

# PHD (STRUCTURED POPULATION HEALTH, POLICY AND HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH EDUCATION) SPHERE

## Overview

**Status:** Active

**National Framework Of Qualifications (NFQ) Level:** 10

**NFQ Award Class:** Major Award

**Duration Full Time:** 4 Academic Year(s)

**Duration Part Time:** 6 Academic Year(s)

**Total Credits:** 360

**Delivery Method:** Blended

### Connected Curriculum:

- Civic and Community Engagement
- Employability
- Global Reach
- Inter-and Transdisciplinary
- Research Based Teaching
- Sustainability

### Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- Good Health and Well-being
- Quality Education
- Gender Equality
- Reduced Inequality

### Graduate Attributes:

- Creator, evaluator and communicator of knowledge
- Digitally Fluent
- Effective global citizen
- Independent and creative thinker
- Socially Responsible

### Work-Integrated Learning (Including Placement):

Yes

### NFQ Level 10, Major Award

The PhD (Structured Population health, Policy and Health Services Research Education) is a cross-institutional Health Services Research Graduate Programme, which aims to improve health through quality healthcare management and delivery in the Irish system. This is to be achieved through development of a critical mass of PhD scholars who will excel in research, policy evaluation and translation of evidence into practice. The programme is multidisciplinary and collaborative, grounded in methodological rigor and diversity.

UCC regulations governing the PhD degree will apply to all UCC students on this programme. In addition, the following regulations apply

specifically to students of the PhD (Structured Population health, Policy and Health Services Research Education) programme and apply to UCC registered students only.

The programme is funded by the Health Research Board (HRB), and is offered collaboratively by UCC, TCD and the RCSI. The programme contains a number of components which support the student's PhD research and submission of a thesis. The design of the programme ensures exposure of the participants to the best HSR researchers in Ireland and offers them the opportunity to work in a HSR setting in Ireland and at an International location. A Steering Group and Advisory Committee, comprising academics and practitioners, guide the development of the programme to ensure its appropriateness and relevance.

The PhD (Structured Population health, Policy and Health Services Research Education) is offered on a full-time basis over four years or on a part-time basis over six years.

## Full-time Programme

The total workload in each year is equivalent to 90 credits to yield a PhD (with equivalent student workload of 360 credits) in 4 years. 70 credits are for compulsory modules. Additional elective modules with a credit value of up to a maximum of 20 may also be taken at any time during the Programme with the agreement of the student's supervisory team. Students registered on this programme in UCC will be governed by UCC regulations in terms of monitoring and progression. This process may involve the inter-institutional programme team. In addition they will adhere to the specific programme requirements.

## Part-time Programme

In some circumstances, arrangements may be made to take the programme part-time, over 6 years. In the case of part-time study, fees will be calculated on a pro rata basis. The total workload in each year is equivalent to 60 credits to yield a PhD (with equivalent student workload of 360 credits) in 6 years. 70 credits are for compulsory modules. Additional elective modules with a credit value of up to a maximum of 20 may also be taken at any time during the Programme with the agreement of the students supervisory team. Students registered on this programme in UCC will be governed by UCC regulations in terms of monitoring and progression. This process may involve the inter-institutional programme team. In addition they will adhere to the specific programme requirements.

More details about SPHeRE can be found here: <https://www.sphereprogramme.ie>

## Programme Requirements

For information about modules, module choice, options and credit weightings, please go to Programme Requirements (p. 1).

## Programme Requirements

### Full-time

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Year 1</b>		
Students take <b>60</b> credits as follows:		
<i>Core Modules</i>		
EH7003	Study Design and Evidence Synthesis	5
EH7005	Health Services Research and Economics	10
EH7009	Population Health and Epidemiology	10

EH7010	Health Systems and Policy	10
EH7011	Quantitative Research and Applied Data Analysis	10
EH7014	National Work Placement	5
EH7015	Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods	10

*Research*

Students will read extensively around their subject, and agree to a research question in consultation with their supervisors.<sup>1</sup>

**Year 2**

Students take **10** credits as follows:

*Core Modules*

EH7012	Research Development and Academic Writing	5
EH7013	International Work Placement	5

*Research*

Students will continue work on the thesis, in consultation with their supervisors.<sup>2</sup>

**Year 3***Research*

Students will continue work on their thesis in consultation with their supervisors.<sup>3</sup>

**Year 4***Research*

Students will continue work on their thesis in consultation with their supervisors.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Students will normally identify a suitable project and produce a thesis proposal by the end of Year 1. Students who do not produce a satisfactory thesis proposal will not be permitted to proceed to Year 2.

<sup>2</sup> Students will be asked to make a formal presentation on their research at the end of Year 2.

<sup>3</sup> Students will ensure that by the end of Year 3 they have gathered their data (or obtained access to the relevant datasets) and begun the data analysis and write-up phase of their thesis. Students will have the opportunity to attend, and participate in, workshops on issues in health services research. Students will be asked to make a formal presentation on their research at the end of Year 3.

<sup>4</sup> Students will develop a detailed submission plan in consultation with their supervisor and ensure that they work to the timetable outlined in this plan. Students will have the opportunity to attend, and participate in, workshops on personal and professional skills development. The final PhD award will be based on the thesis only and examined in accordance with UCC regulations.

**Part-time**

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Year 1</b>		
Students take modules to the value of <b>25</b> credits from the following:		
<i>Core Modules</i>		
EH7003	Study Design and Evidence Synthesis	5
EH7005	Health Services Research and Economics	10
EH7009	Population Health and Epidemiology	10
EH7010	Health Systems and Policy	10
EH7011	Quantitative Research and Applied Data Analysis	10
EH7015	Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods	10
EH7014	National Work Placement <sup>1</sup>	5
<i>Research</i>		

Students will read extensively around their subject to develop a research question in consultation with their supervisors.<sup>2</sup>

**Year 2**

Students take modules to the value of **30** credits from the following (not previously taken):<sup>3</sup>

EH7003	Study Design and Evidence Synthesis <sup>3</sup>	30
EH7005	Health Services Research and Economics	10
EH7009	Population Health and Epidemiology	10
EH7010	Health Systems and Policy	10
EH7011	Quantitative Research and Applied Data Analysis	10
EH7015	Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods	10

*Research*

Students will read extensively around their subject to finalise a research question in consultation with their supervisors.

**Year 3**

Students take **5** credits as follows:

*Core Modules*

EH7012	Research Development and Academic Writing (compulsory)	5
--------	--	---

Students may choose to take optional modules to the value of **5** credits from the following:

*Elective Modules*

EH7013	International Work Placement (Optional)	5
--------	---	---

*Research*

Students will continue research on their thesis in consultation with their supervisors.<sup>4</sup>

**Year 4***Research*

Students will undertake work on their thesis in consultation with their supervisors.<sup>5</sup>

**Year 5***Research*

Students will undertake work on their thesis in consultation with their supervisors.<sup>6</sup>

**Year 6***Research*

Students will undertake work on their thesis in consultation with their supervisors.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> All students must undertake work placement but in the case of students currently employed in an appropriate health services environment students may complete this module within their current work environment, subject to approval of the programme team.

<sup>2</sup> Continuation requires submission of a thesis title hence approval by the College of Medicine and Health is required at the end of Year 1.

<sup>3</sup> No student may register for the Second Year of study until all modules in First Year have been passed.

<sup>4</sup> Students will agree objectives and goals for the year with their supervisor. Students will be asked to make a formal presentation at the end of Year 3.

<sup>5</sup> Students will have the opportunity to attend, and participate in, workshops on issues in health services research.

<sup>6</sup> Students will ensure that by the end of year 5 they have gathered their data (or obtained access to the relevant datasets) and have begun the data analysis and write-up phase of their thesis. Students will have the opportunity to attend, and participate in, workshops on personal and professional skill development.

<sup>7</sup> Students will develop a detailed submission plan in consultation with their supervisor and ensure that they work to the timetable outlined in this plan. The final PhD award will be based on the thesis only and examined in accordance with UCC regulations.

## Examinations

Full details and regulations governing Examinations for each programme will be contained in the *Marks and Standards Book* and for each module in the *Book of Modules*.

## Programme Learning Outcomes

**Programme Learning Outcomes for PhD (Structured Population health, Policy and Health Services Research Education) SPHeRE (NFQ Level 10, Major Award)**

The overarching requirement for undertaking a PhD is to complete a substantial programme of independent original research of publishable quality submitted as a thesis. In addition, on successful completion of this programme, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an ability to articulate and critically appraise the main features of health care systems in developed countries, the challenges facing these systems and research on the relationship between health care and population health;
- Acquire specialist knowledge and expertise on the design of health services research;
- Demonstrate an ability to independently find, evaluate and synthesise previously published health services research;
- Demonstrate an ability to independently conduct specialist research on the effectiveness of health services and/or health systems;
- Demonstrate an ability to independently translate health services and health systems research into policy and practice.