



## MODULE SPECIFICATION

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| <b>Academic Year (student cohort covered by specification)</b>     | 2021-22  |
| <b>Module Code</b>   | 1803   |
| <b>Module Title</b>  | Sociological Approaches to Health  |
| <b>Module Organiser(s)</b>   | Nicki Thorogood and Neil Spicer  |
| <b>Faculty</b>   | Public Health & Policy   |
| <b>FHEQ Level</b>  | Level 7  |
| <b>Credit Value</b>  | <b>CATS:</b> 15<br><b>ECTS:</b> 7.5  |
| <b>HECoS Code</b>  | 100619   |
| <b>Term of Delivery</b>  | Term 2   |
| <b>Mode of Delivery</b>  | For 2021-22 this module is currently planned to be delivered online.<br><br>Teaching will comprise a combination of live and interactive activities (synchronous learning) as well as recorded or self-directed study (asynchronous learning).   |
| <b>Mode of Study</b>   | Full-time  |
| <b>Language of Study</b>   | English  |
| <b>Pre-Requisites</b>  | It is desirable, but not essential, that students should have taken the Principles of Social Research (1104) module or be able to demonstrate equivalent knowledge.  |
| <b>Accreditation by Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body</b> | None   |
| <b>Module Cap (Indicative number of students)</b>                  | 15-25  |
| <b>Target Audience</b>   | This module is intended for students on all MScs, particularly those with interests in social and cultural influences on health.   |
| <b>Module Description</b>  | This module provides an introduction to sociological perspectives on health, involving the theoretical and empirical study of social and cultural structures and processes that influence health and illness. The module will involve applying and critiquing key concepts in sociology as applied to the study of health and illness. |
| <b>Duration</b>  | 5 weeks at 2.5 days per week   |
| <b>Timetabling slot</b>  | C1   |



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| <b>Last Revised (e.g. year changes approved)</b> | 09/20 |
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| <b>Programme(s)</b>                                 | <b>Status</b> |
|---|---------------|
| This module is linked to the following programme(s) |               |
| MSc Public Health                                   | Recommended   |
| MSc Health Policy, Planning & Finance               | Recommended   |
| MSc Public Health (Environment & Health)            | Recommended   |
| MSc Public Health (Health Services Research)        | Recommended   |
| MSc Public Health for Development                   | Recommended   |

## Module Aim and Intended Learning Outcomes

| <b>Overall aim of the module</b>   |
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| <p>The overall module aim is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>introduce students to sociological perspectives on health, involving the theoretical and empirical study of social and cultural structures and processes that influence health and illness.</li> </ul> |

| <b>Module Intended Learning Outcomes</b>  |
|---|
| <p>Upon successful completion of the module a student will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate an understanding of key concepts in sociology as applied to the study of health and illness;</li> <li>Apply these concepts at an empirical level;</li> <li>Demonstrate a critical awareness of the main conceptual, theoretical and methodological issues raised by research in the sociology of health.</li> </ol> |

## Indicative Syllabus

### Session Content

The module is expected to cover the following topics:

- The critical appraisal of how 'knowledge' is produced: an introduction to discourse and semiotic analysis and its application to current issues for public health
- The social production of health and ill health: Historical overview of relationships between social organisation and health. Biomedicine and critiques. The impact of social, cultural and psychological processes on health status and access to health services. Understanding the concepts of mental health and illness
- Examining inequalities in health: Examination of the research which links social factors such as social class, ethnicity, gender and disability to differential health outcomes. The role of social support and 'social capital'. Conceptual and methodological debates about the literature
- Medicine, risk and society: Medicalisation and the role of medicine in society. Conceptions of risk and risk behaviour

## Teaching and Learning

### Notional Learning Hours

| Type of Learning Time           | Number of Hours | Expressed as Percentage (%) |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| Contact time                    | 40              | 27%                         |
| Directed self-study             | 30              | 20%                         |
| Self-directed learning          | 30              | 20%                         |
| Assessment, review and revision | 50              | 33%                         |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>150</b>      | <b>100%</b>                 |

Student contact time refers to the tutor-mediated time allocated to teaching, provision of guidance and feedback to students. This time includes activities that take place in face-to-face contexts such as lectures, seminars, demonstrations, tutorials, supervised laboratory workshops, practical classes, project supervision as well as where tutors are available for one-to-one discussions and interaction by email. Student contact time also includes tutor-mediated activities that take place in online environments, which may be synchronous (using real-time digital tools such as Zoom or Blackboard Collaborate Ultra) or asynchronous (using digital tools such as tutor-moderated discussion forums or blogs often delivered through the School's virtual learning environment, Moodle).

The division of notional learning hours listed above is indicative and is designed to inform students as to the relative split between interactive (online or on-campus) and self-directed study.



### Teaching and Learning Strategy

Twenty sessions spread over nine days provide overviews of the material listed above. These are generally lectures by subject area specialists followed by seminars in which students are encouraged to discuss and explore their own views, ideas and responses to the case studies from the topics covered. Two sessions are run as a whole group workshop on discourse and semiotic analysis.

There are also several documentary films shown to support the topics being discussed. The remainder of the time will be spent in private study. Students will be expected to read and discuss relatively large volumes of material. The private study time must therefore be considered an integral part of the module.

### Assessment

#### Assessment Strategy

The assessment for this module has been designed to measure student learning against the module intended learning outcomes (ILOs) as listed above. Formative assessment methods may be used to measure students' progress. The grade for summative assessment(s) only will go towards the overall award GPA.

The assessment for this module will be online.

Formal assessment is by an individual essay of 1,500 words. One question to be selected from a list of questions based on the lecture/seminar topics.

#### Summative Assessment

| Assessment Type | Assessment Length (i.e. Word Count, Length of presentation in minutes) | Weighting (%) | Intended Module Learning Outcomes Tested |
|-----------------|--|---------------|--|
| Coursework      | 1500   | 100%          | 1, 2 and 3                               |

#### Resitting assessment

Resits will accord with the LSHTM's [Resits Policy](#)



## Resources

### Indicative reading list

#### Basic introductions to sociology of health and illness:

Nettleton, S & Gustafsson, U (2002) The sociology of health and illness reader. Cambridge: Polity Press

Gabe, J, Bury, M and Elston, M (eds) (2004) Key concepts in medical sociology. London: Sage

Scambler, G (ed) (2008) Sociology as applied to medicine. London: (6th edition) WB Saunders.

Armstrong, D (2003) An outline of sociology as applied to medicine. (5<sup>th</sup> Edition) Oxford: Arnold

Nettleton, S (2006) The sociology of health and illness. Cambridge: Polity Press.

## Teaching for Disabilities and Learning Differences

The module-specific site on Moodle gives students access to lecture notes and copies of the slides used during the lecture. Where appropriate, lectures are recorded and made available on Moodle. All materials posted on Moodle, including computer-based sessions, have been made accessible where possible.

LSHTM Moodle is accessible to the widest possible audience, regardless of specific needs or disabilities. More detail can be found in the [Moodle Accessibility Statement](#) which can also be found within the footer of the Moodle pages. All students have access to "SensusAccess" software which allows conversion of files into alternative formats.

Student Support Services can arrange learning or assessment adjustments for students where needed. Details and how to request support can be found on the [LSHTM Disability Support pages](#).