



UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

Department of Public Health and Epidemiology

# Epidemiology, Statistics and Health Information (Distance Learning)

## ***The course***

This is one of the core modules in the Master's in Public Health run in the Division of Primary Care, Public and Occupational Health at the University of Birmingham. It has been taught since 1994 in three week long blocks in the department. Now it has been developed into a wholly distance-learning format, with exactly the same syllabus. There are no face-to-face lectures or residential schools. The course is built around a timetable of 28 weekly sections, studying approximately 10 hours per week. In each section you will have a study guide to read and activities to do. These vary from doing a statistical test to looking at a website with the latest Census data. The distance-learning course uses many of the teaching resources used for the face-to-face course but delivered in a more appropriate way for distance learning, much of it via WebCT.

## ***Equipment you will need***

You will need a PC (not Mac or other operating system) with Windows 98 or above, and equipped with Microsoft Office (PowerPoint, Word, Excel) 97 or equivalent (such as Star Office 5.2 or above), a web browser (preferably Internet Explorer version 5.0 or above), and an e-mail client (e.g. Outlook Express). You will also need an Internet connection, either a 56k modem, or preferably a broadband connection. Also, you will need to be familiar with the use of Excel, Internet Explorer and an e-mail client.

## ***Tuition and Counselling***

All students are assigned a specialist e-tutor who is a member of the academic staff in the Department of Public Health and Epidemiology. Your e-tutor is familiar with the module and is there to help you and ensure that you make good academic progress. You can also access support from the Course Co-ordinator – Miss Louise Taylor and technical and computing support from Ms Lesley Clarke. You will also be part of a peer group support network. Contacts will be by email, post and telephone and contact details will be given to you at the start of the course.

## ***Assessment***

The distance-learning cohort will be assessed in the same way as the classroom based cohort. There are 3 parts to the assessment:

A, Health information assignment (10% of mark)

B, Critical appraisal assignment (20% of mark)

C, A 2 hour problem-based examination (70% of mark), which takes place in May

You must pass the module overall, AND the examination to successfully pass this module

## Awards

This course can be taken on its own or can count 30 credits towards a Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma in Public Health & Epidemiology or a Masters' Degree of Public Health, Health Technology Assessment or Health Promotion.

## Registration and fees

You can request a registration form from The Admissions Manager, The Academic Office, The University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2TT, United Kingdom University of Birmingham or by emailing Louise Taylor at [L.A.Taylor@bham.ac.uk](mailto:L.A.Taylor@bham.ac.uk).

The deadline for applications, to start the distance-learning module this year, is 31<sup>st</sup> August 2006. Please quote the banner code 01 16868 in your application form. The fee for the module this year subject to confirmation is £666.75.

## Contact details

Miss Louise Taylor (Course Co-ordinator)	<a href="mailto:l.a.taylor@bham.ac.uk">l.a.taylor@bham.ac.uk</a>	0121-414-8348
Dr Sarah Walters (Course Director)	<a href="mailto:s.walters@bham.ac.uk">s.walters@bham.ac.uk</a>	0121-414-6760
Dr Catherine Meads (Project Manager)	<a href="mailto:c.a.meads@bham.ac.uk">c.a.meads@bham.ac.uk</a>	0121-414-6771

## Syllabus

Introduction to Public Health and Health Information	<i>Basic Epidemiology and Statistics</i>
Health and its determinants, Principles of public health History of public health in the UK Historical trends in major causes of morbidity and mortality Global differences in major causes of morbidity and mortality Organisations with statutory responsibility for health and their roles Health Authorities, Local Authorities European Community World Health Organisation Community Health Councils Sources of information about health and disease Census Mortality Hospital information Compendium of Clinical and Health Indicators Public Health and the Internet Computerised sources of health information Cancer registration Population structure, dynamics and demography Disease classification Disease staging Basic mathematical concepts for statistics and epidemiology Ethics of public health	Types of data and data presentation Descriptive statistics Frequency distributions, mean, median and mode Centiles, quartiles and ranges Normal distribution and its properties Standardised ratios Probability theory, Sampling, Inferential statistics Inferences on means, Inferences on proportions Analysis of categorical data Correlation and Regression Non-parametric tests Assessment of risk Descriptive epidemiology, Measures of disease frequency, Comparisons in time, person and place Ecological studies, Analytical epidemiology Cross-sectional and prevalence studies Cohort studies, Experimental studies and clinical trials, Survival analysis Principles of Screening Binomial distribution Study design and questionnaires Qualitative research methods Critical appraisal of published paper Epidemiology of specific diseases: Inherited diseases, Cardiovascular, Respiratory, Cancer, Infectious, Mental illness, Musculoskeletal disease