Programme Specification

MSc Applied Human Nutrition

Valid from: February 2015

Faculty of Health and Life Sciences
SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awarding body:</th>
<th>Oxford Brookes University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching institution and location:</td>
<td>Oxford Brookes University, Gipsy Lane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final award:</td>
<td>Master of Science, PG Diploma, PG Certificate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme title:</td>
<td>Applied Human Nutrition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interim exit awards and award titles:</td>
<td>PG Diploma, PG Certificate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brookes course code:</td>
<td>BM60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCAS/UKPASS code:</td>
<td>P027796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JACS code:</td>
<td>B400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode of delivery:</td>
<td>On-campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode/s of study:</td>
<td>FT/PT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language of study:</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant QAA subject benchmark statement/s:</td>
<td>The outcomes of the Applied Human Nutrition MSc broadly conform to the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education descriptors for a qualification at Master’s degree level as set out in the current National Qualifications Framework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External accreditation/recognition: (applicable to programmes with professional body approval)</td>
<td>Course is accredited with the Association for Nutrition (AfN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty managing the programme:</td>
<td>Health and Life Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of production (or most recent revision) of specification:</td>
<td>February 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SECTION 2: OVERVIEW AND PROGRAMME AIMS

2.1 Rationale for/distinctiveness of the programme

The programme is designed to provide students with a sound grounding in the application of human nutrition. An evidence based approach to enquiry is a skill sought by employers, particularly when it is accompanied by an awareness of the workplace and professional practise; also a focus of the postgraduate provision.

The Applied Human Nutrition programme is underpinned by research. High profile speakers from the food industry, government and research bodies regularly present You have opportunities to work with our Functional Food Centre, the UK's first research centre dedicated to functional foods, in undertaking your research project - involving you in some of the cutting
edge research that helps the government and food industry develop new products with specific health and nutritional benefits

Students will learn through a variety of methods from lectures by staff directly engaged in their own research to opportunities, to developing their skills in evidence-based practice, to undertaking their own research projects involving the collection and analysis of data. Our aspiration is that student will develop their intellectual curiosity and gain the skills of critical analysis which will assist them in their future careers.

The MSc course is accredited by the Association for Nutrition which holds the UK Voluntary Register of Nutritionists. Students have the opportunity to apply for Direct Entry to the UKVRN, at Associate level. There is increasing recognition among employers, in industry and in the public sectors that registration with the society is a sign of quality, which could enhance graduate career prospects. The PG certificate and PG diploma are not accredited by the Association for Nutrition.

2.2 Aims of the programme

The purpose of the MSc in Applied Human Nutrition is to offer a structured, flexible and progressive programme of study to students, in preparation for careers in a wide variety of related fields, e.g. research, teaching, nutritional consultancy, public health, policy development, the health and fitness industry, or more generally, the biosciences. In addition the programme seeks to:

- provide students with a systematic understanding of the scientific principles, procedures and methods underlying the nutritional requirements of humans throughout their life cycle and how these are attained
- provide a practical and fundamental knowledge of the basis of dietary requirements in health and disease and how to translate these into food-based guidelines
- provide an extensive knowledge of diseases caused by poor diet and the nutritional, food and health problems in different parts of the world
- provide a knowledge of food staples and commodities, their nutritional value, the science which underlies their composition as well as changes which occur to them during their storage and processing into conventional and novel products.
- provide a knowledge of the appropriate techniques by which foods may be tested for nutritional composition, biochemical properties, physical and sensory attributes as well as considerations of microbiological safety.
- develop a knowledge of the role of the community and local, national and international bodies in maintaining the nutritional health of the population
- develop a knowledge of the basis of current and impending food and nutrition policy; how food policy is developed, and its influence on human health and the food supply chain
- demonstrate the concept of health promotion and where it originated from through counselling and goal setting for diet, nutrition and exercise in health and disease
- enable students to develop research skills required for the collection, analysis and presentation of data in the nutritional sciences
- understand and appreciate the Association for Nutrition’s (AfN) Standards of Ethics, Conduct and Performance, in line with the AfN’s competency requirements for accredited courses.

SECTION 3: PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

This programme aims to help students achieve a range of learning outcomes (knowledge, understanding and skills) that can be grouped under one of 5 graduate attributes as shown below.
On completion of this programme of study, you will be able to (bracket indicate which qualification each learning outcome applies to):

3.1 **Academic literacy**

- demonstrate a systematic understanding of knowledge of the science of human nutrition throughout the life cycle (MSc; PGdip; PGcert)
- demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of the nutritional components of foodstuffs and the consequences of their manipulation and the concept of nutrient bioavailability (MSc; PGdip)
- have a detailed knowledge of the methodology and methods used to identify and communicate the factors which contribute to an adequate diet, and apply preventative advice at a community level (MSc; PGdip; PGcert)
- be conversant with the techniques used to establish the nutritional status of individuals (MSc; PGdip; PGcert)
- demonstrate the techniques used to determine the nutritional value and organoleptic quality of foods (MSc; PGdip)
- have a comprehensive understanding of methods used to develop new food products with nutritional improvements (MSc; PGdip)
- have a good understanding of new approaches and new technologies as they apply to nutrition and food products (MSc; PGdip)
- evaluate the processes involved in product development in relation to special dietary needs (MSc; PGdip)

3.2 **Research literacy**

- critically evaluate current research in nutrition, to criticise methods used in food production and to produce new hypotheses in nutrition related research (MSc; PGdip)
- demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge in depth of one aspect of nutrition by independent learning as part of the research project (MSc)
- structure, manage and carry out a research project, presenting a well-structured and comprehensive research report (MSc)

3.3 **Critical self-awareness and personal literacy**

- formulate and adopt a strategic, analytical and creative approach to problem solving (MSc)
- work effectively as both an individual or as a member of a team, using a range of academic skills which centre upon enquiry, research, analysis and information dissemination (MSc; PGdip; PGcert)
- demonstrate effective presentation and demonstration skills of nutritional information through verbal, written and graphic mediums (MSc; PGdip; PGcert)
- be efficient at time management, self-direction and self-motivation, particularly in relation to multi-task initiatives (MSc; PGdip; PGcert)
- set personal objectives and relate the course content to their longer term career objectives (MSc; PGdip)

3.4 **Digital and information literacy**
• observe, gather, evaluate, interpret and integrate ideas and evidence in the nutrition domain to support findings and hypotheses (MSc; PGdip; PGcert)
• apply numerical problem-solving skills in the context of nutrition (MSc; PGdip)
• record and report findings using accepted scientific formats (MSc; PGdip; PGcert)
• demonstrate the application of research design and common statistical methods to research problems in nutrition (MSc; PGdip)

3.5 Active citizenship
• demonstrate a critical awareness of the international, national and social impact of nutrition (MSc; PGdip; PGcert)
• demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of, and propose changes in, global and local policies relating to nutrition and food production (MSc; PGdip)

The science and practice of nutrition is inherently international and one taught module on the degree is dedicated exclusively to international nutrition, its problems and potential solutions. Throughout the course, students will participate in group sessions to discuss practical international issues and case studies and the application of theoretical concepts in an international context. The course will also cover relevant international organisations and bodies and their interrelationships, international nutrition policy, its implementation and its outcomes. All teaching staff have substantial overseas experience.

SECTION 4: PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND CURRICULUM

4.1 Programme structure and requirements:

The MSc course consists of six core modules and a Research Project and is delivered in full-time (one year) and part-time (two-year or three-year) modes.

For the Postgraduate Diploma, modules P16501, P16502, P16503, P16504, P16505, PX must be passed

For the Postgraduate Certificate, 60 M-level points are required including P16501 Human Nutrition, either P16502 International Nutrition and/or P16503 Food Science and one other module which could include P16504 Research Methods, P16505 Nutrition, Physical Activity and Health, PX Health promotion and professional practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module No. (Provisional)</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P16501</td>
<td>Human Nutrition</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P16502</td>
<td>International Nutrition</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P16503</td>
<td>Food Science</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P16504</td>
<td>Research Methods</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P16505</td>
<td>Nutrition, Physical Activity and Health</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PX</td>
<td>Health promotion and professional practice</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P16509</td>
<td>Research Project</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the MSc qualification, all modules are compulsory.
Timing

The full-time course normally takes one calendar year with enrolment taking place in late September. Enrolment and Induction week is the week before the start date of the course. There is only one entry point per year.

Taught modules occur in 2 semesters, Semester 1 from the end of September to mid-December and Semester 2 from the end of January to start of May, with a break for Easter. Examinations will be in December and May. Students must be available for the exam period.

The time allocated for the Research Project is the summer period, from the end of May to the end of August with ethical approval being obtained prior to this period.

The timing of the individual modules is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module No.</th>
<th>Module Title</th>
<th>Semester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P16501</td>
<td>Human Nutrition</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P16502</td>
<td>International nutrition</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P16503</td>
<td>Food Science</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P16504</td>
<td>Research Methods</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P16505</td>
<td>Nutrition, Physical Activity and Health</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PX</td>
<td>Health promotion and professional practice</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P16506</td>
<td>Research Project</td>
<td>Summer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Part-time course can be taken in two years by the above scheme: In year 1, Research Methods and Human Nutrition are taken in Semester 1 and one or two of International Nutrition, Nutrition Physical Activity and Health or Health promotion and professional practice taken in Semester 2. Over the summer, the Research Project is started. In year 2, Food Science is taken in Semester 1 and the remaining modules from Semester 2 (not taken in Year 1) are taken. During the summer, the Research Project is finished.

If required, the course can be extended up to five years for a part-time student. The Course Leader will advise on this, if required.

4.2 Professional requirements

Successful completion of all modules (the MSc qualification) are required to qualify for accreditation with the Association for Nutrition to register as an Associate Nutritionist (ANutr).

SECTION 5: PROGRAMME DELIVERY

5.1 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods used

The modules are characterised by an appropriate breadth and depth of content that is informed by relevant benchmark statements, the requirements of the accrediting body (AfN) and the latest research. A wide mix of teaching methods will be used throughout the modules on this course.

They include a variety of teaching, learning and assessment methods that are informed by contemporary practice in science teaching in higher education with specific emphasis on being applied and applying research to teaching and learning. All modules make use of the Brookes Virtual Learning Environment (typically for locating module resources, but often also for quizzes and coursework submissions). Assessment methods include essays, reviews, laboratory/field notebooks, scientific reports, posters and oral presentations. Reflective
learning is encouraged through use of self, peer or staff formative feedback on assignments, group work and project work, and reflective diaries.

Specifically, the Research Project will develop independent learning, self-motivation, planning and implementing tasks at a professional level. The Research Project will additionally give an opportunity for the student to display originality in thought, deal with complex issues and communicate conclusions.

Co-ordinated implementation of the previous School of Life Sciences’ Assessment Strategy, augmented by the University Assessment Compact, is designed to ensure that students progress towards meeting programme outcomes while experiencing diversity and balance in assessment practice within and between modules and equity in module workloads. The staff are committed to providing students with clear assessment criteria, and useful and timely feedback on all their work and a Student Charter lays out the staff commitment with respect to this.

There is an average of 36 hours of contact between staff and students on each module with the balance of student effort, totalling 200 hours, involving tutor- and self-directed independent learning. Approximately two-thirds of modules will contain an exam element which typically comprises between 40 and 60% of the available marks.

The quality of academic provision for students will continue to be assessed regularly by programme teams, principally through annual student evaluation of each module, and through critical appraisal of the annual external examiner reports.

Dissemination and encouragement of good practice will continue to be facilitated through staff development activities and operation of the University’s peer enhancement of teaching and learning scheme (PETAL).

Cross-cultural capability and responsible citizenship are encouraged and nurtured in our programmes in a number of ways: the use in teaching of international text books and journals that expose UK students to non-UK perspectives; study abroad opportunities; international staff exchanges and visits that expose students to different cultural perspectives; the presence of international students on our programmes; the use of groupwork to facilitate cultural interaction between home and international students; and the inclusion of a ‘Science and Humanity’ module at level 6 that encourages students to think beyond the traditional confines of science and engage with a wide range of science-based issues from different cultural perspectives.

The teaching, learning and assessment on the course support the University’s Graduate Attributes through their fulfilment of the learning outcomes for the course. Many of the learning outcomes for the MSc Applied Human Nutrition are imbedded throughout the student learning on the course rather than just on single modules. Students are asking to apply information from previous modules in future ones and through into their research projects. Assessments are aimed to build skills in a variety of communication methods (presentations, scientific reports, newspaper articles) whilst also demonstrating the required knowledge.

**Linking Teaching with Research**

Nutrition at Oxford Brookes has an active research group under the umbrella of the Functional Food Centre, staffed by experienced academics with an international reputation. The material taught on the course is supported by research currently being undertaken in the department and the wider research interests of the academic staff. There is always an opportunity to link students’ research project to larger ongoing research programmes in the group. In addition, in the group we have visiting Professors, visiting Fellows and a programme of academic visitors, all of whom contribute to teaching and/or research project supervision.

Knowledge and understanding in many areas of science represented by programmes within the Department are rapidly advancing. Articles from primary research journals are featured in student reading lists, and students are encouraged to use primary research journals in
preparing assignments. Research-active staff often give topic lectures that focus on their research interests. Students also have the opportunity to attend regular research-focused seminars delivered by members of staff or invited speakers.

### 5.2 Assessment regulations

The programme conforms to the University Regulations [Postgraduate framework - http://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/current especific/b4/]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION 6: ADMISSIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### 6.1 Entry criteria

Candidates for the MSc degree should normally have (or be about to attain) at least a second class undergraduate honours degree in a scientific subject from a recognised institute of higher education.

Applicants with a pass or third class degree in a suitable scientific subject, or qualifications or experience which demonstrate that a candidate possesses appropriate knowledge and skills at degree standard, may be offered a place on the Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate course.

[Students on the Postgraduate Diploma course may apply to transfer later to the MSc course when their application will be considered by the Examination Committee in relation to performance on the course generally, examination performance and the likelihood of completing the proposed research project].

Applicants whose home language is not English must demonstrate that their level of English is appropriate for study at postgraduate level. In addition to the academic entry qualifications for their chosen programme, applicants must have one of the following or an equivalent qualification acceptable to the University as set out in the list produced by the International Centre for English Language Studies (ICELS):

(i) British Council IELTS: level 6.5 or above;
(ii) Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English: grade C or above;
(iii) O-level English Language or GCSE English Language: grade A, B or C;
(iv) Oxford Brookes University English Language Entrance test - pass.

#### 6DBS

N/A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION 7: STUDENT SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Following a comprehensive induction programme during the week before the start of term, students are assigned their academic adviser who, along with the course leader, will act as a primary line of support throughout the course.

The course ensures complete support of students through a variety of means:

- The first stage includes regular seminars covering a wide range of subjects including research skills, understanding assessment criteria and making the most of coursework feedback.
• Secondly, academic staff monitor student progress regularly to check that they are maximising their potential. If students experience academic difficulties staff can arrange for them to receive academic mentoring support.

• Thirdly, if students are faced with challenges that affect their ability to study, such as illness, bereavement, depression, financial difficulties or accommodation issues, staff will work with them in finding a way forward.

• Course and module handbooks are produced to a template designed to improve student understanding by providing consistency and clarity.

• There are also a number of general support services including learning and personal support services. These range from academic advisers and support co-ordinators to specialist subject librarians, career advisers and other learning support staff all designed to ensure that students get the best out of their studies.

SECTION 8: GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY

Graduating students typically find employment in nutrition research, nutritional consultancy, health claim substantiation, food ingredients analysis and development, food and nutrition policy development, new food product development, education, health promotion, community nutrition, or more generally, the life sciences. Students are encouraged to engage with the Nutrition Society throughout the course and for future career development.

SECTION 9: LINKS WITH EMPLOYERS

• During induction week, new students are expected to attend a meeting which outlines job opportunities and also highlights the importance of the Nutrition Society and the Association for Nutrition within the Nutrition Profession.

• A Nutrition Seminar Series runs on a fortnightly basis throughout semesters 1 and 2 to ensure that students have an opportunity both to engage with new research and also discuss potential career paths with those from both research and industrial backgrounds.

• The Functional Food Centre also offers work experience to students and allows opportunities for students to engage with industrial clients where appropriate.

SECTION 10: QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Indicators of quality/methods for evaluating the quality of provision

Evaluating the quality of provision:

• The quality of academic provision for students will continue to be assessed regularly by programme teams at team meetings and during annual review. This will principally be achieved through annual student evaluation of each module, through critical appraisal of the annual external examiner reports, the Oxford Brookes Student Survey and the National Student Survey.

• Student support co-ordinators provide a conduit for student concerns and regularly meet with students to discuss the quality of teaching provision. Outcomes of these meetings are fed back to the programme team.

• The opportunity to review the programme through periodic review every 6 years.

• The external profiles of academic staff will be continually monitored including achievement in research publication output, Association for Nutrition registration,
success in winning grants as well as external recognition on research funding panels, as journal editors, external examiners.

In the last Research Excellence Framework (the system used for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions) published in December 2014

- UoA (12) Allied Health Professions 98% of research was Internationally recognised of which 82% was either Internationally excellent or World-Leading.
- UoA (14) Biological Sciences 95% of research was Internationally recognised of which 59% was either Internationally excellent or World-Leading.