.

10. Programme Structure

Part Time

Level 7

Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Assessment	Compulsory/Optional	Condonable/Non-Condonable
PBHM01	Issues in Public Health	15	100% Coursework	Compulsory	Condonable
PBHM02	Qualitative Health Research	15	100% Exam	Compulsory	Condonable
PBHM03	Health Promotion	15	100% Coursework	Compulsory	Condonable
PBHM04	Epidemiology & Statistics for Public Health	15	100% Coursework	Compulsory	Condonable
PBHM05	Leadership for Public Health	15	70% Coursework 30% Practical	Compulsory	Condonable
PBHM06	Public Health Policy & Politics	15	100% Coursework	Compulsory	Condonable
PBHM07	Health Protection	15	100% Practical	Compulsory	Condonable
PBHM58	Behavioural Science for Public Health	15	50% Coursework 50% Practical	Compulsory	Condonable
PBHMD1	Dissertation	60	80% Coursework 20% Practical	Compulsory	Non-Condonable

Key: Semester X = A & B

- A definitive module descriptor is required for each module

Delivery Pattern

Modules are to be taken in the following order (33.3% intensity per year):

Year 1: one of the following combinations:

(i) PBHM02 (15c), PBHM03 (15c), PBHM06 (15c), PBHM07 (15c) = 60 credits

(ii) PBHM01 (15c), PBHM04 (15c), PBHM05 (15c), PBHM58 (15c) = 60 credits

Year 2: the combination of modules above, that was not completed in year 1.

Year 3: PBHMD1 (60c) = 33.3% intensity

Up to 30 credits can be condoned on this programme.

11. Accrediting Professional Body /Professional Regulatory and Statutory Body (PSRB)

The MPH is aligned with the APHEA MPH curriculum validation criteria that in turn are supported by Public Health England (South West). Consequently, the MPH programme is being developed in line with international standards for public health education, and national CPD standards for public health education.

12. Professional Advisory Group

The University has an arrangement with Chichester University allowing it to enrol PhD students at this institution. Graduates from this programme will be well placed to compete for local, national and international doctoral studentships as and when the opportunities arise.

13. Academic Progression Opportunities

The University has an arrangement with Chichester University allowing it to enrol PhD students at this institution. Graduates from this programme will be well placed to compete for local, national and international doctoral studentships as and when the opportunities arise.

14. Employability and Career Progression Opportunities

Employers are seeking public health professionals educated to at least Master's degree level (with public health being the subject of either the undergraduate or postgraduate degree). Employers increasingly look to highly academically qualified people who have the necessary skills and experience to work in today's industry to fill project and programme manager vacancies. The Faculty of Public Health and Public Health England skills frameworks, have informed the content and development of this programme.

The sought-after skills include:

- experience of scientific writing, including report writing;
- excellent project management skills;
- experience of delivering projects on time and on budget;
- experience in designing and implementing research studies and evaluations;
- in-depth knowledge of public policy clients and markets;
- an ability to lead proposals and pitches;

Our post-graduates will be well placed to meet these industry requirements.

Successful completion of the Master of Public Health should mean an individual has the ability, skills and confidence to secure a position in a public health organisation. The programme will give post-graduate students the opportunity to work with professionals within the ODPHP and members of the public as appropriate. The range of public health initiatives include the following project areas:

Health services – working with a range of NHS public health services

Alcohol - tackling alcohol harm

HIV - increase awareness of HIV, how it can be prevented and treated.

Staying well this winter - flu jabs as a major campaign to keep people well.

Thrive Plymouth - a movement for a healthier Plymouth.

Winter warmth - reduce risks and stay well during the winter.

One You - avoid future diseases caused by lifestyle choices.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

If a student analyses the results of data that has been completed by vulnerable adults or children independently, there would be no need for DBS checks. If a student is working directly with children or vulnerable adults DBS checks will need to be completed on an individual basis depending on the activity.

15. Support for Students and for Student Learning

Students have full access to university facilities for academic and pastoral support and guidance. Student support and guidance is promoted via the following platforms:

- Extensive library and other online learning resources and facilities
- Library and study skills guidance material
- Programme handbooks, and module guides
- Student Support and Staff-Student Liaison Committee (SSLC)
- Tutorial staff, including programme leaders, module leaders and tutors and personal development tutors

Personal Development Tutors

Every student in the University is allocated a Personal Development Tutor. It will be a priority to assign Masters' students with a member of staff that teaches them within the first semester wherever possible. Tutors assist in evaluating student progress and provide appropriate pastoral and subject advice to support a student's area of study, accommodation and financial information.

Module Tutors

Support for learning and completing assessment tasks is offered by specialist academic staff alongside the module leader.

University programme and support staff spend a significant amount of energy in assuring the total student experience is extended, enhanced and enriched; extended in the sense that students are prepared for a higher education experience, enhanced in the sense that students have a successful and enjoyable experience during their studies, and enriched in the sense that students are able to undertake opportunities to guide lifestyle and career aspirations alongside their studies. In addition, the programme will facilitate a number of guest lecturers who add value to the student experience by bringing additional knowledge.

Online and Distance Learning

Although students will not be able to access the programme as distance or online only, online facilities will support students throughout their studies. A strong element of e-mentoring will be

available through e-mail and the Virtual Learning Network (VLE) and Moodle will be used to support taught modules within the programme.

Equality and Diversity

Questioning issues around equality and diversity are implicit in our programmes. Through assessed exploration of public affairs and politics and discussions around race, gender and disability, students on this programme will be challenged to unpack stereotypes and question discrimination throughout their studies. We work closely with student support to ensure that those who need extra help receive assistance from the university.

Study Skills

Study skills support for students will be integrated into the modules. All modules will have a built-in formative assessment, to help individual students identify any specific areas where support is required. In addition to this, dedicated dissertation workshops will be provided in term 1 and 2, which all students, whether full time or part time could attend. During the dissertation workshops guidance will be given on planning a study; ethics; writing an introduction; critically appraising literature; methods and methodologies; presenting results/findings; discussion of findings; and reflecting on research practice.

16. Student Feedback Mechanisms

Students are given the opportunity to feedback their experience on a specific module through Module Evaluation Forms (MEFs), the feedback is collated, analysed and actioned through annual module reports and then again in the programme and departmental report. Students are also assigned a personal development tutor with whom they can discuss programme related issues.

There are also feedback channels at a national level through the annual Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey. There are normally bi-annual Staff Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) meetings, and they prove useful for gathering information, making quick changes to aspects of the day-to-day experience and planning for longer term solutions or changes.

17. Other Stakeholder Feedback

Other stakeholders including Public Health England-South West (PHE-SW), the Office of the Director of Public Health Plymouth (ODPHP) and graduates will be periodically invited to feedback on the content of the programme and the development of the students' skills, knowledge and values. This will be reported more widely in the institution through the Annual Programme Report.

18. Quality and Enhancement Mechanisms

The quality of the student experience and the standards of the awards are managed, and quality assured through the University's regulations policies and procedures. Student achievement and progression is managed through the Module Assessment Boards (MABs) and the Progression and Award Boards (PABs). Programmes are reviewed annually through University annual monitoring processes, including external examiner contributions, and incorporate student feedback mechanisms at both modular and the programme level reported formally through the University's annual monitoring and reporting cycle.

