

## **Programme Specification**

### **MSc in Cancer Studies**

Valid from: September 2016

**Faculty of Health & Life Sciences**

## SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

Awarding body:	Oxford Brookes University
Teaching institution and location:	Oxford Brookes University
Final award:	MSc
Programme title:	Cancer Studies
Interim exit awards and award titles:	Postgraduate Certificate in Cancer Studies Postgraduate Diploma in Cancer Studies
Brookes course code:	HC93
UCAS/UKPASS code:	P041894
JACS code:	B701
Mode of delivery:	Face to face
Mode/s of study:	Full-time, Part-time, mixed mode
Language of study:	English
Relevant QAA subject benchmark statement/s:	N/A
External accreditation/recognition: <i>(applicable to programmes with professional body approval)</i>	N/A
Faculty managing the programme:	Health & Life Sciences
Date of production (or most recent revision) of specification:	January 2016

## SECTION 2: OVERVIEW AND PROGRAMME AIMS

### 2.1 Rationale for/distinctiveness of the programme

The MSc in Cancer Studies at Oxford Brookes University is a unique programme, offering an innovative, interdisciplinary approach to the study of cancer. We have designed the Programme to draw on expertise in the study of cancer from across the University, promoting discussion and debate across disciplines, but founded on a solid disciplinary knowledge base. As a student, your contribution will be central. We aim to attract students from a wide range of disciplinary and professional backgrounds. You will contribute your own particular experience and expertise to discussions and debates, and you will benefit from the knowledge and understanding of others. You will have opportunities to pursue your individual disciplinary or professional interests, through a range of specialist and optional modules, and you will gain a richer and more critical perspective on them by exploring what other disciplines can bring to the study of cancer.

Key themes in the field of cancer studies will be explored from the perspective of the biological sciences, the social sciences and the humanities. This will also be achieved by examining the historical and international contexts of cancer, illustrating the many different ways in which individuals, social groups and societies are affected by, and respond to the challenge of cancer.

### 2.2 Aim/s of the programme

- to enable you to develop a good theoretical and empirical foundation to support your understanding of cancer, cancer research, cancer care and the impact of cancer on the individual, family and society.
- to enable you to develop skills in critical analysis and evaluation.

## SECTION 3: PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

### Knowledge, understanding and skills:

On satisfactory completion of the programme, you will be able to:

#### 3.1 Academic literacy

- Critically analyse the nature of cancer, from a number of disciplinary perspectives (depending on which module choices you make with this interdisciplinary degree):
  - critically analyse social science perspectives on cancer;
  - critically debate the conduct of epidemiological and medical research in relation to cancer (*also relevant to Research literacy*);
  - critically analyse knowledge of the biology of cancer;
  - critically appraise the processes of product development and business management in the bioscience sector in relation to cancer;
  - critically analyse historical perspectives on cancer.

#### 3.2 Research literacy

- critically evaluate how different disciplines conduct research on cancer (*also relevant to Academic literacy*);
- design and implement research studies;
- initiate, plan, conduct and report your own primary or secondary research to provide new knowledge in relation to cancer (this research project can be located in one of a number of disciplines) (*also relevant to Academic literacy*);
- critically analyse ethical considerations in cancer-related research;
- critically appraise and utilize research findings (*also relevant to Digital and information literacy*);
- disseminate your research findings.

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

- develop original and creative solutions to complex issues and problems;
- provide leadership in cancer practice and policy;
- reflect critically on the nature of individual and family experiences of cancer.

### **3.4 Digital and information literacy**

- use appropriate technology to search for and locate high quality information relevant to Cancer Studies (*also relevant to Research literacy*);
- critically evaluate sources of knowledge accessed online;
- engage in online learning activities, developing confidence in e-learning abilities, and becoming an active member of the online community.

### **3.5 Active citizenship**

- critically analyse how cancer is experienced and managed:
  - how this has developed historically
  - how it varies globally
- synthesize and articulate knowledge about cancer from a variety of disciplines and theoretical perspectives, and in a national and international setting (*also relevant to Academic literacy*)
- critically analyse the social, political and economic context in which applied health research is conducted in the UK and internationally (*also relevant to Research literacy*)

## SECTION 4: PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND CURRICULUM

### 4.1 Programme structure and requirements:

Award Level	Compulsory Modules	Optional Modules
<b>Post Graduate Certificate</b> (60 credits)	P40206 Applied Cancer Biology (20 credits) P40204 Living with Cancer in Contemporary Society (20 credits) P40205 Tackling Cancer: UK and International Perspectives (20 credits)	
<b>Post Graduate Diploma</b> (120 credits)	P40206 Applied Cancer Biology (20 credits) P40204 Living with Cancer in Contemporary Society (20 credits) P40205 Tackling Cancer: UK and International Perspectives (20 credits) <b>AND</b> <b>Alternative compulsory modules; one module from:</b> P10113 Functional Genomics and Research Skills P24114 Intelligence and Individual Differences P67501 Key Concepts & Methods in Historical Research (40 credits)* P49210 Advanced Research Design P49214 Independent Study	<b>Optional modules; two modules from:</b> P10101 Molecular Biology Semester 1 (20 credits) P10102 Genome Science Semester 2 (20 credits) P40212 Advanced Communication and Supportive Relationships Semester 1 (20 credits) P44011 Advanced History Taking and Assessment Semester 1 or 2 (20 credits) P44012 Diagnostic Reasoning in Practice Semester 2 (20 credits) P44050 Non-Medical Prescribing (v300)(x1.5) Semesters 1 and 2 or Semester 2 and Summer (30 credits) P44820 Leadership in Health and Social Care Semester 1 and 2 and summer (20 credits) P46650 Planning and Managing Clinical Trials Semester 1 or 2 (20 credits) P49203 Evidence Based Practice Semester 2 (20 credits) P67575 The Hospital in History(double) Semester 2 (40 credits) P44612 Epidemiology Sem 2 (20

		<p>credits)</p> <p>P40208 Management of Patients Receiving Systemic Anti-Cancer Treatments Sem 2 (20 credits)</p> <p>P10112 Molecular Basis of Human Genetic Disease Sem 1 (20 credits)</p> <p>P10114 Clinical genetics and diagnostics Sem 2 (20 credits)</p> <p>P10115 Advances in Medical Genetics Sem 2 (20 credits)</p>
<p><b>Master's degree</b> (180 credits)</p>	<p>P40206 Applied Cancer Biology (20 credits)</p> <p>P40204 Living with Cancer in Contemporary Society (20 credits)</p> <p>P40205 Tackling Cancer: UK and International Perspectives (20 credits)</p> <p><b>AND</b></p> <p><b>Alternative compulsory modules; one module from:</b></p> <p>P10113 Functional Genomics and Research Skills P24114 Intelligence and Individual Differences</p> <p>P67501 Key Concepts &amp; Methods in Historical Research (40 credits)*</p> <p>P49210 Advanced Research Design</p> <p>P49214 Independent Study</p> <p><b>AND</b></p> <p>P49215 Dissertation (60 credits)</p>	<p><b>Optional modules; two modules from:</b></p> <p>P10101 Molecular Biology Semester 1 (20 credits)</p> <p>P10102 Genome Science Semester 2 (20 credits)</p> <p>P40212 Advanced Communication and Supportive Relationships Semester 1 (20 credits)</p> <p>P44011 Advanced History Taking and Assessment Semester 1 or 2 (20 credits)</p> <p>P44012 Diagnostic Reasoning in Practice Semester 2 (20 credits)</p> <p>P44050 Non-Medical Prescribing (v300)(x1.5) Semesters 1 and 2 or Semester 2 and Summer (30 credits)</p> <p>P44820 Leadership in Health and Social Care Semester 1 and 2 and summer (20 credits)</p> <p>P46650 Planning and Managing Clinical Trials Semester 1 or 2 (20 credits)</p> <p>P49203 Evidence Based Practice Semester 2 (20 credits)</p> <p>P67575 The Hospital in History(double) Semester 2 (40 credits)</p> <p>P44612 Epidemiology Sem 2 (20 credits)</p> <p>P40208 Management of Patients</p>

		Receiving Systemic Anti-Cancer Treatments Sem 2 (20 credits) P10112 Molecular Basis of Human Genetic Disease Sem 1 (20 credits) P10114 Clinical genetics and diagnostics Sem 2 (20 credits) P10115 Advances in Medical Genetics Sem 2 (20 credits)
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## 4.2 Professional requirements

N/A

# SECTION 5: PROGRAMME DELIVERY

## 5.1 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The teaching, learning and assessment strategy of the programme reflects the philosophy which underpins it. You will be expected to take responsibility for your own learning and also to contribute to the learning of your peers on the programme. Different students will bring different experiences and cultures and they will be encouraged to share this both with the programme team and with each other. The programme will include a 'taught' element, informed by relevant national and international research and evidence-based literature, but this is designed to be a starting point for critical reading and reflection. The value gained from the taught sessions will depend not only on the effort you put in during each session, but in the time and effort before and after each session. Mutual support between students also enhances the learning experience and will be strongly encouraged. The programme team value you as a partner in delivery of the programme and you will be given opportunities to be involved in all aspects of your programme, its management and delivery.

In order to make the most of the range of experience, skills and knowledge within the student group, a variety of teaching and learning strategies will be employed:

- Lectures introduce you to new areas of study and provide the context for further independent reading and practical work;
- Group activities (e.g. seminars, workshops, presentations, action learning cycles,) are used as a means of sharing knowledge and experience, developing critical skills, and emphasising the inter-disciplinary nature of the course;
- Fieldwork and practical classes/experience provide the opportunity to ground learning in the realities of research, practice, business and/or patient/carer experience;
- Presentation skills are developed through student-led seminars, presentations to your peers, and some of the assessments;
- You are encouraged to consider opportunities as they arise within the University's e-learning strategy, see: <http://www.brookes.ac.uk/elearning/>
- You will have opportunities to negotiate the specific details of some assessments to ensure that they are relevant to the development of your expertise relevant to your module choices through the MSc (e.g. through learning contracts).

Seminars and lectures take up approximately 30 hours of the 200 hours of student effort per module, the remainder being mainly self-directed study. A variety of modes of assessment are used within the programme, depending on which module is chosen by the student. Each module includes a point of formative assessment, in line with the Assessment Compact.

The programme handbook provides a commentary for students on how the Graduate Attributes are developed through the programme. In addition, students can expect to be introduced to the concept of Graduate Attributes during induction, and will have tutorial discussions with their academic advisor, particularly in their first year, which will focus on identifying module content and activities leading to their acquisition of Graduate Attributes, and their experience of them.

## 5.2 Assessment regulations

The programme conforms to the University Regulations on the Assessment of Taught Postgraduate Programmes:

<http://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/current/specific/b4/>



## SECTION 6: ADMISSIONS

### 6.1 Entry criteria

The requirements for initial entry to the Cancer Studies programme are that applicants should hold a UK honours degree or equivalent overseas degree from a recognised institution. In exceptional circumstances, applicants who do not hold an honours degree (or equivalent) will be required to submit a portfolio of work as agreed with the course leader which will be taken into account as part of their application.

For applicants who have not previously studied Biology above A-level (or equivalent), a Brookes Virtual (on-line) preparatory study package in cancer biology will be provided. This will not be formally assessed but is intended to give students a basic foundation in biology in advance of the compulsory module on Applied Cancer Biology. The study package comprises 8 learning units with an associated 1-2 hours of independent study and question-answer assessment at the end of each unit.

Admission shall be guided by the University's admissions policy in force at that time. The general principles of admission to the University's programmes of study are a reasonable expectation that the applicant will be able to fulfil the objectives of the programme and shall be able to achieve the standard required for the award and the University's Equal Opportunities Policy.

#### In summary:

- Applicants should hold an honours degree, minimum classification 2.2, from a recognised institution;
- Applicants who do not hold a suitable degree may be admitted to the Programme if they demonstrate that they have the appropriate level of knowledge and skills to study at master's level, by presenting a portfolio of evidence. This may include producing an assignment specified by the programme team for the purposes of assessing their abilities;
- They should meet the English Language requirements of the University;
- They should have a source of funding to enable them to meet the course fees;
- They should provide 2 satisfactory references.

### 6.2 DBS checks

N/A.

## SECTION 7: STUDENT SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

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There are a number of resources that will be available to you during your course of study, outlined below:

#### PROGRAMME SUPPORT STRUCTURES

##### Academic Advisor

An academic advisor will be allocated at the beginning of your programme of study and will retain that role while you are a student on the programme. The academic advisor has both an educational and pastoral role, which can be summarised as providing support and guidance in managing learning and professional development, advising about the standard of academic work expected, keeping an overview of your progress through the and being available for personal advice and support

##### Programme Administration

Programme administrators provide administration support for the programme and are based in the School's Programme Administration Centre. The Programme administrator for Cancer & Palliative Care is contactable by phone: 01865 488157, or e-mail: [c-pcare@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:c-pcare@brookes.ac.uk)

#### UNIVERSITY SUPPORT STRUCTURES

##### International Students

Oxford Brookes University has a community of more than 19,000 students, including more than 5,000 postgraduates. Approximately 20% are international students who come from more than 145 countries worldwide, in addition to other European Union countries. We value the academic and cultural contribution international students bring to the University.

In addition, the University International Student Advisory Service (ISAS) provides welfare support, visa advice and counselling. For further details, visit <http://www.brookes.ac.uk/student/services/isas/index.html>

#### Learning Resources

##### PIP

Once registered and enrolled at Oxford Brookes University you will have your own Personal Information Profile available at: [https://kmis.brookes.ac.uk/csms/wprin\\_menu.main](https://kmis.brookes.ac.uk/csms/wprin_menu.main). PIP is a suite of web pages through which you can view and maintain your personal and academic programme details.

##### E-mail

Once registered and enrolled at Oxford Brookes University you will be given a Brookes email account. Your user name will be your Brookes student number and your password will be the same as for your PIP.

## **SECTION 8: GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY**

Graduating with a Masters Degree in Cancer Studies from Oxford Brookes University will give you considerable advantages in seeking better employment and developing your career. Previous students on cancer-related courses have gone onto take up senior clinical, research and managerial posts. The University Careers and Employment Centre may be able to help you find options for developing your career to make the most of your degree from Oxford Brookes University.

Careers and Employment Centre:

<http://www.brookescareerscentre.co.uk/default.aspx>

## **SECTION 9: LINKS WITH EMPLOYERS**

Oxford is a world-renowned centre for research into various aspects of cancer, including cancer biology, cancer treatments, personal experiences of cancer, and the practice of cancer care and service delivery. There are also excellent examples of hospital-based and community-based Cancer Care services in Oxford and the Thames Valley region. On the course, we draw on local experts in cancer sciences, involving them in seminars and lectures.

There may be opportunities for you to have a placement with a local service. You can discuss this when you are applying for a place on the course.

## **SECTION 10: QUALITY MANAGEMENT**

### **Indicators of quality/methods for evaluating the quality of provision**

#### *Student Representation/consultation*

We value feedback on the programmes, courses, and modules. We utilise feedback from students to improve our educational provision on an ongoing basis. There will be a number of opportunities throughout your programme for you to give feedback on issues of content, delivery and support. There may be opportunities for attendance at meetings at the University. In addition, a range of other methods of consultation will be used. This will include online surveys of the student group at intervals during the period of study. Your contribution to this process is valued.

#### *Programme Management*

The programme will be managed as a programme of study within the University and, as such, will be subject to the standard procedures of the University for managing, monitoring and reviewing modular programmes. The day-to-day management of the programme will be the responsibility of the Course Leader assisted by the Programme Committee. The Programme Committee, which meets 3 times a year, consists of the course leader, module leaders, and representatives of students and service users, where these are available to attend. The main areas of discussion within the Committee are: programme administration, teaching and student support, module review, recommending changes to modules or programme rules, and nominating external examiners.

#### *Module Review*

Your experiences of the programme are evaluated in a number of ways. Throughout the modules you will be given an opportunity to evaluate how things are going. At the end of each module you will be asked to contribute to a formal module evaluation. The module leader will produce a module review drawn from these evaluations. These will be discussed at the programme committee meetings each semester. They also form part of an annual programme review.

### *Annual Review*

The process of annual review allows for a critical appraisal of the programme, including its strengths, limitations, achievements, areas of concern and areas for improvement, leading to an action plan for the subsequent year. The preparation of the annual review will involve all members of the programme team, local experts in the field of Cancer Studies and feedback from students in order to produce a balanced and informed judgement about the programme.

### *Periodic Review*

The programme is also subject to Periodic Review as part of the Faculty's cycle of periodic programme reviews. This means the programme will normally be reviewed every 5 years, and this will include a broad review of the academic standards, learning opportunities, general course management, and make recommendations for improvements.

### *External examiner*

The Programme has an external examiner who is responsible for taking an overview of the quality of the student learning experience. This includes regularly seeing examples of students' assessed work, and the feedback given to them. The external examiner is also consulted on any proposed changes to the Programme.