

Course Specification

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.

We undertake continuous review of our courses to ensure quality enhancement and professional relevance, in response to student and other stakeholder feedback and to manage our resources. As a result, this course may be revised during a student's period of registration. Major changes to courses and modifications to courses are approved following consideration through the University's Course Approval and Review processes or Course and Unit Modification policy, as appropriate; Any changes will be balanced against our obligations to students as set out in our Student Agreement and will be discussed with and communicated to students in an appropriate and timely manner.

Basic Course Information

Final award and title	MRes Health Sciences and Services	Course Code	MRHSSP
FHEQ level and credit of final award	Level 7; 180 credits		
Intermediate awards titles	N/A		
FHEQ level and credit of intermediate award	N/A		
Awarding Institution	Health Sciences University		
Teaching Institution	Health Sciences University		
Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditation/recognition	N/A..		
Duration of PSRB accreditation/ recognition where applicable	N/A		
Mode of study	Part-Time		
Variants	N/A		
Standalone Units	RES7001: RES7001 Research Knowledge and Practice RES7002: RES7002: Research Design and Integrity		
Distance Learning course	Yes		
Standard length of course	2 years		
Language of delivery	English		
Location of delivery	Online (distance learning), delivered through Health Sciences University		
UCAS code (where applicable)	Not applicable		
HECOS Code(s)	100962		
Date Course initially approved	August 2026		

Version number	1.0
Date this version approved	August 2026
Academic year from which this applies	2026/27
Author	Professor Steven Vogel, Michelle Holmes

Course Overview

1. Admissions regulations and entry requirements

The admissions regulations for this Course are set out in the University's Recruitment, Selection and Admission Regulations published here: <https://www.hsu.ac.uk/about/policies-and-procedures/academic-regulations-policies-and-procedures><https://www.aecc.ac.uk/about/how-we-work/latest-policies/>.

These regulations include the general entry requirements and specific requirements regarding English language.

The detailed entry requirements for the course may be found from the relevant course page on the University's website.

Applicants will normally be expected to hold a recognised honours degree or equivalent (typically 2:2 or above) in a relevant health sciences, health professions, social sciences, life sciences, health management or related discipline.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

The University has a Recognition of Prior Learning Policy which can be found in the University's Recruitment, Selection and Admission Policy and Procedure for Taught Courses published here: <https://www.hsu.ac.uk/about/policies-and-procedures/academic-regulations-policies-and-procedures>.

The course is designed to support staged entry through the standalone unit route, which itself functions as a structured form of RPL into the full award. Applicants who have completed equivalent recent (within five years) Level 7 research methods training elsewhere may apply for credit recognition for RES7001 or RES7002, subject to mapping against the unit learning outcomes.

2. Additional entry requirements

Not Applicable.

3. Aims of the course

The MRes Health Sciences and Services provide professionals working in the field of health and social care, including doctoral students, clinicians, allied health professionals, academic-clinical fellows, healthcare academics, professionals and leaders, with comprehensive research methods training specifically designed for health and social care contexts. Delivered fully online with flexible elements to accommodate professionals' commitments. The curriculum is explicitly aligned with UKRIO research integrity standards, NIHR academic fellowship pathways, and PPIE frameworks, providing directly relevant career development support for professionals within health and social care.

The aims of the course are to:

3. Aims of the course

1. develop students' knowledge and critical understanding of the philosophical, methodological and ethical foundations of research in health sciences and health and care services, and how these foundations shape research design and conduct;
2. equip students with the skills to systematically access, critically appraise and synthesise existing research evidence across a range of study designs and evidence types, situating their research within current scientific and professional frameworks;
3. develop students' ability to formulate well-grounded research questions and to align them with appropriate research designs, enabling them to justify methodological choices across clinical, service, leadership and management contexts and to translate conceptual understanding into applied research practice.
4. provide a comprehensive grounding in the principal methodological traditions used in health research (qualitative, quantitative, mixed-methods and synthesis-based approaches), enabling students to evaluate and select and apply appropriate methods in the design and execution of an independent research study;
5. embed research ethics, integrity, open research and information governance as integral to the responsible conduct of research, supporting students to apply ethical principles and governance requirements throughout the full research lifecycle in line with UKRIO standards and the expectations of UK research funders and ethics committees;
6. develop students' capability to engage meaningfully with patients, the public and other stakeholders through Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) and co-creation;
7. Equip students to design, conduct, analyse and report a substantial piece of independent research, including the production of a structured, ethically grounded research proposal and the completion of an extended research project that generates original or extended knowledge within their chosen field.
8. Enable students to communicate research effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences, including the production of academically rigorous written work in formats appropriate for peer-reviewed publication and dissemination to practice or policy audiences.
9. Foster autonomy, critical judgement and reflexivity as developing researchers, supporting students to evaluate their own research practice, decision-making and positionality, and to apply this learning to future research or professional roles.
10. Prepare students to conduct research within their professional roles or to progress confidently to doctoral study and competitive funding applications, with a strong foundation in independent research practice, scholarly communication and evidence generation.

4. Course Learning Outcomes – what students will be expected to achieve

This course provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas:	The methods used to enable outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated are as follows:
Subject Knowledge and Understanding Having successfully completed this course students will be able to: A1 Critically evaluate the epistemological and ontological foundations underpinning research and evidence-based practice, demonstrating an informed understanding of how different philosophical positions shape research design, conduct, claims to knowledge and professional inquiry in health sciences and services.	Teaching and Learning Methods A1–A4 are achieved through a structured progression across the three units, integrating recorded asynchronous content (lectures, curated reading, case-based materials) with synchronous online seminars and workshops and independent work. Theoretical content is contextualised through application to learners' professional and research contexts, supported by directed reading and structured VLE-based tasks. RES7001 introduces PICO, PEO and the DEPT _H models (Diagnosis,

A2 Demonstrate systematic understanding of the principal methodological traditions used in health research, including qualitative, quantitative, mixed-methods and literature synthesis-based designs, and critically evaluate their philosophical assumptions, applications and limitations in relation to independent research enquiry. A3 Demonstrate critical understanding of research ethics and integrity, including UKRIO standards, open research principles and information governance frameworks, and apply these principles across the full research lifecycle within health research contexts. A4 Demonstrate critical understanding of the principles and practice of Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) in health research, and evaluate how PPIE and knowledge mobilisation contribute to research design, conduct, dissemination and impact.	Etiology, Prognosis, Therapeutics) as examples of complementary frameworks for classifying research questions and linking them to appropriate designs; no single framework is privileged or required, and students are supported to select and justify a framework suited to their own professional questions. RES7001 also explicitly develops scientific and academic writing alongside literature searching skills; critical appraisal within RES7001 requires students to evaluate the quality of Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) reported in published research, alongside methodological quality, and applicability to practice. These elements are revisited in RES7002 as a starting point for design choice and justification before embarking on the extended research project in RES7003. Assessment Methods A1 – literature appraisal (RES7001); presentation and Q&A (RES7001, assesses LO1); research proposal (RES7002), viva (RES7003) A2 – research proposal (RES7002); referenced in literature appraisal (RES7001) where evidence base requires methodological discussion, viva (RES7003) A3 – research proposal (RES7002), project file (RES7003) A4 – research proposal (RES7002), project file (RES7003)
Cognitive Skills Having successfully completed this course students will be able to: B1 Critically appraise research evidence across a range of study designs and evidence types, using appropriate frameworks to evaluate methodological quality, validity, the quality of patient and public involvement and applicability to practice. B2 Apply a framework such as the DEpTh model or other conceptual frameworks to categorise clinical, service and organisational research questions according to their primary focus, and critically evaluate how question type informs the selection of appropriate research designs, methods and evidence types across clinical practice, service improvement, leadership and management research. B3 Critically evaluate the relationship between epistemological and ontological positions, research paradigms and methodological choices, demonstrating the ability to align a research question with an appropriate and well-justified design. B4 Demonstrate originality and autonomy in identifying and articulating knowledge gaps	Teaching and Learning Methods B1–B4 are developed through structured, scaffolded engagement with critical appraisal exercises, paradigm-mapping activities, and design-justification workshops. Workshops use real, published research as case material, and learners are explicitly supported to reason through methodological choices in the context of their own professional questions. Tutor-guided VLE activities integrating recorded asynchronous content (lectures, curated reading, case-based materials) provide structured opportunities for guided practice between sessions. In RES7002, all students undertake a scheduled project exploration and confirmation checkpoint, normally by the midpoint of the unit, at which their proposed research question, feasibility, indicative design and support needs are discussed individually with the unit lead or supervising tutor before progression to the summative proposal. This knowledge and skills are then put into practice within the extended research project Assessment Methods B1 – literature appraisal (RES7001), research paper (RES7003) B2 – literature appraisal (RES7001)

through systematic engagement with the literature, and in formulating focused, answerable research questions that underpin the design and execution of independent research .	B3 – research proposal (RES7002); presentation and Q&A (RES7002) B4 – research proposal (RES7002); literature appraisal (RES7001); presentation and Q&A (RES7002), research paper (RES7003) Formative assessment includes structured appraisal exercises, paradigm-mapping tasks, tutor feedback on draft research questions.
Practical Skills Having successfully completed this course students will be able to: C1 Systematically access and navigate existing literature, including published research, grey literature and evidence synthesis resources, applying structured search strategies to defined research questions or practice areas. C2 Apply established appraisal tools across a range of study designs to evaluate research evidence in a methodologically rigorous and contextually informed manner. C3 Design and conduct rigorous, ethically sound research, integrating paradigmatic alignment, methodological rationale, ethical and governance considerations, and PPIE planning within an independent research project C4 Produce structured, professionally and academically relevant research outputs, including a literature appraisal, research proposal and extended research report, of a standard appropriate for professional use and for dissemination through peer-reviewed or equivalent scholarly routes .	Teaching and Learning Methods C1–C4 are developed through hands-on workshops on literature searching, critical appraisal, research design and proposal drafting, supported by tutor-guided VLE activities such as recorded asynchronous content (lectures, curated reading, case-based materials) and individual or small-group tutorial discussions at key stages of the appraisal and proposal process. Summative assessments for RES7001 and RES7002 are explicitly designed to develop these practical skills which are then applied in the extended research project. Assessment Methods C1 – literature appraisal (RES7001), research paper (RES7003) C2 – literature appraisal (RES7001), research paper (RES7003) C3 – research proposal (RES7002); presentation and Q&A (RES7002), project file (RES7003), research paper (RES7003) C4 – literature appraisal (RES7001); research proposal (RES7002), research paper (RES7003) Formative assessment includes structured search-strategy and appraisal exercises, and proposal-drafting exercises with annotated tutor feedback.
Transferable skills Having successfully completed this course students will be able to: D1 Demonstrate initiative, autonomy and personal responsibility in self-directed scholarly enquiry, including the planning, management and completion of an extended independent research project D2 Communicate research findings, critical analysis and research designs effectively in writing, to a standard appropriate for specialist and non-specialist audiences, including formats suitable for peer-reviewed publication D3 Engage critically and constructively with feedback to improve own performance and to develop scholarly judgement.	Teaching and Learning Methods D1–D4 are developed across all units through scholarly writing tasks, peer discussion, structured engagement with formative feedback, and explicit teaching on scientific and academic writing in RES7001, and on dissemination, scientific writing and grant and proposal writing in RES7002. Elements such as academic writing and dissemination will be revisited in RES7003. Independent study, which forms the largest component of learning hours, is the principal vehicle for the development of self-direction and scholarly judgement. Assessment Methods D1 – all summative components require autonomous engagement with academic literature and with research design

D4 Demonstrate skills in the dissemination of research, including scientific writing and grant or funding-related proposal writing, informed by an understanding of research impact and knowledge mobilisation	D2 – written assessments (RES7001, RES7002); oral presentation and Q&A (RES7001, RES7002), project file (RES7003), research paper (RES7003) D3 – formative feedback engagement is structured into all units D4 – research proposal (RES7002); presentation and Q&A (RES7002), project file (RES7003), research paper (RES7003), viva (RES7003). Formative assessment includes peer discussion, written and verbal tutor feedback, and follow-up discussion with tutors on summative feedback.
Professional competencies Having successfully completed this course students will be able to E1 Demonstrate ethically grounded research practice by applying UKRIO principles, open research norms and information governance frameworks throughout the design, conduct and reporting of research in health and care contexts E2 Engage meaningfully with patients, the public and other stakeholders through PPIE and co-creation, with appropriate critical reflection on questions of representation, power and impact. E3 Critically reflect on the limits of own personal and professional knowledge, skills and positionality, and demonstrate commitment to continuing development as a research-active practitioner or early-career researcher E4 Work autonomously and responsibly within professional, ethical and regulatory frameworks relevant to the conduct, management and dissemination of research in health sciences and services	Teaching and Learning Methods E1–E4 are developed through embedded engagement with research integrity, open research, information governance and PPIE throughout RES7002, supported by ethical scenario analyses, structured reflective tasks and discussion of real cases. Learners are encouraged throughout both units to reflect on their developing scholarly identity and on the limits of their current expertise. This knowledge and skills is then applied within the extended research project (RES7003). Assessment Methods E1 – research proposal (RES7002); presentation and Q&A (RES7002), project file (RES7003) E2 – research proposal (RES7002); presentation and Q&A (RES7002), project file (RES7003) E3 – formatively addressed across RES7001 and RES7002, and included in the project file (RES7003) E4 –project file (RES7003), research paper (RES7003), viva (RES7003) Formative assessment includes ethical scenario analyses, peer discussion and written tutor feedback.

Intermediate Exit Award Outcomes

PGCert Research Methods

A1 Critically evaluate the epistemological and ontological foundations underpinning research and evidence-based practice, demonstrating an informed understanding of how different philosophical positions shape knowledge production and professional inquiry in health sciences and services.

A2 Demonstrate systematic understanding of the principal methodological traditions used in health research, including qualitative, quantitative, mixed-methods and literature synthesis-based designs, and the philosophical assumptions, applications and limitations of each.

A3 Demonstrate critical understanding of research ethics and integrity, including UKRIO standards, open research principles and information governance frameworks relevant to health research.

A4 Demonstrate critical understanding of the principles and practice of Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) in health research, and of how knowledge is translated into practice, policy and impact.

- B1 Critically appraise research evidence across a range of study designs and evidence types, using appropriate frameworks to evaluate methodological quality, validity, the quality of patient and public involvement and applicability to practice.
- B2 Apply a framework such as the DEPTH model or other conceptual frameworks to categorise clinical, service and organisational research questions according to their primary focus, and critically evaluate how question type shapes the choice of appropriate research designs across clinical practice, service improvement, leadership and management research.
- B3 Critically evaluate the relationship between epistemological and ontological positions, research paradigms and methodological choices, demonstrating the ability to align a research question with an appropriate and well-justified design.
- B4 Demonstrate originality and autonomy in identifying and articulating knowledge gaps from systematic engagement with the literature, and in formulating focused, answerable research questions that respond to those gaps.
- C1 Systematically access and navigate existing literature, including published research, grey literature and evidence synthesis resources, applying structured search strategies to defined research questions or practice areas.
- C2 Apply established appraisal tools across a range of study designs to evaluate research evidence in a methodologically rigorous and contextually informed manner.
- C3 Design rigorous, ethically sound research, integrating paradigmatic alignment, methodological rationale, ethical considerations and PPIE planning.
- C4 Produce structured, professionally relevant research outputs (a literature appraisal and a research proposal) of a standard appropriate for use within professional practice or for submission to a research ethics committee or funding body.
- D1 Demonstrate initiative, autonomy and personal responsibility in self-directed scholarly enquiry, including the management of own learning and development as a research-active practitioner.
- D2 Communicate findings, critical analysis and research proposals effectively in writing, to a standard appropriate for specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- D3 Engage critically and constructively with feedback to improve own performance and to develop scholarly judgement.
- D4 Demonstrate foundational skills in the dissemination of research, including scientific writing and grant and proposal writing.
- E1 Demonstrate ethically grounded research practice, applying UKRIO principles, open research norms and information governance frameworks to the design and conduct of research in health and care contexts.
- E2 Engage meaningfully with patients, the public and other stakeholders through PPIE and co-creation, with appropriate critical reflection on questions of representation, power and impact.
- E3 Recognise the limits of own personal and professional knowledge, skills and experience, and demonstrate commitment to continuing development as a research-active practitioner.
- E4 Work autonomously and responsibly within professional, ethical and regulatory frameworks relevant to research in health sciences and services.

Course Structure

5. Outline of course content

This course is designed for clinical and non-clinical professionals working in or adjacent to health and care services, including doctoral students in health sciences, NHS clinicians and allied health professionals, academic-clinical fellows (including those on NIHR-aligned pathways), academic staff in healthcare institutions, and professionals from health management and health business contexts. The course provides

5. Outline of course content

a coherent progression from the critical appraisal of existing evidence to the design of new research, with research integrity, open research, information governance and PPIE embedded throughout.

The course consists of three core units at Level 7:

RES7001: Research Knowledge and Practice (30 credits) – provides the theoretical and practical foundations for engaging critically with research and evidence-based practice. The unit covers the philosophical underpinnings of research; evidence-based medicine and evidence-based practice; Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE); systematic literature searching, critical appraisal (including evaluation of the quality of patient and public involvement in published research), and the use of grey literature; the distinctions between research, audit and service evaluation; scientific and academic writing; and question-classification frameworks including PICO, PEO, and the DEPTH model are presented as complementary rather than prescribed approaches to linking research questions to designs.

RES7002: Research Design and Integrity (30 credits) – revisits the epistemological and evidence-based practice foundations of RES7001 where relevant, while also functioning as a standalone unit, and equips learners to design rigorous, ethically sound research. The unit covers the relationship between research questions, knowledge gaps and paradigmatic alignment; qualitative, quantitative, mixed-methods and literature-based methodological traditions; research ethics and integrity (UKRIO standards, open research, information governance); PPIE; knowledge transfer and dissemination; and an introduction to scientific writing and grant and proposal writing; with alignment to the Vitae Researcher Development Framework. All students undertake a scheduled project exploration and confirmation checkpoint during the unit, at which their proposed research question, feasibility, design and support needs are discussed individually with the unit lead or supervising tutor before progressing to the summative proposal. The unit culminates in the production of a structured research proposal.

RES7003: Extended Research Project (120 credits) – provides an opportunity to complete an independent piece of applied research, building on prior learning from RES7001 and RES7002 to design, conduct, analyse and critically evaluate original research that contributes to the evidence based in health sciences and services.

A full course diagram is provided at Appendix 1, the learning outcomes mapping at Appendix 2, and the course summary at Appendix 3.

6. Placements, work-based learning or other special features of the course

The course does not include a formal placement or work-based learning component. Learners are explicitly encouraged, however, to ground both summative assessments in their own professional context. The extended research project and associated activities may be developed within a clinical, professional or service setting of the learner's choosing, providing direct relevance to learners' practice or research roles. Any work-based research activity that arises is the responsibility of the learner's employing organisation rather than the University, and learners are advised throughout on the appropriate governance, ethics and information governance considerations.

7. Course structure, levels, units, credit and award

The level of study, units and credits required for the course and for final and intermediate exit awards are set out in the **course diagram** provided at [Appendix 1](#).

The **learning outcomes mapping document** at [Appendix 2](#) shows the relationship between the Learning Outcomes for units and the overarching Learning Outcomes of the course.

The **Course summary document** at [Appendix 3](#) shows the structure of each unit in terms of summative assessment and gives an indication of learning hours/student workload for each unit.

8. Learning hours/student workload

University courses are made up of units of study, which are given a credit value indicating the notional amount of learning undertaken. One credit equates to ten student study hours, including student contact time, tutor guided learning time, and independent study (including assessment). Ten University credits are equivalent to five European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits.

Student contact time is a broad term, referring to the amount of time students can expect to engage with University staff in relation to teaching and learning. It includes scheduled teaching sessions (sessions on a student and/or staff timetable), specific academic guidance (i.e. not broader pastoral support/guidance) and feedback. For this course, contact time is delivered online, including synchronous lectures and seminars, practical workshops and small-group case-based activities through Microsoft Teams, alongside personalised tutor presence in online discussion forums and through email. Online contact time can be synchronous or asynchronous and is always characterised by personalised tutor presence and input within a specified timeframe. Opportunities for one-to-one interaction with members of staff, during which students can receive individual help or personalised feedback on their progress, may include scheduled office hours and email-based interactions.

Independent study incorporates student-led activities (without the guidance of a member of teaching staff), such as preparation for scheduled sessions, reflecting on feedback received and planning for future tasks, follow-up work, wider reading (including reading beyond set topics), or practice, revision, and completion of assessment tasks,

Independent study helps students learn to manage their own learning as preparation for the expectations of a professional life that emphasises continuing professional development and life-long learning.

Tutor-guided learning covers specific learning activities that students are asked to undertake by a tutor, such as directed reading, review of learning materials on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) in advance of scheduled 'flipped classroom' sessions.

Units RES7001 and RES7002 are both 30 credits each representing 300 notional hours of learning. The indicative profile of these units is approximately 30 hours of student contact time, 60 hours of tutor-guided learning, and 210 hours of independent study. In a typical teaching week within a unit, students will normally have around 2-3 hours of live contact time delivered online (including lectures, seminars and workshops). Students will have around 5-6 hours of tutor-guided time in a typical teaching week, including directed reading and structured VLE tasks. Independent study averages around 16–20 hours per week across the duration of a unit, with this loading rising in the lead-up to summative assessment. Within RES7003, there will be 2 hours of live interactive online workshops each month. Additional contact will include academic supervision and tutorials. You will be supported with online materials via the VLE.

More detail about student workload is provided in unit specifications.

9. Staff delivering the course

Students will be taught by University academic staff with research methods expertise relevant to health sciences and services.

The core course staff include researchers in the UCO SoO with active portfolios across qualitative, quantitative, mixed-methods and synthesis methodologies, and with experience of supervising research at doctoral level and securing competitive research funding. The course will utilise expertise from across the breadth and depth of the HSU including expert teaching staff from other schools within the university. The course team will also utilise its wide network of external expertise to enhance the teaching within the course across a range of topics.

10. Progression and assessment regulations

The regulations for this course are the University's standard Assessment Regulations which are published here:

10. Progression and assessment regulations

<https://www.hsu.ac.uk/about/policies-and-procedures/academic-regulations-policies-and-procedures/>

The regulations for this course are the University's standard Assessment Regulations. No exceptions are sought.

The course follows standard Level 7 PG Cert progression and award requirements: a student must successfully complete 180 credits at Level 7 (RES7001: Research Knowledge and Practice, 30 credits, and RES7002: Research Design and Integrity, 30 credits, RES7003 Extended Research Project) to be eligible for the award of MRes Health Sciences and Services.

11. Employment progression routes

The course is designed to support a range of employment and progression routes. Anticipated graduate destinations include: continued professional practice with enhanced research literacy and evaluation capability; service evaluation, audit and quality improvement work within health and care organisations; doctoral study (including professional doctorates, NIHR-aligned academic-clinical pathways and traditional PhD routes); applied research roles in health services research, public health, allied health professions research and clinical academic medicine; and research management or commissioning roles within health and care organisations and policy bodies. The course prepares graduates for these routes through its emphasis on critical appraisal, research design, ethical and methodological judgement, and the production of professionally relevant outputs, including a literature appraisal, a research proposal and the completion of an extended independent research project. RES7002 includes explicit content on grant and proposal writing, scientific writing and dissemination, and the course is structured so that the proposal developed for the RES7002 assessment is implemented through the Extended Research Project (RES7003), culminating in the generation, analysis and dissemination of original research that can be carried forward into doctoral study, funding applications or the learner's own professional research practice.

12. Additional costs and special or unusual conditions which apply to this course

Additional costs are mandatory or optional costs which students will need to meet in order to fully participate in and complete their course. Students will need to budget for these costs separately as they are not included in the overall Course Fee they are charged.

'Special or unusual conditions' are aspects of the course which students may not be expecting and which may therefore have an impact on whether or not they wish to undertake the course.

Information about additional costs and special or unusual conditions applying to students on this course can be found in the **Important information to take into account when choosing your course** published here: <https://www.hsu.ac.uk/student-life/student-finances/additional-costs/>

There are no significant additional course costs beyond standard tuition fees and the ordinary requirements for postgraduate online study (reliable internet access, a personal device suitable for online learning, and access to required reading, the majority of which is available through the University Library).

13. Methods for evaluating the quality of learning and teaching

Students have the opportunity to engage in the quality assurance and enhancement of their courses in a number of ways, which may include:

- Completing student surveys annually to give feedback on individual units and on the course as a whole.
- Taking part in focus groups as arranged.
- Seeking nomination as a Student Union representative OR engaging with these elected student representatives.

- Serving as a student representative on Course Consideration panels for course approval/review.
- Taking part in Course Consideration or professional body meetings by joining a group of students to meet with the panel.
- Taking part in meetings with the external examiner(s) for the course (such meetings may take place virtually).

The ways in which the quality of the University's courses are monitored and assured, both inside and outside the institution, are:

- Annual monitoring of units and courses.
- Periodic Course review, at least every six years.
- External examiners, who produce an annual report.
- Oversight by Academic Standards and Quality Committee (which includes student representation), reporting to Academic Board.

14. Inclusivity statement

The University is committed to being an institution where students and staff from all backgrounds can flourish. We recognise the importance of equality of opportunity and promoting diversity, in accordance with our [Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy](#). We are committed to a working and learning environment that is free from physical, verbal and non-verbal harassment and bullying of individuals on any grounds, and where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, within a positive and satisfying learning and working environment.

The University seeks to ensure that all students admitted to our courses have the opportunity to fulfil their educational potential. The interests of students with protected characteristics will be taken into consideration and reasonable adjustments will be made provided that these do not compromise academic or professional standards as expressed through the learning outcomes.

The course is designed with inclusivity at its core. Online delivery removes geographical barriers and supports learners with caring responsibilities, those with health conditions, and those whose work demands fluctuate. Synchronous activity is timetabled to support working professionals, with sessions recorded where appropriate and asynchronous alternatives made available. All summative assessment is coursework-based (written assignment and oral presentation). Learners are free to choose the substantive topic, supporting learners across the breadth of the cohort. Reasonable adjustments will be made in line with the University's policies.

15. External reference points

This course has been designed with reference to the following external benchmarks and reference points to ensure that the course aims and learning outcomes have been developed appropriately to match the characteristics of Master's-level study and the demands of research methods education in health sciences and services:

- UK Quality Code for Higher Education (2024) and the QAA Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies.
- QAA Characteristics Statement: Master's Degree.
- Higher Education Credit Framework for England.
- SEEC Credit Level Descriptors for Higher Education (2021), particularly the Level 7 descriptors.
- Vitae Researcher Development Framework (2025), particularly in relation to research methods, critical thinking and analysis, project management, open research, research integrity and ethics, and communication, knowledge exchange and public engagement; RES7002 and RES7003 is aligned with this framework

15. External reference points

There is no Subject Benchmark Statement specifically for postgraduate research methods in health sciences and services. The course has therefore been benchmarked against the QAA Master's Characteristics Statement and against research integrity and PPIE expectations articulated by national bodies including UKRIO and NIHR, and against relevant researcher development capabilities set out in the Vitae Researcher Development Framework.

These reference points have been used to ensure that the learning outcomes reflect Level 7 expectations regarding systematic understanding of current insights in the field, autonomy and decision-making in complex situations, originality in the application of knowledge, effective communication, and personal responsibility for ethically informed practice. The same principles have been applied in the development of the unit-level learning outcomes.

16. Internal reference points and policy frameworks

The course has been designed in alignment with the following internal frameworks:

- University Strategic Plan
- Education Strategy 2023–2026
- University Course Design Framework
- University Standard Admission Regulations
- University Standard Assessment Regulations
- University Assessment Feedback Policy

The course conforms fully with the University's academic policies and procedures applicable to Taught Courses.

Record of Modifications

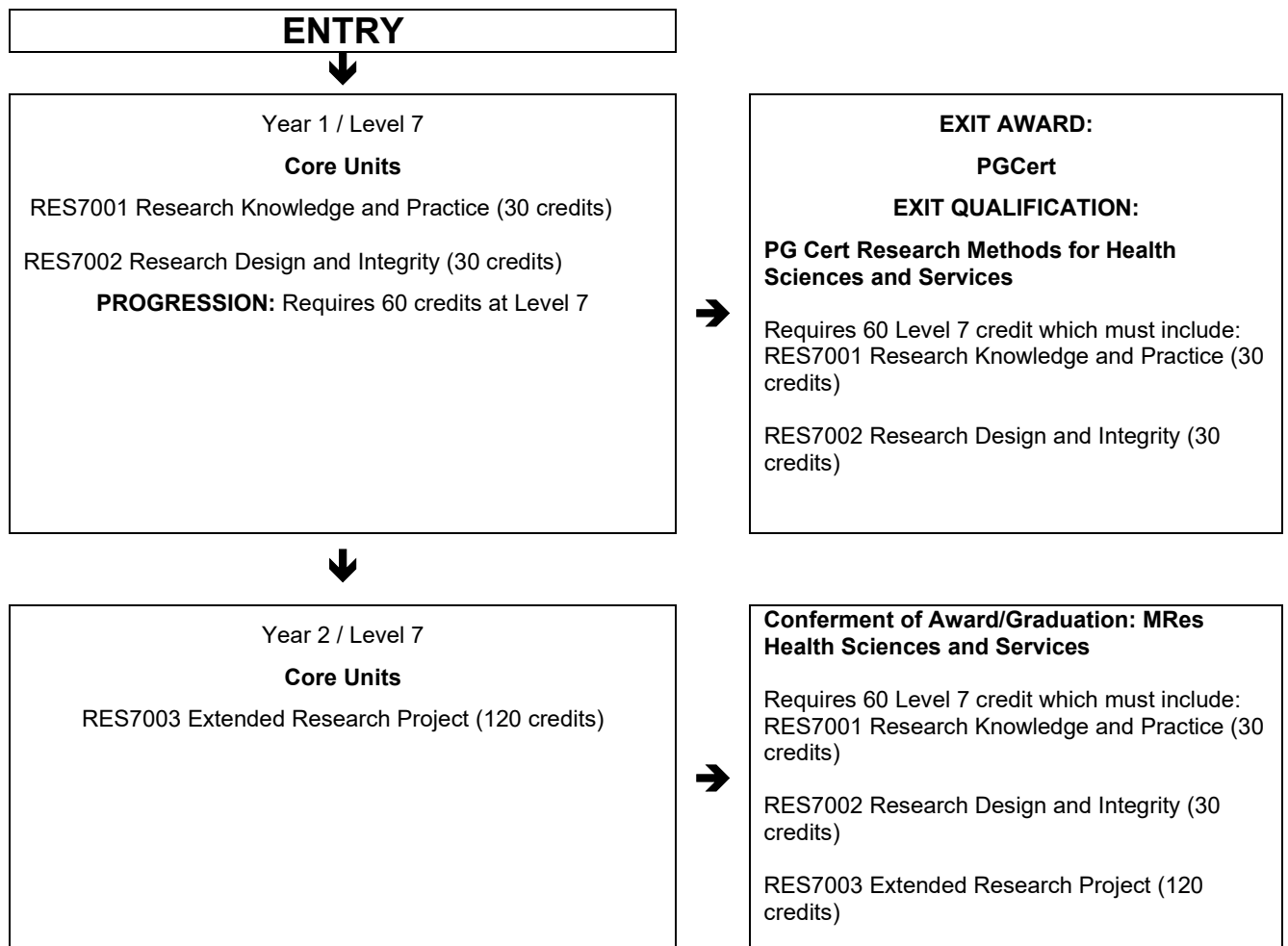
Course level

Description of Modification	Date approved	Intake to which modification applies

Unit level

Unit code and title	Nature of modification	Date of approval/ approving body	Intake to which modification applies

Appendix 1: Course Diagram MRes Health Sciences and Services



Appendix 2: Learning outcomes mapping document template

This table shows where a learning outcome referenced in the course specification may be taught (T), developed (D) and/or assessed (A) within a unit. The numbers A1 A2 B1 B2 etc refer back to the learning outcomes listed under Subject Knowledge and Understanding, Cognitive Skills, Practical Skills, Transferable Skills and Professional Competencies in this course specification template (Course [Intended Learning Outcomes](#)).

Course Outcomes – Subject Knowledge & Understanding (A) and Cognitive Skills (B)

Unit Code	Level	A1	A2	A3	A4	B1	B2	B3	B4
RES7001 – Research Knowledge and Practice	7	TDA	TD		TDA	TDA	TDA	TD	TDA
RES7002 – Research Design and Integrity	7	TDA	TDA	TDA	TDA	TD		TDA	TDA
RES7003 – Extended Research Project	7	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	D	D	DA

Course Outcomes – Practical Skills (C), Transferable Skills (D), and Professional Competencies (E)

Unit Code	Level	C1	C2	C3	C4	D1	D2	D3	D4	E1	E2	E3	E4
RES7001 – Research Knowledge and Practice	7	TDA	TDA		TDA	TD	TDA	TDA	TD	TD	TD	TD	TD
RES7002 – Research Design and Integrity	7	TD	TD	TDA	TDA	TD	TDA	TD	TDA	TDA	TDA	TD	TDA
RES7003 – Extended Research Project	7	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA

Key: T = taught; D = developed; A = assessed.

Appendix 3: Course Summary

This must be consistent with information provided in each unit specification.

Course title: MRes Health Sciences and Services

Unit details						Assessment Component Weightings (%) (Formal elements only)						Prof. body requirement applies*	Indicative learning hours			
Code	Title	Version	Credits	Core/ Option	Pre/ co requisites	Exam 1	Exam 2	Cwk 1	Cwk 2	Prac 1	Prac 2		Student contact time	Indepen dent study	Tutor- guided learning time	Place ment
RES7001	Research Knowledge and Practice	1.0	30	C	None			80%		20%		N	30	210	60	0
RES7002	Research Design and Integrity	1.0	30	C	None			80%		20%		N	30	210	60	0
RES7003	Extended Research Project	1.0	120	C	None			30%	50%	20%		N	81	1059	60	0
Progression requirements: Successful completion of 60 credits at Level 7, comprising RES7001 (30 credits) and RES7002 (30 credits). Exit qualification: N/A MRes Health Sciences and Services. Requires 180 Level 7 credits which must include RES7001: Research Knowledge and Practice, RES7002: Research Design and Integrity and RES7003 Extended Research Project. PG Cert Research Methods for Health Sciences and Services. Requires 60 Level 7 credits which must include RES7001: Research Knowledge and Practice and RES7002: Research Design and Integrity.																

* If this box is marked 'yes,' then a requirement is set by the relevant professional body which must be applied in the assessment of the component and/ or unit. See relevant Unit Specification for further information.