MODULE SPECIFICATION

Academic Year (student cohort covered by specification)	2023-24
Module Code	5002
Module Title	Evidence Based Public Health Policy & Practice
Module Organiser(s)	Kathryn Oliver, Tolib Mirzoev
Faculty	N/A (DrPH is a School-wide programme)
FHEQ Level	Level 7
Credit Value	**CATS:** 30 **ECTS:** 15
HECoS Code	100091 Public Services
Term of Delivery	Term 1
Mode of Delivery	For 2023-24 this module will be delivered online only. There will be a combination of live and interactive activities (synchronous learning) and recorded or self-directed study (asynchronous learning).
Mode of Study	Full time or part time. The module is taught online. Both full-time and part-time students follow the same schedule.
Language of Study	English
Pre-Requisites	At least one of the following: • a Master's degree in a subject appropriate to the course of study to be followed (recommended) • evidence of at least two years' appropriate experience in a public health organisation, plus at least two years' appropriate experience in a management and/or leadership role preferably also in a public health setting
Accreditation by Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body	Not currently accredited by any other body
Module Cap (Maximum number of students)	Numbers are capped at (approximately) 20 students.
Target Audience	The module is a compulsory module for students undertaking the Doctorate in Public Health programme.
Module Description	Public health leaders are often involved in commissioning and managing applied research, and it is important to develop skills in ensuring that the research undertaken is appropriate to meeting the needs of policy and practice. It is

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<tr><td></td><td>also important to ensure that it uses rigorous methods, and has the best chance of providing robust and useful answers. The ability to develop and undertake primary research is taken forward in the Organisational and Policy Analysis (OPA) (RS1) and in the Thesis (RS2) components later in the programme. As preparation for these, the current module aims to teach students how to appraise the quality and relevance of existing research so that they can better design and carry out their own projects in the future.

The aim of EBPHP is to develop the necessary analytic skills for producing and evaluating evidence-informed policy and practice. These cover understanding public health policy making and making, mobilising and using evidence. Since the evidence base is constantly changing and developing, the emphasis is on practical, generic skills rather than substantive findings in particular areas of public health.

The emphasis in this module is less on teaching skills in methods of hands-on, primary research, than on skills in identifying how best to synthesise and use existing evidence in a policy environment, and helping students to become more effective evidence-informed public health practitioners.</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Duration**</td><td>10 weeks at 2.5 days per week</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Timetabling slot**</td><td>Online, with sessions scheduled on Mondays and Tuesdays</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Last Revised (e.g. year changes approved)**</td><td>August 2023</td></tr>
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Programme(s) This module is linked to the following programme(s)	Status
Doctorate of Public Health (DrPH)	Compulsory

Module Aim and Intended Learning Outcomes

Overall aim of the module
EBPHP aims to explore the making of public health policy and shaping of public health practice, with particular reference to the place of evidence in these processes

Module Intended Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of the module a student will be able to: 1. demonstrate an understanding of the contexts and processes of public health policy making across different settings and countries, in particular, the relationship between evidence/research, and policy; 2. use their understanding of how different groups involved in public health policy may approach the same issue from different perspectives to advocate more effectively for evidence-informed public health policies. 3. distinguish between generating evidence, eliciting values and making decisions; 4. understand the process of undertaking a systematic review of studies, drawing out the policy implications, and assessing the quality and relevance to policy of such reviews; 5. make persuasive recommendations for policy or practice change to improve the public health based on the best evidence available.

Indicative Syllabus

Session Content
The module is expected to cover the following topics: • Understanding the policy process and key frameworks for policy analysis • Different perspectives on problem and solution framing • Roles of policy actors in evidence-informed policy-making and stakeholder analysis • Understanding the contributions of different types of evidence to policymaking • Theories and strategies for getting research evidence into policy and practice • Critical evaluation and synthesis of published evidence • Making persuasive recommendations for evidence-informed policymaking

Teaching and Learning

Notional Learning Hours

Type of Learning Time	Number of Hours	Expressed as Percentage (%)
Contact time	66	22
Directed self-study	44	15
Self-directed learning	30	10
Assessment, review and revision	160	53
Total	**300**	**100**

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.

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

Teaching and Learning Strategy
The module is taught over 10 weeks, in the main through approximately three-hour online sessions on Monday and Tuesday afternoons. Each week involves a mixture of more formal lectures and less formal interactive or practical sessions (e.g. appraising the quality and relevance to public health practice and policy of different types of research evidence), usually in small groups. Typically the split will be lectures and class discussions on a Monday and group work on a Tuesday. Monday sessions will include lecturers from the teaching team and presentations from guest speakers. Generic skills and overarching principles are reinforced and made relevant through the use of case studies and practical examples. As DrPH students are drawn from with a wide range of backgrounds and areas of public health practice, some teaching will involve restating some of the basic principles underlying the different parts of public health practice but there will also be opportunities to learn directly from fellow students.   In addition to doing the essential readings for each session, some extra preparation is required before specific sessions (e.g. preparing a group work presentation).

Assessment

Assessment Strategy
Assignment   The module has one assignment which relate to the main themes of the module and will be marked as the formal summative assessment for the module. Students are encouraged to start thinking about how and when you are going to do the work required for the assignment since it will each require a considerable amount of time to prepare.   This assignment consists of three tasks: a rigorous appraisal of an evidence review, a strategy to gather additional information for a policy briefing and a policy briefing. The student will choose a topic likely to be of interest to a minister of health in a country of their choice. The first task with be to identify an existing evidence review on the topic and to conduct an appraisal of the review. The appraisal should cover not only methodological quality but also consider other dimensions of quality such as policy relevance, acceptability and equity. The second part of the task is to consider the applicability of the review to the policy challenge and to identify any other information that might be necessary for inclusion in the brief (for example, demographic information, cost information, data on public and or

professional perspectives). The list of potential additional sources can be presented as a table of sources with a commentary on their potential contribution. The final task will be to write a short policy briefing on the implications of the review prepared for a minister of health in a country of the student's choice. This assignment is up to 4000 words in length.

Formative assessment

There will also be a formative assessment in class time to help students prepare for the assignment. For this piece of work students will receive feedback rather than a mark. This formative assessment is based on the elements in the module that focus on the policy making process and the deployment of evidence in that process. Students are asked to prepare an 'agenda setting' or influencing strategy on behalf of a non-governmental organisation, designed to get a research-driven issue onto the policy agenda of a ministry of health. This strategy should include a stakeholder mapping and analysis exercise, and an assessment of the different types of evidence which might support your proposed strategy.

Students can choose any topic and/or policy area in the field of public health where they think that current practice does not reflect the best evidence of effectiveness, and any country setting. They can choose to do this assessment individually, in pairs or small groups.

The strategies will be presented to the group in week 10, with feedback provided from the group in the session and from the teaching team by the end of term.

Assignment is due on **29 January 2024**.

Candidates who do not pass an assignment are required to re-submit a revised document.

Resit / deferral / new attempt: the next assessment date/deadline will normally be **1 June 2024.**

Summative Assessment

Assessment Type	Assessment Length (i.e. Word Count, Length of presentation in minutes)	Weighting (%)	Intended Module Learning Outcomes Tested
Assignment I	4000 words maximum	100	Primary: 1-3, 5; secondary 4

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

Resources

Indicative reading list
Boaz, A, Davies, H, Fraser, A and Nutley, S (2019) *What Works Now: Evidence Informed Policy and Practice.* Policy Press: Bristol Buse K, Mays N, Colombini M, Fraser A, Khan M, Walls H. *Making health policy.* 3rd edition. Maidenhead: Open University Press McGraw Hill, 2023 (available from the LSHTM supplies department at a discount since part of the LSHTM series 'Understanding Public Health') Petticrew M, Roberts H. Systematic reviews in the social sciences: a practical guide. Oxford: Blackwell, 2006. Gough D, Oliver S, Thomas J, eds. An introduction to systematic reviews. London: Sage, 2012 Smith K. (2013) *Beyond evidence-based policy in public health. The interplay of ideas.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. (Chapters 1 and 2).

Teaching for Disabilities and Learning Differences

The Module Organisers will discuss specific requirements with the student in conjunction with the formal Learning Agreement. The module-specific site on Moodle provides students with access to lecture notes and copies of the slides used during the lecture prior to the lecture (in pdf). All materials posted on Moodle, including computer-based sessions, have been made accessible where possible. The LSHTM Moodle has been made accessible to the widest possible audience, using a VLE that allows for up to 300% zoom, permits navigation via keyboard and use of speech recognition software, and that allows listening through a screen reader. All students have access to "SensusAccess" software which allows conversion of files into alternative formats. For students who require learning or assessment adjustments and support this can be arranged through the Student Support Services – details and how to request support can be found on the [LSHTM Disability Support pages](#).