PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1. Overview

Programme Title	MPhil/PhD
Academic Year	2027-28
Cohort Entry Points	Each September, January and April
Programme Director	Catherine Goodman
Awarding Body	London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine
Teaching Institution	London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine
Faculty	All Faculties
Length of Programme	2-4 years (full-time) or 3-8 years (part-time)
Mode of Study	Available full-time or part-time.
Period of Registration	Minimum registration period: 2 years full-time or 3 years part-time Maximum registration period: 4 years full-time or 8 years part-time
Language of Study	English
Entry Requirements	Please refer to the specific programme entry requirements here.
Exit Routes	MPhil
Award Titles	MPhil PhD
Accreditation by Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body	N/A
Level of programme within the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)	The MPhil is based on meeting the award criteria at Level 7 (Masters level) The PhD is based on meeting the award criteria at Level 8 (Doctorate level) For further information about Level 7 and 8 qualifications in England, see https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the-quality-code/qualifications-frameworks

Re-sit Policy	See Doctoral Degree Academic Regulations
Date of production / revision of this programme specification (month/year)	July 2026

2. Programme Description, Aims & Learning Outcomes

Programme Description	A research-based degree. Both the MPhil and the PhD are assessed solely on the thesis submitted and the viva. There is no formal taught component to the Programme. However, additional training that is *not* formally assessed as part of the PhD can be undertaken to enhance a student's transferable and technical skills. All students are required to complete a session on research ethics.

Programme aims

- The MPhil aims to develop researchers who are competent in effectively planning and undertaking independent research.
- The PhD aims to enable students to demonstrate that they have expertise in core research concepts, methods and skills, and that they have made an original contribution to a defined field of knowledge.

Learning outcomes

MPhil

The award of MPhil (Level 7) is based on evidence of the student's proven demonstration of facility in four distinct areas:

1. A systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice;
2. A comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship;
3. Originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline;
4. Conceptual understanding that enables the student to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline, to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

PhD

The award of PhD (Level 8) is based on evidence of the student's proven ability in four distinct areas:

1. The creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship;
2. The systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge;
3. The ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, application or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems; and
4. A detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.

3. Programme structure, features and award requirements

Programme structure and requirements

MPhil/PhDs are very variable; they may be desk-based, or include laboratory work or field work, but there are some common elements.

Students are expected to be in London for registration, and to attend the induction and Transferable Skills programme. Further transferable skills and other training opportunities are offered throughout the programme, including the opportunity to take relevant modules from LSHTM masters' programmes to develop particular skills.

All students have a first supervisor and a second supervisor (who will be identified before registration) and may have further members in their supervisory team. Students will be in

contact with their supervisor(s) at least once a month (full-time) or once every two months (part-time).

Students are expected to spend a minimum of 9 months in London over the course of the programme, usually including the first 3 months after registration. This is to enable students to benefit from the School's academic environment and gain any training required for successful completion of their doctoral work. Most students spend longer than this in London.

Students for the PhD will initially register for a Master of Philosophy (MPhil) degree before "upgrading" to a PhD. Full-time students should normally upgrade between 7 and 11 months after registration, and part-time students by 22 months after registration. All upgrading requirements (including any resubmissions) must be completed by 18 months (maximum) for full-time students and 36 months (maximum) for part-time students. The upgrading consists of a written report (max 7,500 words), an open seminar, and a closed meeting with an assessment panel. This normally takes place in London. The upgrading provides students with feedback to improve the design of their research and identifies students who are struggling with progress and unlikely to complete a PhD successfully.

For students intending to stay registered for the MPhil the procedures are similar, with a formal review instead of the "upgrading". The final MPhil thesis should be submitted by 2 years (full time) or 4 years (part time).

For students who upgrade to a PhD, the final PhD thesis should be submitted by 4 years (full time) or 8 years (part time).

Estimated number of study hours

It is expected that part-time students will spend on average 17.5 hours a week (or 0.5 full time equivalent; FTE) on their MPhil/PhD. This time includes private (self-directed) study and meetings with supervisors. Full time students will be expected to spend on average 35 hours a week (or 1.0 FTE) on their MPhil/PhD

ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

Thesis

The PhD thesis will be <100,000 words and the MPhil thesis will be <60,000 words. The theses can be a traditional "book-style" or "research paper style" or a combination. The option to include research papers means that sections that might otherwise be chapters can be written as stand-alone research papers and incorporated in that way.

Assessment

Students must satisfy the criteria for the award of the relevant degree (PhD or MPhil) in the United Kingdom (UK). The threshold (minimum) standards for the award of these degrees in the UK are given under 'Learning outcomes' above.

Students will demonstrate that they meet these criteria by the following means:

- Submission of a thesis

- Participation in an oral examination (viva voce) by a minimum of two examiners who have read the thesis.

The conduct of the examination will be governed by the Doctoral Degree Examination Guidance. Requirements for the physical presentation of the thesis will be published on the LSHTM web site.

4. Entry requirements

Entry Requirements

Applicants should have at least one of the following:

- an upper second-class Honours degree of a UK university, or an overseas qualification of an equivalent standard, in a subject appropriate to that of the course of study to be followed; or
- a registrable qualification appropriate to the course of study to be followed, in medicine, dentistry or veterinary studies; or
- a Masters degree in a subject appropriate to the course of study to be followed; or
- a professional qualification obtained by written examination and approved by LSHTM as an appropriate entrance qualification for the degree in question.
  and
- evidence of aptitude for research.

Note that these are minimum entry requirements, and possession of these does not guarantee a place.

English language entry requirements

Band B

It is essential that all students have a good command of the English language to benefit from their studies at the LSHTM.

As part of the application process, applicants are required to demonstrate how they meet the LSHTM's minimum English language requirements. This is particularly important for applicants requiring a Student Visa, as the UK Home Office requires every student from outside the UK and Ireland to show evidence of a minimum level of English language ability (called CEFR B2 level), in order for a Student Visa to be issued for entry to the UK.

English language entry requirements

Additionally, the LSHTM asks applicants to have minimum English language proficiency levels that are necessary for our academic programmes. These levels are higher than the CEFR B2 minimum level.

The academic English language requirements for each of the LSHTM's programmes are categorised into one of three profiles A, B or C. For information on these three profiles, please refer to the LSHTM English Language Requirement Policy: https://www.lshtm.ac.uk/sites/default/files/english_language_requirements_policy.pdf

Financial requirements

Applicants are required to have sufficient funds to cover programme tuition fees, living expenses and any travel and project costs for the duration of their studies. Invoices for tuition fees are raised annually and payment must be paid at the start of each year of the Programme, in October. The Programme is unable to provide financial assistance to any students whose funds prove to be inadequate at any stage during the programme. Students offered admission will be required to sign a financial declaration form confirming that they understand this situation and will have sufficient financial support for the duration of their studies. Evidence of available funds may be required.

Students with disabilities

The School welcomes applications from people with disabilities. These may include sensory impairment (visual/hearing), mobility or dexterity impairment, chronic medical conditions (e.g. diabetes, HIV, epilepsy, asthma) or chronic pain/fatigue, mental health difficulties, specific learning difficulties (e.g. dyslexia or dyspraxia), Asperger's Syndrome and other autism spectrum disorders, or other conditions with long-term and adverse effect on studying. The School aims to offer as much appropriate assistance as possible to accommodate individual needs and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that both the application procedure and the programme itself are organised and delivered to offer all students the opportunity to participate fully. Applicants are encouraged to disclose any specific disability at the time of application, and to provide information on what can be done to make the application and selection process as accessible as possible. This will help the School understand individual needs and help ensure that obstacles are minimised throughout the application and admission process. Once registered, the School will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments and, within resource constraints, provide support to students with disabilities. Student Support Services can answer queries and provide confidential advice at any stage in the PhD programme. The School will comply with the commitments set out above, in addition to any local legal obligations which affect how they must treat students with disabilities.