



FACULTY OF MEDICINE

Lund University

Board of the Faculty of Medicine

CURRICULUM

Diary No. M 2007/1752¹

Adopted by the Board of the Faculty of Medicine

30 January 2007

Valid from 1 July 2007

Revised by the Board of the Faculty of Medicine

29 March 2011

Master's Programme in Public Health

120 credits

Level A, Second cycle

Ladok code VAFHÄ

Language of Instruction: English

Programme Description

The programme is based on previous studies in related fields at the Bachelor level, aims to help students develop a scientific approach and acquire sound knowledge of methodology, in order to carry out independent public health work at various levels of society as well as research in the field. The programme also provides a basis for research training in public health.

The programme provides an interdisciplinary perspective on the subject of public health in general and on the planning, follow-up and evaluation of public health projects/programmes. Students acquire relevant theories and knowledge of global patterns of health and disease, the formulation, implementation and monitoring of health policy, epidemiology and qualitative methods. The programme also provides knowledge of theories and methods for assessing needs, setting priorities, intervention, quality assurance and evaluation of health promotion and disease prevention measures.

The demand for qualified professionals in the field of public health has grown in recent years, thanks to greater awareness that the health of a population is a determinant of long-term sustainable societal development. Implementation and monitoring of the UN Millennium Development Goals, whose stakeholders include the WHO and the World Bank, is boosting international demand for skills in public health science. A Master's degree in public health science, or equivalent, is often required by the organizations such as Sida (the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) and UN bodies when recruiting individuals to international positions in this field.

Students also acquire through this programme the theoretical and methodological skills required to complete third cycle (research) studies in public health science.

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Learning Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

On completion of the programme, students shall

- demonstrate knowledge and theoretical understanding in public health, including both broad knowledge of the field and a considerable degree of specialised knowledge in certain areas of the field, as well as in-depth insight into current research and development work;
- demonstrate specialised theoretical and methodological knowledge in the field of public health;
- demonstrate knowledge of theories and methods concerning leadership and organisation in public health work;
- demonstrate specialised knowledge of theories and methods for describing global, socio-economic and cultural circumstances that affect public health and public health work;
- demonstrate specialised knowledge of theories and methods of preventive public health work and applicable strategies for promoting public health and preventing ill health at individual, local, national and international levels;
- demonstrate knowledge of theory and practice of ethical approaches in public health work.

Skills and Abilities

On completion of the programme, students shall

- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues critically, autonomously and creatively and to plan and apply appropriate methods and evaluate work within the public health sector;
- demonstrate the ability in speech and writing both nationally and internationally to report clearly and discuss his or her conclusions and the knowledge and arguments on which they are based;
- demonstrate the ability to critically and systematically integrate knowledge and analyse, assess and deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations;
- demonstrate the ability to autonomously understand and critically assess research in the field and participate in research in public health science;
- demonstrate the ability to communicate public health theory and knowledge as popular science;
- demonstrate the ability to participate in teamwork with different collaborators, nationally and internationally and in multicultural contexts.

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Judgment and Approach

On completion of the programme, students shall

- demonstrate the ability to critically assess and appreciate the impact of health policy, health promotion and disease prevention on all levels from different ethical, cultural and social perspectives;
- demonstrate the ability to make assessments in the field of public health informed by relevant disciplinary, social and ethical issues and also to demonstrate awareness of ethical conflicts in research and development work;
- demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used;
- demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and knowledge development in the field.

Independent Project (Degree Project)

For a degree of Master the student must have completed an independent project (degree project) of 30 credits within the framework of the course requirements.

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Course Information

The programme offers gradual specialisation in three principal areas:
Health and Society (*Global Public Health, Health Economics and Health Systems, Health Policy*);
Theory of Science and Methodology (*Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Qualitative Research Methods, Thesis Course*); and Professional Development (*Planning and Leadership in Public Health, Health Promotion and Health Communication, Internship*).

1	<i>Global Public Health</i> 7.5 credits
	<i>Epidemiology and Biostatistics</i> 15 credits
	<i>Qualitative Research Methods</i> 7.5 credits
2	<i>Health Economics and Health Systems</i> 15 credits
	<i>Health Policy</i> 7.5 credits
	elective course or internship 7.5 credits
3	<i>Planning and Leadership in Public Health</i> 10 credits
	<i>Health Promotion and Health Communication</i> 12.5 credits
	elective course or internship 7.5 credits
4	<i>Thesis Course</i> 30 credits

The programme begins with an overview course in *Global Public Health* (7.5 credits) in which the main health problems, health indicators and health determinants for low-income, middle-income and high-income countries are explored.

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The first semester continues with the methodological courses *Epidemiology and Biostatistics* (15 credits) and *Qualitative Research Methods* (7.5 credits). These methodological courses comprise theoretical as well as practical components and forming a basis for Public Health research. The placement in the semester one allows students to begin planning at an early stage for the *Thesis Course* (30 credits) and to develop a critical approach to reported research results.

Courses providing greater depth to students' theoretical and practical knowledge of important tools in public health science are taught in semesters two and three, such as *Planning and Leadership in Public Health* (10 credits), *Health Promotion and Health Communication* (12.5 credits), *Health Policy* (7.5 credits) and *Health Economics and Health Systems* (15 credits).

Besides the compulsory courses, students are offered the opportunity of individual specialisation through elective courses totalling 15 credits in semesters two and three. Some elective courses are offered within the programme, but courses in public health science at other departments at Lund University or other higher education institutions can also count towards the degree. Approval will be based on the relevance and level of the course. The course *Internship* is offered as an elective course within the programme.

Degree

Upon completion of the programme, students are awarded a degree of Master of Medical Science with a Major in Public Health.

Admission Requirements and Selection Criteria

The admission requirements are: a first cycle (Bachelor's) degree of 180 higher education credits or the equivalent, and proof of proficiency in English equivalent to English B from Swedish upper secondary school.

Selection is based on a total assessment of the students' previous academic qualifications, prior work experience in the field of public health, and Statement of Purpose. In the case of equal qualifications, admission may be determined by drawing of lots.

Work experience in the field is defined as work which promotes the state of health of a population or a population group. Examples of this are work with the objective of:

- preventing disease and removing threats to human health.
- improving information with the objective of promoting public health.
- improving opportunities to coordinate and undertake measures to deal with health risks.