



**MSc Research and
Quality Improvement
in Health and Care**

**Postgraduate Certificate
in Leading Improvement
in Health and Care**

2026-27

UK Top 30

The Complete University Guide 2025: 21st

The Mail University Guide 2025: =29th

World Class Research and Sustainability

Times Higher REF2021 Analysis: UK Top 20 for
research quality and 13th in the UK for quality of
research outputs.

QS World University Rankings for Sustainability 2024:
=14th for Health and Wellbeing



Teaching Excellence
Framework Silver Award



Ofsted Good Provider -
January 2024

Contents

| | |
|--|---------|
| Introduction | 4 |
| Key Attributes of the Programme | 5 - 7 |
| Programme Pathway: Your Route to MSc Research and Quality Improvement in Health and Care | 8 - 11 |
| Programme Learning Outcomes | 12 -13 |
| Additional Programme Information | 14 - 16 |
| Fees and Funding | 17 |
| Other Study Options | 18 - 19 |
| How to Apply | 20 |

Introduction

Russell Fitchett
Course Director



The MSc Research and Quality Improvement (QI) in Health and Care is a multi-professional programme providing fundamental research-related knowledge and skills applied to health and care and an opportunity to extend and apply these in an individualised pathway using a range of tailored modules. The MSc programme is suitable for those with both clinical and non-clinical health and care research interests, whether working as a health or care professional or in another health and care research-related role, enabling them to improve outcomes, enhance individuals' well-being and influence health and care policy.

The content of the programme is informed by current capability frameworks (NIHR Clinician Researcher Credentials Framework (2023), NHSE Multi-Professional Practice-based Research Capabilities Framework (2023)) and by internal and external stakeholder engagement. The whole programme is underpinned by analysis and evaluation of the health and care contexts in which research and Quality Improvement take place, consideration of stakeholder and research participant experience and the design and delivery of effective health and care research and research-related activity. Learners will apply their enhanced knowledge, understanding and skills in their own final-year research or Quality Improvement project.

The course is designed to be taken part-time and will be available fully online, enabling those based within the UK and internationally to study at a distance. Flexible access to a full portfolio of modules allows learners to complete single modules as standalone CPD, which they can subsequently import (within 5 years), or enrol directly to undertake the full Master's.

We look forward to supporting you throughout your studies and helping you achieve this key milestone in your professional and career development.

Key Attributes of the Programme

Values, Principles and Ethos of the MSc Research and Quality Improvement in Health and Care:

We have developed the programme for a multiprofessional audience working across a diverse regional, national and international context within health and social care. The course team consists of experienced and passionate research-active academics and researchers in health and social care.

We understand the importance of patients and the public, both as the ultimate beneficiaries of inclusive, well-designed and robustly governed health and care research and wider research-related activity, but also as respected and valued stakeholders and collaborators within the research process, is threaded through the teaching and learning activities and resources of the programme.

We believe our programme forms a critical opportunity to share the research-related expertise, integrity and insight of the HealthUEA research community to support the development of the next generation of regional, national and international researchers and improvers in health and care.

Why choose UEA?

The course is designed to be taken part-time and will be available fully online, enabling those based within the UK and internationally to study at a distance. Flexible access to a portfolio of modules allows you to complete single modules as standalone CPD, which you can subsequently import (up to 80 credits within 5 years) into the programme, or enrol directly to undertake the full Master's.

Flexible Study Options

Our fully online and blended learning study options provide you with the ability to:

- Study while working – fit your education around your professional and personal commitments.
- Learn from anywhere – access high quality teaching and resources remotely, removing geographical barriers to academic progression.
- Flexible learning formats – offering a balance of independent study and interactive learning.

Multi-Professional Community of Practice

At UEA, you will not study in isolation – you will be part of a thriving learning community from a variety of healthcare backgrounds. We foster a strong sense of belonging through collaborative learning, ensuring you feel connected and supported throughout your studies.

Through interactive learning, discussion forums, and live group sessions, you will:

- Engage with a diverse range of perspectives from individuals working across a range of healthcare settings, including clinical and non-clinical.
- Develop peer networks that extend beyond your studies, supporting your professional development and career growth.
- Learn within a collaborative environment, sharing experiences with clinicians, educators, leaders and researchers.

This multi-professional approach enhances your interdisciplinary skills, helping you work more effectively across teams and settings in modern healthcare.

Career-Enhancing and Leadership Focused

The knowledge, skills, values and behaviours developed as a result of completing the course can enhance career progression and diversify scope across a range of roles within health and care. Whichever the chosen route, graduates will be playing a vital role in contributing to knowledge generation and improvement of health and care.

Those successfully completing the extended project module 'doctoral project proposal' will have the opportunity to exit with the MSc as planned or to import the level 7 credits they have completed into the Professional Doctorate in Transforming Health and Social Care, providing a flexible and accessible route to doctorate and the opportunity to complete the study proposed over a further three years (part time) at level 8.

Career and development opportunities that this course may lead to include:

- Eligibility for further study options (master's or doctoral degrees) across the health and care sectors.
- Eligibility for clinical academic jobs, e.g. working in research groups in universities or as a lecturer-practitioner.
- Clinical research roles, including those requiring recognition and approval by professional and regulatory bodies.
- Lead roles (Director of Research, Research Training Programme Director).

Dedicated Learner Support Services

At UEA, we are committed to supporting your success. Our learners benefit from:

- Dedicated advisers.
- Comprehensive wellbeing and study support services.
- Specialist guidance for those returning to education after time in practice.

Programme Pathway: Your Route to Research and Quality Improvement in Health and Care

To achieve your Master's degree, you will generally complete 180 credits over a period of three years, consisting of:

- Three core modules (20-credits each) (compulsory for all learners)
- Three compulsory modules (20-credits each) (including a choice between two options)
- A final 60- credits from a work-based extended project with recommendations for policy, practice or research.

How your MSc is Structured

| | MSc Research and Quality Improvement in Health and Care | | |
|--------|---|---|--|
| Year 1 | Foundations of Health Research | Using Evidence to Lead and Advance Practice | Option (Implementation Science, Research Practice Portfolio) |
| Year 2 | Leading Projects in Health and Care | Principles of Qualitative Research | Principles of Quantitative Research |
| Year 3 | Work-based Extended project with recommendations for policy, practice or research (60c) | | |

| Year | Study Focus | Credits |
|--------------|--|------------|
| 1 | Core modules and compulsory module (option) | 60 |
| 2 | Core module and compulsory module(s) | 60 |
| 3 | Work-based Extended Project | 60 |
| Total | MSc Research and Quality Improvement in Health and Care | 180 |

Core Modules

Compulsory for all learners on MSc Research and Quality Improvement in Health and Care and MSc Leadership and Management in Health and Social Care

These modules form the foundation of management and leadership practice, ensuring you develop expertise within health research, using evidence and leading projects.

Foundations of Health Research (20 credits) – Develop your knowledge and understanding of research within the context of health and care; this module will prepare you to engage in and apply research to real-world health and care challenges.

Using Evidence to Lead and Advance Practice (20 credits) – Develop the skills to find, understand, appraise and apply research evidence to enhance clinical practice and decision making.

Leading Projects in Health and Care (20 credits) - Understand core principles of project management alongside key ethical theories, governance frameworks, and regulatory requirements shaping research in the UK and internationally.

Compulsory Modules

Compulsory for all learners on MSc Research and Quality Improvement in Health and Care

Implementation Science (20 credits) - This module introduces Implementation Science research and its role in healthcare. Health services are under increasing pressure to improve services and yet save resources. The routine delivery of evidence-based interventions and services ensures that the most cost-effective interventions are delivered to patients; however, it takes on average 17 years for research evidence to be routinely adopted in practice. To close this research - practice gap, the field of Implementation Science has developed, defined as the scientific study of methods to promote the systematic uptake of clinical research findings and other evidence-based practices into routine practice, and, hence, to improve the quality and effectiveness of health services.

OR

Research Practice Portfolio (20 credits) - The Research Practice Portfolio module allows learners to gain academic credit for tailored research practice activity mapped against research development frameworks in their own professions/areas of practice under the guidance of both a practice-based facilitator and an academic supervisor. The module provides an ideal opportunity for learners to evaluate their current research knowledge and experience, to investigate ways to become more involved in research practice to enhance areas of limitation and to critically reflect on, discuss and plan their ongoing research career/development objectives and aspirations.

AND

Principles of Qualitative Research (20 credits) - This module will provide fundamental knowledge and skills in the principles and practice of qualitative research methods applied to health and care, enabling learners to formulate appropriate qualitative research questions and design and conduct coherent and robust qualitative research. Learners will utilise their enhanced insight into qualitative research methods and practice to inform a critical approach to the evaluation of their own position within the research process and to qualitative research conducted and reported by others.

AND

Principles of Quantitative Research (20 credits) - Principles of Quantitative Research aims to provide fundamental knowledge of the research questions and methodological approaches appropriate for experimental and quantitative observational study designs, and the principles of statistics as applied to health sciences research. By the end of this module, you will be confident in the interpretation of the results of studies using statistical methods.

Note: UEA reserves the right to make changes to the programme structure, module availability, or policies due to academic, regulatory, or operational requirements.

- Module Availability – Optional modules run subject to viability and learner demand.
- Communication of Changes – Any updates will be communicated to learners via their UEA email and course notifications.

| Module | Credits | Delivery | Term Start | Duration (Weeks) |
|---|---------|------------------------------|------------|------------------|
| Core modules | | | | |
| Foundations of Health Research | 20 | Online, 6x two-weekly blocks | 1 | 12 |
| Using Evidence to Lead and Advance Practice | 20 | Online, 6x two-weekly blocks | 2 | 12 |
| Implementation Science OR Research Practice Portfolio | 20 | Online, 6x two-weekly blocks | 3 | 12 |
| Leading Projects in Health and Care | 20 | Online, 6x two-weekly blocks | 1 | 12 |
| Principles of Qualitative Research | 20 | Online, 6x two-weekly blocks | 2 | 12 |
| Principles of Quantitative Research | 20 | Online, 6x two-weekly blocks | 3 | 12 |
| Work-based Extended Project | 60 | Online | 1 | Year |



Programme Learning Outcomes

By the end of the programme, you will be able to:

1. Articulate and justify the importance of research in contemporary health and care delivery and practice.
2. Apply critical thinking to evaluate research evidence, identify knowledge gaps, and formulate research questions.
3. Critically analyse the practical constraints and challenges of undertaking research and quality improvement in health and care, informed by robust understanding of the research environment and infrastructure.
4. Design, plan, and conduct both rigorous research-related projects to evaluate and improve services and care and research studies to address quantitative, qualitative and/or mixed-methods research questions, underpinned by philosophical principles and paradigms.
5. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the principles of data collection and analysis, applying these appropriately to generate new knowledge and meaningful insights, including the use of appropriate tools to generate valid and reliable results.



6. Adopt a position of critical enquiry to identify, analyse and appraise research evidence and synthesise, evaluate and interpret research findings to inform decision-making in practice.
7. Understand and apply principles of ethics and governance in research-related activity, exercising critical thinking and judgement to ensure compliance with research-related governance frameworks in health and care and to demonstrate respect and value for individuals involved in research.
8. Effectively communicate research-related findings, including through oral and poster presentation and publication.
9. Work effectively within diverse teams, including researchers, clinicians and community members, to generate and mobilise new knowledge for enhancing health and care.
10. Incorporate diverse perspectives and cultural sensitivities into inclusive research-related design, implementation, and dissemination.
11. Engage with patients and the public to ensure research and QI relevance and impact.
12. Reflexively evaluate research and QI capacity and capability to identify and address personal, departmental and organisational development objectives.



Additional Programme Information

Effort Hours: Understanding Study Commitment

Every 20-credit module at Level 7 requires approximately 200 effort hours to complete successfully. These effort hours include:

- Synchronous learning – Live sessions such as tutorials, webinars, and face-to-face study days.
- Asynchronous learning – Curated online content available at any time.
- Clinical supervision (if applicable) – Where modules involve direct patient care, workplace-based assessment or practice-based project work.
- Assessment preparation – Time spent on formative activities and summative assessments.

Most modules run over 12 weeks, with up to six weeks of additional time for assessment preparation, depending on the module and assessment activity.

Employers may allocate study time, but learners should be prepared to study in their own time as well.



Entry Requirements

To apply for the MSc Research and Quality Improvement in Health and Care at UEA, you must meet the following criteria:

- Have employer-supported practice-based supervision and assessment, ensuring you can apply learning directly to your professional role.
- Demonstrate motivation and ability to study at Master's level, evidenced by achievement of any of the below, within the past five years. *
 - A bachelor's degree (2:2 or above) ideally in a health-related subject
 - Level 6 module achieved at 55% or above (or two modules if no bachelor's degree)
 - Level 7 module achieved 50% or above

If English is not your first language or if your degree was not taught in English, you will need to provide evidence of IELTS 7.0 (minimum 6.5 in all components) or an equivalent qualification.

*If you cannot demonstrate academic ability as outlined above, please contact admissions@uea.ac.uk who will put you in touch with a member of the course team to discuss your options.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) – Reduce Your Study Load

The MSc Research and Quality Improvement in Health and Care at UEA allows you to import up to 80 credits from previous Master's-level study through a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process. This means you could significantly shorten your study time while still achieving your full MSc qualification.

To be eligible for RPL:

- The study must have been completed within the last five years.
- Credits must have been achieved at Level 7 (Master's level).
- The credits must not have been used towards a previous academic qualification (for example another MSc degree).
- The learning outcomes of the modules being imported must align with the module learning outcomes that they are replacing. A copy of these can be made available on request.

How to apply for RPL:

1. Identify eligible credits from previous study.
2. Following enrolment onto the programme, submit an RPL application form along with evidence (e.g., academic transcripts, module descriptors).
3. Your application will be assessed by the RPL panel to ensure alignment with MSc Research and Quality Improvement in Health and Care module learning outcomes.
4. If approved, credits will be applied to optional modules (up to 80 credits), reducing the number of modules you need to complete.

If you would like to discuss your eligibility for RPL before applying, join one of our drop-in sessions or contact our admissions team.

Ready to Advance your Career?

- Speak to our CPD or admissions team about career pathways and funding support.
- Join a drop-in session to learn how this MSc can support your career goals.
- See the "How to Apply" section to get started.

Email: fmh.cpd@uea.ac.uk

[Upcoming Drop-in Sessions](#)



Fees and Funding

Investing in your professional development is an important decision, and we are committed to helping you explore the funding options available to support your studies.

Tuition Fees

Fees are reviewed annually, and the latest information on course costs can be found on our website: <https://www.uea.ac.uk/study/fees-and-funding>

Fees for the full course for the academic year 2026-27 are £11,200. For 2026/27 our 20-credit module fee is £1,245

For self-funding applicants our postgraduate funding schemes include the 10% Alumni Tuition Fee Discount Scheme. Please see our [10% Alumni Tuition Fee Discount Scheme](#) for further details.

Funding Options

Many learners receive funding through:

Employer Sponsorship – NHS Trusts, private healthcare providers, or other organisations may offer full or partial funding for modules as part of workforce development.

Learner Finance Loans – Some learners may be eligible for postgraduate learner loans to support tuition fees and living costs.

Self-Funding – Learners who wish to self-fund their studies can opt to pay per module or per academic year. Flexible payment plans may be available. We encourage you to approach your employer for funding in the first instance. For further guidance on funding options, including payment plans, contact the UEA Finance Office or visit: [UEA Postgraduate finance, fees and funding for UK learners](#).

Other Study Options

If this pathway does not fully align with your learning needs, UEA offers alternative routes into Management and Leadership, and other areas of healthcare practice including:

Standalone CPD Modules – 20 and 40 credit modules at Level 7 that can contribute towards future MSc qualifications, allowing you to focus on specific areas of interest or required competencies. For further information on our CPD modules please visit our website:

<https://www.uea.ac.uk/health/healthuea-academy>

MSc Advanced Professional Practice - An NHS England accredited part-time programme, generally completed over three years. This direct-entry programme comprises the same compulsory modules as the MSc ACP excluding the End Point Assessment meaning that apprentices can select up to 80-credits of optional modules

MSc Advancing Healthcare Practice – A flexible, entirely online MSc part-time and full-time programme, allowing maximum flexibility in your learning. This course is underpinned by the four pillars of Advanced Practice but does not include practice-based core modules and so can be undertaken by professionals in roles that do not involve direct clinical care. A combination of 80 compulsory module credits and 100 optional module credits will allow you to tailor your studies to your personal development needs and areas of interest.





MSc Advanced Clinical Practice Degree Apprenticeship (ACPDA) – An NHS England accredited part-time programme, generally completed over three years and funded through your organisation's Apprenticeship Levy. This programme comprises the same compulsory modules as the MSc APP with an additional 20-credit compulsory End-Point Assessment module, meaning that learners can select 60 optional modules credits.

PGCert Specialist Practice – 60-credit programmes of part-time study completed over nine months. Pathways currently available include Adult Critical Care, Pre-hospital Emergency Medicine, Cardiac Catheterisation Laboratory Practice, Independent Prescribing.

MSc Management and Leadership in Health and Social Care – An MSc programme suitable for those with both clinical and non-clinical health and social care backgrounds, whether working as a health or social care professional or in another health and care role, enabling you to develop your own and your team's performance and well-being, evaluate and improve health and social care policy and practice and enhance service outcomes.

For further information on our CPD modules please visit our website <https://www.uea.ac.uk/health/healthuea-academy>

How to Apply

Applications for the MSc Research and Quality Improvement in Health and Care programme are submitted via the UEA [online application form](#).

Application Process

- 1. Check Entry Requirements** – Ensure you meet the academic and professional criteria for the programme, including any additional requirements for restricted modules. See the Entry Requirements and RPL section for further details.
- 2. Prepare Supporting Documents** – You may need to submit:
 - A CV detailing your professional experience
 - A personal statement outlining your reasons for applying
 - Proof of professional registration (if applicable)
 - Evidence of funding or sponsorship (if required)
- 3. Submit Your Application** – Complete the online application via the UEA admissions portal. If you would like to discuss your individual circumstances prior to applying, we run regular drop-in sessions. Please contact us for further information and dates:

Email: fmh.cpd@uea.ac.uk