

Medical Microbiology (Combined Honours)

This programme is no longer recruiting

Final award	BSc (Hons)
Intermediate awards available	Cert HE and Dip HE
UCAS code	-
Details of professional body accreditation	N/A
Relevant QAA Benchmark statements	Biosciences/ Biomedical Sciences
Date specification last up-dated	December 2013

Profile

The summary - UCAS programme profile

BANNER BOX:

This programme allows students to combine a highly specialised, and practical oriented, training in medical microbiology with other subjects to create an individualised programme suited to their own interests or career aspirations.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

For students entering with AS/A2 qualifications, the minimum requirement is 240 points at A2 level with a preferred minimum of 100 A2 points in Biology and Chemistry. We also accept Access to Science, Advanced GNVQ in Science at merit grade, and BTEC National Diploma in Science with a minimum of 6 modules at merit grade or higher. All students should also have a minimum of grade C at GCSE, or equivalent, in English language, mathematics and double science.

Applicants with overseas or alternative qualifications are considered on an individual basis. For mature students, credit may be given for relevant work experience. Direct entry to the second year of the programme is available for students with Higher National Certificate or Diploma in an appropriate area, or for those who have successfully completed study equivalent to level one at another University.

If you want to study Medical Microbiology but have not achieved the right entry qualifications, why not start with our extended degree programme?

Students may be admitted through Accreditation of Experiential Learning (AEL) or Accreditation of Certificated Learning (ACL) processes.

In the case of applicants whose first language is not English, then IELTS 6.0 (or equivalent) is required. International qualifications will be checked for appropriate matriculation to UK Higher Education undergraduate programmes.

ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

What is Medical Microbiology?

Microbiology is the study of all forms of life too small to be seen by the naked eye. These include viruses, bacteria, yeasts, protozoa and some fungi. We study all aspects of these micro-organisms, their properties, their many and varied roles, and their interactions with other species especially humans. A major emphasis of the programme is understanding the properties of micro-organisms and the mechanisms by which they are able to enter the body and cause disease. Such understanding is essential in improving infectious disease diagnosis and control.

Medical Microbiology at UEL

- The programme at UEL is based around the study of the microbiology of disease.
- Emphasis is placed on the ways in which knowledge in this area can be applied for the benefit of mankind.
- There is extensive laboratory training and an option for students majoring in this subject to undertake sandwich placement training.

Programme structure

- Students follow a 4-year sandwich degree programme or a 3-year full-time programme. The programme can also be followed part-time.
- At Level 1, there are core modules of Microbiology and Cellular Biology which introduces the basic concepts. Other supporting modules which may be taken include Cellular Processes, Human Physiology, Skills for Biosciences (core for student majoring in this subject) and Human Health and Disease .
- At Level 2, students continue to build on the options elected at level 1, the core module is Medical Microbiology, which is an introduction to infectious disease and laboratory diagnosis of infections. Choices include further study of biochemistry with modules of Molecular Biology (which is highly recommended to support level 3 of the programme) or Metabolism. Modern molecular biology methods and their medical applications are introduced in Molecular Genetics, and Practical and Employability Skills investigates the major methods of laboratory investigation. The study of human physiology is continued in Physiological Function and Dysfunction, which also includes an introduction to the histology of normal and pathological tissues..
- The third year of study can be spent away from the University in an agreed work placement. (see below).
- The final year (Level 3) contains core modules of Infectious Disease Processes, which looks in detail at the pathology and pathogenesis of infectious diseases with particular emphasis on AIDS, TB and Malaria, and Infectious Disease Control which looks at existing and novel treatments for infections and also looks at how modern technology can be applied in the development of new and improved vaccines. Level 3 also contains an individual research project involving original self directed work. This may be laboratory based, or it may involve a library investigation.

Learning environment

Learning is encouraged through participation in a wide variety of activities including lectures, seminars, workshops, laboratory-based practicals, external visits, distance learning, web-based learning etc. You study 3 modules per semester. Each module has 5 to 6 hours contact per week, and may need up to 10 hours further individual study per week. Success at university depends on developing your ability to study independently using library resources, CAL, handouts and web-based study activities. The first year has a Skills module each semester. These help you make the major shift to independent learning needed at university, compared to schools and FE colleges, and also help to develop those transferable skills so important in working life.

Assessment

Students are assessed in practical work and theory. In most modules 50% of the module mark is derived from coursework during the semester (this can take a variety of forms including laboratory work, data analysis, essays, oral presentations etc.) and 50% from unseen written theory examination at the end of the semester.

- Level 1 (Year 1) modules introduce you to the standards and types of assessment used at university. Some have theory exams staged at intervals through the semester. Although they do not contribute to your final Honours grade, you are expected to achieve at least 40% in all Level 1 modules.
- Your final Honours grade uses marks from Level 2 and Level 3 modules only. Your Level 1 modules prepare you to do your best in these later years.
- If a module is not passed at the first opportunity, marks from later opportunities are not capped.

Work experience/placement opportunities

- The third year of the programme can be spent in a Sandwich Placement. This is optional but it is strongly recommended for students majoring on this programme, for whom it will provide significant advantages in terms of employability.
- During the placement year there is an option to complete a work-based learning module.

Project work

- Project work is an essential component of an Honours degree programme and one that most students enjoy. Small projects and group work exercises feature throughout the programme.
- Project work encourages students to show initiative in their individual work under supervision in a laboratory, using appropriate microbiological techniques to generate and interpret new data.
- Most projects continue investigating areas of clinical interest such as drug discovery and development, antibiotic resistance, infection control, improving diagnostic procedures, proteomics etc.
- Projects may be library or laboratory based

Added value

- Extensive personal support throughout the programme.

- Sound practical as well as academic training.
- Excellent job prospects for all students at the end of the programme both in the NHS and elsewhere.
- Effective careers advice and support available.

IS THIS THE PROGRAMME FOR ME?

If you are interested in...

- Finding out more about how the world works.
- Developing your knowledge of medically oriented areas of Microbiology.
- Studying practical methods relevant to medical and clinical microbiology.
- Understanding how current knowledge in microbiology depends on study at many levels: humans, cells, other organisms as well as the micro-organisms themselves.
- Improving your scientific skills of logical argument and analysis

If you enjoy...

- Reading or hearing about research and/ or medicine (do you already enjoy TV documentaries like Horizon or Equinox, radio science programmes, New Scientist articles?)
- The challenge of increasing not just your knowledge of facts, but also your understanding of how science contributes to the search for new solutions to problems in microbiology.
- Doing scientific procedures and experiments in laboratories and IT labs with precision
- Working in groups in laboratories using standard and new techniques to solve problems
- Being able to study quietly and individually away from formal staff-led sessions

If you want...

- To focus on medical microbiology but still keep your career options open.
- The chance of reviewing your degree programme at the end of the first year and possibly changing to Biomedical Sciences, Biochemistry, Immunology, and other Biosciences degrees.
- The option of a year's work experience in a laboratory away from the University.
- To be able to spend up to one third of your final year on your own individual research project at the university (usually developing laboratory skills, but IT, survey or library projects also negotiable).

Your future career

The qualification opens many opportunities within and outside Microbiology. Destinations of recent graduates include:

- Laboratory based work in medical and industrial research.
- Health Service research laboratories e.g. St Thomas' Hospital , London.
- The Central Public Health Laboratory, Colindale.
- Research and /or sales in Pharmaceutical industries, e.g. Glaxo Smith Kline
- Government agencies e.g. the Medicines Control Agency

- Higher degrees in Microbiology (M.Sc., Ph.D.).
- Further study in other disciplines, e.g. M.Sc. (e.g. IT ; Business), MBA, Nursing, Physiotherapy.
- Training as a teacher. (e.g. enrol on PGCE courses at UEL)

This programme does not qualify students for IBMS registration and would require further modules to be taken for anyone considering a career in a hospital diagnostic laboratory.

How we support you

The School of Health and Bioscience provides immediate contact with University support systems.

- In your first year, you are allocated a Personal Tutor (a member of staff familiar with your degree). You will see your Tutor at regular intervals to discuss progress and life in general.
- Module leaders and programme leaders also give support on academic matters, and advice about other specialist help available through the University.
- The School also has a Help Desk to provide administrative assistance and advise how to get the right help.
- Internet homepages are used by many staff to support their teaching and your learning.
- Lecture and practical files, quizzes, mark summaries and much more is now available for several modules via [UELPlus Online Programme links](#).

Throughout the programme you will find a number of scheduled support activities devoted to specific aspects e.g. how to write your project report, or more general aspects such as careers.

Support for students on a University level includes:

- [Libraries and Learning Resource Centres](#)
- [Childcare for students with children aged 21/2 years to 5 years.](#)
- [Careers advice and information](#)
- [Counselling and Advice for practical problems](#)
- [Health Centre with a nurse regularly on duty.](#)
- Language tuition
- [Dyslexia support](#)
- [Accommodation](#)

Bonus factors

- A School of Health and Bioscience with staff and facilities to match to the wide interests and backgrounds of students.
- Sports facilities at the Atherton Centre, which is just a few minutes walk away.
- Multiplex cinema, theatre, supermarkets, high street shops, restaurants, cafes and pubs a few minutes walk away in Stratford - a major site of new development in East London.
- Central London only 20 minutes away by underground and [extensive transport links with all parts of London](#).

Outcomes

Programme aims and learning outcomes

What is this programme designed to achieve?

This programme is designed to give you the opportunity to:

- acquire a sound understanding of the theory and practice of Medical Microbiology.
- critically evaluate the concepts, techniques and applications of Medical Microbiology
- develop the practical and transferable skills necessary for a career in Medical Microbiology and related areas.
- develop responsibility for independent learning.

What will you learn?

Knowledge

- An in-depth knowledge of micro-organisms, their properties and activities.
- An awareness of current research in medical aspects of Microbiology and its impact on current practice
- An awareness of the contribution made by Medical Microbiologists to the diagnosis and treatment of infectious disease.
- An understanding of the driving forces behind current research in the field.
- An awareness of the wider implications of scientific research on society as a whole.

Thinking skills

- The ability to comprehend, analyse and criticise published information.
- The ability to formulate hypotheses with the minimum of assistance.
- The ability to use integrated approaches to problem solving.

Subject-Based Practical skills

- The ability to analyse data from your own and other people's experiments and to interpret them in the light of published work.
- The ability to select and apply a range of practical skills relevant to medical microbiology.
- The ability to design and carry out experimental work.
- The ability to effectively communicate your work to others by a variety of means.
- The ability to select and utilise appropriate computer software.

Skills for life and work (general skills)

- The development of your own style of independent learning.
- The ability to communicate ideas and experiments to others and to debate relevant scientific and /or ethical issues.
- IT skills.
- Communication skills.

- Team work.
- Time management

Structure

The programme structure

Introduction

All programmes are credit-rated to help you to understand the amount and level of study that is needed.

One credit is equal to 10 hours of directed study time (this includes everything you do e.g. lecture, seminar and private study).

Credits are assigned to one of 5 levels:

- 0 - equivalent in standard to GCE 'A' level and is intended to prepare students for year one of an undergraduate degree programme
- 1 - equivalent in standard to the first year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- 2 - equivalent in standard to the second year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- 3 - equivalent in standard to the third year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- M - equivalent in standard to a Masters degree

Credit rating

The overall credit-rating of this programme is 360 credits.

Typical duration

The expected duration of this programme is 3 years when attended in full-time mode or 4 years in part-time mode. It is possible to move from a full-time mode of study to a part-time mode of study and vice-versa, to accommodate any external factors such as financial constraints or domestic commitments. Many of our students make use of this flexibility and this may impact on the overall duration of their study period.

How the teaching year is divided

The teaching year begins in September and ends in June but some programmes also allow students to join at the start of Semester B, in February.

A typical student, in full-time attendance mode of study, will register for 120 credits in an academic year. A student in a part-time mode of study may register for up to 80 credits in any academic year.

What you will study when

This programme is part of a modular degree scheme. A student registered in a full-time attendance mode will take six 20 credit modules (or fewer, if any are 40 credit modules) per year. An honours degree student will complete modules totalling 120 credits at level one, modules totalling 120 credits at level 2 and modules totalling 120 credits at level 3.

It is possible to bring together modules from one field with modules from another to produce a combined programme. Subjects are offered in a variety of combinations:

- Single - 120 credits at levels one, two and three
- Major - 80 credits at levels one, two and three
- Joint - 60 credits at levels one, two and three
- Minor - 40 credits at levels one, two and three

Modules are defined as:

- Core - Must be taken
- Option - Select from a range of identified modules within the field
- University wide option - Select from a wide range of university wide options

The following are the core and optional requirements for the single, major, joint and minor routes for this programme:

LEVEL	UEL Module Code	TITLE	SKILLS MODULES (Insert Y where appropriate)	CREDITS	STATUS SINGLE	STATUS MAJOR	STATUS JOINT	STATUS MINOR
1	BS1000	Skills for Biosciences	Y	20	Core		Option	
1	BS1001	Cellular Biology		20	Core		Option	Core
1	BS1041	Human Physiology		20			Option	
1	BS1010	Human Health and Disease		20			Option	
1	BS1002	Cellular Processes		20	Core		Option	
1	BS1022	Microbiology		20	Core		Core	Core
2	BS2001	Metabolism		20			Option	
2	BS2002	Molecular Biology		20	Core		Option	Option
2	BS2012	Molecular Genetics		20	Core		Option	

2	BS2011	Practical and Employability Skills	Y	20	Core	Option	
2	BS2049	Physiological Function and Dysfunction		20		Option	Option
2	BS2024	Medical Microbiology		20	Core	Core	Core
3	BS3023	Infectious Disease Processes		20	Core	Core	Core
	BS3024	Infectious Disease Control			Core	Core	Core
3	BS3045	Immunology		20		Option	
3	BS3065	Independent Research Project (single module)		20		Option	
3	BS3063	Independent Research Project (double module)		40	Core		

The Skills Modules listed in the Joint Route are Core, unless the equivalent Skills Modules are taken in your other combined subject.

Requirements for gaining an award

In order to gain an **honours degree** you will need to obtain 360 credits including:

- A minimum of 120 credits at level one or higher
- A minimum of 120 credits at level two or higher
- A minimum of 120 credits at level three or higher

In order to gain an **ordinary degree** you will need to obtain a minimum of 300 credits including:

- A minimum of 120 credits at level one or higher
- A minimum of 120 credits at level two or higher
- A minimum of 60 credits at level three or higher

In order to gain a **Diploma of Higher Education** you will need to obtain at least 240 credits including a minimum of 120 credits at level one or higher and 120 credits at level two or higher

In order to gain a **Certificate of Higher Education** you will need to obtain 120 credits at level one or higher.

In order to gain an Associate Certificate you will need to obtain a minimum of 20 credits at level one or higher

In order to gain a Foundation Degree you will need to obtain a minimum of 240 credits including:

- A minimum of 120 credits at level one or higher
- A minimum of 120 credits at level two or higher

(A Foundation degree is linked to a named Honours degree onto which a student may progress after successful completion of the Foundation degree)

Degree Classification

Where a student is eligible for an Honours degree, and has gained a minimum of 240 UEL credits at level 2 or level 3 on the programme, including a minimum of 120 UEL credits at level 3, the award classification is determined by calculating:

The arithmetic mean of the best 100 credits at level 3 $\times 2/3$ + The arithmetic mean of the next best 100 credits at levels 2 and/or 3 $\times 1/3$

and applying the mark obtained as a percentage, with all decimal points rounded up to the nearest whole number, to the following classification

70% - 100% First Class Honours
60% - 69% Second Class Honours, First Division
50% - 59% Second Class Honours, Second Division
40% - 49% Third Class Honours
0% - 39% Not passed

The lowest module marks at level II and at level III are disregarded in the final degree classification calculations

Assessment

Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning

Knowledge is developed through

- Lectures
- Tutorials
- Workshops
- Practicals
- Reading
- Internet, UELPlus and CAL

Thinking skills are developed through

- Computer aided learning
- Presentations
- Preparing for tutorials and seminars/workshops
- Completing coursework assignments (including data analysis essays, presentations etc)
- Independent reading

Practical skills are developed through

- Laboratory Practical and/or fieldwork
- Computer simulations and use of IT

Skills for life and work (general skills) are developed through

- Managing time
- Presenting ideas and arguments in a structured manner - written and oral communication
- Problem solving
- Team work

Assessment

A wide variety of assessment methods are used including

- Written examinations
- Practical reports
- Essays
- Data analysis
- Poster presentations
- Oral presentations
- Portfolios
- Final year research project and dissertation
- MCQ tests
- Database searches
- Library exercises

Knowledge and Thinking Skills are assessed by

- Evidence of reading and comprehension of the topics covered in the module being assessed. This will be particularly apparent in essay work and examinations.

- Ability to describe, explain and discuss various aspects of the programme material in the context of class tutorials, group work, presentations and other pieces of assessed coursework for the module.
- In the final year particularly, thinking skills will be assessed by the ability to take information presented in any module out of its original context and to utilise this information in the construction of arguments, comparisons, hypotheses etc as required to address the specific assessments in each module.

Practical skills are assessed by

- The ability to carry out laboratory practical work effectively, within the timeframe allocated.
- The ability to interpret and report on work carried out in the laboratory.
- The ability to complete assignments using appropriate resources.
- Evidence of logical planning and management of time in the preparation of materials for assessment.

Skills for life and work (general skills) are assessed by

- The ability to work to strict deadlines
- The ability to select and utilise appropriate problem solving skills
- Demonstration of effective oral and written communication skills
- Evidence of interpersonal skills such as teamwork and /or team leadership
- Evidence of general numeracy skills

Quality

How we assure the quality of this programme

Before this programme started

Before the programme started, the following was checked:

- there would be enough qualified staff to teach the programme;
- adequate resources would be in place;
- the overall aims and objectives were appropriate;
- the content of the programme met national benchmark requirements;
- the programme met any professional/statutory body requirements;
- the proposal met other internal quality criteria covering a range of issues such as admissions policy, teaching, learning and assessment strategy and student support mechanisms.

This is done through a process of programme approval which involves consulting academic experts including some subject specialists from other institutions.

How we monitor the quality of this programme

The quality of this programme is monitored each year through evaluating:

- external examiner reports (considering quality and standards);
- statistical information (considering issues such as the pass rate);
- student feedback.

Drawing on this and other information, programme teams undertake the annual Review and Enhancement Process which is co-ordinated at School level and includes student participation. The process is monitored by the Quality and Standards Committee.

Once every six years an in-depth review of the whole field is undertaken by a panel that includes at least two external subject specialists. The panel considers documents, looks at student work, speaks to current and former students and speaks to staff before drawing its conclusions. The result is a report highlighting good practice and identifying areas where action is needed.

The role of the programme committee

This programme has a programme committee comprising all relevant teaching staff, student representatives and others who make a contribution towards the effective operation of the programme (e.g. library/technician staff). The committee has responsibilities for the quality of the programme. It provides input into the operation of the Review and Enhancement Process and proposes changes to improve quality. The programme committee plays a critical role in the quality assurance procedures.

The role of external examiners

The standard of this programme is monitored by at least one external examiner. External examiners have two primary responsibilities:

- To ensure the standard of the programme;
- To ensure that justice is done to individual students.

External examiners fulfil these responsibilities in a variety of ways including:

- Approving exam papers/assignments;
- Attending assessment boards;
- Reviewing samples of student work and moderating marks;
- Ensuring that regulations are followed;
- Providing feedback through an annual report that enables us to make improvements for the future.

Listening to the views of students

The following methods for gaining student feedback are used on this programme:

- Module evaluations
- Student representation on programme committees (meeting each semester)
- Personal tutor, module leader, programme leader, field co-ordinator

Students are notified of the action taken through:

- Circulating the minutes of the field committee and the annual quality improvement report
- Verbal feedback to specific groups
- Providing details on the appropriate noticeboard

Listening to the views of others

The following methods are used for gaining the views of other interested parties:

- Feedback from former students
- Industrial liaison committee
- Liaison with sandwich placement employers

Further Information

Alternative locations for studying this programme

Location	Which elements?	Taught by UEL staff	Taught by local staff	Method of Delivery
-	-	-	-	-

Where you can find further information

Further information about this programme is available from:

- [The UEL web site](#)
- The student handbook
- Module study guides
- [UEL Manual of Regulations and Policies](#)
- [UEL Quality Manual](#)
- [Regulations for the Academic Framework](#)
- [School web pages](#)