

MODULE SPECIFICATION

Academic Year (student cohort covered by specification)	2025-26
Module Code	EPM101
Module Title	Fundamentals of Epidemiology
Module Organiser(s)	Lucy Pembrey, Thandile Gondwe, Amare Tadesse
Contact	<p>The LSHTM distance learning programmes and modules are run in collaboration with the University of London. Enquiries may be made via their Student Advice Centre at: https://london.ac.uk/contact-us</p> <p>(Enquiries from London-based LSHTM MSc or research students regarding study of DL modules should be emailed to distance@lshtm.ac.uk)</p>
Faculty	<p>Faculty of Epidemiology and Population Health London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine http://www.lshtm.ac.uk/eph/</p>
FHEQ Level	Level 7
Credit Value	CATS: 15 ECTS: 7.5
HECoS Code	101335 : 100473 : 100962
Mode of Delivery	Distance Learning
Mode of Study	Directed self-study, through online materials via the Virtual Learning Environment
Language of Study	English
Pre-Requisites	<p>This module assumes basic numeracy skills.</p> <p>Note for the Epidemiology programme students: students are encouraged to complete EPM102 at the same time as EPM101.</p>
Accreditation by Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body	Not currently accredited by any other body.
Module Cap (Maximum number of students)	There is no cap on the number of students who can register for this distance learning module.
Target Audience	<p>Fundamentals of Epidemiology is a core module for all students on the DL PG Certificate/ PG Diploma/ MSc Epidemiology programme. It can also be taken as an elective module by those studying the DL PG Diploma/MSc in Clinical</p>

	Trials and Global Health Policy, and as an “individual module” for those wishing to gain a basic understanding of epidemiology before deciding whether to take further training in this field. These students may include clinicians, public health officials, nurses and other healthcare providers as well as those working indirectly in health such as medical journalists and scientific officers in government and industry.
Module Description	The module provides a solid introductory grounding in the design, analysis and interpretation of epidemiological studies and introduces epidemiological methods applied to public health.
Duration	<p>Students may start their studies at any time from receipt of study materials (made available annually usually in October, depending on date of registration) and work through the material until the start of the June assessment (although assessment submission deadlines which are earlier than this must be observed).</p> <p>Students registering after September (individual modules students only) should note that introductory messages, and some online activities (for example discussion forums and/or real-time welcome sessions) may have already taken place before they get access to the Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle). All such messages and recordings (where applicable) will be available to access throughout the study year.</p>
Last Revised (e.g. year changes approved)	March 2025

Programme(s)	Status
This module is linked to the following programme(s)	
PGCert/PGDip/MSc Epidemiology (Distance Learning - University of London)	Compulsory
PGDip/MSc Clinical Trials (Distance Learning - University of London)	Elective
PGDip/MSc Global Health Policy (Distance Learning - University of London)	Elective

Module Aim and Intended Learning Outcomes

Overall aim of the module

The overall module aim is to introduce the basic concepts in the design, analysis and interpretation of epidemiologic studies and to introduce to epidemiologic methods for public health.

Module Intended Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the module a student will be able to:

1. Describe, calculate and interpret epidemiological measures
2. Identify the key principles and assess the relative merits of different epidemiological study designs
3. Discuss and evaluate key considerations in the design, conduct and interpretation of epidemiological studies
4. Identify the major potential sources of error in epidemiological studies and assess the implications of these sources of error
5. Apply epidemiological principles to the ascertainment of disease in populations.

Indicative Syllabus

Session Content

The module is expected to cover the following topics:

Session	Title
FE00	Overview of Fundamentals of Epidemiology
FE01	Introduction to epidemiological methods
FE02	The epidemiological focus: cases and populations
FE03	Measures of occurrence
FE04	Using routine data in epidemiology
FE05	Measures of effect
FE06	Measures of impact
FE07	Transmission of infection
FE08	Overview of study design
FE09	Confounding and effect modification
FE10	Standardisation
FE11	Bias
FE12	Measurement error: validity and reliability
FE13	From association to causation
FE14	Cross-sectional studies
FE15	Cohort studies
FE16	Case-control studies
FE17	Intervention studies
FE18	Ecological studies

Session Content	
FE19	Surveillance
FE20	Screening

Teaching and Learning

Notional Learning Hours

Type of Learning Time	Number of Hours	Expressed as Percentage (%)
Directed self-study	100	67
Self-directed learning	20	13
Assessment, review and revision	30	20
Total	150	100

Teaching and Learning Strategy

Learning is self-directed against a detailed set of learning objectives using the materials provided. The key learning methods are:

- Reading and reflecting on the CAL materials which introduce, explain and apply the principles and methods covered in the module.
- Reading and reflecting on provided materials which support the learning in the CAL sessions. This material includes LSHTM online library resources.
- Accessing academic support which is available from the module tutors through the web-based discussion forums and occasional online webinars in which students are encouraged to participate.
- Completing formative assignment(s) and reflecting on written feedback from module tutors.

Assessment

Assessment Strategy

Formal assessment of this module will be by a time-limited assessment in June contributing 100% of the final module grade. All five module learning outcomes will be assessed via this task. If students fail the module overall, they are allowed one further attempt at the assessment.

Summative Assessment

Assessment Type	Assessment Length (i.e. Word Count, Length of presentation in minutes)	Weighting (%)	Intended Module Learning Outcomes Tested
Time-limited assessment	Assessment length: 1,500 per question	100	1 – 5

Time-limited assessments for DL modules are held once a year, mostly in June (including resits). Assessments are held in accordance with University of London's annual guidance but in 2025/26 they are likely to be accessed online. Please note that a separate

assessment fee may be payable in addition to the module fee. Further details will be communicated as soon as the final decisions are known.

Resitting assessment

Resits will accord with the LSHTM's [Resits Policy](#)

Assessment submission deadlines

Formative Assignment(s) must be submitted by 31st March.

These can be submitted only once and must be submitted via the online Assignment Management System.

Resources

Indicative reading list

- Webb P, Bain C, Page A. *Essential Epidemiology: An introduction for Students and Health Professionals*. Cambridge University Press, 2020 (Fourth Edition). E-book accessible via the LSHTM library.
- Buring JE. *Epidemiology in Medicine*. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 1987.
- Porta, M. (Ed.). *A Dictionary of Epidemiology*. Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Buck C, Llopis A. *The Challenge of Epidemiology: Issues and Selected Readings*. Pan American Health Org, 1988.
- dos Santos Silva I. *Cancer Epidemiology: Principles and Methods*. IARC, 1999.

Other resources

The Moodle Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) contains the key materials and resources for EPM101 as follows:

- Interactive study material, referred to as Computer Assisted Learning (CAL), which is the key learning material for the module. The CAL sessions are also available to download.
- Reading material (via the LSHTM online library)
- Discussion forums
- Assignments and Exercises
- Past examination papers and examiner reports.

Moodle can be accessed from the first week of October, after module registration.

Teaching for Disabilities and Learning Differences

The module-specific site on Moodle provides students with access to the module learning materials, including a study guide and online reading list (containing both essential and recommended readings), and additional resources including supplementary exercises and optional lecture recordings. All materials posted up on Moodle areas, including computer-based sessions, have been made accessible where possible. The LSHTM Moodle has been made accessible to the widest possible audience, using a VLE that allows for up to 300% zoom, permits navigation via keyboard and use of speech recognition software, and that allows listening through a screen reader. All students have access to “[SensusAccess](#)” software which allows conversion of files into alternative formats.

For students with special needs, reasonable adjustments and support can be arranged – details and how to request support can be found on the University of London website at <https://london.ac.uk/applications/how-it-works/inclusive-practice-access-arrangements>