# Module Specification

## GENERAL INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module name</th>
<th>Health Systems</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module code</td>
<td>GHM201</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module Organiser(s)</td>
<td>Fred Martineau</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact email</td>
<td>The LSHTM distance learning programmes and modules are run in collaboration with the University of London. Enquiries may be made via their Student Advice Centre at: <a href="https://london.ac.uk/contact-us">https://london.ac.uk/contact-us</a> (Enquiries from face-to-face i.e. London-based LSHTM MSc or research students regarding study of DL modules should be emailed to <a href="mailto:distance@lshtm.ac.uk">distance@lshtm.ac.uk</a>.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home Faculty</td>
<td>Faculty of Public Health &amp; Policy London School of Hygiene &amp; Tropical Medicine <a href="https://www.lshtm.ac.uk/research/faculties/php">https://www.lshtm.ac.uk/research/faculties/php</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>This module is at Level 7 (postgraduate Masters level) of the QAA <a href="https://www.qaa.ac.uk">Framework for Higher Education Qualifications</a> in England, Wales &amp; Northern Ireland (FHEQ).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Credit</td>
<td>LSHTM award 15 credits on successful completion of this module.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accreditation</td>
<td>Not currently accredited by any other body.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keywords</td>
<td>Health Systems, Global Health, Governance, Organisation, Financing, Right to Health, Primary Health Care, Human Resources, Health Sector Reform, Health Systems Goals/SDGs, Universal Health Coverage, Public-private, Health Policy, Non-Communicable Diseases, Globalisation, Health Systems Assessment.</td>
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## AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND AUDIENCE

### Overall aim
To demonstrate understanding of the functioning of health systems, drawing on relevant disciplinary perspectives and enable students to undertake analysis of health systems in developed and developing countries. This module will involve understanding the core building blocks of health care systems and their modes of operation, the implications of different approaches to system design for access, quality, and broader outcomes, highlighting the equity impacts of different design features.

### Intended learning outcomes
By the end of this module, students should be able to:
1. Define the concept of a 'health system', and its core objectives, elements and functions.
2. Explain key debates, theories and conceptual approaches related to understanding health systems and their boundaries;
3. Apply a range of approaches and models to analyse the historical and contemporary social, economic and political factors that influence health systems;
4. Assess the functioning of different health care systems and their actors, and their impact on health, equitable health care access, and wider socio-economic outcomes;
5. Critically appraise and apply key concepts and approaches to health systems evaluation and performance measurement, including analysing the roles of local and global policy actors;
6. Apply health systems approaches to major health challenges in a range of different contexts.

The intention of the module is to prepare students for work in national health systems, for example in strategic planning, policy design and implementation, at national, regional, and district level, in international organisations, NGOs, and academic institutions, among others. The module covers (in a compressed form) key health systems issues that are on national and international agendas and seeks to equip students with the language, key concepts, and ability to engage in high level debates. The ability to write a concise, policy-focussed editorial, which is part of the module assessment, is a transferable skill that is core to many of these roles.

**Target audience**
Elective module for students on the DL MSc/PGDip Global Health Policy programme, DL PG Dip/MSc Clinical Trials and DL MSc/PGDip Public Health programmes. The module is also available as a stand-alone individual module for anyone interested in global health and health systems.

**CONTENT**

**Session content**
Well-functioning health systems are increasingly recognised to be essential in improving health outcomes, health equity, access to services, and social protection. In middle- and low-income country settings, they are vital to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Effective health systems policies, especially as a means to scale up essential interventions, respond to the growing burden of non-communicable diseases, and foster accountability, are seen as central to the global public health agenda.

The module includes sessions addressing the following topics:
- What is a health system?
- What makes up a health system? Governance function
- Health systems functions: financing
- Health system functions: creating resources
- Health system functions: provision
- Assessing health systems and their performance
- Universality in health systems, part 1: Right to Health and the health system
- Universality in health systems, part 2: Universal Health Coverage
- Health systems: a relational view
- Pluralism in health systems: public-private engagement.

**TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT**

**Study resources provided or required**
The following materials are provided to students after registration for this module once a year:
- Access to the LSHTM Virtual Learning Environment – Moodle, containing programme resources including lecture notes and slides, audio and video recordings, activities and access to web-based discussion forums
- All essential and some recommended readings - provided on Moodle via links to LSHTM library resources
- Access to LSHTM online library resources
- Suggested relevant websites
In addition to these, students will receive a CD-ROM, containing all lecture notes and slides and some of the activities.

**Teaching and learning methods**
Learning is self-directed against a detailed set of learning objectives using the materials provided. Students are strongly encouraged, and expected, to participate in the online discussions, assignment preparation exercises and interactive learning activities available on Moodle and to make use of LSHTM
online library resources. In addition, written feedback is provided on submitted assignments.

| **Assessment details** | Formual assessment of this module includes an assessed assignment answering a set essay question (50%) and an assessed ‘editorial’ assignment (e.g. BMJ style) where students write an academic journal-style editorial on any relevant health systems topic of their choice (50%). Examples of published or highly marked editorials from past years, as well as guidance on format will be provided.

Students will be expected to post at least five posts (at least 50 words each) relating to exercises in the module material on the Moodle web-based forums. This requirement is the minimum and we encourage much more active participation, which will benefit learning.

If students fail the module overall they are allowed one further attempt at the failed element (examination and/or assignment). |
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<th><strong>Assessment dates</strong></th>
<th>Assignments for this module can be submitted only once annually. The Assessed Assignment must be submitted no later than 14 February. The Editorial Assignment must be submitted no later than 12 May. All assignments must be submitted via the online Assignment Management System.</th>
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| **Language of study and assessment** | English (please see ‘English language requirements’ below regarding the standard required for entry). |

**TIMING AND MODE OF STUDY**

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<th><strong>Duration</strong></th>
<th>Students may start their studies at any time from access to the Moodle VLE (opens beginning of October) and receipt of study materials (dispatched annually usually during September and October, depending on the date of registration) and work through the material until the end of May (although assessment submission deadlines which are earlier than this must be observed).</th>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Dates</strong></th>
<th>Tutorial support for distance learning modules is available only from the beginning of October through to the end of May.</th>
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<th><strong>Mode of study</strong></th>
<th>By distance learning</th>
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| **Learning time** | The notional learning time for the module is 150 hours, consisting of:

- **Directed self-study** (reading and working through the provided module material) ≈ 80 hours
- **Self-directed learning** (general reading around the subject, library, Moodle discussion forums) ≈ 30 hours
- **Assessment and review** ≈ 40 hours. |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**APPLICATION, ADMISSION AND FEES**

| **Pre-requisites** | No specific pre-requisites.

Those wishing to study this module must have regular access to the internet to participate in module-specific discussions and tutorials on Moodle, benefit from online library facilities and submit assignments. |
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<p>| <strong>English language requirements</strong> | A strong command of the English language is necessary to benefit from studying the module. Applicants whose first language is not English or whose prior university studies have not been conducted wholly in English must fulfil LSHTM’s English language requirements, with an acceptable score in an approved test taken within two years prior to entry. Applicants may be asked to take a test even if the standard conditions have been met. |</p>
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<th><strong>Student numbers</strong></th>
<th>There is no cap on the number of students who can register for this distance learning module.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Student selection</strong></td>
<td>This module is available to be studied by students registered for the DL MSc/PGDip Global Health Policy and DL MSc/PGDip Public Health programmes. Alternatively, students may register for this as an ‘individual module’. This module is also open to LSHTM research degree and London-based MSc students.</td>
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<td><strong>Fees</strong></td>
<td>The current schedule of fees can be viewed at <a href="https://london.ac.uk/applications/costs-your-course/course-fees">https://london.ac.uk/applications/costs-your-course/course-fees</a> (click on the Postgraduate fees 2018-19 link).</td>
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<td><strong>Scholarships</strong></td>
<td>Scholarships are not available for individual modules. Some potential sources of funding are detailed on the LSHTM website.</td>
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| **Admission deadlines** | Applications for LSHTM distance learning programmes and modules are managed by the University of London. To apply to take either a formal award (i.e. PG Certificate, PG Diploma or MSc) or an individual module, click on the following link: [https://london.ac.uk/courses/global-health-policy](https://london.ac.uk/courses/global-health-policy)

Key deadlines are as follows:
- Application deadline: 31 August each year
- Registration deadline (new students): 30 September each year
- Registration deadline (continuing students, with the exception of those taking individual modules): 31 October.

**Please note:** The academic year starts 1 October. Students who register after 1 October should note that module welcome and Collaborate sessions held in October are recorded, but they cannot request an extension to assignment submission deadlines or apply for an examination extenuating circumstance as a result of registering later than 1 October.

In-house LSHTM DrPH/research students and London-based MSc students wishing to study this module should note information given in the mixed mode study option links at:

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**ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT**

This module specification applies for the academic year 2018/2019

Last revised/approved by Fred Martineau 20/2/18

London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, Keppel St., London WC1E 7HT.  
[www.lshtm.ac.uk](http://www.lshtm.ac.uk)