

UNIVERSITY OF YORK

Programme Specification: Postgraduate Certificate & MSc in Health Economics

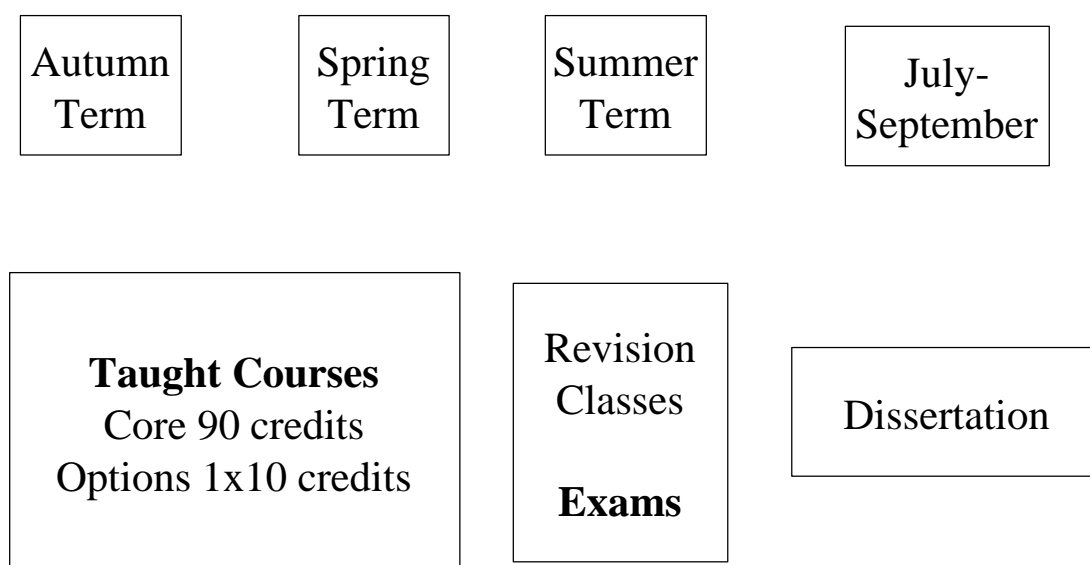
- 1 Programme title(s) covered by this specification**
Postgraduate Certificate/MSc Health Economics
- 2 Name(s) of final award(s)**
Postgraduate Certificate in Health Economics (100 credits)
MSc Health Economics (180 credits)
- 3 Awarding body/institution**
University of York
- 4 Teaching institution (if different)**
- 5 UCAS code (where relevant)**
- 6 Criteria for admission to the programme**
Minimum entry requirement is the equivalent of an upper second class degree in economics or other relevant discipline.
- 7 Length and status of programme and mode of study**
9/12 months, full-time
- 8 Proposed starting date (month and year; for new programmes only)**
- 9 Relevant subject benchmark statement(s)**
N/A
- 10 Accreditation (if applicable)**
Recognised for research training by ESRC
- 11 Educational aims of the programme**

The overall aims of the programme are to provide training in the theoretical and practical issues of relevance to health economics and to provide students with the experience and skills necessary to participate in research and in health services decision-making.

The programme offers:

- Training in the core areas of health economics and economic evaluation of health that aims to bring participants up to the current frontier of research
- A broad training in microeconomics, statistics and econometrics to provide a foundation for specialisation in health economics
- Through the summer placement and dissertation, the opportunity to work under the guidance of an experienced researcher in a working environment and to develop a research project, identifying the problem, applying appropriate methods and presenting results in a meaningful way.

12 Programme structure



Autumn	Weeks 0/1	Week2	Week3	Week4	Week5	Week6	Week7	8	9	10
Core	Math/Stats Review	Maths for Economists			Advanced Micro (20 credits)					
		or, Applied Microeconomics (20 credits)								
		Health Economics (20 credits)								
		Econometrics (20 credits)								
		or, Econometric Methods for Research (20 credits)								
		or, Quantitative Analysis (20 credits)								
Options										
		Cost Benefit Analysis (10 credits)								
		Experimental Economics (10 credits)								
		International Macroeconomics (10 credits)								
		Game Theory (10 credits)								
		Labour Economics: Microeconomic issues (10 credits)								
		Macroeconomic Theory (10 credits)								
		Management Decision Analysis (10 credits)								
		Public Sector Economics (10 credits)								

Spring	Week2	Week3	Week4	Week5	Week6	Week7	Week8	Week9	Week10
Core	Advanced Micro								
	or, Applied Microeconomics								
	Econometrics								
	or, Econometric Methods for Research								
	or, Quantitative Analysis								
	Evaluation of Health Care (20 credits)								
	Clinical Decision Analysis (10 credits)								
Options	Applied Microeconometrics (10 credits)								
	Development Project Appraisal (10 credits)								
	Economics of Defence (10 credits)								
	Health Care Management (10 credits)								
	Industrial Economics (10 credits)								
	Industrial Policy (10 credits)								
	Labour Economics: Macroeconomic Issues (10 credits)								
	Open Economy Macroeconomics (10 credits)								
	Public Finance (10 credits)								

Summer	Week2	Week3	Week4	Week5	Week6	Week7	Week8	Week9	Week10
		Revision classes				Written exams			

The Postgraduate Certificate in Health Economics programme is completed at this point, alternatively students continue with:

July 1 st		September 23
Summer placement and Dissertation		

At this point students will have qualified for the MSc

13 Intended learning outcomes, distinguishing those which are assessed, in terms of:

(a) Knowledge

Both MSc and Postgraduate Certificate students will:

- Have a thorough knowledge of the theory and methods used by professional health economists and active researchers in the field
- Identify, read and understand important contemporary contributions in learned journals

(b) Understanding

Both MSc and Postgraduate Certificate students will understand:

- The role of observation, abstraction and model construction to facilitate empirical validation
- The nature and sources of socio-economic data and the major current research problems
- Understand the key analytical arguments that are used in health economics

(c) Skills (discipline-related and transferable)

Both MSc and Postgraduate Certificate students will have discipline based skills of:

- analytical problem formulation
- analytical problem solving
- accessing and handling economic data sets
- using econometric software for parameter estimation and hypothesis testing

In addition MSc students will:

- with guidance, formulate a research project, identifying the problem, the methodology for its solution and a sense of its importance

Both MSc and Postgraduate Certificate students will have transferable skills of:

- **Self-confidence** in presenting and defending ideas and views before critical audiences of various kinds.
- **General analytical skills** - spotting key objectives, identifying assumptions, working out implications, avoiding logical inconsistencies, interpreting data insightfully, marshalling relevant evidence, quickly assimilating technical information.
- **Being able to listen** to others in such a fashion as to understand the important points being made (whether in a lecture, seminar or less formal situations), taking good and usable notes quickly and legibly, and spotting the weaknesses in others' arguments.
- **Presentational skills in written form** - summarising arguments, writing coherent essays/papers, applying general analytical skills to a wide variety of fields.
- **Presentational skills in meetings** - preparation prior to the meeting, effective use of basic visual aids such as projectors, black/white boards and flip-charts, ability to perceive the audience response to what is said and to adjust pace, style, etc.
- **Good time management** - planning a sequence of tasks over a period of time so that each gets its adequate due, ability to distinguish the urgent from the postponable and the important from the trivial.
- **Decisiveness** - having considered a range of pros and cons, being able to decide what seems to be the best way forward, ability to persuade relevant others (having first listened to their views).
- **Being an expert when appropriate** - knowing when one's own specialist technical expertise is needed and setting it in the relevant context, knowing the limitations of one's subject, being able to draw on the relevant technical contributions of other experts.

The learning outcomes relating to knowledge, understanding and discipline specific skills are assessed formatively through the written work that students provide during the programme, and summatively through the written examinations.

(d) Experience and other attributes

Experience of listening, note-taking, summarising and evaluating in lectures; oral presentation of arguments, debate in seminars; time management in both working to deadlines and presenting within time constraints; problem solving through working on exercise sheets; computing both statistical/econometric and word processing; practical research experience through case study, placement and dissertation work.

14 **Teaching, learning and assessment methods used to achieve and demonstrate the learning outcomes**

Teaching and Learning Methods

Modules use lectures and small group activity devoted either to seminar discussion of particular ideas/evidence or to skills based exercises. Lectures are used to convey analytical frameworks, show how to use skills, present empirical evidence and give perspectives of current developments in the subject and open research questions.

In small group activity students submit written work (essays and exercises) which is assessed and commented on, this assessment is solely a learning/feedback aid to student and teacher and does not form part of the examination process.

Assessment Methods

Coursework: Each student takes 100 credits of coursework; these are mostly assessed by unseen written exams. The assessment in Clinical Decision Analysis is based on a case study submitted at the end of the Spring Term and for those students taking Quantitative Analysis, 20% is based on a project. Econometric Methods for Research has one exam in January and one in June; all other modules have their written exams in June.

The assessment methods of the coursework are matched to the learning outcomes as follows:

- (a) subject knowledge is assessed through essay questions that require either or both of knowledge of a topic and the ability to compare and evaluate different bits of knowledge and explore the application of knowledge to a new area
- (b) analytical and theoretical skills are tested through unseen problem questions in the exams
- (c) overall understanding of the subject area of a module is tested by essay questions set at a broad, open-ended level eg “Highlight the main outstanding research questions in area x. How would you approach answering one of these?”

The dissertation: Each student progressing to the MSc prepares a supervised 10,000 word dissertation over the summer which is examined individually by both internals and externals. The dissertation amounts to 80 credits. Most students on the MSc in Health Economics choose to complete their dissertations as part of a summer research placement. The placement covers the period 1 July - 30 September and the student works in a host institution under the supervision of one or more experienced health economists. Placements are offered in academic research units, health care organisations, and pharmaceutical companies. The majority of hosts are based in the UK but many of the placements are overseas. The main aim of the summer placements is to give the students the opportunity to apply the concepts and technical skills they have learnt during the taught component of the MSc to a practical research project. In addition they gain experience of working with a senior researcher and as part of a professional team. The placement allows the students the chance to test their career plans and the practical experience may enhance their career prospects (e.g. for those who want to gain experience of work in developing countries). In some cases the placement may lead directly to a job and in others it gives the student useful contacts for the future. Many placements lead to conference presentations and sometimes to publications in academic journals. The placement projects provide experience of some or all of the following:

- Conducting a literature search and reviewing relevant literature (this may include systematic reviews).

- Compiling and checking empirical datasets.
- Selecting and applying appropriate methods (e.g., building a decision tree for CEA; designing, piloting and implementing a quality of life questionnaire; estimating and interpreting microeconomic models).
- Documenting the research and preparing a 8-10,000 word report.

Assessment of the dissertation includes examining evidence of understanding of the existing research, examining skills in formulating and solving a small research problem, skills of data assembly and analysis, skills of writing up and presentation.

15 Variations and exceptions

The pathways through the degree all have a common core of 90 credits designed to cover the basic benchmarks statements for economics and the coursework requirements of the ESRC. Differentiation of pathway occurs in the choice of 10 credits of options and in the topics selected by students for dissertations.

16 Quality and standards:

The programme is subject to review by the national TQA body. In the latest inspection of 2001 the programme received a score of 24/24.

Methods of internal monitoring include individual student/supervisor meetings, evaluation forms for each module, Board of Studies and Graduate School Board student representation, Peer observation of teaching, an end of programme overall questionnaire and an annual open forum. Students' anonymous responses to module evaluation forms are seen both by the teacher in question and by the Head of Department.

Tutors in the various classes and seminars report student progress to the supervisor who will then discuss progress with the student at the start of each term.

Departments carry out an annual documented review of all taught programmes, including consideration of student feedback and the reports of external examiners, reporting to the Teaching Committee. Teaching Committee is implementing a process of periodic review on a six-yearly cycle, which will complement its existing scheme of departmental visits to facilitate the exchange of views on the planning, organisation and development of teaching, and the sharing of good practice.

17 Date on which this programme specification written or revised

March 2005

18 Other sources of information relating to this programme specification

Further information is available on the web at www.york.ac.uk/depts/econ and in the departmental booklet *Introduction to Graduate Studies*.