



APHEA

Agency for Public Health
Education Accreditation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR THE ACCREDITATION REVIEW OF

MSc Public Health



BRISTOL

University of the
West of England

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

Accreditation granted May 2015 to May 2021

SITE VISIT DATES: March 12 - 13, 2015

SITE VISIT TEAM:
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Julien Goodman, Director APHEA

The team would like to thank the programme team at the University of West of England, Bristol for the preparation of all the documents required and the exceptional hospitality whilst on site. From the documentation and visit, the team was able to discern quite thoroughly how everything was arranged and organised within the programme. The team appreciated the work and collaboration of the programme and would like to especially thank Nick de Viggiani and Catherine Dyer for the organisational approach during the event which has been crucial for the mission and stay in Bristol.

The programme was found to be very well organised with the structure and governance quite clear. There had been discussions regarding the market position of the programme and whether it is competing with other programmes. The team had understood that there is not a real competition because there is a niche and a place within England for their local market and there is an international market for students, which is quite secure and constant. The team had also understood that the programme offers good career prospects and improvement for national and international students. All of the students, staff and stakeholders had informed the team that most of the students had come from employment and that they have good opportunities for promotion and new careers afterwards, which is an important aspect of the programme. Suggested recommendations were for the programme to be more focused on tracking the alumni in the future especially the international students as the programme so far tracks only the national students. The suggestion was to consider the establishment of an Alumni Association with the potential use of lifelong email accounts through Facebook in order not to lose contact with them after one or two years. This would be a good endeavour to understand what's happened with the students and to keep track of them but also for use in marketing.

With regard to the aims and objectives of the programme the team found that the aims are very clear and are shared between staff and students and everybody is aware of what the programme aims towards. The information regarding the programme is clear and readily available for all students and staff. All course material or modules are available and well documented. The team also found that the programme is focused on competences which is exactly what one would expect, on the basis of a previous work cross-referencing to the lists of competences. This has also been a good starting point for refreshing the programme as it allowed for the periodic review of the programme.

The team had discussed both internally and with the school the possibility of an amount of flexibility within the programme. The team was aware of how the module structure and the competences aligned within the programme but wondered about the possibility to implement optional or extra offers in areas, for example, in human rights, global governance, disaster preparedness and ethics. It would be nice to be able to offer the students optional extras such as extra lectures in some of the subjects. The team had been informed that there is a pilot placement scheme which was not structurally implemented as part of the main programme so far. The team thought it would be a good opportunity to encourage these placements as it would enrich the programme and the international students' experience within the UK. This could also be attached to some research questions, for example through the dissertation or through case studies. The team felt there was potential to improve this part of the programme to give more value to the student experience.

The curriculum was found to be comprehensive and covered the majority of competences required by the modern public health workforce. All the main areas of public health are covered and well done. There are some areas which require some reorganisation such as the calculation for the ECTS credits to align them more with the European system. Postgraduate Masters programmes at the University of the West of England, Bristol require completion of 180 UK credits, (equivalent to 60 European ECTS credits). Within the block modules there has been some enquiry during the visit as to whether the blocks had contained the relevant competences, as they were not explicitly mentioned. However, during the enquiry, it was clear that all the competences required were covered and therefore the suggestion would be to use a more transparent terminology so that students (especially international students) can be able to understand the terminology used. This would make the contents more transparent and evident within the programme. Finally, the programme may wish to think about expanding European and international focus. The understanding was that the programme relied on the international students' backgrounds to ensure the international flavour to the programme. However, the international content is much more than just comparing different international situations from the students' perspective; the programme is advised to consider what it really offers the students in understanding what is happening within an international public health approach.

The programme exceeded expectations of the students and many of them did not expect such a broad and forward leading programme. The students were enthusiastic about the programme and it helped them break down the conception of public health being medical and hierarchical in nature. As such, the students received a much broader and more modern view of public health than they would have received in their countries. With regard to the alumni, once again, an Alumni Association was seen as useful for the students once they finished the programme, as they may become "lost" in the problematic situations within their countries. In addition to having alumni associations, the programme should encourage and support graduates within their own environment to link to public health, for example, with public health associations within their own countries.

The team were impressed with an exceptional and devoted faculty who were found to possess a great team spirit. There is also a very good rapport with the students. As a potential recommendation, the programme may wish to consider improving the research component of the faculty. At present it is good with well renowned publications but perhaps could be broadened through the use of a research strategy which could be considered or developed over the long-term.

The team had the impression that the facilities and services provided to the students were impeccable. The team were most impressed with the student well-being services and with the peer-assisted learning (PAL) which was found to be an exceptional model, to be transported and encouraged throughout Europe.

The internal quality management system is in place and works well, with the external stakeholders and the students involved, and a continuous feedback included in the system. The stakeholders mentioned a memorandum of understanding as the basis of their relationship with the school; the team felt that this relationship should be further formalised in the years to come. All stakeholders, with one exception, were former students; in the future it might be worth considering stakeholders coming from a more general environment.

The final remarks were to reiterate that the team felt that it was an impressive programme at the University of West of England, Bristol.

Summary of Conclusions

| Criterion I: Governance and Organisation of the Programme | |
|---|---------------|
| Sub – Criterion 1.1 | Met |
| Sub – Criterion 1.2 | Met |
| 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 |
| Sub – Criterion 3.3 | Partially Met |
| Sub – Criterion 3.4 | Met |
| Sub – Criterion 3.5 | Met |
| Sub – Criterion 3.6 | Met |
| Sub – Criterion 3.7 | Partially 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 | Met |
| Sub – Criterion 7.2 | Met |
| Sub – Criterion 7.3 | Met |
| Sub – Criterion 7.4 | Met |