

**ST GEORGE'S, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON**

**POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE**  
**HEALTHCARE RESEARCH SKILLS AND METHODS**

**SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT**

**1. GENERAL**

1.1 The Certificate consists of 3 core modules and one optional module as follows:

	<b>Module Name</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Credit Value</b>
<b>Core</b>	MRDM101X Research Methods	7	15
<b>Core</b>	MRDM102X Statistics Or MRDM105X Practical Data Analysis: qualitative and quantitative approaches	7	15
<b>Core</b>	MRDM103X Critical Appraisal	7	15
option	MRDM104X Research Project Planning and Management	7	15
option	MCP7103X Implementation and Improvement Science: Principles for Practice	7	15
option	MCP7104X Negotiated Independent Learning	7	15

Recognition of prior learning and credit transfer is permitted as per the programme regulations (see Appendix B)

1.2 Module assessments and weightings are as follows:

<b>Compulsory Module and code</b>	<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Word limit / length</b>	<b>Assessment Weighting</b>
<b>Research Methods MRD M101X</b>	Protocol presentation	20 minutes	Formative
	Summative written research protocol	2,000 words	100%
<b>Statistics MRD M102X</b>	Online exercises & mock summative assessment	10 hours	Formative

Or  Data Analysis MRD M105x	Timed short answer Examination	One hour ten minutes	100%
	Qualitative & quantitative workshops	20 minute discussion	Formative
	Quantitative dataset written report OR Transcript Qualitative analysis	2000 words	100%
Critical Appraisal MRD M103X	Oral Paper Critique	20 minute discussion	Formative
	Written Paper Critique	2,500 words	100%

Optional Module and code	Assessment	Word limit / length	Assessment Weighting
Research Project Planning and Management MRDM 104X	Group workshops, discussion & reflective account	1 hour	Formative
	Written Report & Reflective Scenario	3,000 words	100%
Implementation and Improvement Science MCP7103x	Group Presentation	20 minutes	Formative
	Reflective Essay	2,500 words	100%
Negotiated Independent Learning MCP7104x	Presentation	20 minutes	Formative
	Reflective Account	2 components: an unrestricted record of CPD activity record 2,000 word reflective report	100%

### 1.3 Completion of a portfolio

The course will include a mandatory portfolio in which students must document on CANVAS all of their in-course assessment work, formative as well as summative, the feedback they received, their completed GCP certificate, plus a completed reflective pro-forma for each module.

In addition to the summative reflection assessments within the optional modules, students will also be prompted to specifically reflect during the programme, as part of their mandatory portfolio, on their learning experiences within each module.

This will be captured within their portfolio through a pro-forma per module, prompting students to reflect on a key piece of knowledge, cognitive skill, practical skill or transferable skill they have learned through the teaching and formative assessments, why and how they plan to take that learning forward.

The aims of these individualised narratives are not to be arduous, time-consuming or to be summative assessments, but as formative assessments to help students to form the habit of continuous self-reflection practice, to appreciate their own progress, assess their individual learning gaps, and therefore ultimately to build their self-confidence and personal effectiveness as a successful healthcare researcher.

## 2. TAUGHT MODULE ASSESSMENTS

### 2.1 Written assignments

2.1.1 Written assignments will be set for the following taught modules:

Research Methods	100%
Statistics / Data Analysis	100%
Critical Appraisal	100%
Research Project Planning and Management	100%
Implementation and improvement Science	100%
Negotiated Independent Learning	100%

2.1.2 Assessments, specific marking criteria and deadlines for submission for all assessments will be devised by Module Leaders in consultation with members of the course team. Communication to students will be via CANVAS, module handbooks, assessment guidelines and timetabled assignment briefing sessions.

2.1.3 Marking criteria for each assignment will be set by the Module Leader in consultation with the Course Co-Directors.

2.1.4 A word limit will be set for each assignment, and assessment will take place in line with the policy on word limits set out in the student handbook, course document and module handbooks.

2.1.5 The pass mark for all assessment components is **≥50%**. To achieve a pass each assignment **must** reflect within it the following Level 7 attributes:

- i. An outline knowledge of the scope and main areas of the subject(s) and its links with related subjects, and a more extensive knowledge of some of the key areas.
- ii. An understanding of the major theories, principles and concepts.
- iii. Familiarity with some of the routine materials, techniques and practices of the subject.
- iv. Skills for the gathering, basic analysis, and presentation of routine information, ideas, concepts and quantitative and qualitative data within a clearly defined context.

- v. Ability to use their knowledge of the subject and its techniques in a routine manner to evaluate and formulate a range of arguments and solutions to problems and issues of a routine nature;
  - communicate the results of their study and other work accurately and reliably, and within structured and coherent arguments;
  - undertake further learning within a structured and managed environment;
  - apply their subject-related and transferable skills in contexts where individuals may have some limited personal responsibility, but the criteria for decisions and the scope of the task are well defined.

All assignments (reports, essays, presentations, research proposals, examinations etc.) will be marked out of 100 and graded as below:

70-100	Excellent
65-69	Very Good
60-64	Good
50-59	Pass
40-49	Fail
0-39	Serious Fail (to include 0 marks for non-submission without an agreed extension)

Where a module has more than one component, each component must be passed with a minimum mark of  $\geq 50\%$ .

- 2.1.6 Assignments will be marked independently by two examiners who will then compare their marks and arrive at an agreed mark. If for any reason agreement cannot be reached, the work will be reviewed by a third marker and sent to the External Examiner for review.
- 2.1.7 Students will receive provisional (unratified) percentage marks during the year, which are then ratified at exam boards.
- 2.1.8 Students who receive a mark of  $\leq 49\%$  for an assignment at first attempt will fail that assignment and will be given a deadline for re-submission. Marks for re-submissions will be capped at 50%. An External Examiner will be asked to review both attempts before marks are confirmed by the Board of Examiners.
- 2.1.9 Students must submit all written assignments. Submissions must be a serious attempt in each case and the examiners reserve the right to reject trivial submissions.
- 2.1.10 Submission dates are mandatory and failure to submit by the instructed time on the submission date given will automatically result in a mark of 0 being awarded (unless an extension has been agreed). A piece of work is deemed to be late if submitted after the date and time specified. Students who persistently fail to submit work by the deadlines set may fail the Postgraduate Certificate and their registration may be terminated at the discretion of the Board of Examiners.

- 2.1.11 Submissions / assessments which breach confidentiality / anonymity will have the relevant penalty applied, as specified in the policy. '*A guide to confidentiality and anonymity for work submitted for assessment*'. Submissions will however be marked and returned with written feedback.
- 2.1.12 Assessments presented without reference to literature will automatically be awarded a fail (0%).
- 2.1.13 Students who fail a Module at second attempt will have their registration terminated.

## **2.2 Research Methods module (15 credits)**

- 2.2.1 This module will be assessed by a research proposal which will be marked using the scale given in 2.1.5 and using the same methods for marking and re-submission as outlined in 2.1.5-2.1.13.
- 2.2.2 Before unratified marks are issued to students, marks will be internally moderated by the Module Leader or member of the marking team to ensure parity with other postgraduate courses.

## **2.3 Examination – Statistics (15 credits)**

- 2.3.1 The module will be assessed by a one-hour ten minute unseen written examination held in the spring term. This will consist of one question made up of a data interpretation exercise with a number of constituent parts. An External Examiner will review the draft examination paper before the examination is held.
- 2.3.2 The paper will be marked out of 100 with the scale given in 2.1.5 above and using the same methods for marking and re-submission as outlined in 2.1.5-2.1.13.
- 2.3.3 Absence from the examination without agreement in advance from the Course Co-Directors will count as a failure at that attempt. Failure to provide any evidence required to support requests to defer an attempt (e.g. medical certificate covering the date of the examination) will also lead to failure at that attempt. Any subsequent attempt will be deemed to be a second attempt and marks will be capped at 50% (as 2.1.8).
- 2.3.4 Before unratified marks are issued to students, marks will be internally moderated by the Module Leader or member of the marking team to ensure parity with other postgraduate courses.

## **2.4 Compensation**

- 2.4.1 A pass is required in each of the four modules. There is no compensation allowed between the four taught module assessments if the candidate receives a fail mark after their second attempt in any of the taught modules. In this event, the

candidate will have their registration terminated and will not be able to attain the Postgraduate Certificate in Healthcare Research Skills and Methods.

### 3. AGGREGATION OF MARKS

- 3.1 Where there is more than one assessment within a module, students will be expected to pass each of the constituent elements. Where a student has required a second attempt, it is the individual assessment component that will be capped at 50%, not the module mark overall.
- 3.2 The marks for each element will be weighted as indicated in the module outline in 1.2 and aggregated to give a single percentage mark for that module. Decimal points will be rounded to the nearest whole number, 0.5 being rounded up.
- 3.3 At the end of the course, marks for individual modules will be added together and weighted according to their credit value to calculate a mean score. Calculations will be rounded to one decimal point e.g.0.5 being rounded up to 1.
- 3.4 Where credits have been transferred through Recognition of Prior Learning (see Appendix B - Programme Regulations for details), the final overall percentage mark is calculated on the basis of the marks awarded for the number of modules undertaken at SGUL.

Below is a worked example of where a proportion of credits have been transferred and credits gained from SGUL modules is less than 60 in total.

Module	Marks	Contribution to total	Credits
Research Methods	55	55	15
<b>Statistics (RPL)</b>	-	-	External 15
Critical Appraisal	60	60	15
Implementation and Improvement Science	68	68	15
<b>Total</b>			<b>60</b>

- 3.5 Students who fail any module at second attempt with a mark less than  $\leq 49\%$  will fail the Postgraduate Certificate.

### 4. DETERMINATION OF FINAL AWARD

- 4.1 Students who pass all four taught modules (60 credits) and submit their portfolio within the maximum registration period of 3 years, will be awarded a Postgraduate Certificate in Healthcare Research Skills and Methods at the Examiners' discretion.
- 4.2 Candidates who fail a module (allowing for permitted re-submissions) will not be awarded the Certificate but may be awarded credits for any modules that they have passed successfully.

## **5 EXTERNAL EXAMINER**

- 5.1 The role of the external examiner includes:
- i. reporting on the standards of student performance as compared to standards within other UK institutions;
  - ii. reporting on the fairness and reliability of the assessment process and moderating between examiners if there is a marking disparity.
- 5.2 The external examiner is a full member of the Board of Examiners and is required annually to submit a written report on this assessment process.
- 5.3 Nominations for external examiners are agreed by the Taught Postgraduate Courses Committee (TPCC) and approved by Senate.
- 5.4 External examiners are expected to serve for four years and should approve all draft examination papers before they are sent to print.
- 5.5 External examiners are entitled to see all work produced by participants on the course and to observe and comment on any other part of the assessment process. They may also meet students if they so wish.
- 5.6 The external examiner comments on and gives advice about curriculum content, balance and structure as well providing an overview of exams across different modules.
- 5.7 Students' work will be anonymised and marked by candidate number wherever practicable.
- 5.8 The role and duties of external examiners are described in more detail in the St George's Quality Manual and in the St George's General Regulations for Students and Programmes of Study.

## **6. BOARD OF EXAMINERS**

- 6.1 The membership of the Board of Examiners shall include the Course Co-Directors, Chair of the Board (who shall not be one of the Course Co-Directors) and at least three internal examiners (as defined in General Regulations 8.2.1.) deemed appropriate. At least one external examiner will be appointed each year as a member of the Board. Assessors may be invited to attend the Board where appropriate. The Director of Academic Administration (Postgraduate) shall act as secretary to the Board, taking responsibility for preparing agendas and minutes.
- 6.2 The Board of Examiners will meet at least once a year to:
- i. determine marks for individual assignments and modules;
  - ii. review students' eligibility for the award of the Postgraduate Certificate;
  - iii. review the assessment processes and make recommendations concerning improvements;

iv. make recommendations on changes to the Scheme of Assessment if required.

SGUL will be responsible for the final classification of the students in accordance with its academic regulations.

- 6.3 The Board of Examiners may determine that a participant's registration on the programme should be terminated for persistent failure to meet submission deadlines or for failure to make academic progress.
- 6.4 St George's Assessment Irregularity Policy will be applied throughout the course. The Board of Examiners will consider any cases brought to it for ratification.

## **7. REPORTING OF RESULTS**

- 7.1 Candidates will be given informal notice of percentages until the ratified percentages are confirmed at the Board of Examiners meeting.
- 7.2 Candidates will be informed of their percentages for each module after the Board of Examiners has confirmed those percentages.

Drafted by Course Co-Directors, Dr Kirstie Coxon & Prof Nidhi Sofat: March 2019.