

# Programme Specification

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## Title of programme: PG Diploma in Allergy 2017-18

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.

Awarding Institution	University of Southampton
Teaching Institution	University of Southampton
Mode of study	Part-time
Duration in years	4 years
Accreditation details	World Allergy Organisation, BSACI, Hong Kong Medical Council
Final award	Postgraduate Diploma
Name of award	Allergy
Interim Exit awards	Postgraduate Certificate
FHEQ level of final award	7
UCAS code	n/a
QAA Subject Benchmark or other external reference	QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Medicine Studied at Masters Level
Programme Lead	Dr Judith Holloway
Date specification was written	September 2012
Date Programme was validated	15/04/2013
Date specification last updated	16/03/2017

## Programme Overview

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### Brief outline of the programme

Our PG Diploma Allergy course is designed to help health care professionals including GPs, hospital-based doctors, nurses, dietitians and professionals in many health care sectors to gain a greater understanding of allergic diseases and to be able to translate this knowledge into their everyday practice. This postgraduate education programme will provide you with effective education and training in the mechanisms, diagnosis, treatment and management of allergic disease. It will enable you to manage both adults and children with allergy more effectively. Through the knowledge and understanding you will gain with us, you will also be able to develop and improve your health care provision, through your ability to cascade education to your colleagues, and adult and paediatric patients and their families. The programme provides opportunities for you to develop and demonstrate scientific understanding, clinical knowledge, practical skills, and critical thinking qualities.

There are opportunities to tailor our course to best meet your career aspirations, and lets you plan your specific programme route at the start of your studies with us. Optional modules are offered both from our own allergy modules, and as a wider choice from across the University. Your contact hours will vary depending on your module/option choices and details are provided in individual module profiles. We offer the course to part time students, so providing flexibility to cater for the needs of a diverse range of students, enabling you to study alongside your other commitments.

We also accommodate students on our "step on, step off" programme allowing you to start the programme and complete a Postgraduate Certificate in Allergy, a Postgraduate Diploma, or the full MSc.

### Special Features of the programme

The modules will be taught by an international faculty, at the forefront of their respective academic disciplines and professions. Adult learning methods will be used throughout and an emphasis placed upon interactive learning, practical demonstration and the interpretation of clinical scenarios to reinforce learning.

## Learning and teaching

A variety of learning and teaching methods will be adopted to promote the development of a wide range of skills. Adult learning methods will be used throughout and an emphasis placed upon interactive learning, including seminars, group work, practical demonstrations and discussions surrounding interpretation of data and clinical scenarios to reinforce learning. These methods are designed to integrate theory and practice, to foster a spirit of enquiry, promote collaborative learning and meet a range of learner needs and styles.

Specialist lecturers from a range of academic and health care professional backgrounds will ensure a breadth and depth of perspective is offered, giving a good balance between background theories, principles and practical management advice. There will also be a basic science and generic clinical skills guided e-learning package with self-assessment available as an online package for students to take advantage of in their own time. Key transferable skills are encouraged via the learning and teaching activities throughout the programme. The Faculty is committed to supporting you to enable you to fulfil your academic and personal potential. We will work with you to facilitate your learning, within a multi-cultural context underpinned with mutual respect.

## Assessment

Your knowledge and understanding will be tested through a combination of formative and summative assessments according to the assessment guidelines within the module profile. The assessment methods are designed to help you integrate theory and practice, maximise your skills of critical thinking and analysis, and develop your understanding of allergy. Study is assessed by assignments, oral presentations, interdisciplinary group work and translational assessments, which allow you to translate your learning into practice. The assessment methods enable you to demonstrate achievement of the programme learning outcomes as you progress through each module on your pathway.

**Please note:** As a research-led University, we undertake a continuous review of our programmes to ensure quality enhancement and to manage our resources. As a result, this programme may be revised during a student's period of registration, however, any revision will be balanced against the requirement that the student should receive the educational service expected. Please read our [Disclaimer](#) to see why, when and how changes may be made to a student's programme.

Programmes and major changes to programmes are approved through the University's programme validation process which is described in the University's [Quality Handbook](#).

## Educational Aims of the Programme

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The aims of the programme are to:

- Enhance your educational and professional expertise in all core areas of allergy, having developed appropriate knowledge, understanding and professional skills to improve your practice.
- Develop your ability to integrate research evidence into all aspects of decision making and to apply knowledge, analytical and critical thinking skills to make sound judgements about data applicable to the care of patients with allergy.
- Enable you to demonstrate leadership in clinical allergy and allergy-related issues.
- Evaluate the psychological impact of living with allergy so that through empathy, the diagnosis, management and eventual compliance of patients can be improved.
- Develop your approach to solving problems, building on a logical and hierarchical approach that allows you to justify personal and professional decisions through critical evaluation and synthesis of relevant theories, empirical evidence and experience to best optimise professional practice.
- Develop strategies for your continuing professional development and lifelong learning in relevant aspects of allergy.
- Apply an evidence based approach to critically evaluate the current literature.

## **Programme Learning Outcomes**

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The programme provides opportunities for you to develop and demonstrate your knowledge and understanding, skills and other attributes in the following areas:

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

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Having successfully completed this programme you will be able to:

1. Comprehend and explain the complex mechanisms involved in normal and allergic immune responses.
2. Integrate your understanding of the underlying immunological mechanisms of disease into your approach for diagnosing and treating allergic patients.
3. Apply your knowledge and understanding to optimize the methods you use for the diagnosis, treatment and management of allergic diseases such as asthma, eczema, rhinitis, food allergy, drug allergy and venom allergy.
4. Apply new research findings to improving the management of allergic patients.
5. Translate knowledge gained into improving your professional practice.

### ***Teaching and Learning Methods***

To help you develop your knowledge and understanding of allergy you will be exposed to a variety of methods of teaching and learning.

- The understanding of the processes involved in allergic disease including the immunological mechanisms, history taking, diagnosis, management of a patient and building allergy teams is acquired through lectures, group work, peer teaching, guided e-learning, problem-solving approaches and coursework.
- Skills in diagnostic testing, and use of medical devices appropriate to allergy are learned through a combination of small group tutorials and practical sessions where you can actively undertake the testing procedures.
- Knowledge of the most up-to-date treatments and how to use them in the management of allergic disease is acquired through a combination of lectures and attendance at recognised allergy clinics to observe approved diagnostic and management protocols in action.
- Innovative and relevant materials to aid self-directed learning on the application of acquired knowledge are also provided through guided e-learning materials. Additional support is provided by direct access to academic staff as required (either by e-mail or personal communication).

### ***Assessment methods***

Your knowledge and understanding will be tested through a combination of formative and summative assessments that may include essays and other written assignments, problem based learning questions, practical work, questions and answers and oral presentations.

## **Subject Specific Intellectual and Research Skills**

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Having successfully completed this programme you will be able to:

6. Select and utilise appropriate information sources.
7. Critically appraise, summarise and apply scientific and clinical evidence to the development of new ideas.
8. Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems in the field of allergy.

### ***Teaching and Learning Methods***

To help you develop your intellectual and research skills you will be exposed to a variety of methods of teaching and learning. Seminars, tutorials, discussions and problem-solving approaches will be used in addition to formal lectures. Each module involves discussion of key issues; practice in applying concepts, both orally and in writing, including analysis and interpretation of material and feedback on work produced. All students will receive initial guidance on how to identify, locate and use material available in libraries and elsewhere (e.g. on the web). Comprehensive bibliographies are provided for each topic at the outset and

guidelines are provided for the production of written assignments. Group tuition is given in the performance of appropriate diagnostic tests.

### ***Assessment methods***

The variety of assessment methods employed all emphasise the requirement for you to demonstrate your skills through the production of coherent written and oral responses either to problems or set tasks. In common with all students in the Faculty you will during your studies produce several written assignments, carry out practical work, undertake written examinations and give oral presentations, which will employ each of the listed skills.

## **Transferable and Generic Skills**

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Having successfully completed this programme you will be able to:

9. Compose and communicate ideas effectively.
10. Compile relevant information using information technology.
11. Solve problems in clinical investigation and related activities.
12. Reflect and evaluate on your own and others' functioning in order to improve practice

### ***Teaching and Learning Methods***

To help you develop your general skills you will be exposed to a range of teaching and learning methods that enhance both written and oral presentation skills, and that give you the opportunity to develop your transferable skills.

### ***Assessment methods***

Your generic skills will be assessed throughout the programme through methods such as oral presentations, assignments and reflections.

## **Programme Structure**

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Our initial core module, the Foundations of Allergic Disease, gives a comprehensive overview of the mechanisms and management of allergic diseases and provides basic science and clinical knowledge along with study skills, providing you with the underpinning for the rest of your postgraduate studies. In addition we offer a range of optional modules, which allow you to tailor the course to your needs. Our optional allergy modules are: (i) Food Allergy, (ii) Eczema, Urticaria and Anaphylaxis and (iii) Allergic Airways Disease. In addition, many of our postgraduate students teach their subjects, and pass on their knowledge to their peers and to students with no formal training. The Teaching the Teachers to Teach module offers you the knowledge and expertise to enable you to design, deliver, assess and evaluate teaching and training sessions in your professional practice. Our last option module, Work Based Learning, allows you to design your own learning experience in allergy to benefit your needs and to explore clinical cases in depth. You can also choose to receive training in clinical research skills, a module which enables you to understand research, the appropriate use of qualitative and quantitative methods and how to interpret results, fundamental expertise for being able to critique an evidence base.

In addition to the allergy modules offered on this programme, students are also able to take a module worth up to 10 ECTS from around the University with the approval of the Programme Leader. Students in the past have chosen modules such as Prescribing Skills, Developing Public Health Practice and Demographic Change, Ageing and Globalisation.

A range of course study materials for all of our modules are available to students via our virtual learning environment, Blackboard ([www.blackboard.soton.ac.uk](http://www.blackboard.soton.ac.uk)). This will allow you to continue your investigation in your own home and/or work environments when producing your course work. We pride ourselves on having

helpful and approachable teaching and support staff and encourage students to contact us whenever support or guidance is needed.

This course varies from the standard University semester and term dates published in the [Calendar](#).

The programme structure table is below

Award	Core modules	ECTS	Option modules	ECTS
Postgraduate Diploma in Allergy (60-85 ECTS) Classified	Foundations of Allergic Disease	10 ECTS	50 ECTS from the following: Food Allergy Eczema, Urticaria & Anaphylaxis Allergic Airways Disease Teaching the Teachers to Teach Work Based Learning Clinical Research Skills Optional level 7 module of student's choice	10 ECTS 10 ECTS 10 ECTS 10 ECTS 10 ECTS 10 ECTS 10 ECTS

This is a modular postgraduate programme that is taken on a part-time basis up to a maximum of 48 months, leading to 60 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) (120 CATS credits) at HE7 level. This length of time for the part time course will allow students to study alongside their other commitments. The programme is arranged as 5 allergy specific modules, the teaching the teachers to teach module and clinical research skills module. Of the 60 ECTS required, 50 ECTS must be taken from the MSc Allergy programme modules offered, with an option of 10 ECTS at level 7 from modules available across the University that can be chosen by the student with prior agreement by the Programme Leader. Normally each student will attend the University for the teaching blocks of 4-6 days per 10 ECTS module. Work Based Learning is a virtual module, not requiring attendance. Students considering upgrading to the MSc Allergy programme should consider taking the Clinical Research Skills module, which is core for the MSc.

All modules once selected are core. All the taught modules are worth 10 ECTS. Each 10 ECTS module represents 250 hours of student learning and endeavour, with teaching where appropriate (including seminars, class presentations and class practical sessions).

This award is classified (pass, merit, distinction).

The structure of programmes are as per the University General Regulations found in Section IV of the University Calendar and the programme specifications. Information about pre and co-requisites is included in individual module profiles.

## Additional Costs

Students are responsible for meeting the cost of essential textbooks, and of producing such essays, assignments and laboratory reports as are required to fulfil the academic requirements for each programme of study. Costs that students registered for this programme typically also have to pay for are included in Appendix 2:

## Progression Requirements

The programme follows the University's regulations for [Progression, Determination and Classification of Results: Standalone Masters Programmes](#) as set out in the University Calendar.

## Intermediate exit points

Exit Award for Postgraduate Diploma:  
Postgraduate Certificate in Allergy (30 ECTS)

Award	Core modules	ECTS	Option modules	ECTS
Postgraduate Certificate in Allergy (30-55 ECTS)	Foundations of Allergic Disease	10 ECTS	20 ECTS from the following: Food Allergy Eczema, Urticaria & Anaphylaxis Allergic Airways Disease Work Based Learning	10 ECTS 10 ECTS 10 ECTS 10 ECTS

You will be eligible for an interim exit award if you complete part of the programme but not all of it, as follows.

Qualification	Minimum overall credit in ECTS	Minimum ECTS required at level of award
Postgraduate Certificate	at least 30	30

## Support for student learning

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There are facilities and services to support your learning some of which are accessible to students across the University and some of which will be geared more particularly to students in your particular Faculty or discipline area.

The University provides:

- library resources, including e-books, on-line journals and databases, which are comprehensive and up-to-date; together with assistance from Library staff to enable you to make the best use of these resources
- high speed access to online electronic learning resources on the Internet from dedicated PC Workstations onsite and from your own devices; laptops, smartphones and tablet PCs via the Eduroam wireless network. There is a wide range of application software available from the Student Public Workstations.
- computer accounts which will connect you to a number of learning technologies for example, the Blackboard virtual learning environment (which facilitates online learning and access to specific learning resources)
- standard ICT tools such as Email, secure filestore and calendars.
- access to key information through the MySouthampton Student Mobile Portal which delivers timetables, Module information, Locations, Tutor details, Library account, bus timetables etc. while you are on the move.
- IT support through a comprehensive website, telephone and online ticketed support and a dedicated helpdesk in the Hartley Library.
- Enabling Services offering support services and resources via a triage model to access crisis management, mental health support and counselling.
- assessment and support (including specialist IT support) facilities if you have a disability, long term health problem or Specific Learning Difficulty (e.g. dyslexia)
- the Student Services Centre (SSC) to assist you with a range of general enquiries including financial matters, accommodation, exams, graduation, student visas, ID cards
- Career Destinations, advising on job search, applications, interviews, paid work, volunteering and internship opportunities and getting the most out of your extra-curricular activities alongside your degree programme when writing your CV
- Other support that includes health services (GPs), chaplaincy (for all faiths) and 'out of hours' support for students in Halls (18.00-08.00)
- A Centre for Language Study, providing assistance in the development of English language and study skills for non-native speakers.

The Students' Union provides

- an academic student representation system, consisting of Course Representatives, Academic Presidents, Faculty Officers and the Vice-President Education; SUSU provides training and support for all these representatives, whose role is to represent students' views to the University.
- opportunities for extracurricular activities and volunteering
- an Advice Centre offering free and confidential advice including support if you need to make an academic appeal
- Support for student peer-to-peer groups, such as Nightline.

Associated with your programme you will be able to access:

- A welcome session for orientation and programme overview.
- Student module guides and timetables.
- An introduction to the library and Information Technology (IT).
- Extensive library and other learning resources and facilities within the Faculty and University.
- The Programme Leader.
- The Module Leaders who are academic members of staff, who will be responsible for overseeing your progress throughout the module.
- The Faculty PGT Senior Tutor for all pastoral matters.
- The International Officer.
- Academic staff and administrative staff.
- A personal academic tutor (PAT).
- A student representative.

## **Methods for evaluating the quality of teaching and learning**

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You will have the opportunity to have your say on the quality of the programme in the following ways:

- Completing student evaluation questionnaires for each module of the programme
- Acting as a student representative on various committees, e.g. Programme Board, Staff Student Liaison Committees, PGT Programmes Committee OR providing comments to your student representative to feedback on your behalf.
- Serving as a student representative on Faculty Scrutiny Groups for programme validation
- Taking part in programme validation meetings by joining a panel of students to meet with the Faculty Scrutiny Group

The ways in which the quality of your programme is checked, both inside and outside the University, are:

- Regular module and programme reports which are monitored by the Faculty
- Programme validation, normally every five years.
- External examiners, who produce an annual report
- Professional body accreditation
- The national Teaching Excellence Framework
- The national Research Excellence Framework (our research activity contributes directly to the quality of your learning experience)
- Institutional Review by the Quality Assurance Agency
- MSc Allergy Programme Board meetings
- Peer observation of teaching
- Ongoing review of subject/professional benchmarking standards
- Ongoing review of the development of allergy services

# Faculty Programmes Committee.

## Criteria for admission

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Admissions requirements will be as stated in the University's General Regulations, the Programme Specifications and the University Prospectus. The normal requirement for entry to all programmes is a good first degree (first or second class), or equivalent, in a relevant subject of an approved University or institution of higher education.

The University Admissions policy can be found at [www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/admissions.html](http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/admissions.html).

Qualification	Grade	Subjects requirements	Specific requirements
Bachelor's degree	2ii (lower second class) minimum	Health or health related field	None

### Mature applicants

If you do not have a good first degree you may nonetheless be admitted to a programme. You will be expected to provide evidence that you are able to study at HE7 and satisfy the Programme Leader that you are competent to pursue the course of study proposed. Evidence of the ability to study at HE7 will normally be in the form of (i) a relevant professional qualification at a suitable level, or (ii) several years relevant post-qualifying professional experience, at least some of which must be at a responsible level.

### Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

The acceptance of such credit towards the award of a qualification will be decided by the Board of Examiners in accordance with the University of Southampton [Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#).

### English Language Proficiency

Candidates whose first language is not English are required to fulfil one of the options below:

- to reach a satisfactory standard in an approved test in English. The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) requirement is 7.0 overall with each component at 6.0 or higher. Other Secure English Language Tests (SELT) may be accepted as identified on the university [website](#)
- to offer a first degree from a UK university, or a University which teaches and assesses in English. This must have been within the last two years
- to come from a country which appears on the list of those exempt from testing.

An original English language certificate is required as evidence in all cases except where online verification is available; ie: IELTS results.

Overall	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Listening
7.0	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5

Selection criteria
As part of the application process, candidates are asked to write a personal statement to explain their motivation for wishing to take the course and to indicate their future career plans. Academic references will also be taken up.



## Career Opportunities

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This postgraduate programme is designed to help you treat your patients better; we provide health care professionals with effective education and training in the mechanisms, diagnosis, treatment and management of allergic disease. Our course will enable you to manage both adults and children with allergy more effectively.

Through the knowledge and understanding you will gain with us, you will also be able to develop and improve your health care provision, through your ability to cascade education to your colleagues, and adult and paediatric patients and their families.

## External Examiner(s) for the programme

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**Name:** Professor M. Thirumala Krishna PhD FRCP FRCPath  
**Institution:** University of Birmingham

Students must not contact External Examiner(s) directly, and external examiners have been advised to refer any such communications back to the University. Students should raise any general queries about the assessment and examination process for the programme with their Course Representative, for consideration through Staff: Student Liaison Committee in the first instance, and Student representatives on Staff: Student Liaison Committees will have the opportunity to consider external examiners' reports as part of the University's quality assurance process.

External examiners do not have a direct role in determining results for individual students, and students wishing to discuss their own performance in assessment should contact their personal tutor in the first instance.

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**Please note:** This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information can be found in the Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment online at [www.blackboard.soton.ac.uk](http://www.blackboard.soton.ac.uk).

## Tracking and Version Control

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Action	Version	Outcome	Date
Update and submit to MSc Allergy Programme Board	1	Approved	16/03/2017
Submit to PGT Programmes Committee	1	Approved	06/04/2017
Submit to Faculty Programmes Committee	1	Approved	26/04/2017

# Appendix 1:

## Learning outcomes and Assessment Mapping document template

Module Code	Module Title	Knowledge and Understanding					Subject Specific Intellectual Skills			Transferable/ Key Skills			
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
MEDI6081	Foundations of Allergic Disease	✓	✓				✓			✓	✓		✓
MEDI6080	Food Allergy	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	
MEDI6079	Eczema, Urticaria & Anaphylaxis	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	
MEDI6077	Allergic Airways Disease	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
MEDI6218	Teaching the Teachers to Teach					✓	✓			✓	✓		✓
MEDI6083	Work Based Learning			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
MEDI6082	Clinical Research Skills						✓	✓		✓	✓		

## Summary of summative assessments

Module Code	Module Title	Coursework 1	Coursework 2	Coursework 3
MEDI6081	Foundations of Allergic Disease	Individual Oral Presentation (40%)	Individual Reflection (10%)	Individual Written assignment (50%)
MEDI6080	Food Allergy	Group Work (50%)	Individual Written assignment (50%)	
MEDI6079	Eczema, Urticaria & Anaphylaxis	Guidelines (50%)	Individual Written assignment (50%)	
MEDI6077	Allergic Airways Disease	Individual Oral Presentation (40%)	Individual Reflection (10%)	Individual Written assignment (50%)
MEDI6218	Teaching the Teachers to Teach	Individual Teaching Reflection (30%)	Individual Conference Presentation (70%)	
MEDI6083	Work Based Learning	Task and Reflection (50%)	Clinical Case Reports (50%)	
MEDI6082	Clinical Research Skills	Online Examination (30%)	Data Management. Analysis and reporting (30%)	Research Proposal (40%)

## Appendix 2:

### Additional Costs

Students are responsible for meeting the cost of essential textbooks, and of producing such essays, assignments and laboratory reports as are required to fulfil the academic requirements for each programme of study. In addition to this, students registered for this programme typically also have to pay for:

- Computer: It is advisable that students provide their own laptop or personal computer, although shared facilities are available across the University campus.
- Books and Stationery Equipment (such as Recording Equipment, Webcams, Approved Calculators)
- Printing and Photocopying Costs (such as Printing coursework for submission, Academic Poster (A1) printing).
- Typing Costs
- Travel Costs for teaching and to and from the University and campus locations (including travel insurance).
- Obtaining Disclosure and Barring Certificates or Clearance Subsistence Costs
- Conference expenses
- Parking costs (including at hospitals)
- Replacing lost student ID cards

You will be able to choose optional modules (which may have different costs associated with that module) which will change the overall cost of a programme to you. Details of such costs will be listed in the Module Profile. Please also ensure you read the section on additional costs in the University's Fees, Charges and Expenses Regulations in the University Calendar available at [www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/](http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/).