

**The Institute of Cancer Research
University of London**

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Programme title:	MSc in Oncology
Final award (BSc, MA etc): (where additional exit points exist they should also be detailed here)	PGCert, PGDip, MSc
UCAS code:	N/A
Cohort(s) to which this programme specification is applicable:	From 2014/15 entry
Awarding institution/body:	University of London
Teaching institution:	Institute of Cancer Research, University of London
Mode of study: Full-time/Part-time/Other	Part-time, day release
Criteria for admission to the programme:	<p>The essential criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical qualifications (graduate medical degree); • at least 2 years of postgraduate experience in clinical medicine; and • Current registration with either the UK GMC (General Medical Council) or, for international students, with the relevant equivalent national authority. <p>The additional desirable criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of planning a career in clinical or medical oncology (evidence of National Training Number (NTN) registration, or evidence of submission of application to obtain such registration).
Length of the programme:	<p>PGCert: 1 year of study (part-time)</p> <p>PGDip: 2 years of study (part-time)</p> <p>MSc: 3 years of study (part-time; across 4 academic years)</p>
Level on Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)	Level 7 (Masters)
Relevant subject benchmark statement (SBS)	N/A

<p>Brief outline of the structure of the programme and its assessment methods:</p>	<p>The programme consists of:</p> <p><u>Part A (1 year)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cell and Molecular Biology of Cancer – 20 credits • Cancer Therapies – 30 credits • Statistics for the Oncologist – 10 credits <p><u>Part B (1 year)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Methods – 10 credits • Cancer Treatments 1 – 20 credits • Cancer Treatments 2 – 20 credits • Cancer in Context – 10 credits <p>Parts A and B are assessed by single best answer papers and/or a short answer question paper and an essay.</p> <p><u>Part C (1 year across 2 academic years)</u></p> <p>Dissertation/Thesis of 10,000 words (60 credits).</p>
<p>Professional body accreditation (if applicable):</p>	<p>N/A</p>

EDUCATIONAL AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME:

The programme is a modular taught postgraduate course for specialist postgraduate students focused on the fields of Clinical and Medical Oncology. The overall aim is to encourage proactive problem solving approaches and a reflective approach to medical or clinical oncology practice, producing graduates who are well equipped with the highly refined intellectual, scientific and clinical skills necessary for leadership careers in twenty-first century Oncology.

The programme is designed and structured for highly specialised, part-time, day release students, and adopts a modular, credit accumulation model that is precisely attuned to their specific needs. The individual modules are each designed to provide detailed and distinct skills, together with advanced knowledge in a particular aspect of Oncology at Master’s level. Together, these lead to a coherent part time programme with possible exit points at Postgraduate Certificate and Diploma level (based on 60 credits or 120 credits of designated taught modules). An additional 60 credit dissertation is required for the MSc award (180 credits total).

The curriculum has also been designed to equip students in the field of Clinical Oncology to sit the Part 1 and Part 2 examinations for Fellowship of the Royal College of Radiologists (FRCR). For medical oncologists, this programme meets the identified need for a theoretical basis to their structured training and will encompass the knowledge required for the medical oncology ‘exit’ examinations. The Research Methods module provides core competences for NIHR Academic Clinical Fellows, as recommended by the Department of Health 2008.

PROGRAMME OUTCOMES:

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

Knowledge and understanding

- to provide a thorough theoretical understanding of cancer together with an in-depth and systematic understanding of current cancer treatments and cancer research, consistent with the volume of Level 7 credits studied;
- to enable the application of theoretical knowledge in the clinical environment, informing working practice and considering work-based experience in an academic context, consistent with the volume of Level 7 credits studied;

Intellectual skills

- to expand and develop advanced skills of critical awareness, advanced reasoning, analysis and evaluation, enabling informed judgements to be made on complex scientific and clinical issues, consistent with the volume of Level 7 credits studied;

Practical skills

- to expand and develop advanced skills in decision-making informed by the interaction between theoretical knowledge and clinical practice, consistent with the volume of Level 7 credits studied;

Transferable skills

- to expand and develop advanced skills in communication for the management and care of cancer patients, consistent with the volume of Level 7 credits studied; and
- to deliver the relevant curriculum and professional education at postgraduate level to enable students in the field of Clinical Oncology to sit the examinations for Fellowship of the Royal College of Radiologists.

MSc only:

- to develop and demonstrate advanced skills in research methodologies and techniques through undertaking a research-based dissertation or equivalent in a clinical setting;
- to develop and demonstrate originality in the exploration of the issues and constraints of undertaking research in a clinical setting, thus developing the ability to engage more effectively in future research activity within the student's organisation; and
- to develop and demonstrate the qualities and transferable skills necessary to contribute towards raising standards in the chosen specialty through research.

Teaching delivery

The programme is delivered on a part-time, day release basis with students attending one day per week. In each of Parts A and B, the programme is taught over a period of approx. 36 weeks, with an additional reading week in the winter or in the spring. Each Part comprises 600 notional learning hours, including approx. 216 contact hours, with the balance comprising private study plus assessment time. Teaching is delivered through a series of lectures, workshops and group-based activities.

Assessment

A variety of assessment methods are used to test the student's learning including:

- Summative testing through essays and assignments, including case studies, critical reviews, reflective diaries, audits, protocol development discussions and short-answer questions.
- Summative testing for the MSc through the submission of a 10,000 word dissertation/thesis
- Formative testing through online multiple-choice questionnaires (which students are required to take and pass in order to be eligible for credits)

Career relevance

On graduation, completion of the MSc course will have enabled students to develop the specialised theoretical and clinical skills to enable them to pursue excellence in their oncological practice. The programme will develop students' careers by equipping them with a high level understanding of the theory and practice of advanced cancer treatment, and of the science of cancer research – all to the benefit of cancer patients. The programme will facilitate students in preparing for the professional oncology examinations. A benefit of following the programme to full MSc level is that demonstrating completion of a research project is an important advantage when applying for funding for an MD or PhD research project. Those students not pursuing a higher research degree will benefit from the competitive advantage of an MSc when applying for competitive site specialty or specific geographic Consultant posts.

The following reference points were used in designing the programme:

- the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications:
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/qualifications-frameworks.pdf>);
- the relevant Subject Benchmark Statements:
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements>); .

More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the Programme Handbook, Assessment and Module Guides. General information regarding assessment, awards and classifications can be found in the ICR Regulations.

Programme Director(s) Name(s):	Professor Robert Huddart Dr David Bloomfield Dr Rema Jyothirmayi
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Date of Production*:	December 2005
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Date of Review:	November 2015
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Date approved by Taught Courses Committee:	December 2015
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* Note: this should be date the programme specification was first created. The dates of review and approval by TCC should be the most recent dates.