

Programme Specification

Title of programme: MSc Allergy

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.

Awarding Institution	University of Southampton
Teaching Institution	University of Southampton
Final award	MSc
Name of award	Allergy
Interim Exit awards	Postgraduate Certificate Postgraduate Diploma
FHEQ level of final award	7
UCAS code	n/a
QAA Subject Benchmark or other external reference	QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Medicine Studied at Masters Level
Programme Lead	Dr Judith Holloway
Date specification was written	September 2012
Date Programme was validated	15/04/13

Programme Overview

Brief outline of the programme

Our MSc Allergy course is designed to help health care professionals including GPs, hospital-based doctors, nurses, dieticians and professionals in many health care sectors to gain a greater understanding of allergic diseases and to be able to translate this knowledge into their everyday practice. This postgraduate education programme will provide you with effective education and training in the mechanisms, diagnosis, treatment and management of allergic disease. It will enable you to manage both adults and children with allergy more effectively. Through the knowledge and understanding you will gain with us, you will also be able to develop and improve your health care provision, through your ability to cascade education to your colleagues, and adult and paediatric patients and their families. The programme provides opportunities for you to develop and demonstrate scientific understanding, clinical knowledge, practical skills, and critical thinking qualities.

Learning and teaching

A variety of learning and teaching methods will be adopted to promote a wide range of skills and meet the differing learning styles of the group. The techniques will include seminars, group work, practical demonstrations and discussions surrounding interpretation of data and clinical scenarios.

Specialist lecturers from a range of academic and health care professional backgrounds will be used to ensure a breadth and depth of perspective is offered, giving a good balance between background theories, principles and practical management advice.

There will also be a basic science and generic clinical skills guided e-learning package with self assessment available as an online package for students to take advantage of in their own time.

Assessment

Study is assessed by assignments, interdisciplinary group work and translational assessments which allow you to translate your learning into practice. The dissertation has two routes; Traditional Research or Professional Project.

As a research-led University, we undertake a continuous review of our programmes to ensure quality enhancement and to manage our resources. As a result, this programme may be revised during a student's period of registration, however, any revision will be balanced against the requirement that the student should

receive the educational service expected. Please read our [Disclaimer](#) to see why, when and how changes may be made to a student's programme.

Educational Aims of the Programme

The aims of the programme are to:

- Enhance your educational and professional expertise in all core areas of allergy, having developed appropriate knowledge, understanding and professional skills to improve your practice.
- Develop your ability to integrate research evidence into all aspects of decision making and to apply knowledge, analytical and critical thinking skills to make sound judgements about data applicable to the care of allergic patients.
- Enable you to demonstrate leadership in clinical allergy and allergy-related issues.
- Evaluate the psychological impact of living with allergy so that through empathy, the diagnosis, management and eventual compliance of patients can be improved.
- Develop your approach to solving problems, building on a logical and hierarchical approach that allows you to justify personal and professional decisions through critical evaluation and synthesis of relevant theories, empirical evidence and experience to best optimise professional practice.
- Develop strategies for your continuing professional development and lifelong learning in relevant aspects of allergy.
- Apply an evidence based approach to critically evaluate the current literature, and develop the skills needed to successfully complete a dissertation project.

Programme Learning Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for you to develop and demonstrate your knowledge and understanding, skills and other attributes in the following areas:

Knowledge and Understanding

Having successfully completed this programme you will be able to:

1. Comprehend and explain the complex mechanisms involved in normal and allergic immune responses.
2. Integrate your understanding of the underlying immunological mechanisms of disease into your approach for diagnosing and treating allergic patients.
3. Apply your knowledge and understanding to optimize the methods you use for the diagnosis, treatment and management of allergic diseases including asthma, eczema, rhinitis, food allergy, drug allergy and venom allergy.
4. Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of research methodologies or methods of enquiry that are appropriate for investigating the processes of allergic disease.
5. Apply new research findings to improving the management of allergic patients.
6. Translate your knowledge of allergic disease into improving your professional practice.

Teaching and Learning Methods

To help you develop your knowledge and understanding of allergy you will be exposed to a variety of methods of teaching and learning.

- The understanding of the processes involved in allergic disease including the immunological mechanisms, history taking, diagnosis, management of a patient and building allergy teams is acquired through lectures, group work, peer teaching, guided e-learning, problem-solving approaches and coursework.
- Skills in diagnostic testing, and use of medical devices appropriate to allergy are learned through a combination of small group tutorials and practical sessions where you can actively undertake the testing procedures.

- Knowledge of the most up-to-date treatments and how to use them in the management of allergic disease is acquired through a combination of lectures and attendance at recognised allergy clinics to observe approved diagnostic and management protocols in action.
- Innovative and relevant materials to aid self-directed learning on the application of acquired knowledge are also provided through guided e-learning materials. Additional support is provided by direct access to tutors as required (either by e-mail or personal communication).
- Understanding research methods and applying them to the discipline of allergy is taught through interactive tutorials and group work, observation of research teams, integration of research with established protocols during lectures, by planning a research project (during the taught part of the programme) and through personal supervision and performing a dissertation project (Research or Professional Project).

Assessment methods

Your knowledge and understanding will be tested through a combination of formative and summative assessments that may include essays and other written assignments, multiple choice questions, problem based learning questions, practical work, questions and answers and oral presentations.

Subject Specific Intellectual and Research Skills

Having successfully completed this programme you will be able to:

7. Reason critically, select and utilise appropriate information sources.
8. Critically appraise, summarise, evaluate and apply scientific and clinical evidence to the development of new ideas.
9. Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems in the field of allergy.
10. Design, undertake and report upon research.
11. Develop the skills for evaluative and reflective practice involving continual analysis of outcomes and appropriate modification of interventions.
12. Translate your in depth dissertation project into a publication format.

Teaching and Learning Methods

To help you develop your intellectual and research skills you will be exposed to a variety of methods of teaching and learning. Seminars, tutorials, discussions and problem-solving approaches will be used in addition to formal lectures. Each module involves discussion of key issues; practice in applying concepts, both orally and in writing, including analysis and interpretation of material and feedback on work produced. All students will receive initial guidance on how to identify, locate and use material available in libraries and elsewhere (e.g. on the web). Comprehensive bibliographies are provided for each topic at the outset and guidelines are provided for the production of written assignments. Group tuition is given in the performance of appropriate diagnostic tests. Throughout your studies you will attend recognised clinics and research laboratories to watch these professional practical skills being applied.

Assessment methods

The variety of assessment methods employed all emphasize the requirement for you to demonstrate your skills through the production of coherent written and oral responses either to problems or set tasks. In common with all students in the Faculty you will during your studies produce several written assignments, carry out practical work, undertake written examinations, give oral presentations and write up a dissertation, which will employ each of the listed skills.

Transferable and Generic Skills

Having successfully completed this programme you will be able to:

13. Compose and communicate ideas effectively, both orally and in writing.
14. Find relevant information using information technology.
15. Evaluate the relevance and importance of the emerging ideas and concepts.
16. Propose and justify the decisions you make in complex and unpredictable situations.
17. Solve problems in clinical investigation and related activities.

18. Design studies and analyse data.
19. Reflect and evaluate on your own and others' functioning in order to improve practice

Teaching and Learning Methods

To help you develop your general skills you will be exposed to a range of teaching and learning methods that enhance both written and oral presentation skills, and that give you the opportunity to develop your transferable skills.

Assessment methods

Your generic skills will be assessed throughout the programme.

Programme Structure

Typical course content

The programme can be tailored to best meet your career aspirations, and lets you plan your specific programme route at the start of your studies with us. We offer the course to both full time and part time students, so providing flexibility to cater for the needs of a diverse range of students, enabling you to study alongside your other commitments.

We also accommodate students on our "step on, step off" programme allowing you to start the programme and complete the full MSc, or exit with a Postgraduate Certificate in Allergy, the Principles of Allergy or a Postgraduate Diploma.

Our Core module, the Foundations of Allergic Disease, gives a comprehensive overview of the mechanisms and management of allergic diseases and provides basic science and clinical knowledge along with study skills, providing you with the underpinning for the rest of your postgraduate studies. In addition we offer a range of optional modules for students to tailor the course to their needs. Our optional modules are: (i) Food Allergy, (ii) Eczema, Urticaria and Anaphylaxis and (iii) Allergic Airways Disease. The Work Based Learning module allows you to design your own learning experience in allergy to benefit your needs. All MSc students will also receive training in clinical research skills in preparation for their dissertation, which is undertaken for the MSc itself and can be the traditional research route or via a Professional Project.

In addition to the allergy modules offered on this programme, students are also able to take a module worth up to 10 ECTS from around the University with the approval of the Programme Leader. Students in the past have chosen modules such as Prescribing Skills, Developing Public Health Practice and Demographic Change, Ageing and Globalisation.

A range of course study materials for all of our modules are available to students via our virtual learning environment, BlackBoard (www.blackboard.soton.ac.uk). This will allow you to continue your investigation in your own home and/or work environments when producing your course work. We pride ourselves on having helpful and approachable teaching and support staff and encourage students to contact us whenever support or guidance is needed.

Special Features of the programme

The module will be taught by an international faculty, at the forefront of their respective academic disciplines and professions. Adult learning methods will be used throughout and an emphasis placed upon interactive learning, practical demonstration and the interpretation of clinical scenarios to reinforce learning. In addition, the dissertation module allows you to develop and undertake a research project with experts in the field.

Programme details

Award	Core modules	ECTS	Option modules	ECTS
Master of Science in Allergy (90 ECTS) Classified	Foundations of Allergic Disease Clinical Research Skills Dissertation	10 ECTS 10 ECTS 30 ECTS	40 ECTS from the following: Food Allergy Eczema, Urticaria & Anaphylaxis Allergic Airways Disease Work Based Learning Option level 7 module of student's choice	 10 ECTS 10 ECTS 10 ECTS 10 ECTS 10 ECTS

This is a modular postgraduate programme that is normally suited to 12 months full-time or up to 5 years of part-time study, leading to 90 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) (180 CATS credits) at HE7 level. This length of time for the part time course will allow students to study alongside their other commitments. The programme is arranged as 5 allergy specific modules, the clinical research skills module, and the dissertation project. Of the taught component (60 ECTS), 50 ECTS must be taken from the Allergy modules offered, with an option of 10 ECTS at level 7 that can be chosen by the student with prior agreement by the Programme Leader from modules available across the University. Normally each student will attend the University for two blocks of teaching totalling 5-6 days per 10 ECTS module. The dissertation project runs for 14 weeks full time, or part time over 1 year. This can only begin once the Foundations of Allergic Disease and the Clinical Research Skills modules have been successfully completed and normally after successful completion of the taught component.

All the taught modules are worth 10 ECTS and the Dissertation module is worth 30 ECTS. Each 10 ECTS module represents 250 hours of student learning and endeavour, with teaching where appropriate (including lectures, class presentations, class practical sessions, and tutorials).

The award at the end of the programme of study will be the degree of Master of Science which must include the Foundations of Allergic Disease, Clinical Research Skills and a Dissertation. This award is classified (pass, merit, distinction).

Students may exit earlier with one of two subsidiary awards, a Postgraduate Diploma or a Postgraduate Certificate. For the award of Postgraduate Diploma in Allergy (also classified) they will have successfully completed 60 ECTS including the Foundations of Allergic Disease. Students may exit with a Postgraduate Certificate in Allergy upon successful completion of 30 ECTS including the Foundations of Allergic Disease and at least one from (i) Food Allergy, (ii) Eczema, Urticaria and Anaphylaxis and (iii) Allergic Airways Disease. Students may exit with a Postgraduate Certificate in the Principles of Allergic Disease upon successful completion of 30 ECTS including the Foundations of Allergic Disease. Students may register for standalone assessed modules and if successful will be awarded ECTS, or take the modules as non-assessed CPD courses and receive a transcript of attendance where appropriate.

Progression Requirements

The programme follows the University's regulations for Progression, Determination and Classification of Results: Undergraduate and Integrated Masters Programmes as set out in the University Calendar <http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/progression-regs.html>

Intermediate exit points

Exit Award for MSc Allergy:

Postgraduate Certificate in the Principles of Allergic Disease (30 ECTS)

Postgraduate Certificate in Allergy (30 ECTS)

Postgraduate Diploma in Allergy, (60 ECTS) Classified

Award	Core modules	ECTS	Option modules	ECTS
Postgraduate Certificate in the Principles of Allergic Disease (30 ECTS)	Foundations of Allergic Disease	10 ECTS	20 ECTS from the following: Work Based Learning Clinical Research Skills Option level 7 module of student's choice Or one from: Food Allergy Eczema, Urticaria & Anaphylaxis Allergic Airways Disease	10 ECTS 10 ECTS 10 ECTS 10 ECTS 10 ECTS 10 ECTS
Postgraduate Certificate in Allergy (30 ECTS)	Foundations of Allergic Disease	10 ECTS	20 ECTS from the following: Food Allergy Eczema, Urticaria & Anaphylaxis Allergic Airways Disease Work Based Learning	10 ECTS 10 ECTS 10 ECTS 10 ECTS
Postgraduate Diploma in Allergy (60 ECTS) Classified	Foundations of Allergic Disease	10 ECTS	50 ECTS from the following: Food Allergy Eczema, Urticaria & Anaphylaxis Allergic Airways Disease Work Based Learning Clinical Research Skills Option level 7 module of student's choice	10 ECTS 10 ECTS 10 ECTS 10 ECTS 10 ECTS 10 ECTS

You will be eligible for an interim exit award if you complete part of the programme but not all of it, as follows:

Qualification	Minimum overall credit in ECTS	Minimum ECTS required at level of award
Postgraduate Diploma	at least 60	60
Postgraduate Certificate	at least 30	30

Support for student learning

There are facilities and services to support your learning some of which are accessible to students across the University and some of which will be geared more particularly to students in your particular Faculty or discipline area.

The University provides:

- Library resources, including e-books, on-line journals and databases, which are comprehensive and up-to-date; together with assistance from Library staff to enable you to make the best use of these resources
- High speed access to online electronic learning resources on the Internet from dedicated PC Workstations onsite and from your own devices; laptops, smartphones and tablet PCs via the Eduroam wireless network. There is a wide range of application software available from the Student Public Workstations.

- Computer accounts which will connect you to a number of learning technologies for example, the Blackboard virtual learning environment (which facilitates online learning and access to specific learning resources)
- Standard ICT tools such as Email, secure filestore and calendars.
- Access to key information through the MySouthampton Student Mobile Portal which delivers timetables, Module information, Locations, Tutor details, Library account, bus timetables etc. while you are on the move.
- IT support through a comprehensive website, telephone and online ticketed support and a dedicated helpdesk in the Student Services Centre
- Enabling Services offering assessment and support (including specialist IT support) facilities if you have a disability, dyslexia, mental health issue or specific learning difficulties
- The Student Services Centre (SSC) to assist you with a range of general enquiries including financial matters, accommodation, exams, graduation, student visas, ID cards
- Career Destinations, advising on job search, applications, interviews, paid work, volunteering and internship opportunities and getting the most out of your extra-curricular activities alongside your degree programme when writing your CV
- A range of personal support services : mentoring, counselling, residence support service, chaplaincy, health service
- A Centre for Language Study, providing assistance in the development of English language and study skills for non-native speakers.

The Students' Union provides

- An academic student representation system, consisting of Course Representatives, Academic Presidents, Faculty Officers and the Vice-President Education; SUSU provides training and support for all these representatives, whose role is to represent students' views to the University.
- Opportunities for extracurricular activities and volunteering
- An Advice Centre offering free and confidential advice including support if you need to make an academic appeal
- Support for student peer-to-peer groups, such as Nightline.

Associated with your programme you will be able to access:

- A welcome session for orientation and programme overview.
- Student module guides and timetables.
- An introduction to the library and Information Technology (IT).
- Extensive library and other learning resources and facilities within the Faculty and University.
- The Programme Leader.
- The Module Leaders who are academic members of staff, who will be responsible for overseeing your progress throughout the module.
- The Faculty PGT Senior Tutor for all pastoral matters.
- The International Officer.
- In consultation with the Module Leader you will identify or will be allocated with a local supervisor and / or a University supervisor for your dissertation projects. Research projects always have both a local supervisor and University supervisor, but Professional Projects may only have a University supervisor.
- Academic staff and administrative staff.
- A personal academic tutor (PAT).
- A student representative.

Methods for evaluating the quality of teaching and learning

You will have the opportunity to have your say on the quality of the programme in the following ways:

- Completing student evaluation questionnaires for each module of the programme

- Acting as a student representative on various committees, e.g. Programme Board, Staff Student Liaison Committees, PGT Programmes Committee OR providing comments to your student representative to feedback on your behalf.
- Serving as a student representative on Faculty Scrutiny Groups for programme validation
- Taking part in programme validation meetings by joining a panel of students to meet with the Faculty Scrutiny Group

The ways in which the quality of your programme is checked, both inside and outside the University, are:

- Regular module and programme reports which are monitored by the Faculty
- Programme validation, normally every five years.
- External examiners, who produce an annual report
- Professional body accreditation
- A national Research Excellence Framework (our research activity contributes directly to the quality of your learning experience)
- Institutional Review by the Quality Assurance Agency
- MSc Allergy Programme Board meetings
- Peer observation of teaching
- Ongoing review of subject/professional benchmarking standards
- Ongoing review of the development of allergy services
- Faculty Programmes Committee.

Criteria for admission

University Commitment

The University will at all times seek to operate admissions regulations that are fair and are in accordance with the law of the United Kingdom, and the University's Charter, Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations.

This includes specific compliance with legislation relating to discrimination (e.g. Equality Act 2010) and the University's Equal Opportunities Policy Statement. This includes a commitment that the University will:

- actively assist groups that experience disadvantage in education and employment to benefit from belonging to the University
- actively seek to widen participation to enable students that do not traditionally participate in Higher Education to do so;
- ensure that admission procedures select students fairly and appropriately according to their academic ability and that the procedure is monitored and regularly reviewed.

Entry Requirements

You must satisfy the Regulations for Admission to Degree Courses as specified in Section IV: General Regulations of the University Calendar. In addition, the normal requirement for entry is a good first degree (second class), or equivalent qualification, of an approved university in a health, or health-related field.

If you do not have a good first degree you may nonetheless be admitted to a programme. You will be expected to provide evidence that you are able to study at HE7 and satisfy the Programme Leader that you are competent to pursue the course of study proposed. Evidence of the ability to study at HE7 will normally be in the form of (i) a relevant professional qualification at a suitable level, (ii) several years relevant post-qualifying professional experience, at least some of which must be at a responsible level, or (iii) completion of at least three years of an undergraduate medical degree.

The course is taught entirely in English. The Faculty of Medicine requires an IELTS score of 7.0 or equivalent (TOEFL offer a computer or internet based assessment). Those for whom English is not their first language are asked to indicate what level of English they have attained.

As part of the application process, candidates are asked to write a personal statement to explain their motivation for wishing to take the course and to indicate their future career plans. Academic references will also be taken up.

University Admissions links:

<http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/admissions.html>

<http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionXI/sectXI-index.html>

Career Opportunities

This postgraduate programme is designed to help you treat your patients better; we provide health care professionals with effective education and training in the mechanisms, diagnosis, treatment and management of allergic disease. Our course will enable you to manage both adults and children with allergy more effectively.

Through the knowledge and understanding you will gain with us, you will also be able to develop and improve your health care provision, through your ability to cascade education to your colleagues, and adult and paediatric patients and their families.

External Examiners(s) for the programme

Name Prof Anthony Frew
Institution. Royal Sussex County Hospital, Brighton

Students must not contact External Examiner(s) directly, and external examiners have been advised to refer any such communications back to the University. Students should raise any general queries about the assessment and examination process for the programme with their Course Representative, for consideration through Staff: Student Liaison Committee in the first instance, and Student representatives on Staff: Student Liaison Committees will have the opportunity to consider external examiners' reports as part of the University's quality assurance process.

External examiners do not have a direct role in determining results for individual students, and students wishing to discuss their own performance in assessment should contact their personal tutor in the first instance.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information can be found in the BlackBoard Virtual Learning Environment online at www.blackboard.soton.ac.uk

Appendix:

Learning outcomes and Assessment Mapping document template

Module Code	Module Title	Knowledge and Understanding						Subject Specific Intellectual Skills						Transferable/Key Skills							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
MEDI6081	Foundations of Allergic Disease	✓	✓					✓				✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	
MEDI6080	Food Allergy	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓						✓		✓		✓			
MEDI6079	Eczema, Urticaria & Anaphylaxis	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓						✓		✓		✓			
MEDI6077	Allergic Airways Disease	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓				✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	
MEDI6083	Work Based Learning						✓	✓		✓		✓		✓							
MEDI6048	Clinical Research Skills				✓			✓			✓			✓					✓		
MEDI6078	Allergy Dissertation	✓			✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	

Module Code	Module Title	Coursework 1	Coursework 2	Coursework 3
MEDI6081	Foundations of Allergic Disease	Individual Oral Presentation (40%)	Individual Reflection (10%)	Individual Written assignment (50%)
MEDI6080	Food Allergy	Group Work (50%)	Individual Written assignment (50%)	
MEDI6079	Eczema, Urticaria & Anaphylaxis	Written Examination (50%)	Individual Written assignment (50%)	
MEDI6077	Allergic Airways Disease	Individual Oral Presentation (40%)	Individual Reflection (10%)	Individual Written assignment (50%)
MEDI6083	Work Based Learning	Task and Reflection (50%)	Clinical Case Reports (50%)	
MEDI6048	Clinical Research Skills	Online Examination (30%)	Data Management. Analysis and reporting (30%)	Research Proposal (40%)
MEDI6078	Allergy Dissertation	Dissertation proposal (Formative)	Half way report (Formative)	Synopsis (Formative)
		Final Written Report (100%)	Individual Reflection (Formative)	