



SITE VISIT REPORT FOR
THE PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION REVIEW
OF THE

MSc Public Health

Faculty of Health and Applied Sciences
University of the West of England, Bristol
United Kingdom.

Site Visit Report

Executive Summary

19th May 2022

AGENCY FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION ACCREDITATION
(online) SITE VISIT DATES: 9th to 10th March, 2022

SITE VISIT REVIEW TEAM:
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Executive Summary

The site visit team (hereafter referred to as "the Review Team") would like to thank all those involved with the site visit for their candour and interaction with the Review Team and for the preparation of the self-evaluation documentation (SED) and scheduling.

Criterion I: Governance and Organisation of the Programme

The MSc is legally recognised through the UK higher Sector and was initially validated in 2000. At present in 2022 the programme fits within a context of an ongoing pandemic and structural changes at UWE Bristol. These changes seek to be completed by 2023 and will see the introduction of a College / School / Programme structure with the latter becoming part of a school. These changes take place alongside the introduction of a Bachelors online programme which began in 2021.

Criterion II: Aims and Objectives of the Public Health Programme

The programme has maintained high levels of student employability and market share in the light of growing regional competition. For the last cohort recruitment the programme had to halt the application process due to the high volume of applications.

The school and programme are expanding internationally and had recently begun an institutional collaboration with Hainan Medical University in China. Internally, they have continued to expand with the introduction of the BSc online degree and the Public Health Apprenticeship programme. These advancements were also seen in their potential for expansion in the programme, for example, creating new diverse pathways.

However, there were issues identified in work placements for international students where their expectations were not entirely met when entering the programme and as a result the programme is recommended to address this situation by understanding student concern and addressing those when marketing the programme.

Criterion III: The Curriculum

A clear strength of the programme is in its international approach and composition. This included engaging international learners to inform others of their respective national situations which was clearly appreciated by the whole student body. The programme employs a spiral learning concept, which consists of a scaffolded approach complemented through revisiting elements of prior learning. To mitigate the disruptions caused by the COVID19 pandemic, the programme had introduced a new three-week induction session.

The pandemic had also entailed that the programme adapt pedagogically, bringing in a broader range of didactic and assessment concepts. The pandemic disruptions were lessened somewhat due to the programme having previously adopted interfaces such as blackboard which were then complemented with other software, such as Mentimeter and Whiteboard which the students felt worked well.

Subjects on One health, emergencies and socio-political dimensions and population ethics were felt to be underemphasised and recommended for additional emphasis within the curriculum. Ethics, for example, is contained throughout the programme but the programme may wish to consider looking at the introduction of an intra-module (smaller learning unit) course on population ethics. As part of the curriculum redesign, the programme had opted for a non-elective trajectory but students maintained a desire for electives and it is recommended that the programme strive to accommodate where possible.

Criterion IV: Students and Graduates

Although some students had mentioned the intensive nature of the programme, the completion rate for the programme was 94% on the first sitting with student satisfaction, as identified through the post graduate taught experience survey, consistently over 90%. The programme was seen to be active in supporting students, especially during the pandemic, through areas such as the lengthened induction period and additional flexibility in submitting assignments. There is a notable alumni community who had praised the programme by virtue of the leading public health roles occupied by alumni.

The programme is looking to integrate computerised student monitoring within business intelligence data and student performance data (forthcoming) which will support further the students on their academic journey. UWE Bristol also engage an impressive Peer Assisted Learning scheme which unfortunately was proving difficult to maintain during the pandemic but had been previously highlighted by APHEA as impressive.

Criterion V: Human Resources and Staffing

The programme is well supported by faculty who operate upon research and teaching contracts. These contracts have inbuilt flexibility to allow for further research activities and are managed through a workload management system to ensure consistency in the teaching. Recently the programme has undergone significant changes including the majority of faculty now holding permanent contracts with many research contracts being moved across to teaching contracts. Four new academic appointments have recently been made with another three in process.

There was an overall sense of camaraderie between the faculty with programme staff meeting both formally and informally. New faculty members are expected to complete faculty training and additional training possibilities through online training during the pandemic were available to existing faculty.

Criterion VI: Supportive Services, Budgeting and Facilities

The level of student support provided by the faculty during the pandemic was commended by the Review Team. All students, both national and international, interviewed had expressed a high level of satisfaction with the resources and had made note of the tutor support in providing software, video and article links. The programme teaching had completely migrated online since March 2020 but is now in the process of reverting to on-site.

Criterion VII: Internal Quality Management

The programme operates a “you said we did” process which ensures that students are informed of how their feedback has been reviewed and, where necessary, acted upon. Student representatives are involved in the programme management and provided with training by the Student Union and supported through several arms of the university structures. Students also provide feedback through anonymous module feedback and the programme is in the process of moving toward standardised programme level surveys.

The programme’s quality systems run centrally and cover: programme design and approval, student representation, academic governance, as well as external examining and continuous improvement. The programme’s alumni are impressive and viewed the programme very positively. However, they also expressed that their involvement was rather informal in nature and therefore it is recommended that the programme become more proactive in its search for stakeholders outside of its alumni body and strengthen the formalisation of stakeholder input into educational management and curriculum development of the programme.

Summary of Conclusions

Criterion I: Governance and Organisation of the Programme	
Sub – Criterion 1.1	Met
Sub – Criterion 1.2	Met with Comments
Sub – Criterion 1.3	Met
Sub – Criterion 1.4	Met
Criterion II: Aims and Objectives of the Public Health Programme	
Sub – Criterion 2.1	Met
Sub – Criterion 2.2	Met
Sub – Criterion 2.3	Met
Sub – Criterion 2.4	Met
Criterion III: The Curriculum	
Sub – Criterion 3.1	Met
Sub – Criterion 3.2	Met with Comments
Sub – Criterion 3.3	Met
Sub – Criterion 3.4	Met
Sub – Criterion 3.5	Met
Sub – Criterion 3.6	Met with Comments
Sub – Criterion 3.7	Met
Sub – Criterion 3.8	Met
Criterion IV: Students and Graduates	
Sub – Criterion 4.1	Met
Sub – Criterion 4.2	Met
Sub – Criterion 4.3	Met
Sub – Criterion 4.4	Met
Sub – Criterion 4.5	Met
Criterion V: Human Resources and Staffing	
Sub – Criterion 5.1	Met
Sub – Criterion 5.2	Met
Criterion VI: Supportive Services, Budgeting and Facilities	
Sub – Criterion 6.1	Met
Sub – Criterion 6.2	Met
Sub – Criterion 6.3	Met
Sub – Criterion 6.4	Met
Criterion VII: Internal Quality Management	
Sub – Criterion 7.1	Partially Met with Comments
Sub – Criterion 7.2	Met
Sub – Criterion 7.3	Met
Sub – Criterion 7.4	Met