

## Programme Specification

Awarding Body/Institution	University of London
Teaching Institution	Queen Mary, University of London
Name of Final Award and Programme Title	Postgraduate Diploma / MSc Endocrinology and Diabetes
Name of Interim Award(s)	PGCert/PGDip
Duration of Study / Period of Registration	PgDip - 4 semesters, MSc - 2 years
QM Programme Code / UCAS Code(s)	A3D4/AS34
QAA Benchmark Group	
FHEQ Level of Award	Level 7
Programme Accredited by	University of London
Date Programme Specification Approved	21st April 2016 (For Sept 2016 start)
Responsible School / Institute	William Harvey Research Institute

Schools which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme

Blizard Institute of Cell and Molecular Science

Institution(s) other than Queen Mary that will provide some teaching for the programme

### Programme Outline

The Postgraduate Diploma in Endocrinology and Diabetes is designed both as a complete curriculum in Endocrinology and Diabetes for new entrants into these fields and as an update and extension for those already in it. The programme is delivered entirely by distance learning, on a part-time basis, enabling students to continue working at their home institutions without interruption. The course provides clinicians with a rigorous education in the theoretical and clinically-applied aspects of their discipline.

All students commence with the taught course which lasts for 4 semesters. Students who wish to further their knowledge and who are eligible may proceed to MSc which in addition to the above taught elements, includes an independent research project or clinical cases project leading to a dissertation. This project is carried out at the home institution (with the appropriate checks and agreements); co-supervised from QMUL by distance learning and assessed by final dissertation.

Thus there are two potential routes of entry to the programme: students may enrol onto PgDip and transfer programme after completion of taught elements and the submission of an acceptable and suitable project. Alternatively students may enrol onto MSc directly but may not progress to the project without passing the hurdles of completion of taught elements and the

submission of an acceptable and suitable project in the same way as their colleagues wishing to progress from PgDip.

## Aims of the Programme

### Postgraduate Diploma

The postgraduate diploma (distance learning) in Endocrinology and Diabetes is designed both as a complete curriculum in Endocrinology and Diabetes for new entrants into these fields and as an update and extension for those already in it. The course provides clinicians with theoretical and clinically applied aspects of their discipline.

Aims of the course include:

- To enhance awareness of the basic sciences and research techniques underpinning endocrinology and diabetes.
- To develop understanding of the clinical sciences relevant to specialist clinical practice in endocrinology and diabetes.
- To develop knowledge of common and important disorders in endocrinology and diabetes at a level appropriate to underpin clinical experience and support independent practice.
- To develop the problem-solving skills which will enable independent practice as a specialist.
- To develop professional competencies of medical graduates in allied areas to understand the pathophysiology, investigation and management of endocrine disorders
- To develop related skills such as correct use of statistics, use of databases, literature searches, reviewing evidence, critical appraisal of scientific literature, writing papers and articles.

### MSc

The Masters course in Endocrinology and Diabetes shares the aims and objectives of the Postgraduate Diploma and in addition aims to:

- To further develop research skills such as literature searches, reviewing evidence, critical appraisal of scientific literature, use of databases, writing papers and articles and correct application of statistics.
- Enable the student to focus on a piece of original research – this may be prospective and involve basic science or clinical skills and techniques or may focus on a detailed review of an area within the curriculum.

## What Will You Be Expected to Achieve?

By the completion of the course, the student will be able to:

- Demonstrate their achievement of the specific learning outcomes detailed in each of the modules of the course which relate to each of the endocrine systems of the body.
- Describe the basic sciences and research techniques underpinning the practice of clinical endocrinology and diabetes.
- Search and interpret the literature to apply results from the relevant clinical sciences to the management of the endocrine patient.
- Review evidence, apply the correct use of statistics and critically appraise the scientific literature to draw conclusions about endocrine physiology, pathology and clinical care
- Demonstrate a broad knowledge of common and important disorders in endocrinology and diabetes at a level appropriate to underpin clinical experience and support independent practice.
- Demonstrate knowledge of, and skills in and appropriate attitudes towards the diagnosis, investigation and management of patients with disorders of the hypothalamus and pituitary, thyroid, parathyroids, bone metabolism, reproductive endocrinology, growth and development, energy balance, the adrenal glands and endocrine-related cancers.
- Utilise problem-solving skills in the clinical and research settings which will enable independent practice as a specialists.

Many students will use this distance-learning course to undertake a Postgraduate Diploma (8 modules or 120 credits) in endocrinology and diabetes mellitus.

Students wishing to obtain a full MSc (12 modules, 180 credits) will, in addition, complete an independent research project. This could be either laboratory or clinically-based, or in certain circumstances (for example the performance of a meta-analysis of existing trial evidence), library-based, or may comprise clinical case evaluation. Before undertaking such a project, the student must be able to demonstrate that their home institution can host the 4-module / 60 credit project and that a suitable on-site supervisor can be identified who is willing to act in this capacity. The student must be able to demonstrate by the approval of the project supervisor and / or lab supervisor that the work done was that of the student. The project proposal together with the above aspects must be approved by the course organiser or designated faculty member / supervisor. The

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approval process will include the submission of a 400-word project outline covering background, aims and methods, together with the CV and letter of support from the on-site supervisor, and the signed agreement of the host institution that the relevant facilities are available. The student will agree to provide regular emailed updates of the project progress to the designated QMUL faculty member / supervisor.

We anticipate that most students are clinicians completing higher medical training in this field in the UK or overseas. For these students the modules of the taught course will complement the clinical training they receive at their host institution.

### Academic Content:

A 1	You will be able to demonstrate their achievement of the specific learning outcomes detailed in each of the modules of the course which relate to each of the endocrine systems of the body.
A 2	You will be able to describe the basic sciences and research techniques underpinning the practice of clinical endocrinology and diabetes.
A 3	You will search and interpret the literature to apply results from the relevant clinical sciences to the management of the endocrine patient.
A 4	You will review evidence, apply the correct use of statistics and critically appraise the scientific literature to draw conclusions about endocrine physiology, pathology and clinical care

### Disciplinary Skills - able to:

B 1	You will demonstrate a broad knowledge of common and important disorders in endocrinology and diabetes at a level appropriate to underpin clinical experience and support independent practice.
B 2	You will demonstrate knowledge of, and skills in and appropriate attitudes towards the diagnosis, investigation and management of patients with disorders of the hypothalamus and pituitary, thyroid, parathyroids, bone metabolism, reproductive endocrinology, growth and development, energy balance, the adrenal glands and endocrine-related cancers.

### Attributes:

C 1	You will utilise problem-solving skills in the clinical and research settings which will enable independent practice as a specialists.
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## How Will You Learn?

### Teaching and Learning strategy

The taught course will be delivered online via the SMD e-learning platform.

- Overall course information, including student handbook and timetables, will be distributed through the learning platform
- Induction material and a welcome chatroom session and / or online discussion thread will be set up at the start of the first term between the distance learning students and the Programme Director.
- A variety of teaching strategies will be employed, most of which will be administered via the learning platform
- Each module is presented on-line as:
  - Summary of the module
  - Aims and Objectives
  - Week-by-week Module Plan
  - Plan for assessment
- Additional one-to-one tutorials with individual students will be arranged if required

• Library facilities. All students registered on the course will have access to the college on-line library facilities. This gives access to a large number of relevant journals. Students will have access to other academic literature and journals via an ATHENS log-on in the same way as on-site students.

The materials for each week of the module will be released together along with a list of materials and key papers. The topics for the module-week outlined in the syllabus will be delivered using a variety of methods to include:

- 1) Lectures – screen capture with audio soundtrack. These lectures will be delivered by members of the course faculty with occasional 'guest lectures' for selected topics. Both types of lecture will be captured and presented in the same way.
- 2) Podcasts. Some of the taught material will be delivered by podcast. In addition some of the exercises (for example guided reading, critical appraisal, guidelines review) may be introduced by podcast together with instructions for the exercise. This material will be presented in audio files (MP3 format) with, where relevant, linked paper-based reading material.
- 3) Lecture notes and document reading material (word documents and PDF.) Topics will also be covered in the form of guided reading – with a reading list or short series of scientific papers to read followed by questions or exercises.
- 4) Online Seminars / Tutorials. Some topics will be covered in real-time online seminars, delivered by Skype (or similar technology). These will be based around a topic or around a series of relevant articles from scientific journals. The organisation of such synchronous support by voice / video seminars will depend on the proportion and location of overseas students in order to circumvent any difficulties posed by differences in time zones.
- 5) Each week of the module will contain clinical case presentations relevant to the topic together with areas for discussion that arise from the cases. The discussion takes place asynchronously via the discussion board, between students and to include comments from the tutor / moderator.
- 6) Modules will contain an up-to-date review of 'HOT topics' in the subject area
- 7) An 'ask the expert' session in which students submit questions during the module via the message board. A discussion of these in interview format with a relevant 'expert' will be delivered in the form of a podcast in the final week of the module.
- 8) Demonstration video. Where specific types of clinical examination or testing are to be demonstrated, delivery will be in the form of short training videos (MP4 format).
- 9) Online reading lists, linked where possible, to the journals in which the papers appear.

## How Will You Be Assessed?

Assessment strategy

Formative Assessment:

Postgraduate Diploma

Informal verbal feedback will be possible during online tutorials which will for part of the time follow a question-and-answer or quiz format. Students will be given feedback about their demonstration of achievement of some of the learning objectives for the module.

Formative assessment will be given in the form of short quizzes with online feedback at the end of each week, based on the learning activities completed that week.

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Formative assessment will be given via feedback on the regular emailed updates on project progress from the student together with planned online update meetings between student and designated course tutor who can also discuss any challenges faced in execution of the project.

Summative Assessment:

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Coursework: There will be an assessment task for each module to be completed during the progress of the module and submitted at the end of the module. Assessment techniques will include structured answers, data analysis tasks and longer essay questions (the proportions of each may differ from module to module.) The end of module task will account for 50% of the marks for that module. Online feedback for this assessment will be provided.

There will be an end-of-course summative assessment after completion of eight modules. The exam will assess content from each of the modules equally and the marks for the exam will be evenly distributed across the modules taught. The marks from the questions from any individual module will account for 50% of the marks for that module. The assessment format will comprise best single answer and best of five questions, short answers and longer essay questions. Material will include case review, data interpretation and questions for discussion.

### MSc

The first year of the MSc comprises the taught course which is assessed as described above.

The second year of the MSc comprises the remaining taught modules followed by an independent research project which may take the form of research or clinical cases analysis

The project will be assessed by written dissertation

## How is the Programme Structured?

Please specify the full time and part time programme diets (if appropriate).

All students commence with the taught course over 4 semesters. Students who wish to further their knowledge and who are eligible may proceed to MSc which in addition to the above taught elements, includes an independent research project or clinical cases project leading to a dissertation. This project is carried out at the home institution (with the appropriate checks and agreements); co-supervised from QMUL by distance learning. Thus there are two potential routes of entry to the programme: students may enrol onto PgDip and transfer programme after completion of taught elements and the submission of an acceptable and suitable project. Alternatively students may enrol onto MSc directly but may not progress to the project without passing the hurdles of completion of taught elements and the submission of an acceptable and suitable project. The Postgraduate Diploma comprises a taught course of 8 modules. These will be covered in 2 modules per semester over 4 semesters – with a duration of 16 months total study.

The modules from the taught course are studied in order of presentation, commencing with a 'generic skills and core knowledge' module which provides a foundation on which the subsequent modules build. In total there are 7 modules which are core and then one module (the seventh) with 2 alternative options as the course seeks to ensure comprehensive coverage of the 'Joint Royal Colleges of Physicians Training Board' (JRCPTB) syllabus for Endocrinology and Diabetes <http://www.jrcptb.org.uk/Specialty/Pages/EndocrinologyAndDiabetesMellitus.aspx> and also to provide appropriate syllabus coverage for clinicians training in metabolic medicine and clinical chemistry. We do not anticipate a demand for study of stand-alone modules at this stage. Therefore the 90 credits undertaken in year one are studied by all students. In year two students are required to study WHR7008 and select either WHR7007 or 7061.

The MSc course comprises the taught course described above, with a further component afterwards during the second year of study. This will involve a 4-module / 60 credit independent research project. This project may be either laboratory or clinically-based, or in certain circumstances, library-based. The hypothesis and study design are proposed by the student and are carried out in the student's home institution. Before undertaking such a project, the student must be able to demonstrate that their home institution can host the 4-module / 60 credit project and that a suitable on-site supervisor can be identified who is willing to act in this capacity. The student must be able to demonstrate by the approval of the project supervisor and / or lab supervisor that the work done was that of the student.

Academic Year of Study PT - Year 1

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Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester
Generic skills and core knowledge	WHR7001	15	7	Compulsory	1	Semester 1
Hypothalamus and Pituitary	WHR7002	15	7	Compulsory	1	Semester 1
Thyroid, Parathyroids and Bone	WHR7003	15	7	Compulsory	1	Semester 2
Pregnancy, Reproductive and Paediatric Endocrinology	WHR7004	15	7	Compulsory	1	Semester 2
Metabolism, Energy Balance and Lipids	WHR7005	15	7	Compulsory	1	Semester 3
Adrenal cortex and Medulla	WHR7006	15	7	Compulsory	1	Semester 3

Academic Year of Study PT - Year 2

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester
Genetics, Oncology and Neuroendocrine Tumours	WHR7007	15	7	Elective	2	Semester 1
Clinical Chemistry	WHR7061	15	7	Elective	2	Semester 1
Diabetes Mellitus	WHR7008	15	7	Compulsory	2	Semester 1
Independent Research Project	WHR7009	60	7	Elective	2	Semester 2 & 3
Clinical Cases	WHR7062	60	7	Elective	2	Semester 2 & 3

### What Are the Entry Requirements?

Qualification requirements for the course are MB BS or basic medical degree from universities recognised by the University of London.  
 Candidates should generally have worked for one year after registration (two-three years post qualification).  
 Applicants may be interviewed prior to acceptance and course entry may be competitive.  
 Students must have access to a suitable computer and broadband access to the internet. Availability of minimum system specifications for using the online learning platform required.  
 Non-native speakers must achieve IELTS 7.0; TOEFL paper 610, internet 100; Warwick English Language Test BBB or equivalent and provide certification of this.  
 Students must be able to sit examinations at a British Council Centre, or a similar approved centre, under invigilation or be able to attend examinations in the UK.

## How Do We Listen and Act on Your Feedback?

The Staff-Student Liaison Committee provides a formal means of communication and discussion between Schools and its students. The committee consists of student representatives from each year in the school/institute together with appropriate representation from staff within the school/institute. It is designed to respond to the needs of students, as well as act as a forum for discussing programme and module developments. Staff-Student Liaison Committees meet regularly throughout the year.

Each school operates a Learning and Teaching Committee, or equivalent, which advises the School/Institute Director of Taught Programmes on all matters relating to the delivery of taught programmes at school level including monitoring the application of relevant QM policies and reviewing all proposals for module and programme approval and amendment before submission to Taught Programmes Board. Student views are incorporated in this Committee's work in a number of ways, such as through student membership, or consideration of student surveys.

All schools operate an Annual Programme Review of their taught undergraduate and postgraduate provision. The process is normally organised at a School-level basis with the Head of School, or equivalent, responsible for the completion of the school's Annual Programme Reviews. Schools/institutes are required to produce a separate Annual Programme Review for undergraduate programmes and for postgraduate taught programmes using the relevant Undergraduate or Postgraduate Annual Programme Review pro-forma. Students' views are considered in this process through analysis of the NSS and module evaluations.

## Academic Support

### Induction

- Induction material and a welcome chatroom session will be set up at the start of the first term between the distance learning students and the Programme Director.
- Mechanisms for student support (academic, technical, administrative and pastoral) are all in place and information about this will be available online as part of the induction materials

### Personal Tutor arrangements

- Taking the advice of other Programme Directors of programmes with a large Distance Learning Component, the intake for the first year of the course will be limited. This will enable allocation of the Programme Organiser as the personal tutor to all of the students. This will enable a high level of consistency of student experience and a commitment to personal contact. Personal tutor allocations and arrangement will be revised appropriately as the course grows with time.

### Feedback

- Informal feedback from students will be sought throughout the course, both in discussion, via email and via the message-board system.
- Formal feedback from students will be sought at the end of each module in the form of a questionnaire.
- Feedback will be sought about a number of areas including:
  - i. course content
  - ii. course delivery
  - iii. technical aspects of accessing the learning experiences
  - iv. quality of associated materials
- This feedback will be used to make alterations to the forthcoming modules as well as to the course overall for the following year.
- More detailed formal feedback about course structure will be sought at the end of each term and at the end of the year.

### Monitoring

The programme will be managed by a Programme Management Committee (PMC) comprising the Programme coordinator, Head of Department, Institute Manager and programme administrator. The PMC will meet termly.

### Programme Review

All activities will be monitored by the PMC to maintain the quality of the course. In addition to ongoing review, content and delivery will be reviewed formally annually and together with outcomes of student assessment and student feedback and changes made to the programme accordingly.

## Programme-specific Rules and Facts

The taught component must be taken and passed before a student progresses to the dissertation or project. Where this is the case, progression shall be considered and agreed by the Subject Examination Board.

Students must:

- i. take modules to the value of 120 credits; and,
- ii. pass modules to the value of at least 90 credits; and,
- iii. achieve an average mark of at least 50.0 across all taught modules; and,
- iv. achieve module marks of at least 40.0 in all modules.

## Specific Support for Disabled Students

Queen Mary has a central Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS) that offers support for all students with disabilities, specific learning difficulties and mental health issues. The DDS supports all Queen Mary students: full-time, part-time, undergraduate, postgraduate, UK and international at all campuses and all sites.

Students can access advice, guidance and support in the following areas:

- Finding out if you have a specific learning difficulty like dyslexia
- Applying for funding through the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)
- Arranging DSA assessments of need
- Special arrangements in examinations
- Accessing loaned equipment (e.g. digital recorders)
- Specialist one-to-one "study skills" tuition
- Ensuring access to course materials in alternative formats (e.g. Braille)
- Providing educational support workers (e.g. note-takers, readers, library assistants)
- Mentoring support for students with mental health issues and conditions on the autistic spectrum.

## Links With Employers, Placement Opportunities and Transferable Skills

There are no formal links with employers. However, there are several ways in which such a qualification might inform employers about graduates' qualities and skills:

- An opportunity for rigorous endocrine teaching with a structured syllabus is currently lacking in the UK, and may be welcomed by employers as evidence of a breadth of understanding of the subject. In addition it is planned that the course will cover the curriculum in Endocrinology and Diabetes outlined in the 'Joint Royal College of Physicians Training Board' (JRCPTB). This should therefore help the performance of students in the knowledge-based assessment set by the Royal College of Physicians. This assessment forms part of the criteria for completion of a Certificate of Completion of Training in the UK for all trainees commencing in 2007 and beyond – 2009 saw this examination administered for the first time and the pass rates were noted to be unexpectedly low.
- Some more junior students (ST level) may wish to use this type of qualification to demonstrate their commitment to the specialty and provide an advantage when applying for specialist training rotations. This is applicable when the specialty is highly oversubscribed or for trainees wishing to secure a competitive post.
- Achievement of the specialty training certificate is also desirable for overseas students to enhance their training and job opportunities. Overseas students formed the majority of those taking the RCP exam and this group also had a significantly lower pass rate than home students. Particularly for overseas candidates, exposure to the clinical material covered by the curriculum may be limited and an endocrinology course may be both valuable in itself as a qualification, as well as a useful way of working through the exam syllabus.
- For student who complete the full MSc, the completion of the independent research project may provide an entry point and pathway into higher research training.

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## Programme Specification Approval

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Programme Title: MSc in Endocrinology and Diabetes

**Person completing Programme Specification**

Dr Maralyn Druce

**Person responsible for management of programme**

Dr Maralyn Druce

**Date Programme Specification produced/amended  
by School Learning and Teaching Committee**

21st April 2016

**Date Programme Specification approved by  
Taught Programmes Board**

21st April 2016 (For Sept 2016 start)