



UNIVERSITY OF LONDON  
External System

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE SINCE 1858

2009–2010

Postgraduate study in

# International Primary Health Care

by distance learning



[www.londonexternal.ac.uk/iphc](http://www.londonexternal.ac.uk/iphc)

Academic direction by:



**UCL**

# The University of London and the External System

**Welcome** from Sir Graeme Davies, Vice-Chancellor, University of London and Professor Jonathan Kydd, Dean, University of London External System



For more than 150 years, the University through its External System has been offering degree programmes to students all over the world. It has always prided itself on being an international institution and its External System demonstrates this inclusive outlook. Today, it has more than 43,000 students studying in over 180 countries, bringing the University to you through flexible and distance learning.

As a family of world-class institutions, the University has a reputation for academic distinction in teaching and research, both in the UK and internationally. All programmes offered through the External System are developed by academics within the Colleges of the University. This ensures that our awards are recognised worldwide for their quality and value, and that students benefit from the academic

From left to right, HRH The Princess Royal, Chancellor of the University of London, pictured with Professor Jonathan Kydd, Dean of the External System and Sir Graeme Davies, Vice-Chancellor of the University of London.

rigour and cutting-edge research undertaken within the Colleges.

Studying with the University of London is one of the greatest investments you can make in yourself. We look forward to welcoming you into our global community of students and wish you every success.

**The University of London** is one of the leading universities in Europe. Its world-class federation of 19 Colleges and a number of smaller specialist Institutes provides an unrivalled range of education opportunities of outstanding breadth and quality. Unique in its size, the federation includes specialised Colleges such as LSE, while others such as UCL are multi-faculty.

In 1858, with the establishment of its External System, the University

broke new ground by opening up its awards to those who either could not or did not wish to come to London to study. Academics who teach and assess campus-based students develop and write the study materials for all our programmes. They also set the exam papers and are responsible for marking the scripts.

Robust quality assurance mechanisms have been endorsed by the Quality Assurance Agency – the UK's independent body

for safeguarding the quality and standards of Higher Education. External students are examined to exactly the same standard as that required of students enrolled at the University's constituent Colleges. This principle of equivalency is enshrined in our Regulations: 'Candidates granted degrees and other awards shall have attained the same academic standard irrespective of mode or place of study or examination'.

# Studying International Primary Health Care



## An introduction from Professor Trisha Greenhalgh

Programme Director, International Primary Health Care



The vision behind this programme is to develop students' abilities in high quality research, service and teaching in primary care by providing a programme of study characterised by rigorous academic standards, learner-oriented objectives, flexibility and relevance to real-life practice.

The programme is offered at MSc, Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate level. It combines educational methods that encourage self-directed learning, reflection on personal experience and critical thinking with state-of-the-art web technology and

the extensive online and print resources. We anticipate that our graduates will make a major contribution to original research, systematic review, teaching and service development in primary care.

It is the world's first fully online postgraduate programme in primary care. My team of academics has been developing, delivering and evaluating web-based modules and short courses since 1998. Our success was acknowledged when our course team won the prestigious 2005 e-Tutor of the Year Award (run by the UK Higher Education Funding Council).

We have worked hard to produce a programme aimed specifically at an international student market, which addresses the many diverse needs of leaders, educators, researchers and change agents working to develop primary health care in different countries and settings. We hope that you find the learning materials and interaction with others helpful to your own work in primary health care, and we wish you every success with your studies on this programme.

### Developed by experts

One of the largest Colleges of the University of London, UCL provides the academic direction for this programme. It was the first institution to offer systematic teaching of medicine. Today, UCL has one of the largest concentrations of biomedical expertise in Europe.

This programme for External

students has been developed by UCL's Open Learning Unit within the Research Department of Primary Care and Population Health, part of the School of Life and Medical Sciences. The Department has academic staff drawn from a range of professional backgrounds including general practice, community nursing, public health, epidemiology and statistics,

social sciences, and psychology. The Department has a long tradition of developing and evaluating innovative approaches to both undergraduate and postgraduate teaching. Its numerous research teams cover a wide range of programmes funded by the World Health Organization, the UK Medical Research Council, the Department of Health, and the Wellcome Trust.

# Programme ob

## Programme aims and objectives

This is an 'executive' programme aimed primarily at senior clinicians, researchers, policy-makers and leaders in education. Its aim is to promote high quality interprofessional research, teaching, and service development in primary health care in an international context, with specific emphasis on comparisons and contrasts between different health care systems.

On completion of the programme we expect our students to be able to:

- Access, understand and apply published research evidence in a primary care setting.
- Develop, evaluate and maintain effective and appropriate health services for populations.
- Teach and support others by developing training courses and academic curricula.
- Identify and meet their lifelong learning needs.

### Taster module

A taster module is available through our website to help you decide if this course is right for you. The module gives you a flavour of what it is like to study International Primary Health Care by distance learning. It closely follows the typical structure of a module found on the course and provides examples of the course material, exercises, assessments and virtual seminars.

Please visit: [www.londonexternal.ac.uk/iphc/taster.shtml](http://www.londonexternal.ac.uk/iphc/taster.shtml)

# Objectives and structure

## Key dates

**Application deadline:** 31 May

**Registration deadline:** 31 July

**Course starts:** beginning of September

**Examinations take place:** June

## Structure

The **MSc degree** structure is shown below. It consists of two compulsory core modules, two elective modules and a dissertation.

### Two compulsory core modules

- The academic study of primary care (15 credits)
- Research methods for primary care (45 credits)

### PLUS two elective modules (30 credits each) from:

- International comparisons in primary health care
- Getting research into practice and policy
- Quality improvement in primary care
- Health informatics
- Narrative in health and illness

### PLUS one dissertation module (60 credits) from:

- Research dissertation
- Service development dissertation
- Teaching and learning dissertation
- Systematic review dissertation

The **Postgraduate Diploma** consists of the two compulsory core modules plus two elective modules.

The **Postgraduate Certificate** consists of the two compulsory core modules. **Please note:** all elective modules can be taken as stand-alone short courses.

## Time commitment

For individual modules, a reasonable expectation for study and exam preparation would be around 125 hours per 15 credits. You have between two to five years to complete the MSc or Postgraduate Diploma and between one to five years to complete the Postgraduate Certificate. You will need to study for an average of 10-15 hours per week during term-time (approx. 40 weeks of the year).

**'I think the support and obvious commitment of the tutors has been outstanding. This has gone a long way to allaying my fears about whether the effort and the expense will be worth it'.**

**Don Eby, MSc graduate and GP, Canada**

## Induction module

In order to familiarise yourself with the online learning environment, you must satisfactorily complete an induction module before you register for the programme.

## Assessment

Your progress through the programme will be tested through a combination of assessed coursework and unseen written examinations. The examinations will be designed to assess understanding of broad principles and problem-solving skills, not rote memory. A typical examination question will ask you to comment critically on a published paper, set of data, or a description of a real-life primary care problem. You can study anywhere and can choose where you are assessed. We have a comprehensive network of examination centres which span over 180 countries worldwide.

# An innovative approach to learning

## How you study

Our teaching and learning model is based on the principles of constructivist adult learning. It comprises both static elements (resources) and dynamic elements (online interaction). Static elements include a range of high quality online study materials (journal articles and book chapters via hypertext links from reading lists), supplemented by key textbooks and study packs.

### How distance learning works for you

Studying at a distance is ideal if you have family responsibilities or work commitments. It allows a high degree of flexibility and is particularly appropriate if you travel regularly or have irregular working hours which means that you cannot attend weekly classes. Generally you can study whenever, wherever and however you choose.

#### ■ Fits your needs

You can study for either a full MSc, a Postgraduate Diploma or a Postgraduate Certificate.

#### ■ Fits your lifestyle

You can fit your study around family and work commitments.

#### ■ Fits your finances

As there are no requirements to come to London to study, your overall costs to study full time are substantially lower. You will have no travel, relocation or accommodation costs. What's more, you can continue working.

### The Online Learning Environment

The dynamic element of the programme is provided through an Online Learning Environment. This is a virtual classroom that enables you to communicate with tutors and other students from around the world.

You will be placed in small groups of between 5-15 for your online group work. Each group is allocated its own tutor who is responsible for both group process (e.g. ensuring that ground rules are established) and academic content.

Within the structured period allocated to each virtual seminar, you will be able to contribute to the conferencing 'discussion' at times that suit you best. All contributions are stored so that you can make reflective

and considered contributions. You are also able to print out a permanent record of all discussions on a particular topic within your tutor group.

Online discussion forums for each module are also available for queries not directly related to the virtual seminar topic.

**'Different problems in primary care require perspectives based on different conceptual and theoretical models. A personal priority is to be able to understand and apply published research, and to analyse and compare different models of healthcare at a theoretical level to capture best practice from other systems and integrate it successfully into the local healthcare system here in Uganda'.  
Robert Otim, MSc student and development practitioner in Uganda.**

# Further information



## Entrance requirements

### Academic

A second class honours degree, or the equivalent, in an appropriate subject from a university or other institution acceptable to the University.

### AND English language

An advanced level of ability to work in English. Please see the 'How to apply' section of the application form for further details (this can be downloaded from our website).

### AND Computing requirements

Regular access to a computer with an internet connection.\* A printer and CD-ROM drive are also recommended.

### AND Work experience

At least one year's relevant work experience in primary health care.

\*Any computer manufactured in the last 3-4 years with a reasonable internet connection should be suitable. To test your machine, take the tester module at: [www.londonexternal.ac.uk/iphc/taster.shtml](http://www.londonexternal.ac.uk/iphc/taster.shtml)

**Note:** If you do not hold the qualifications listed above you will still be considered, but we will require evidence of your ability to undertake an advanced course of study.

## Fees

Flexible payment – pay upfront, or pay as you go – you choose.

MSc	£6,795
Postgraduate Diploma	£4,420
Postgraduate Certificate	£2,155

These fees are made up of a registration fee (which is on a sliding scale of £675 for the MSc, £340 for the Postgraduate Diploma and £105 for the Postgraduate Certificate), plus £510 per 15 credits. Students taking a single module for professional development pay a total fee of £1,125.

The fees shown above refer to the 2009-2010 academic year only. They are subject to annual review. Fees include all core study materials but are exclusive of the cost of sitting examinations. This cost varies and is payable to your local examination authority.

## Further information and how to apply

If you have any questions or would like further information on this programme, please email: [m.rigby@pcps.ucl.ac.uk](mailto:m.rigby@pcps.ucl.ac.uk)  
To apply, please go to our website where you can download an application form: [www.londonexternal.ac.uk/iphc](http://www.londonexternal.ac.uk/iphc)

## Scholarships

In 2009, the Commonwealth Scholarships scheme is offering 10 scholarships for this programme for students in developing Commonwealth countries. For further information and the application forms please see: [www.londonexternal.ac.uk/iphc/scholarships](http://www.londonexternal.ac.uk/iphc/scholarships)

If you have any further questions after visiting the scholarships page please email: [p.boynton@pcps.ucl.ac.uk](mailto:p.boynton@pcps.ucl.ac.uk)

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ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE SINCE 1858

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**All programmes offered through the External System are designed by academics at the University of London's constituent Colleges. Assessment is the responsibility of academics at these Colleges. Currently these include:** Birkbeck, Goldsmiths, Heythrop College, Institute of Education, King's College London, The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, Queen Mary, Royal Holloway, Royal Veterinary College, School of Oriental and African Studies, and UCL (University College London).

**For further information on the range of programmes we offer, please visit our website or contact us at:**

The Information Centre, University of London, Stewart House,  
32 Russell Square, London WC1B 5DN United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0)20 7862 8360/1/2

Fax: +44 (0)20 7862 8358

Email: [enquiries@london.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@london.ac.uk)

**[www.londonexternal.ac.uk](http://www.londonexternal.ac.uk)**