MODULE SPECIFICATION

Academic Year (student cohort covered by specification)	2026-27
Module Code	2436
Module Title	Population, Poverty & Environment
Module Organiser(s)	Sarah Walters & Rachel Eagan
Faculty	Epidemiology and Population Health
FHEQ Level	Level 7
Credit Value	**CATS:** 15 **ECTS:** 7.5
Term of Delivery	Term 2
Mode of Delivery	For 2026-27 this module will be delivered by predominantly face-to-face teaching modes. Where specific teaching methods (lectures, seminars, discussion groups) are noted in this module specification these will be delivered by predominantly face-to-face sessions. There will be a combination of live and interactive activities (synchronous learning) as well as recorded or self-directed study (asynchronous learning).
Mode of Study	Full-time
Language of Study	English
Pre-Requisites	While the first term module in Population Studies (2011) provides a useful background, it is not essential; this module builds upon it and focuses on the population, poverty and environmental nexus. 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.
Accreditation by Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body	Not currently accredited by any other body
Module Cap (indicative number of students)	24 (numbers capped due to limitations in facilities/staffing)

Target Audience	This is a module suitable for postgraduate students interested in population issues, particularly in low and middle-income countries, and in the context of anthropogenic climate change. We consider how population issues relate to health, the environment, and to wider social and economic change. Preference will be given to LSHTM MSc students, particularly those registered for MSc Demography & Health and MSc Climate Change and Planetary Health, and LSHTM research degree students. Other applicants meeting the entry criteria will usually be offered a place in the order applications are received, until any cap on numbers is reached. Applicants may be placed on a waiting list and given priority the next time the module is run. Full Registration (full participation) by LSHTM research degree students is required for this module, with the exception that completion of the assessment essay is optional for research degrees students.
Module Description	The module takes a big-picture approach to the relationship between population, poverty and the environment, with a primary focus on how these issues affect low- and middle-income countries. The aim of this module is to introduce students to the main debates around the links between population, poverty and the environment so that they can assess the policy implications of demographic change. The topics considered include: population growth; trends in health inequalities; migration; urbanisation; livelihoods and households; environmental change and demographic impacts; food security; population ageing; gender and reproductive justice; measuring poverty and population policies.
Duration	5 weeks at 2.5 days per week (Wednesday lunchtime to Friday afternoon).
Timetabling slot	Slot C2
Last Revised (e.g. year changes approved)	August 2026

Programme(s) This module is linked to the following programme(s)	Status
MSc Demography and Health	Recommended
MSc Control of Infectious Diseases	Recommended
MSc Health Policy Programming and Financing	Recommended
MSc Public Health for Global Practice	Recommended
MSc Reproductive and Sexual Health Research	Recommended
MSc Climate Change and Planetary Health	Recommended

Module Aim and Intended Learning Outcomes

Overall aim of the module
The overall module aim is to: • Introduce students to the main debates about the links between population, poverty and the environment so that they can assess the policy implications of demographic change, primarily in low- and middle-income countries. The module examines the big picture; it is not focused on health service-related issues.

Module Intended Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of the module a student will be able to: 1. Understand the complex inter-relationships between population trends, human welfare and the environment in relatively low-income countries 2. Assess the significance of these issues for development and health and social policy, with emphasis on poverty reduction strategies in low- and middle-income countries

Indicative Syllabus

Session Content
The module is expected to cover the following topics: • Population growth and its economic impact • Population policies • Defining and measuring poverty and livelihoods • Gender and reproductive justice • Climate change, demographic trends and development • Inequalities in child survival in low- and middle-income countries • International migration • Internal migration and urbanisation • Population ageing

Teaching and Learning

Notional Learning Hours

Type of Learning Time	Number of Hours	Expressed as Percentage (%)
Contact time	23	15
Directed self-study	55	37
Self-directed learning	27	18
Assessment, review and revision	45	30
Total	**150**	**100**

Student contact time refers to the tutor-mediated time allocated to teaching, provision of guidance and feedback to students. This time includes activities that take place in face-to-face contexts such as lectures, seminars, demonstrations, tutorials, supervised laboratory workshops, practical classes, project supervision as well as where tutors are available for one-to-one discussions and interaction by email.

The division of notional learning hours listed above is indicative and is designed to inform students as to the relative split between interactive and self-directed study.

Teaching and Learning Strategy
The teaching and learning strategy is based on a combination of face-to-face lectures and research focus sessions; asynchronous, interactive, online learning; and face-to-face small-group tutorial discussion sessions. Teaching methods emphasise student-centred learning. Each tutorial discussion session lasts 1 hour, and they are the principal arena for students to prepare and present their ideas on the topic being considered that week. The class is divided into small tutorial groups with a member of staff facilitating the discussion. Each student will help to lead the discussion of one of the four topics. Everyone is expected to attend the four discussion sessions and to have read some of the papers in preparation. Enthusiasm and interest to read widely about population and environmental issues is crucial to effective learning in this module. Students' contributions to the tutorial sessions are not assessed to allow students to freely develop and express their own thoughts and ideas. However, informal feedback on process and content and an indication of which topics and issues may merit further reading and reflection will be provided by the facilitator during the course of each of the discussion sessions.

Assessment

Assessment Strategy
The assessment for this module has been designed to measure student learning against the module intended learning outcomes (ILOs) as listed above. Formative assessment methods may be used to measure students' progress. The grade for summative assessment(s) only will go towards the overall award GPA. Assessment is entirely based on an essay on one of the three discussion topics on which the student did **not** lead the discussion. Thus, each student is required to prepare intensively for at least two of the four discussion topics and to read background material on the other two. The essay format enables students to show they have understood complex inter-relationships between population trends, welfare and the environment and to assess the significance of these issues for development, health and social policy.

Summative Assessment

Assessment Type	Assessment Length (i.e. Word Count, Length of presentation in minutes)	Weighting (%)	Intended Module Learning Outcomes Tested
Coursework	2000-2500 words	100	1 & 2

Resitting assessment
Resits will accord with Chapter 8a of the LSHTM Academic Manual. The task will be to submit an essay on either of the four discussion topics on which they did not lead the discussion and have not already submitted an initial essay.

Resources

Indicative reading list

Recommended reading

Muttarak, Raya and Joshua Wilde. The World at 8 Billion. Population Council. https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/undesa_pd_2022_the_world_at_8_billion.pdf

Hoffmann R, Andriano L, Striessnig E, Rüttenauer T, Borderon M, Grace K. Climate change and population: Demographic perspectives on the 21st century's defining challenge. Vienna yearbook of population research. 2024;22. doi:https://doi.org/10.1553/p-nfjc-z82h

Sasser JS. At the intersection of climate justice and reproductive justice. Wiley interdisciplinary reviews. 2024;15(1). doi:10.1002/wcc.860

Merchant, E. Introduction to: Building the Population Bomb. Oxford University Press; 520:312.

Bongaarts J, Gragnolati M, Amer Ahmed S, Corker J. Population, Development, and Policy. Population Council; 2020. doi:10.31899/pgy16.1018

Cleland J. World Population Growth; Past, Present and Future. Environmental and Resource Economics. 2013;55(4):543-554. doi:10.1007/s10640-013-9675-6

Ezeh AC, Bongaarts J, Mberu B. Global population trends and policy options. The Lancet. 2012;380(9837):142–8. https://www-sciencedirect-com.ez.lshtm.ac.uk/science/article/pii/S0140673612606965

Textbooks

1. Crook N, ed. Timaeus I. Principles of population and development : with illustrations from Asia and Africa. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 1997.
2. Dyson T. Population and development. London: Zed; 2010. https://www-vlebooks-com.ez.lshtm.ac.uk/Vleweb/Product/Index/1513347?page=0
3. Gould WTS. Population and development. London: Routledge; 2009.

Other resources

Interactive online study sessions
Documentaries/podcasts

Teaching for Disabilities and Learning Differences

The module-specific site on Moodle gives students access to lecture notes and copies of the slides used during the lecture. Where appropriate, lectures are recorded and made available on Moodle. All materials posted on Moodle, including computer-based sessions, have been made accessible where possible.

LSHTM Moodle is accessible to the widest possible audience, regardless of specific needs or disabilities. More detail can be found in the Moodle Accessibility Statement which can also be found within the footer of the Moodle pages. All students have access to "SensusAccess" software which allows conversion of files into alternative formats.

Student Support Services can arrange learning or assessment adjustments for students where needed. Details and how to request support can be found on the LSHTM Disability Support pages.