



**UNIVERSITY OF
PLYMOUTH**

Faculty of Health

Peninsula Medical School

Programme Specification

MSc Clinical Sciences (Specialism) Stage 3 ONLY

Part Time

September 2020

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- 1. MSc Clinical Sciences (Specialism)**
 - MSc Clinical Sciences (Acute Medicine)
 - MSc Clinical Sciences (Cardiology)
 - MSc Clinical Sciences (Diabetes)
 - MSc Clinical Sciences (Dermatology)
 - MSc Clinical Sciences (ENT)
 - MSc Clinical Sciences (Family Medicine)
 - MSc Clinical Sciences (Geriatrics)
 - MSc Clinical Sciences (Minor Surgery)
 - MSc Clinical Sciences (Musculoskeletal Medicine)
 - MSc Clinical Sciences (Ophthalmology)
 - MSc Clinical Sciences (Urology)

Intermediate award title(s)

N/A

UCAS code N/A

JACS code A900

- 2. Awarding Institution:** University of Plymouth

Teaching institution(s): University of Plymouth

- 3. Accrediting body(ies)**

Not applicable

- 4. Distinctive Features of the Programme and the Student Experience**

The MSc Clinical Sciences (Specialism) programme is a Stage 3 only programme that has primarily been developed to provide a natural progression route for postgraduate students from a series of medical postgraduate diplomas delivered by one of our external partners (Rila Institute of Health Sciences) <https://rila.co/healthcare-professionals/postgraduate-courses/> and <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/schools/rila-institute-of-health-sciences>. However, the programme is also open to applications from students who have successfully completed a postgraduate diploma in clinical

studies (or similar) from other institutions (APCL 120 credits), and meet the required entry standards.

You will register for the MSc Clinical Sciences generic programme but will exit with a named pathway in your clinical specialism

Distinctive Features:

1. An opportunity to undertake a Clinical Specialism Project of relevance to your clinical interests with the support of an academic supervisor and clinical supervisor in clinical practice
2. An opportunity to explore the changing nature of modern healthcare and the requirement for continued evaluation and improvement of current clinical practice in your chosen specialism
3. Your project will be undertaken in the workplace and will enable you to build on your evidence based practice knowledge and skills developed earlier in your studies. You will develop critical evaluation and synthesis skills in relation to a particular clinical specialism, and an opportunity to contribute to service development and improvement within your clinical specialism
4. The Project Development module will ensure that you are well prepared for the design, development and implementation of a coherent project relevant to your clinical specialism
5. Distance learning delivery will be provided by experienced academic supervisors providing high quality academic support and regular formative feedback via a dedicated online platform

Student Experience

The programme will be delivered using a distance learning approach with online student/staff discussion forum and individual project work with both academic and clinical supervisory support. Throughout the programme, your learning will be supported by online systems, which will be accessible anywhere with internet access. The Medical School has dedicated information technology and e-learning teams to source and produce online resources, including access to the latest journals. The web-based 'Moodle' Digital Learning Environment (DLE) plays a vital role in supporting your teaching and learning and is the central hub for all online resources for the programme.

A range of teaching approaches will be used across the programme with learning in small groups to encourage the exchange of information and ideas and to enable students to learn from and with colleagues from a variety of clinical backgrounds. You will be allocated a 'Learning Set' in the Project Module module and will be required to engage in online discussions and reflections throughout the programme.

Throughout the programme you will be supported by the Programme and Module Leads and will be provided with a personal tutor in line with the University of Plymouth policy on personal tutoring. The personal tutor will act as a sustained and first point of reference for you on personal, domestic and/or academic matters including signposting to student support services available via the University. In addition, you will be allocated an academic supervisor who will support you in the completion of your clinical specialism project. You will also be linked up with a clinical supervisor who will provide guidance in relation to the clinical specialism/topic area; normally this person would be your clinical supervisor in the workplace. It is **your responsibility**, with guidance and support from the programme team, to identify an appropriate clinical supervisor in the workplace.

Learning resources and facilities for both individual and group electronic communications between students and between students and tutors are available through the Digital Learning Environment. You will be given training on the use of the Digital Learning Environment through an online programme induction module. On-line tutorials will also be available to you.

The University of Plymouth provides a wide range of student support services including:

1. Learning Development
2. Disability Services
3. English Language Centre
4. Careers and Employability
5. Student Counselling Services
6. Health and Wellbeing
7. Student Union
8. International Student Advisory Service
9. Faith and Spiritual

Student Feedback

In addition to a continuous feedback dialogue that takes place throughout the course, as a student on the MSc Clinical Sciences programme, you will receive both formative and summative feedback.

Continuous feedback dialogue is an integral part of the programme. Discussions online and in one-to-one online tutorials will provide you with feedback on your project ideas.

Peer feedback will be also be an essential part of the programme, as it provides an opportunity for you to develop effective feedback language and techniques which you can then use within your own practice.

Formative feedback will be given by academic tutors throughout the programme. 'Feed-in' and 'feed-forward' (Brown, 2007)¹ will be used to set up assignment tasks and ensure that students have a clear brief and time to discuss their ideas at a very early stage. All assignments have a formative deadline, thus enabling tutors to give detailed individualised feedback which feeds into the summative piece of work. All feedback is provided electronically; you will also be offered a telephone/skype/electronic tutorial for each module.

Summative feedback is given on the same form as the formative feedback thus providing a clear picture of progress and the rationale for the grade awarded. Summative feedback is normally provided within 20 working days of the assignment deadline.

5. Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Group(s)

This programme has been developed with reference to the relevant policies and procedures related to University of Plymouth and external agencies such as the Quality Assurance Agency and the Higher Education Academy.

The University of Plymouth is committed to providing equality for all irrespective of age, disability, ethnicity (including race, colour and nationality), gender, gender reassignment, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity and will work to ensure that all students, employees and visitors, as well as those who seek to apply to work or study at the University, are treated fairly and are not subjected to discrimination by the University on any of these grounds (University Equality and Diversity Policy).

The programme will operate within the University of Plymouth Academic Regulations.

6. Programme Structure

¹ Brown, S. (2007) 'Feedback and Feed-Forward', Centre for Bioscience Bulletin, 22 (Autumn 2007)

Note: This is a Stage 3 only progression route for students who have successfully completed either i) a Postgraduate Diploma in a clinical specialism through Rila or ii) a Postgraduate Diploma in clinical studies (or similar) from another institution

The award of the MSc Clinical Sciences (Specialism) will be on the basis of successful completion of 120 M-level credits from a relevant Postgraduate Diploma in a clinical specialism, plus 60 credits from MSc Clinical Sciences Programme (Stage 3) from the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry.

Stage	Mode of Study	Level	Credits	Cumulative Credits	Award
*Stage 1	P/T	7	60	60	PgCert
*Stage 2	P/T	7	60	120	PgDip
Stage 3	P/T	7	60	180	Masters

* Stage 1 & 2 are undertaken with Rila Institute of Health Sciences
<https://rila.co/healthcare-professionals/postgraduate-courses/>

Short Module Descriptors – Stage 3

<p>CST710 Project Development</p> <p>Using a distance learning approach, the module introduces students to the changing nature of modern healthcare and the requirement for continued evaluation and improvement of current clinical practice. The application of contemporary evidence to elicit innovation and improvement is explored. The module examines project design and development and the process involved in developing a coherent project proposal.</p> <p>20 credits</p>	<p>CST711 Clinical Specialism Project</p> <p>This module enables students to design and implement a project proposal aimed at evaluation and improvement of an aspect of current clinical practice within their area of clinical specialism. Students will design and undertake the project and evaluate and disseminate their findings through the production of a final project report.</p> <p>40 credits</p>
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Please note that successful completion of CST710 Project Design is a pre-requisite to undertaking the module CST711 Clinical Specialism Project.

7. Programme Aims

The MSc Clinical Sciences (Specialism) programme (Stage 3 ONLY) aims:

1. To enhance your skills of critical appraisal, analysis and synthesis of evidence

2. To provide an opportunity for students to contribute to service development, improvement and innovation in a clinical area thereby enhancing patient care
3. To develop transferable skills for lifelong learning in a career as a healthcare professional

8. Programme Intended Learning Outcomes

This section outlines the knowledge and skills that are developed through completion of the MSc Clinical Sciences (Specialism) programme (Stage 3 only). Since this is a Stage 3 only programme, the outcomes are identified accordingly, with the assumption that both postgraduate certificate (Stage 1) and postgraduate diploma (Stage 2) level outcomes have been successfully achieved by students progressing to the MSc (Stage 3).

8.1. Knowledge and understanding

On successful completion you will have developed:

- 1) Systematic understanding and critical awareness of current understanding of an area of clinical specialism and its relationship with other disciplines
- 2) A critical understanding of current theoretical and methodological approaches in an area of clinical specialism
- 3) A comprehensive understanding of contemporary evidence relating to your scope of clinical and professional practice

8.2. Cognitive and intellectual skills

On successful completion you will have developed:

- 1) Critical analysis and evaluation skills required to evaluate complex, incomplete or contradictory evidence and implement appropriate approaches to ensure enhancement in your area of clinical practice
- 2) Problem solving, research and enquiry skills required to design and undertake substantial investigations to address significant areas of theory and practice
- 3) Synthesis and creativity with an ability to apply complex knowledge in unfamiliar contexts and to synthesise ideas and information in innovative ways in order to generate transformative solutions

8.3. Key and transferable skills

On successful completion you will have developed the ability to:

- 1) Manage and deal with complexity both systematically and creatively to evaluate and enhance clinical practice
- 2) Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, managing themselves and planning and implementing tasks in a professional manner
- 3) Work effectively and proactively as a member of a clinical team

8.4. Employment related skills

On successful completion you will have developed:

- 1) Ability to make difficult decisions in complex and unpredictable situations
- 2) Independent learning ability required for continuing professional development
- 3) Initiative and personal responsibility to meet all expectations of employers, professional bodies and regulators

8.5. Practical skills

On successful completion you will have developed:

- 1) Analysis, appraisal and synthesis skills related to evidence, evaluation and improvement
- 2) Ability to reflect on professional practice to improve your own professional development and practice
- 3) Effectively communicate current understanding and independent findings related to an area of clinical specialism

9. Admissions Criteria, including APCL, APEL and DS arrangements

The MSc Clinical Sciences programme has been designed primarily to provide progression opportunities for a series of postgraduate programmes in clinical specialisms that are provided by one of our partner institutions (Rila Institute of Health Sciences, London) <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/schools/rila-institute-of-health-sciences>. Rila are a leading health teaching organisation based in London that has been offering a range of postgraduate medical training programmes for over 20 years. Students who have completed 120 M-level credits on a Postgraduate Diploma programme in one of the clinical specialisms with Rila will be eligible to APCL to the MSc stage of the programme (via an Articulation Agreement) as long as they satisfy the standard progression route criteria as outlined in the programme documentation. Applicants may be required to undertake an interview as part of the selection and

admissions process and applicants and if successful would be provided with a place on a first come first served basis.

The MSc Clinical Sciences (Specialism) programme is a Stage 3 progression route for students who have successfully completed any one of the following postgraduate diploma programmes from Rila Institute of Health Sciences:

- Postgraduate Diploma Acute Medicine
- Postgraduate Diploma Cardiology
- Postgraduate Diploma Dermatology
- Postgraduate Diploma Diabetes
- Postgraduate Diploma ENT
- Postgraduate Diploma Family Medicine
- Postgraduate Diploma Geriatric Medicine
- Postgraduate Diploma Minor Surgery
- Postgraduate Diploma Musculoskeletal Medicine
- Postgraduate Diploma Ophthalmology
- Postgraduate Diploma Urology

Marks achieved from any one of the approved Rila Postgraduate Diplomas above will be counted towards the final MSc Clinical Sciences (Specialism) degree classification. Where there is a time lapse between the student completing the taught modules and undertaking the dissertation, and prior to the Rila programmes being validated by the University of Plymouth, the APCL regulation will be followed.

The MSc Clinical Sciences programme would also be open to applications from students who have successfully completed 120 M-level credits from a relevant Postgraduate Diploma in Clinical Studies (or similar) from another external institution via the traditional APCL/APEL route in line with the current academic regulations.

You will enrol on the generic programme (MSc Clinical Sciences) but will exit with a named pathway that reflects the area of clinical specialism reflected in your postgraduate diploma pathway. For example, if you have completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Cardiology, you would register on the MSc Clinical Sciences, but would exit with an MSc Clinical Sciences (Cardiology).

English Language Requirements

Students are required to produce evidence of English language ability. If English is not your first language, an English Language qualification such as IELTS of 7.0 with no less than 7.0 in any band will be required. Equivalent qualifications can be accepted. Equivalencies are detailed on the University website at: <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/international/how-to-apply/international-students-entry-requirements>. Students having a UK degree or having lived in the UK for some years may still be required to take IELTS to demonstrate achievement of the required standard. In addition, in order to ensure an ability to meet the academic requirements

of the programme, you may be asked to complete a piece of academic writing as part of the admissions process.

10. Progression criteria for Final and Intermediate Awards

The standard University academic regulations will apply (Link to University of Plymouth Academic Regulations: <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/your-studies/essential-information/regulations>). There are no intermediate awards.

11. Non Standard Regulations

There are no non-standard regulations that would apply.

12. Transitional Arrangements

Students who have successfully completed or are registered on any one of the postgraduate diploma programmes from Rila Institute of Health Sciences will be eligible to APCL (via an Articulation Agreement) onto the MSc Clinical Sciences (Specialism) programme provided they pass all modules, receive 120 M-level credits, and satisfy the standard progression route criteria as outlined in the programme handbook. Students from other institutions who have successfully completed 120 M-level credits on a clinical studies (or similar) programme, would also be eligible to apply via the standard APCL/APL route in accordance with admissions criteria outlined in Section 9.

Appendices

Programme Specification Mapping (PGT)

Appendix 1:

Programme Specification Mapping (PGT): module contribution to the meeting of Award Learning Outcomes

Module	Credits	Core Elective	Award Learning Outcomes contributed to (for more information see Section 8)																				Compensation N	Assessment element(s) and weightings [use KIS definition] E1 - exam E2 - clinical exam T1 - test C1 - coursework A1 - generic assessment P1 - practical
			Knowledge & understanding				Cognitive & intellectual skills				Key & transferable skills				Employment related skills				Practical skills					
			1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4		
CST710 Project Development	20	C	√	√	√		√	√			√	√	√			√	√			√				C1 – 100%
CST711 Clinical Specialism Project	40	C	√	√	√		√	√	√		√	√	√		√	√	√		√	√	√			C1 – 100%
Learning Outcomes 60 credits																								
Confirmed Award LOs																								