



MODULE SPECIFICATION

Academic Year (student cohort covered by specification)	2021-22
Module Code	5002
Module Title	Evidence Based Public Health Policy & Practice
Module Organiser(s)	Nicholas Mays, Eduard Beck (Honorary Professor) and Annette Boaz
Faculty	N/A (DrPH is a School-wide programme)
FHEQ Level	Level 7
Credit Value	CATS: 30 ECTS: 15
HECoS Code	100091 Public Services
Term of Delivery	Term 1
Mode of Delivery	For 2021-22 this module will be delivered online only. Where specific teaching methods (lectures, seminars, discussion groups) are noted in this module specification these will be delivered using an online platform. 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 or part time. The module is taught on-line. Both full-time and part-time students follow the same schedule.
Language of Study	English
Pre-Requisites	At least one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Master's degree in a subject appropriate to the course of study to be followed (recommended) • Evidence of at least two years' appropriate experience in a public health organisation, plus at least two years' appropriate experience in a management and/or leadership role preferably also in a public health setting
Accreditation by Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body	Not currently accredited by any other body
Module Cap (Indicative number of students)	Numbers are capped at (approximately) 20.
Target Audience	The module is designed for students taking the Doctorate in Public Health and is a compulsory module for that programme.
Module Description	The aim of EBPHP is to develop the necessary skills for evidence-based policy and practice. Since the evidence base is constantly



	<p>developing, the emphasis is on practical, generic skills rather than substantive findings in particular areas of public health. The module focuses on the development of the two core skills required from public health leaders: the development of strategies to access, evaluate and synthesise relevant evidence; and the presentation and use of evidence for the purpose of informing and shaping policy and/or practice.</p> <p>The advent of electronic databases allows easier and cheaper methods to identify the relevant scientific studies on a public health issue, and it is important to understand how best to do this. It is also important to understand the limitations of such evidence, especially as there is often very useful information and experience that remains outside the more formal, peer reviewed literature. It is essential to be able to discriminate between evidence of different standards, and to weigh appropriately the evidence from different types of research and study designs.</p> <p>Decision making in public health policy and practice involves many different groups, some scientific, some managerial and some representing political and group interests. For example, to influence political decision-makers it is usually necessary for the arguments to be presented very concisely. For scientific users, the emphasis is more on completeness and fully referenced reviews, and, for the general public, the need is to ensure that the presentation is clear and free from unnecessary jargon. The module therefore supports students to develop the skills to present the evidence to each of these user groups in ways that make them useful for decision making, while ensuring that the essence of the argument remains intact. It also helps them understand better the policy making process in a range of country contexts.</p>
Duration	10 weeks at 2.5 days per week
Timetabling slot	On-line, with live sessions scheduled on Mondays and Tuesdays,
Last Revised (e.g. year changes approved)	July 2021

Programme(s)	Status
This module is linked to the following programme(s)	
Doctorate of Public Health (DrPH)	Compulsory



Module Aim and Intended Learning Outcomes

Overall aim of the module

The overall module aims are to:

- Enable students to locate, assess, synthesise, present and use research-based and other information to influence public health policy and practice in a range of settings.
- Provide students with an overview of policy theory and research methods useful for understanding and analysing health sector organisations acting within their policy environments

Module Intended Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the module a student will be able to:

1. Acquire and evaluate the quality of existing evidence (e.g. on effectiveness, acceptability and cost) related to public health policies and interventions;
2. Distinguish between generating evidence, eliciting values and making decisions;
3. Undertake a rigorous review of existing studies, draw out the policy implications, and assess the quality and relevance to policy of such reviews;
4. Make persuasive recommendations for policy and/or practice change to improve the public health based on the best evidence available;
5. Demonstrate a thorough understanding of the dynamics of the relationship between the worlds of research, and policy and practice in the field of public health, and of the assumptions underpinning the concepts of 'evidence', 'policy' and 'politics';
6. Use their understanding of the ways in which different groups involved in public health policy and practice use research evidence to advocate more effectively for the promotion of the public's health informed by sound evidence.
7. Be familiar with the main theories of public policy making appropriate to the study of the operation of public health organisations within a particular policy environment;
8. Be able to plan the main elements of RS1/OPA with the learning from the ULMO module and the RS1/OPA preparation sessions.



Indicative Syllabus

Session Content

The module is expected to cover the following topics:

- Getting research evidence into policy and practice
- Critical evaluation and synthesis of published evidence
- Understanding the policy process

Teaching and Learning

Notional Learning Hours

Type of Learning Time	Number of Hours	Expressed as Percentage (%)
Contact time	40	13
Directed self-study	120	40
Self-directed learning	90	30
Assessment, review and revision	50	17
Total	300	100

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

Teaching and Learning Strategy

Teaching is by a mixture of lectures, case studies, group work and panel discussions. The focus of the teaching is on discussion and active student involvement in learning.



Assessment

Assessment Strategy

The module is assessed through two written assignments, each weighted 50%, an evidence review and an influencing strategy.

Assignment I ties in particularly with the series of sessions devoted to Research, Evidence and Policy in Public Health. Students are asked to prepare an 'agenda setting' or influencing strategy designed to get a research-driven issue onto the policy agenda of a Ministry of Health in a setting of their choice.

Assignment II consists of a rigorous evidence review and builds on the series of sessions devoted to Assessing and Synthesising Public Health Evidence. This is accompanied by a short policy briefing for a minister of health in a country of the student's choice with recommendations based on the findings of the overview relevant to the country context.

Assignments are due on 7 **and 14 January 2022**.

Candidates who do not pass an assignment are required to re-submit a revised document.

Resit / deferral / new attempt: the next assessment date/deadline will normally be **1 June 2022**.

Summative Assessment

Assessment Type	Assessment Length (i.e. Word Count, Length of presentation in minutes)	Weighting (%)	Intended Module Learning Outcomes Tested
Coursework – Assignment I	2,500 words maximum	50	Primary: 1-6; secondary 7
Coursework – Assignment II	Evidence review 3,000 words maximum plus Abstract (300 words maximum) plus maximum 2 figures and 3 tables; policy brief 1,000 words maximum	50	Primary: 1-6; secondary 7

Resitting assessment

Resits will accord with the LSHTM's [Resits Policy](#)



Resources

Indicative reading list

Buse K, Mays N, Walt G. Making health policy. Maidenhead: Open University Press, second edition, 2012 (available from the LSHTM supplies department at a discount since part of the LSHTM series 'Understanding Public Health')

Peters BG. Advanced introduction to public policy. Edward Elgar, 2015

Petticrew M, Roberts H. Systematic reviews in the social sciences: a practical guide. Oxford: Blackwell, 2006.

Gough D, Oliver S, Thomas J, eds. An introduction to systematic reviews. London: Sage, 2012

Smith K. (2013) *Beyond evidence-based policy in public health. The interplay of ideas*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. (Chapters 1 and 2).

Teaching for Disabilities and Learning Differences

The Module Organisers will discuss specific requirements with the student in conjunction with the formal Learning Agreement.

The module-specific site on Moodle provides students with access to lecture notes and copies of the slides used during the lecture prior to the lecture (in pdf 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 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](#).