

**The Institute of Cancer Research
University of London**

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Programme title:	MSc in Oncology
Final award (BSc, MA etc): (where additional exit points exist they should also be detailed here)	PGCert, PGDip, MSc
UCAS code:	N/A
Cohort(s) to which this programme specification is applicable:	From 2024/25 entry
Awarding institution/body:	University of London
Teaching institution:	The Institute of Cancer Research, University of London
Mode of study: Full-time/Part-time/Other	Part-time, day release
Criteria for admission to the programme:	The minimum entrance requirements for doctors wishing to register for the PG Cert / PG Dip / MSc Oncology are as follows: • Medical qualifications (graduate medical degree) • At least 2 years of postgraduate experience in clinical medicine • Current registration with the UK GMC Evidence of planning a career in clinical or medical oncology (evidence of NTN registration, or evidence of submittal of application to obtain such registration) is desirable, but not essential. For Physician Associates wishing to register for the PG Cert / PG Dip / MSc Oncology: • PG Diploma in Physician Associate Studies (or equivalent), and a degree passed with First Class or Upper Second Class honours • Or an MSc in Physician Associate Studies (or equivalent) • Working as a Physician Associate in an oncology environment • Current registration on the Physician Associate Managed Voluntary Register (PAMVR) All non-native English speakers wishing to register should have a standard of English equivalent to IELTS 7.0 (see the ICR Admissions Policy and Procedure for further guidance)

Length of the programme:	PGCert: 1 year of study (part-time) PGDip: 2 years of study (part-time) MSc: 3 years of study (part-time)
<u>Level on Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)</u>	Level 7 (Masters)
Brief outline of the structure of the programme and its assessment methods:	The programme consists of: <u>Part A (1 year)</u> • Cell and Molecular Biology of Cancer – 20 credits • Cancer Therapies – 30 credits • Statistics for the Oncologist – 10 credits <u>Part B (1 year)</u> • Research Methods – 10 credits • Cancer Treatments 1 – 20 credits • Cancer Treatments 2 – 20 credits • Cancer in Context – 10 credits Parts A and B are assessed by single best answer papers and/or an essay. <u>Part C (1 year)</u> Dissertation/Thesis of 10,000 words (60 credits).
Professional body accreditation:	N/A

EDUCATIONAL AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME:

The programme is a modular taught postgraduate course for specialist postgraduate students focused on the fields of Clinical and Medical Oncology. The overall aim is to encourage proactive problem solving approaches and a reflective approach to medical or clinical oncology practice, producing graduates who are well equipped with the highly refined intellectual, scientific and clinical skills necessary for leadership careers in twenty-first century Oncology.

The programme is designed and structured for highly specialised, part-time, day release students, and adopts a modular, credit accumulation model that is precisely attuned to their specific needs. The individual modules are each designed to provide detailed and distinct skills, together with advanced knowledge in a particular aspect of Oncology at Master's level. Together, these lead to a coherent part time programme with possible exit points at Postgraduate Certificate and Diploma level (based on 60 credits or 120 credits of designated taught modules). An additional 60 credit dissertation is required for the MSc award (180 credits total).

The curriculum has also been designed to equip students in the field of Clinical Oncology to sit the Part 1 and Part 2 examinations for Fellowship of the Royal College of Radiologists (FRCR). For medical oncologists, this programme meets the identified need for a theoretical basis to their structured training and will encompass the knowledge required for the medical oncology 'exit' examinations. The Research Methods module provides core competences for NIHR Academic Clinical Fellows, as recommended by the Department of Health 2008.

PROGRAMME OUTCOMES:

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas:

Knowledge and understanding
- to provide a thorough <u>theoretical understanding</u> of cancer together with an in-depth and systematic understanding of current cancer treatments and cancer research, consistent with the volume of Level 7 credits studied; - to enable the <u>application of theoretical knowledge</u> in the clinical environment, informing working practice and considering work-based experience in an academic context, consistent with the volume of Level 7 credits studied;
Intellectual skills
to expand and develop <u>advanced skills of critical awareness</u>, advanced reasoning, analysis and evaluation, enabling informed judgements to be made on complex scientific and clinical issues, consistent with the volume of Level 7 credits studied;
Practical skills
to expand and develop <u>advanced skills in decision-making</u> informed by the interaction between theoretical knowledge and clinical practice, consistent with the volume of Level 7 credits studied;
Transferable skills

- to expand and develop advanced skills in communication for the management and care of cancer patients, consistent with the volume of Level 7 credits studied; and
- to deliver the relevant curriculum and professional education at postgraduate level to enable students in the field of Clinical Oncology to sit the examinations for Fellowship of the Royal College of Radiologists.

MSc only:

- to develop and demonstrate advanced skills in research methodologies and techniques through undertaking a research-based dissertation or equivalent in a clinical setting;
- to develop and demonstrate originality in the exploration of the issues and constraints of undertaking research in a clinical setting, thus developing the ability to engage more effectively in future research activity within the student's organisation; and
- to develop and demonstrate the qualities and transferable skills necessary to contribute towards raising standards in the chosen specialty through research.

Teaching delivery

The programme is delivered on a part-time, day release basis with students attending one day per week. In each of Parts A and B, the programme is taught over a period of approx. 36 weeks, with an additional reading week in the winter or in the spring. Each Part comprises 600 notional learning hours, including approx. 180 contact hours, with the balance comprising private study plus assessment time. Teaching is delivered through a series of lectures, workshops and group-based activities.

Assessment

A variety of assessment methods are used to test the student's learning including:

- Essays and assignments, including case studies, critical reviews, reflective diaries, audits, and protocol development discussions.
- Submission of a 10,000 word dissertation/thesis for the full MSc
- Online single best answer questionnaires (which students are required to take and pass in order to be eligible for credits)

Career relevance

On graduation, completion of the MSc course will have enabled students to develop the specialised theoretical and clinical skills to enable them to pursue excellence in their oncological practice. The programme will develop students' careers by equipping them with a high level understanding of the theory and practice of advanced cancer treatment, and of the science of cancer research – all to the benefit of cancer patients. The programme will facilitate students in preparing for the professional oncology examinations. A benefit of following the programme to full MSc level is that demonstrating completion of a research project is an important advantage when applying for funding for an MD or PhD research project. Those students not pursuing a higher research degree will benefit from the competitive advantage of an MSc when applying for competitive site specialty or specific geographic Consultant posts.

More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the [Student Handbook and Module Guides](#). General

information regarding assessment, awards and classifications can be found in the ICR Academic Regulations .	
Programme Director(s) Name(s):	Professor Robert Huddart Professor David Bloomfield Professor Rema Jyothirmayi
Date of Production*:	December 2005
Date of Review:	December 2024
Date approved by Taught Courses Committee:	December 2024

* Note: this should be date the programme specification was first created. The dates of review and approval by TCC should be the most recent dates.