

Programme Specification for MRes in Clinical Education

1.	Awarding institution/body	University of Worcester
2.	Teaching institution	University of Worcester
3.	Programme accredited by	N/A
4.	Final award	MRes in Clinical Education
5.	Programme title	MRes in Clinical Education
6.	Pathways available	N/A
7.	Mode and/or site of delivery	Taught, and research based, distance learning programme delivered by on-line learning with tutorial support.
8.	Mode of attendance	Part time
9.	UCAS Code	N/A
10.	Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement	<p>Vitae (2010) Researcher Development Framework: https://www.vitae.ac.uk/vitae-publications/rdf-related/researcher-development-framework-rdf-vitae.pdf</p> <p>Academy of Medical Educators (2014) Professional Standards Framework, Domain 4: Educational Research and Scholarship: http://www.medicaleducators.org/aome/assets/File/AOME%20Professional%20Standards%202014%281%29.pdf</p> <p>QAA Masters Degrees Characteristics (2010).</p> <p>FHEQ (2008) Qualification Descriptors for Level 7</p>
11.	Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision	<p>July 2015</p> <p>August 2016 (Regulations amended - Section 20)</p>

12. Educational aims of the programme

The taught modules included within the MRes in Clinical Education serve to focus and develop skills in research, criticality and academic writing. The course delves deeper into the philosophical underpinnings of research methodology and practice in order to equip learners with the skills to develop and design meaningful research strategies, and to construct coherent, concise academic arguments.

The Masters by Research (MRes) provides an opportunity to gain intensive research experience without the commitment to a PhD. The thesis stage of the programme builds upon the solid foundations in research strategy developed during the modular phase.

The rationale of the programme is to develop and enhance the skills, both generic and specific, that a clinical educator needs in order to contribute to, and lead research in their professional context. Furthermore, the programme also seeks to highlight and then to enhance skills that a research student develops in the course of their research degree which are transferable to their future career.

This programme is intended to meet the needs of professionals working in the context of the healthcare profession, to undertake this study alongside their professional practice. The programme has been developed to be delivered entirely online to facilitate asynchronous and distance learning, which can be paced according to learner needs. Embedding the learning and research from the award within their professional practice is a particular strength of both the programme, and the discipline. The course applies the Academy of Medical Educators values

from Domain 4 (levels 2 and 3) of the [Professional Standards Framework](#): Educational Research and Scholarship. In particular:

4.2.3. Participates in the design and development of educational programmes, projects or research.

4.2.4. Interprets and applies the results of educational research to his or her educational practice.

4.3.3. Develops new educational insights, theories and practices, through scholarly endeavors.

4.3.4 Designs, supervises, manages and evaluates research strategies or projects.

4.3.5. Contributes to educational research or projects applying appropriate research methods.

The programme aims:

1. To enable students to critically evaluate core research skills, e.g. planning a research project, and to prepare learners for doctoral level study.
2. To advance and enhance critical writing and critical thinking skills.
3. To facilitate students to lead and direct their own work autonomously.
4. To enhance and critically reflect on core IT and library skills.
5. To develop and critically analyse research skills specific to the subject area of the professional context.
6. To provide critical analysis and synthesis the broader context of research in the UK and internationally.
7. To enable the student to synthesise original contributions of knowledge to advance understanding, theory, or practice within their professional communities.
8. To provide students with the knowledge, skills, and intellectual capabilities that are required to work in the context of clinical education.
9. Engage students in the field of clinical education research in a healthcare organisation, postgraduate training body, or higher education institution.
10. To promote engagement in clinical education research, addressing societal and regulatory expectations.

13. Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

Knowledge and understanding:

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a broad knowledge and understanding of the context in which clinical education research takes place, at the national and international level.
2. Critically employ knowledge of research techniques, including information retrieval, research design, analysis and presentation of results relevant to the field of Clinical Education.
3. Critically reflect on and demonstrate understanding of issues, and competence in relating to the rights of other researchers, of research participants, and of others who may be impacted on by the research, e.g. confidentiality, ethical issues, attribution, ownership of data and the requirements of the Data Protection Act (1998) as well as relevant regulatory bodies, e.g. General Medical Council (GMC) Good Medical Practice (2013).
4. Critically analyse and demonstrate appreciation of standards of good research practice in the institution and in their specialty professional discipline and branch of research.

Cognitive and intellectual skills:

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Plan, conduct and report on a programme of original research.
 2. Critically draw on a wide range of research methodologies to address specific research questions.
 3. Integrate and critically evaluate information and data from a variety of sources.
 4. Critically reflect on appropriate, critical, and incisive research questions.
 5. Critically analyse creative and novel approaches to developing solutions to a broad range of research problems / questions.
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Practical skills relevant to employment:

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Apply a critical understanding of research philosophy to a range of research problems.
 2. Use and critically evaluate a range of research methodologies to problems in contemporary clinical education.
 3. Critically approach and evaluate literature, data, and what is presented as a contribution to knowledge.
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Transferable/key skills:

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Communicate effectively using appropriate methods, such as oral presentations and written reports, to deliver scientific results to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
 2. Critically reflect on the application of information technology literacy skills to: the identification and search of online databases; analysis; and integration of appropriate methods of research.
 3. Demonstrate autonomous practice by: exercising initiative; taking personal responsibility and practice self-direction.
 4. Critically reflect on own continuing professional development.
 5. Critically analyse existing, and design new and appropriate, risk assessments and health and safety procedures.
 6. Demonstrate proficiency in time management.
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Examples of learning, teaching, and assessment methods used:

- The entire taught component of the course will be delivered through online learning, making use of the University of Worcester's BlackBoard virtual learning environment. This platform will facilitate the use of other technologies (such as discussion fora, video lectures, web-based seminars, and interactive quizzes).
- Formal online eLearning sessions will combine: video-lectures; structured reading; reflective exercises; and 'virtual classroom' seminars ('webinars').
- Distance tutorial support (e.g. using email, Skype, or telephone).
- Opportunities for debate, using online discussion fora.

- Engaging in discussion with the wider academic community through participation in journal clubs either locally, within discussion fora, or through social media (e.g. Twitter journal club).
- Guided reading of key texts with comment and facilitated online discussion.
- Directed independent study, group discussions, and quiz-based exercises.
- Formative assignments which will support students in developing subject knowledge in addition to academic and research skills.
- Summative assessments e.g. literature review, essay reports, research proposal and thesis, allows students to demonstrate independent learning and research skills.
- The independent research project will be assessed by the submission of the MRes thesis and presentation to an assembled panel of subject experts, and non-subject-experts, audience members.
- The thesis offers an opportunity to: learn autonomously; critically appraise the evidence base of an aspect of educational theory, or practice; and develop new or original understanding.

14. Assessment Strategy

The Assessment Strategy has been designed to provide students with a variety of challenges appropriate for Master's level modules. The range of assessments, specified in the module outlines, have been developed in order to support the pedagogical and research approaches employed and which are appropriate for the nature of the subject discipline. Each modular assessment builds towards the skills required for completion of the final thesis.

The assessment strategy is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills that are required to work in the context of clinical education. In particular:

- All summative assessments are constructively aligned to the modular learning outcomes and reflect the advanced academic level of study (level 7).
- The assessment strategy is designed to develop advanced skills and knowledge, provide evidence of the students' progress and achievement throughout the course and prepare the students for lifelong learning.
- A variety of assessment methods, both formative and summative, are used including essays, presentations and an extended research project (thesis).
- Formal guidance is provided for all assessment activities whether formative or summative. For summative assessments a comprehensive assignment brief is included in the module outline and this includes explicit assessment criteria clearly indicating what students need to do to complete the assessment successfully.
- Formative assessment is an important feature across the programme and it has a fundamental role to play in student learning and development. Students are strongly advised to engage with all formative assessment in order that they receive regular feedback on their progress, to allow them to self-assess their achievement. Furthermore it is aligned to summative assessments, increasing student confidence in achievement.

15. Programme structures and requirements

The programme offers the opportunity to achieve the award of Master by Research in Clinical Education.

Award Map

The programme consists of:

- 60 credits at level 7 (equivalent to a PGCert in Clinical Education Research), and
- 120 credit thesis at level 7 (MRes Clinical Education)

Students will normally be expected to successfully complete the taught components of the programme in the suggested modular order, as outlined in the award map.

Course Title: MRes Clinical Education/PG Cert Clinical Education Research
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Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status (Mandatory (M) or Optional (O))
			MRes Clinical Education
MCER4001	Research in Clinical Education	15	M
MCER4002	Philosophy of Clinical Education Research	15	M
MCER4003	Research Methodology in Clinical Education	15	M
MCER4004	Research Project Development and Management	15	M
MCER4000	MRes thesis project	120	M

Students who have successfully completed the taught modules (60 credits at level 7), who withdraw from the programme, will gain the exit award of Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) in Clinical Education Research.

Programme delivery

The MRes in Clinical Education provides a part-time programme of study over a period of, typically, 4 years, and not exceeding 6 years. The detailed schedule for the programme showing how modules are delivered over the academic year is available in the course handbook.

The taught components of the MRes in Clinical Education are delivered entirely by online, and distributed learning. As such, there are no formal requirements to attend campus. The University of Worcester's virtual learning environment, BlackBoard, will provide the portal through which students will primarily access learning materials, and engage with discussion and assessment activities.

16. QAA and Professional Academic Standards and Quality

This award is located at level 7 of the FHEQ. The programme has been designed with reference to the [QAA Masters Degrees Characteristics](#) (2010), FHEQ (2008) [Qualification Descriptors for Level 7](#), the [Vitae Researcher Development Framework](#) (2010), and the Academy of Medical Educators (2014) descriptor 4 on [Educational Research and Scholarship](#).

The learning outcomes for the programme and its constituent modules have been constructed in accordance with the QAA [Framework for HE Qualifications](#) (FHEQ). The aims and intended learning outcomes of the course comply with the Framework descriptor for Masters level study and the *Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area* requirements for completion of a second cycle award.

17. Support for students

Student support is a central component of the MRes in Clinical Education programme and is available from within the Research School, and within the Institute of Health and Society and from the wider University. Examples of wider University support are [Student Services](#) and the [Disability and Dyslexia Services](#)

Pre-programme

Students will be given written guidance on how to access online tutorials that orientate learners to the BlackBoard virtual learning environment, and the specific details of the programme, layout and access. This will also be covered in the induction. Students may also complete a module dedicated to Developing Academic Skills for Professional Practice (HESC2001 – 20 credits level 5), which is suitable for students who have been away from Higher Education for some time and would welcome the opportunity to brush up their academic skills before proceeding with the Postgraduate Certificate. This module currently runs only in semester 2 (spring/summer), but an unaccredited workshop version of the module is also offered in semester 1 (autumn/winter).

Induction

An induction programme, specific to online learning, and this MRes pathway, will introduce students to: information and learning systems, including library resources; an introduction to student services based at the university; and an introduction to the expectations of advanced Masters Level study.

Personal Academic Tutoring

Personal Academic tutoring is at the heart of supporting students personally, professionally and academically. We believe that the personal academic tutor system is fundamental to student success.

Students will be allocated a personal academic tutor who will normally will remain with them throughout their time at the University and will be the student's regular point of contact within the University. Students are advised to maintain regular contact with their personal academic tutor, with email being the communication tool of choice. All tutorial contact is recorded. The tutorial scheme will be given to students during induction and will have a focus on [professional development planning](#) and the tutor will request to see the students' PDP and give constructive feedback on it.

Thesis support

All students complete a thesis. Students are supported in this via the module leader and a thesis supervisor, or Director of Studies (DoS).

18. Admissions

Admissions Policy

The University aims to provide fair and equal access to a university education to all those who have the potential to succeed or benefit from it. Admissions to the MRes in Clinical Education are made in line with the University's [Admissions Policy](#) and [Diversity and Equality](#) policies.

The programme recruits applicants who are able to study at Masters Level and have the appropriate level of skills to competently use, as well as have consistent access to reliable information technology (including internet connection) to engage fully with the course.

Entry requirements

Candidates should normally possess the following/or be in process of obtaining:

- A Second Class Honors Degree (2.2 or above), or equivalent award in an appropriate discipline e.g. medicine
- or*
- Appropriate research or professional experience, which has resulted in appropriate evidence of achievement. For example: experience in a research environment, such as private research and development, or public research. This will be assessed via the application form and/ or interview.

and

- GCSE English Language & Maths grade C or above, or an acceptable equivalent.

Applications from those with international qualifications are checked against NARIC criteria, and copies of all certificates are required before an offer is made to the student.

Programme specific entry requirements

- Confirmation of the ability to use IT facilities, such as the internet, virtual learning environments (e.g. BlackBoard), Word and PowerPoint.
- Have consistent, reliable access to information technology (specifically, a computer and internet connection).
- Where English is a second language, IELTS Level 7.5 will need to be evidenced. Please note that IELTS must have been passed within the last 2 years.

Minimum computer specifications required to work with Blackboard Software

- Microsoft Windows 7
Microsoft Office 2010
- **Supported Internet Browsers (current release):**
- Mozilla Firefox
Google Chrome
- **Browser settings:**
- Pop up blocker disabled for online learning application
JavaScript enabled
Java enabled
Cookies enabled
- **Plugins:**
- Adobe Flash Player
Adobe acrobat reader
Java
- **Internet Connection:**
- Internet Connection through Internet Service Provider providing broadband connection
- **Security:**
- Anti-virus software
Current Windows Updates applied
- **PC:**
- Intel Core Duo Processor or i3
4GB RAM
- **Additional hardware:**
- USB headset and webcam

Recognition of Prior Learning

Students with relevant previous study at postgraduate level or with extensive experience may be considered eligible for recognition of prior learning.

Recognition for prior learning cannot be claimed for the MCER4004 (Research Project Development and Management in Clinical Education) module.

Please contact the Research School for further information or guidance on 01905 855214.

Further information on Recognition of Prior Learning can be found at <http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/941.htm>

Admissions procedures

Applicants apply directly to University of Worcester (UW). www.worc.ac.uk

Admissions/selection criteria

All applications are submitted to the Research School and passed to the relevant Programme Leader for consideration. In the application form, applicants are required to outline an idea for a potential research project for their intended thesis. However, it is not expected, at this stage,

that applicants will have thoroughly developed plans. For example, the outlined idea could be a research proposal, or just a reflection of an area of particular interest. Where it is unclear how a candidate meets the entry criteria, the candidate may be required to attend an interview, normally conducted via Skype.

An offer of a place on the MRes in Clinical Education programme will be made when the following conditions are satisfied:

- Applicant meets the specified entry requirements.
- The Institute has the supervisory capacity and expertise to support the research project outlined in the application form.
- The idea, or proposal outlined has the potential to become a viable research project at Masters Level.

Where an applicant is unsuccessful, they are offered written feedback against individual performance and interview outcomes.

19. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

An integrated range of strategies are used by the MRes in Clinical Education team to monitor, evaluate and improve the quality and standards of learning and teaching:

- External Examiner reports.
- The programme leader presents the overall evaluation of the programme through the Programme Annual Evaluation Report which is presented at the Institute's Quality Committee.
- Informal midpoint and formal, anonymous end of module evaluation by students. Module leaders provide a formal response and action plan which is available for current and future students to access via Blackboard.
- Each cohort has a student academic representative (StAR) provided with training for the role by the Student Union.
- Training for StAR's will be provided online, and participation with campus-based meetings will be facilitated using online fora and communication technologies.
- Scholarly activity is actively encouraged to enhance the learning and teaching experience for students with an emphasis on research activity, conference presentation and writing for publication and doctoral level study.
- The programme team are actively involved in staff development activities to enhance the learning and teaching experiences of the students on this programme.
- Modifications to modules including assessment strategies are presented at the Institute of Health and Society's Quality Committee.
- Institute of Health and Society student forum. Attendance will be facilitated via Skype.
- Post examination board moderation provides an opportunity to reflect on assessment activities, process and assessment marks of identified modules.
- Academic team engagement with the University's peer supportive review of teaching.
- The University and Institute of Health and Society Learning and Teaching Committees, together with the Educational Development Unit (EDU) promote learning and teaching through the provision of support and personal development opportunities for staff. This includes a programme of staff development seminars and when requested facilitates Institute/departmental staff development.
- A higher Education Academy (HEA) teacher-accredited course for new staff and promotion of membership / fellowship of the HEA.
- Staff development activity – including doctoral level study, support with research and conference presentations.

20. Regulation of assessment

The course operates under the University's Taught Courses Regulatory Framework

Requirements to pass modules

- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in the module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is D- for each module.
- Students are required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.
- Some modules have attendance requirements.
- Students are required to pass the four taught modules (MCER4001, 4002, 4003, 4004) in order to progress to the thesis stage of the programme (MCER4000).
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

Submission of assessment items

- Students who submit course work late but within 5 days of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at D- unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- Students who submit work later than 5 days but within 14 days of the due date will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
- For full details of submission regulations please see the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework.

Retrieval of failure

- Students are entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade, unless the failure was due to non-attendance.
- Reassessment items that are passed are graded at D-.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module (or, in some circumstances, take an alternative module); the module grade for a re-taken module is capped at D-.
- A student who fails 60 credits or more after exhausting all reassessment opportunities may be required to withdraw from the University.

Requirements for Awards

Award	Requirement
PG Cert in Clinical Education Research	Passed a minimum of 60 credits at level 7 from MCER4001, 4002, 4003, and 4004.
MRes in Clinical Education	Passed a minimum of 180 credits at level 7 including a minimum of 120 credits from the Thesis (MCER4000)

The awards of MRes may be made with Pass, Merit or Distinction. The PG Cert award is unclassified.

21. Indicators of quality and standards

Programme Development:

The programme is mapped to widely accepted guidelines in the Researcher Development Framework (Vitae, 2010) and Professional Standards of the Academy of Medical Educators (2014). The programme content has been developed in consultation with, and has been piloted by local healthcare professionals and educators. The online course has been designed and developed using the Carpe Diem framework.

Teaching Staff:

Teaching staff are active in scholarly activity in the field of Clinical and Medical Education. This is reflected in research output published in peer-reviewed outlets, as well as engagement and contribution to external activities. Research output was submitted to the 2014 Research Exercise Framework under 2 academic units (Allied Health Professions, Nursing and Pharmacology unit, and the Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience unit). In total there were 21.5 FTE staff returned to these units of assessment.

Currently, there are 35 PhD or professional doctorate students undertaking research projects within the Institute of Health and Society. Within the Institute, we have 32 staff who are able to supervise advanced research degrees.

Achievements of Staff

Several member of the programme team are Fellows of the Higher Education Academy, with one member being a University Teaching Fellow. All members of the programme team are research active, with over one third having or working towards doctoral level qualifications.

22. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers**Graduate destinations**

As well as being an advanced qualification in its own right, an MRes qualification in Clinical Education is an important pathway into Doctoral study in education, and the social sciences. Students with this qualification will be better placed to progress to successful doctoral study at the University of Worcester, or elsewhere. Additionally, the MRes in Clinical Education has been specifically mapped to place graduates in a position to enter doctoral level study, in either the MPhil/PhD pathway, or one of the Professional Doctorates (EdD, DHSc, or DBA) at the University of Worcester.

Student employability

Generally, MRes in Clinical Education graduates will pursue a career in academia, a professional role allied to healthcare, or the education of healthcare professionals. The knowledge students will develop and the training they will receive will provide a solid foundation for leadership roles within a social sciences research environment.

The programme provides students with the opportunity to develop transferrable skills in time management, intellectual leadership, organisation, academic writing, and the use of information technology. The University of Worcester also provides careers education and support opportunities. Subsequently, graduates will be well placed to explore a variety of onward employment options.

Links with employers

The MRes in Clinical Education is aligned to the professional standards and values of the Academy of Medical Educators. The programme was developed in consultation with local healthcare professionals, and clinical educators. A sample of the online materials has been piloted through a regional postgraduate training body. Additionally, the programme development has been supported by a team of experts in online learning and clinical education.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module outlines and the course handbook provided to all students at the start of the course.