Improve your healthcare research skills via flexible online learning

PgCert Research Methods for Health by online learning

www.abdn.ac.uk/pgcert/research-methods-health
The PgCert Research Methods for Health is delivered entirely online utilising a range of engaging and innovative teaching and assessment methods which cater to different ways of learning.

This 60 credit programme offers a fully flexible, participatory learning opportunity enabling you to:

- Study while working
- Learn at your own pace
- Review material as often as you require
- Incur limited financial costs

The programme is aimed at healthcare professionals, policy makers and early career researchers who would like to improve their health research skills but are unable to take time out for full-time study and/or want to avoid relocating.
By making the most of online technology, world renowned researchers will share their experience and expertise. **Emphasis will be placed on linking methodological and theoretical understanding with practical experience of research design and analysis.**

The PgCert programme aims to provide you with the framework and methodological skills to design effective, rigorous, ethical and relevant healthcare research projects. This involves being able to:

- Critically appraise the research evidence (including systematic reviewing)
- Develop a precise research question and articulate and justify an appropriate study design
- Select a suitable statistical method for analysis and interpretation of the findings
You will benefit from being part of a collaborative and supportive online community, helping to facilitate the successful achievement of clearly defined learning outcomes.

What will you study?

The certificate can be completed full-time over a period of 6 months or part-time over a maximum of 24 months. The four courses can be completed in the sequence that is most appropriate to you. We also welcome students who wish to undertake single courses from the programme for CPD purposes.

The PgCert comprises 4 courses:

- Fundamentals of research design
- Epidemiology
- Evidence-based health
- Applied statistics

**Fundamentals of research design**
Topics include: formulating a research question; choosing a study design; selecting a sample; choosing the method for data collection and analysis and maximising the dissemination of your results.

**Epidemiology**
Topics include: basic study design; measures of disease occurrence; causality; bias; confounding; odds ratios and relative risks, as well as validity and reliability.

**Evidence-based health**
The course will follow the steps of protocol development for a systematic review including: choosing a search strategy; critical appraisal; data extraction and synthesis/analysis. The course also looks at using evidence in guideline development and healthcare practice and how to maximise effective communication of research findings.

**Applied statistics**
Topics include: data types and presentation of data; probability; samples; distributions; statistical inference; hypothesis testing; univariate parametric and non-parametric methods and correlation.
The programme makes the most of digital tools and online technology to enable active learning and provide repeated exposure to evidence-based practice using real life examples.

How will you learn?

Innovative teaching methods are used to help you in the understanding, application, and the development of a critical academic attitude. These include:

- Podcasts
- Synchronous and asynchronous discussions
- Links to relevant and current websites
- e-books and journal articles
- Wikis and blogs
- Live ‘office hours’ for questions

On-going support is provided by the dedicated, interdisciplinary team of experienced researchers who will be tutoring you. Technical support is provided and peer support will develop throughout the course(s) since engagement with students from other countries and disciplines will be actively encouraged.
Completion of the PgCert programme will enable you to develop a range of essential methodological research skills. Such proficiency may allow you to be more competitive in securing external funding for projects to improve health and reduce health inequalities.

Career opportunities

Students should benefit from increased opportunities as a result of an enhanced professional profile and will have the confidence and methodological skills required to design and undertake a research project. Interaction with the tutors and fellow students will broaden your professional networks and collaborations. The PgCert could be the first stage in gaining an MSc in Applied Health Sciences (specialisation) with a specialisation area such as substance abuse, health economics or sexual and reproductive health. Completion of the full PgCert programme or of one or more of the individual courses will provide evidence of CPD and may support your career development and promotion opportunities.
Research excellence
Public Health, Health Services and Primary Care research at the University is conducted within the Institute of Applied Health Sciences (IAHS).

Research conducted by the academic groups within the IAHS supports the global evidence base needed by individuals, healthcare providers and organisations when making decisions about maximising health and optimising healthcare services.
**Facilities**
The University of Aberdeen IT services support a variety of web and computer based resources, complementing your studies and allowing you to manage and review coursework at your own pace.

You will access the learning materials and resources of the programme via the University’s virtual learning environment called MyAberdeen. You will also have access to the full text of over 85,000 on-line books via the Ebrary, plus articles from over 20,000 electronic journals.

**Collaborations**
Strong collaborations exist with other universities, research institutions, foundations and governments within the UK, Europe, America and multiple developing countries.

Partnerships also exist with major international and bi-lateral agencies such as the European Union (EU), the UK Department for International Development (DFID), United Nations’ Children Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), World Bank, World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Population Council (New York). Industry-related collaborations include research projects, consultancies and membership of scientific advisory bodies.
The PgCert Research Methods for Health by online learning makes the most of digital tools and online technology to enable active learning and provide repeated exposure to evidence-based practice using real life examples.

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Admissions criteria
Applicants will usually need to possess a health-related honours degree (at a second class level or at least 60% or GPA – 3/5; 2.4/4; 6/10 OR equivalent) or be able to demonstrate evidence of equivalent experience in health care practice/research. They will also require reliable internet access. International students must also meet the English language requirements of the University.

Want to know more?
Contact Prof. Amanda Lee or Dr Debbi Marais at rmh@abdn.ac.uk who will be delighted to discuss the opportunity with you.

How to apply
To apply for this programme please visit www.abdn.ac.uk/postgraduate/apply