MODULE SPECIFICATION

Academic Year	2026-27
Module Code	PHM109
Module Title	Health Policy, Process and Power
Module Organiser(s)	Christina Petsoulas and Manuela Colombini
Contact email	For students studying University of London Awards (initial registration 2025/2026 and prior years: Enquiries may be made via their Student Advice Centre at: Student Advice Centre. For students studying LSHTM awards (registration in 2026/2027 and onwards): Enquiries should be emailed to: PHsupport@lshtm.ac.uk
Faculty	Public Health & Policy
FHEQ Level	Level 7
Credit Value	**CATS:** 10 **ECTS:** 5
Mode of Delivery	Distance Learning
Mode of Study	Directed self-study, through online materials (Virtual Learning Environment)
Language of Study	English
Pre-Requisites	None
Accreditation by Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body	None
Module Cap (Maximum number of students)	None
Target Audience	This module is available to students registered for the Distance Learning PG Certificate/ PG Diploma/ MSc in Public Health programmes. For students who first registered for the MSc Public Health (UoL) prior to 2026/27 the module is recommended for students studying the Health Promotion, Health Services Management, and General streams. Alternatively, it can also be taken as an individual module.
Module Description	This module provides students with an introduction to the complexities of policy making, the theorists and theoretical approaches that help explain it, and the actors, power and policy processes involved within it.

Duration	Studies for distance learning modules begin in early October. At this time, module materials will be made available on Moodle once fees have been paid. Students may start their studies at any time from the beginning of October and work through the material until the start of the June assessments. However, students are encouraged to commence their studies in October and work steadily through the materials over the course of the academic year.
Last Revised (e.g. year changes approved)	May 2026

For students studying UoL awards (initial registration in 2025/2026 and prior years)

Programme(s) This module is linked to the following programme(s)	**Status**
PGCert and PGDip Public Health (Distance Learning - University of London Worldwide)	Elective
MSc Public Health (General Stream) (Distance Learning - University of London Worldwide)	Recommended Elective
MSc Public Health: Environment and Health (Distance Learning - University of London Worldwide)	Elective
MSc Public Health: Health Promotion (Distance Learning - University of London Worldwide)	Recommended Elective
MSc Public Health: Health Services Management (Distance Learning - University of London Worldwide)	Recommended Elective
MSc Public Health: Health Economics (Distance Learning - University of London Worldwide)	Elective

For students studying LSHTM awards (registration in 2026/2027 and onwards)

Programme(s) This module is linked to the following programme(s)	**Status**
PGCert Public Health (Distance Learning)	Elective
PGDip Public Health (Distance Learning)	Elective
MSc Public Health (Distance Learning)	Elective

Module Aim and Intended Learning Outcomes

Overall aim of the module
The overall module aim is to: • improve students' understanding and ability to apply the main theoretical approaches on the dynamics of health policy processes at both national and international levels, drawing on political science and policy analyses.

Module Intended Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of the module a student should be able to: 1. Explain and give examples to illustrate the concepts and theories associated with the health policy framework, including context, content, actors and processes of policy making; 2. Explain and apply theories involved in the policy process, e.g., regarding power, agenda setting, policy implementation, and theories of how evidence influences policy; 3. Analyse a policy using the frameworks introduced in this module.

Indicative Syllabus

Session Content
The module is expected to cover the following topics: • Health policy frameworks used to analyse the process involved in policy making; • The concept of power in health policy making; • Policy actors and various stakeholders involved in shaping policy (e.g. state, media, private sector); • Policy-decision-making and agenda setting: how agendas are set, and who sets them; • How research interacts with policy making; • How policies are implemented: unfolding process of "formulation-implementation"; • How to analyse past policies retrospectively (called "analysis of policy"); • How to engage in prospective policy analysis in order to shape future policy (called "analysis for policy").

Teaching and Learning

Notional Learning Hours

Type of Learning Time	**Number of Hours**	**Expressed as Percentage (%)**
Directed self-study	70	70
Self-directed learning	0	0
Assessment, review and revision	30	30
Total	**100**	**100**

Teaching and Learning Strategy
Learning is via directed self-study. A guide to studying the module is provided, together with access to a range of study resources, discussion forums and online webinar discussion sessions. The textbook that supports this module provides a detailed set of learning objectives at the start of each chapter, and also offers focused reading and various learning activities. Students are strongly encouraged to participate in the module-specific discussions and online webinar discussion sessions to obtain tutor support, and to make use of the LSHTM on-line library resources.

Teaching and Learning Strategy
Student support is available from the module tutors through the online discussion forums and five scheduled 1-hour 'live-chat' sessions on specific topics (online webinar sessions). Module tutors provide asynchronous feedback for all students on the online discussion forum.

Assessment

Assessment Strategy
The summative assessment of this module is by a time-limited assessment (100%).

Summative assessment

Assessment Type	Assessment Length	Weighting (%)	Intended Module Learning Outcomes Tested
Time-limited assessment	TBC	100	All

Time-limited assessments for DL modules are held once a year, usually in June (including resits), and will be held online for 2026-27.

For students studying UoL awards (initial registration in 2025/2026 and prior years)
Assessments are held in accordance with University of London's annual guidance.

For students studying LSHTM awards (registration in 2026/2027 and onwards)

Assessments are held in accordance with Chapter 8b of the LSHTM Academic Manual.

Resitting assessment
Resits will accord with Chapter 8b of the LSHTM Academic Manual. The Resit assessment will be the same assessment type as the first attempt (see previous table).

Resources

The following materials are provided to students after registration and fee payment for this module in October:

- A brief guide to studying the module;
- The textbook *Making Health Policy (3rd edition)* by Kent Buse, Nick Mays, Manuela Colombini, Alec Fraser, Mishal Khan and Helen Walls;
- A reading list including details of both required and optional reading and links to selected papers;
- A Frequently Asked Questions or 'FAQ' document, which summarises questions that are regularly discussed in Moodle;
- Module-specific discussion forums;
- Online webinar discussion sessions to be run during the year at key points in the module.

All materials are provided in e-format and may be accessed via the LSHTM VLE – Moodle.

Teaching for Disabilities and Learning Differences

The module-specific site on Moodle provides students with access to the majority of the module learning materials, including a study guide and online reading list (detailing both essential and recommended readings), and additional resources including supplementary exercises, the option to listen to recordings of selected lectures taking place in London. In this module, materials provided include a textbook that is made available to students in e-format. All materials posted up on Moodle areas, including computer-based sessions, have been made accessible where possible. The LSHTM Moodle has been made accessible to the widest possible audience, using a VLE that allows for up to 300% zoom, permits navigation via keyboard and use of speech recognition software, and that allows listening through a screen reader. All students have access to "SensusAccess" software which allows conversion of files into alternative formats.

For students studying University of London awards (initial registration 2025/2026 and prior years): For students with special needs, reasonable adjustments and support can be arranged – details and how to request support can be found on the University of London Worldwide website at: Inclusive practice and Access arrangements | University of London

For students studying LSHTM awards (registration 2026/2027 and onwards): For students who require learning or assessment adjustments and support this can be arranged through the Student Support Services – details and how to request support can be found on the LSHTM Disability Support pages.