



**UNIVERSITY  
OF LONDON**

# Programme Specification 2023–2024

## Infectious Diseases

MSc

PGDip

PGCert

Individual courses

**Important document – please read**



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## Important information regarding the Programme Specification

Last revised 4 May 2023

### About this document

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' button 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** programme:

**Modules:** 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, confirms the programme structure and the educational aims and learning outcomes, and advises on any development in student support, as part of its annual review of standards.

Any changes that may impact on continuing students 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 2023-2024:

**IDM501 HIV:** The following applies to students who first registered for the module prior to 23/24 and who need to resit or who are partially through the previous method of assessment, the last opportunity for students to be assessed via a 70% exam and 30% AA will be in the 24/25 academic year.



## 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 awards are given in the [Programme Regulations](#), under Scheme of Award.

### 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:

- 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
  - eight elective IDM modules (at least six must be from the IDM selection of modules. Up to two may be chosen from a selected list of other modules. ; and
- or

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- five elective IDM modules selected from a list of options; and
- a Project Report.

The **PGDip Infectious Diseases** consists of:

- four compulsory IDM1 modules; and
- four elective modules, at least three of which must be chosen from IDM modules. One module may be 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
<b>MSc</b>	Two years	Five years
<b>PGDip</b>	Two years	Five years
<b>PGCert</b>	One year	Five years
<b>Credit bearing individual modules</b>	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:

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- 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 programme 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 and may require a student to select a replacement module, or credit may be transferred if it hasn't been used in a previous award.

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.

Students must be able to download and install software to their Windows or MacOS device to include secure examination browsers for online assessment purposes (if offered on your programme of study). Depending on the security settings for each assessment you may be required to have full administrator rights on your computer to install and run the software

needed to take part in the assessment. Full administration rights are likely to apply to a computer that you own but not to one provided by your employer, for example.

### **Computer requirements**

The computer must have at least the following minimum specification:

- Windows: 10 and 11 on 64-bit platforms
- Mac OS X 10.15 and higher (for some assessments MacOS Big Sur(version 11) as a minimum)
- CPUs newer than 2011 (Intel Sandy Bridge or newer)
- OpenGL 2.0 graphics driver
- Local storage for the recording of proctored examinations (75MB per hour) if offered on your programme of study
- Web camera & microphone (internal or external)
- A broadband internet connection capable of streaming video and a minimum of 0.15Mbps upload speed.
- Minimum device requirements are subject to change and older operating systems may become obsolete over time.
- It should also have the following applications installed:
  - Word processor (for Microsoft Word documents)
  - A PDF reader (e.g. Adobe)

Some modules/courses may have additional requirements such as video and audio recording options, Microsoft Excel, STATA, statistical or other specialist software. Where this is the case, you will find information on the course webpages.

**Please note:** full mobile access is not available for all programmes. Proctored assessments will not work on any smartphone, tablet, Chromebook, Linux Operating Systems or other mobile device of any kind.

### **Additional requirements**

- Students may need to use a calculator.

### **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](#).



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](#).

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## Educational aims and learning outcomes of the programme

### 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:

- 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 critical analysis and evaluation, and the generation of original and thoughtful assignments. Some study guides are provided in the form of interactive computer-assisted learning (CAL) materials, delivered via the virtual learning environment (VLE) and most are supported by textbooks and 'reading lists' with online access to 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. Module specific academic support from subject specialist tutors is available via the VLE throughout 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 a time-limited 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 and well communicated argument (in presentation (IDM502).

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.

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

## Assessment methods

In line with our current General Regulations, the University may offer students alternative assessments where necessary. This includes holding online timed examinations in place of written examinations which are usually held at examination centres.

Core modules IDM103 and IDM104 (PGCert, PGDip and MSc) will be assessed by one two-hour and 15-minute time-limited examination. Core module IDM101 will be assessed by an online, time-limited 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 time-limited 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 time-limited examinations take place on one occasion each year, normally in June.

Find full details of the assessment and the scheme of award in the [module specifications](#) and [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:

### Support and guidance from UoLW

- [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, 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.
- LSHTM 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/Zoom/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). Students will also become eligible to join [LSHTM Connect](#), a network of students and LSHTM alumni.

## 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 the University of London federation members. 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 federation member. 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](#).

### Award standards

All University of London qualifications must comply with the Office for Students' (OfS) [Conditions of Registration](#) relating to quality and standards, which includes [ongoing conditions of registration](#) set by the Office for Students (OfS), including condition B5 ([sector-recognised standards](#)). This is to ensure appropriate standards for each qualification. In addition, every programme that is developed by a federation member of the University of London (or a consortium with representation by more than one federation member) 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 University of London Student Experience Survey. Carried out every year, 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. Registered students are also encouraged to feedback to LSHTM through annual module surveys, the results of which are integral to the annual Module review procedure and are also considered by the programme

team and principal committees. Details of any resulting actions taken are published on the Virtual Learning Environment and the University of London 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. The LSHTM also recruits student representatives at the programme level and there is distance learning student representation on the LSHTM Student Representatives Council Executive. Students are 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 University of London 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.

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## 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. The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine also welcomes former students to its alumni association and LSHTM Connect these are free to join.

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](#).