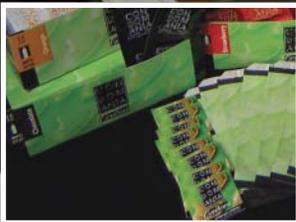


Sexual Health Framework Programme and Course Prospectus

Committed to positive action for sexual health



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Disclaimer

This prospectus was printed in June 2010. It contains information on our sexual health programmes and courses within the School of Health & Social Care. The university has made every effort to ensure that the information provided is both helpful to prospective candidates and accurate at the time of its publication.

The university reserves the right to withdraw or amend aspects of programmes or courses in this prospectus, including content, staff provision, location and facilities.

Prospective candidates should note that, in the event of such circumstances occurring, the university cannot accept liability for any claims for costs or damages made by a student resulting from any change to, or withdrawal of, programmes or courses that she or he had intended to study.



Welcome

to the School of Health & Social Care

Dear Colleagues,

This prospectus contains details of our Sexual Health Framework and associated programmes and courses provided by the School of Health & Social Care for those of you wishing to extend your Continuing Professional Development and thereby your career opportunities in sexual health.

We hope you find the prospectus helpful in making decisions about your studies and that once you begin study you find it a rewarding experience.

Our courses can be taken individually or as part of a programme leading to a specified award, such as a BSc Hons or an MA. Many are available via electronic learning, including the Sexual Health Skills course, which we offer in partnership with the Royal College of Nursing, Department of Health and Teenage Pregnancy Unit.

For further information and to be directed to relevant personnel, please use the contact details on the back of this prospectus.

Best wishes,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Liz Meerabeau'.

Professor Liz Meerabeau
Head of School of Health & Social Care



Introduction

The UK's statistics on sexual ill health pose a very challenging situation for health care professionals and allied workers. The House of Commons Health Committee in 2003 described sexual ill health in Britain as a situation in crisis. The news media are already suggesting that the situation is likely to be compounded in the build-up to the 2012 London Olympics, which will have implications across the nation.

The School of Health & Social Care at the University of Greenwich is committed to doing something positive about this situation. In collaboration with organisations such as the Royal College of Nursing (RCN), various sexual health associations and private-sector companies, the School provides a number of exciting programmes and courses that are carefully tailored to be clinically and professionally relevant to health care workers. These are offered at diploma, degree and postgraduate levels, and aim to help practitioners improve their clients' holistic sexual health and well-being. Simultaneously, this contributes to the aims of the various UK national strategies on sexual health, HIV, and teenage and unplanned conceptions. The university's sexual health programme and courses include a number of new and innovative developments.

This brochure:

- outlines the numerous individual "stand-alone" courses;
- shows you a number of programmes, or routes, to achieving a significant academic award in sexual health;
- explains the options for various ways of studying, such as in the classroom, by e-learning or by a combination of the two.

Sexual health courses at Greenwich

Most of our sexual health courses are worth either 15 or 30 academic credits. These credits are widely accepted by other higher education institutions, so may contribute to other programmes of study you take elsewhere. Similarly, you may already have credits from other higher education institutions that count towards the credit total required for an award on a University of Greenwich course.

Courses are offered at academic levels 5 (diploma), 6 (degree) and 7 (postgraduate/Master's) levels. These can be taken as stand-alone courses, forming part of Continuing Professional Development, or dovetailed into an academic award for those who wish to gain a significant qualification in sexual health. Some courses are offered at more than one level, allowing you to access them at the most suitable level for you. You can also gain an award at one level, and then continue studying for a higher award. (See table 1.)

Table 1 Credits structure for University of Greenwich awards

Academic level	4 and 5	6	7
Credits required for this level	240	120	180
Total credits required	240 (120 + 120)	360 (240 + 12)	180 (60 + 60 + 60)
Exit with	DipHE	BSc Hons	Master's



NOTE

As a mark of our commitment to quality learning, the sexual health courses aim to implement the good practice guidelines of the Department of Health.

Why should I study a sexual health programme?

Each of the UK's national strategies for sexual health, teenage conceptions, and HIV, place nurses, midwives and other health and social care professionals at the centre of the work to be done in improving the nation's sexual health, in prevention, treatment and care. There is growing realisation that certain elements of sexual health are important to client encounters wherever they take place: from the effects of medication on sexual perception and performance, the notions of risk and unprotected sex, vulnerability caused by taking drugs and alcohol, to altered body image after surgery. Many practitioners realise they could do more to help their clients/patients in sexual health matters, but often feel unable to do so without appropriate knowledge, skills and learning.

What are the benefits for patients?

The client encounters knowledgeable professionals who are sensitive and empowered to address clients' sexual health matters proactively, overcoming embarrassment and stigma in so doing; professionals are able to engage with multi-professional peers in streamlining holistic care for clients.

What if I do not have recent academic qualifications or credit points?

Do not be put off: talk to us! The University of Greenwich is keen to reward you for what you have learned through experience. We may also be able to take into account learning from previous courses, or knowledge and skills that you have acquired through practice, if this is equivalent to a course offered in this booklet.

We also offer academic skills courses to help you get back to study.

WebCT support

The e-support office provides the following services:

- guidance for access to your online course;
- technology advice and information;
- Learning Services web pages;
- registry facilities online;
- helpline for students on WebCT and Lotus Notes courses.

Online learning support for staff and students in the School of Health & Social Care is provided by the School WebCT technical administrator, who is a WebCT-certified senior trainer. OSCARS (Off-campus Services Contact and Remote Support) provides support for remote users, i.e. those studying outside the university.

What teaching and learning techniques will I encounter?

Learning and teaching strategies will be selected to complement the learning outcomes. These methods depend on the format of delivery for the course, which may be classroom based or electronic learning through WebCT. The course may include a wide range of adult learning activities, such as lectures, to introduce concepts and theoretical components of the course, individual exercises and interactive group work, either in the classroom or via online peer chat rooms. You will be asked to contribute individually and collectively in prescribed exercises and activities. This will require you to share your ideas, work, experiences and comments with fellow students as part of your overall learning experience and development.

This learning will be demonstrated through discussion, critical reflection, evaluation activities/presentations, reports from service or placement visits and debate, in order to explore issues and further develop understanding, as well as assist in the application of theory to practice. Subject specialist guest facilitators/speakers will be invited to contribute to both classroom and online courses. This ensures that you are made aware of contemporary knowledge and current practice issues through the experiences of these specialists working directly in the field. You will be encouraged to develop and utilise self-awareness, explore moral dilemmas and share beliefs, attitudes and knowledge, thus increasing confidence in making sound professional practice decisions.

How will I be assessed?

Each of the courses is individually assessed and examples of assessment include written essays, analysis of reflective learning and portfolio development. A number of the courses will have a practice component to be assessed alongside the theoretical component. This information is provided in more detail in the individual course handbooks which will be supplied.

When do the courses and programmes start?

Term 1 starts in September, term 2 in January and term 3 in April.

DEVELOPING PRACTICE

"I used to just think diabetes, hypertension and coronary heart disease were medical conditions we threw pills at. Then I realised the role they played for my patients, and their sex lives (or not!) and the effects on future or current relationships."

Practice nurse

NHS Next Stage Review

All relevant courses in this prospectus have been mapped against the eight pathways identified in *A High Quality Workforce: NHS Next Stage Review* (or 'Darzi' as it colloquially referred to). The pathways are:

1. Long-Term Conditions
2. Children's Services
3. Maternity and New Born Care
4. Mental Health Care
5. Acute Care
6. Planned Care
7. End of Life Care
8. Staying Healthy

For further information on the NHS Next Stage Review, please go to www.dh.gov.uk.

Outline of sexual health programmes

BSc Hons Sexual Health

Top-up degree, i.e. 120 credits at level 6

The University of Greenwich requires 120 credits at each of levels 4 and 5 as an entry point to this new top-up degree. This consists of a selection of sexual health courses at level 6, to the total of 120 credits, made up of 60 credits from core courses (table 3) and 60 credits from option courses (table 5). This benefits students by grounding them in a significant number of courses offered on different aspects of sexual health client care. This is particularly important for sexual health practitioners working across a variety of settings, such as in contraception, genito-urinary nursing and HIV client care.

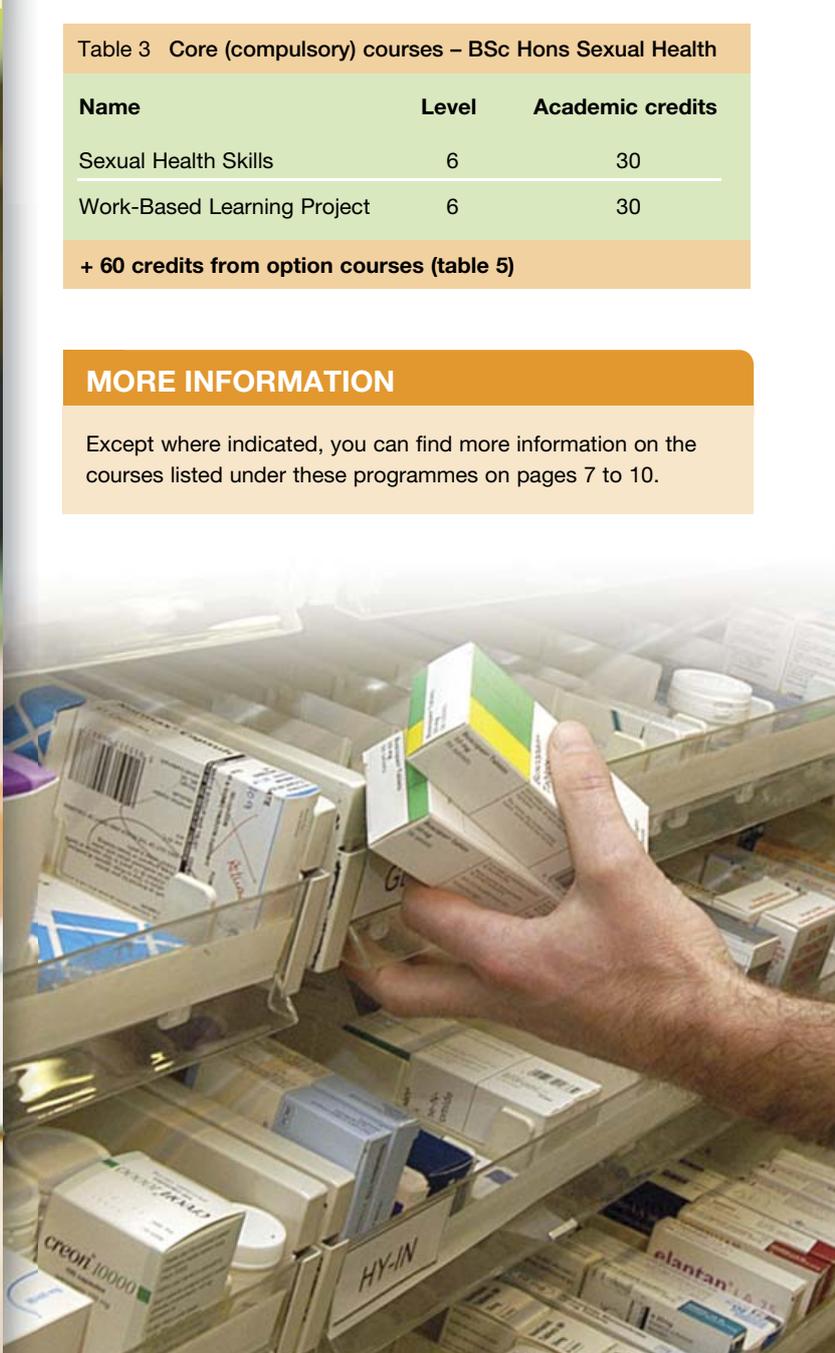
Table 3 Core (compulsory) courses – BSc Hons Sexual Health

Name	Level	Academic credits
Sexual Health Skills	6	30
Work-Based Learning Project	6	30

+ 60 credits from option courses (table 5)

MORE INFORMATION

Except where indicated, you can find more information on the courses listed under these programmes on pages 7 to 10.



Graduate Diploma in Sexual Health

For entry to this programme the University of Greenwich requires a degree or 120 credits at each of levels 4 and 5, plus professional experience equivalent to graduate status. The student selects courses according to their practice and learning needs. The award represents a flexible programme of sexual health courses at levels 6 and 7, i.e. "graduate-level studies in postgraduate time" to allow the practitioner to develop new knowledge in the specialism in preparation for study at Master's level. The award comprises 120 credits: two core courses worth 60 credits (table 4) and a further 60 credits selected from a range of options (table 5 and table 6).

University Certificate in Contraception and Sexual Health (C&SH)

This initiative has been developed in response to service provision and changes in the delivery of contraception and sexual health. The certificate is made up of 60 credits of core courses (table 7).

OTHER PROGRAMMES AND COURSES

For entry at level 5, to undertake an individual course of study or get further details on all School of Health & Social Care programmes, please see our prospectus for Continuing Professional Development courses at www.gre.ac.uk/schools/health/programmes/cpd.

Table 4 Core (compulsory) courses – Graduate Diploma in Sexual Health

Name	Level	Academic credits
Sexual Health Skills	6	30
Project	6	30
+ 60 credits from option courses (tables 5 and 6)		

Table 5 Option courses for all undergraduate awards

Name	Level	Academic credits
Cervical Cytology and Breast Awareness	6	15
Current Issues in HIV and AIDS	6	30
Contraception and Reproductive Sexual Health Practice	6	30
Delivering SRE in the Classroom (credit-rated provision)	6	30
Developing an Advanced Portfolio for Practice	6	15 or 30
Fertility Awareness (delivered on behalf of Fertility UK)	6	30
Introduction to Sexual Infections and Sexual Health	6	15
Managing Infertility	6	15
Promoting Sexual Health	6	15
Psychosexual Awareness (credit-rated provision)	6	30
The Menopause Course (credit-rated provision)	6	15
Sexual Health Teaching and Learning Practice (credit-rated provision)	6	30
Understanding Human Fertility	6	15

Table 6 Additional option courses – Graduate Diploma only

Name	Level	Academic credits
Promoting Sexual Health	7	15
Inter-Professional Working	7	15

Table 7 Core (compulsory) courses – C&SH

Name	Level	Academic credits
Cervical Cytology and Breast Awareness	6	15
Contraception and Reproductive Sexual Health Practice	6	30
Introduction to Sexual Infections and Sexual Health	6	15



outline of sexual health programmes

MA Professional Practice in Health and Social Care (Sexual Health)

For entry to this programme the University of Greenwich requires a degree or equivalent professional qualifications and relevant experience. The MA offers practitioners maximum flexibility for professional development, enabling them to acquire specialist knowledge and skills and giving them the opportunity to claim academic credit for professional experience. The programme is delivered by e-learning over the Web, reducing the need for regular attendance at the university.

The programme is structured in three stages (see table 8) and students have the option of exiting at the end of each stage with an award (either a postgraduate certificate, postgraduate diploma or Master's degree). Alternatively, they can progress to the next stage. The courses for each stage are given in tables 9, 10 and 11.

The programme may be taken in a minimum of two and a half years and a maximum of five years.

MORE INFORMATION

Except where indicated, you can find more information on the courses listed under this programme on pages 7 to 10.

Table 8 Programme structure

Stage	1	2	3
Credits required for this stage	60	60	60
<i>Credits from core courses</i>	30	30	60 (project)
<i>Credits from other courses</i>	15 × 2/30	30	
Total credits required	60	120 (60 + 60)	180 (60 + 60 + 60)
Exit with	PGCert	PGDip	Master's
Progress to	PGDip	Master's	

Table 9 Stage 1: PGCert (60 credits, minimum 40 at level 7)

Courses	Level	Academic credits
Contemporary Issues in Sexual Health (core/compulsory for all three PG awards)	7	30
<i>Choice of 15 or 30 credits from options below or other sexual health courses, e.g. transferred from other universities, and may include 30 credits at level 3.</i>		
Advanced Contraceptive Practice	7	30
Promoting Sexual Health	6/7	15

Table 10 Stage 2: PGDip (+ 60 credits = 120)

Courses	Level	Academic credits
Research Methods (core/compulsory for PGDip and MA)	7	30
<i>Choice of 30 credits from options, see examples below – can include selection from PGCert or other sexual health course.</i>		
Ethics and Professional Values	7	15
Inter-Professional Working	7	15
A Portfolio of Innovative Practice	7	15 or 30
Reflective Practitioner	7	15
Safe and Effective Prescribing for Nurses*	7	15

Table 11 Stage 3: MA (+ 60 credits = 180)

Course	Level	Academic credits
Independent Work-Based Learning	7	60



Courses

Advanced Contraceptive Practice

Level 7

In 2005 the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) published its guidelines on long-acting reversible contraception (LARC). The priorities for implementation focussed on contraception provision and training of health professionals in contraception care. This course enables the health professional to fit intrauterine devices and implants in order to work at a higher or specialist level in contraception and sexual health. The course follows guidelines issued by the RCN and Faculty of Family Planning and Reproductive Healthcare.

Cervical Cytology and Breast Awareness

Level 6

This course is for professionals in general practice, gynæcology, midwifery, genito-urinary medicine, family planning and areas where sexual health is a concern. Students gain knowledge and skills of issues surrounding cervical smears and breast awareness.

The student must have a skilled supervisor and opportunities for taking cervical smears.

Contemporary Issues in Sexual Health

Level 7

Since the “sexual revolution” of the 1960s, HIV and AIDS in the 1980s, and now the increase in sexual infections, sexual health has moved to centre stage in social consciousness. This course examines issues in sexual health, such as abortion, the law, fertility, gender and disability. A review of epistemologies enables the student to pursue an in-depth evaluation of the issues pertinent to their area of sexual health. The course remains contemporary in content by focusing on issues that are relevant during the term of the course.

Contraception and Reproductive Sexual Health Practice

Level 6

Sexual health, sexuality and contraception are of national concern. The National Strategy for Sexual Health (2001) identified the need for these services. This course enables the practitioner to work in the practice of contraception. Applicants should secure a clinical placement and mentor prior to the course. This can be done by contacting the placement supervisor

in your PCT, the contraceptive & sexual health manager in the PCT, or you may be able to secure a placement where you are working. Placements may be secured in other trusts. Please contact the course co-ordinator prior to the course to discuss placement arrangements.

Current Issues in HIV and AIDS

Level 6

This course explores the multiple problems confronting people who are HIV antibody positive or who have an AIDS-defining illness. You are asked to reflect on the emergence, continued prevalence and epidemiology of the HIV pandemic, and explore the political, economic and social consequences. The course also covers strategy, policy and services for clients who have HIV, explores social values, beliefs and ethics and the implications of these issues for professional practice.

Delivering SRE in the Classroom

External provision delivered by fpa

Level 6

This course aims to provide participants with the specialised knowledge, skills and awareness they require to deliver sex and relationship education in the classroom, within the context of personal, social and health education.

Contact: helens@fpa.org.uk

Working in collaboration

The university works with leading health organisations on a number of its courses (listed below). For more information on our collaborators, see pages 11 to 12.



Association of Psychosexual Nursing

- Psychosexual Awareness



Condomania@/Sexual Health Group

- Promoting Sexual Health



Department of Health

- Sexual Health Skills

fpa

- Delivering SRE in the Classroom
- Sexual Health Teaching and Learning Practice



Menopause Clinical and Research Unit

- The Menopause Course



Royal College of Nursing

- Managing Infertility
- Sexual Health Skills
- The Menopause Course
- Promoting Sexual Health
- Understanding Human Fertility



Teenage Pregnancy Unit

- Sexual Health Skills

Developing an Advanced Portfolio for Practice

Level 6

The University of Greenwich is committed to awarding credit to students for prior and current learning which has occurred during education activities, or through experience at work or elsewhere.

This course provides the formal framework for practitioners to develop a portfolio of evidence based on their prior and current learning experiences, contributing towards an academic award.

Previous and current learning may occur through:

- education and training activities not formally assessed;
- short courses and study days which form part of Continuing Professional Development provision;
- extensive experience in practice which has resulted in additional responsibilities, significant change and development.

Students can prepare a claim for prior and current learning through the process of reflection on experience and compiling a portfolio of evidence, with the support and supervision of experienced tutorial staff. Students are advised to contact the course co-ordinator or their programme leader before registering for this course.

Ethics and Professional Values

Level 7

This e-learning course at Master's level covers ethical concepts, theories and principles in relation to the work environment. Students examine the principle of autonomy and rights of practitioners, and how ethical theory relates to different aspects of the professional role. Students evaluate the influence of ethics and values on professional practice and are encouraged to develop critical, ethical reflection.

Fertility Awareness

Level 6

This is designed for health professionals to achieve competence as providers of education in fertility awareness and natural family planning for women/couples at all stages of reproductive life. The student is provided with the necessary knowledge to be able to interpret the physiological changes of the menstrual cycle and the observed indicators of fertility to support clients to avoid or to achieve a pregnancy.

Independent Work-Based Learning Project

Level 7

Students use research interests to produce a professionally relevant project. There is a high degree of flexibility in the shape of the final project, but the subject should be related to and informed by the specialist component of the programme.

Inter-Professional Working

Level 7

This course is offered as a blended learning course (a combination of face-to-face sessions and web-based learning) and has been designed to meet the needs of health and social care professionals working in a range of practice settings. Students are expected to demonstrate a critical understanding of the concept of inter-professional working in relation to both the clients and users of the service.

Introduction to Sexual Infections and Sexual Health

Level 6

In response to the Government's Sexual Health Strategy and the aim to reduce waiting times for genito-urinary (GU) services, this course has been designed for practitioners in sexual health. Practitioners working in GU, sexual health clinics or in the community in general practices gain knowledge and competence in the area of sexually transmitted infections. A short placement in a GU clinic is required as part of the course.

Managing Infertility

In association with the Fertility Nurses Group, Royal College of Nursing

Level 6

This e-learning course, created by the Royal College of Nursing Fertility Nurses Group, is aimed at practitioners in infertility clinics. Surveys by the group showed that fertility nurses need a course to meet the challenges, including moral and ethical issues, generated by new technology in this field.

Web-based sessions are released in consecutive order each week, so students can work through each session at any time to suit their needs. All sessions are managed by the course co-ordinator. Subject specialists are available online during the course.

Portfolio of Innovative Practice

Level 7

This course enables health care professionals to reflect on their experience working in sexual health and produce a portfolio of evidence of substantial learning, leadership potential and innovative practice. Please speak to the course co-ordinator or programme leader before registering.

Project

Level 6

The purpose of this core course is to develop the student's skills in reviewing research literature. This is a fundamental component of professional practice in health and social care and these skills are transferable to a number of areas of employment. The project enables students to draw on a range of research evidence in relation to public health, and health and social care, depending on their area of interest.

Promoting Sexual Health

In association with Condomania® and the Royal College of Nursing

Level 6/7

The Government's Strategy for Sexual Health and the Social Exclusion Report have highlighted the enormous potential for sexual health promotion. This e-learning course, developed as a response to these initiatives, is a collaborative initiative between the university, the Royal College of Nursing and Sexual Health Group Plc, owners of the Condomania® condom brand.

In taking this course, you develop an informed understanding of health promotion and education in relation to sexual health. The course covers the complexities in defining sexual health, stigma and prejudice; risk and safer sex, ethical and legal issues and dilemmas. Women's and male sexual health issues are explored separately, as well as issues for sexual health promotion generally, and in relation to targeting specific community populations. The course covers the negative effects of sexual ill health, the issue of sexual infections, and policy and strategy, as well as issues often given a lower profile in this area, such as sexual abuse and disability.

Credit: North News & Pictures. From a Spencer Tunick event, Gateshead 2006.



Psychosexual Awareness

In association with the Association of Psychosexual Nursing

Level 6

This course offers experiential group training, providing the opportunity for nurses and health care professionals to meet and study the issues concerning psychosexual awareness and care of patients/clients in their everyday work. The training involves the study of feelings in the practitioner/patient relationship in relation to psychosexual issues. The course offers the possibility of examining lived clinical practice against published work and provides a rare chance to understand complex and often difficult feelings that arise during patient/client consultations. The seminar work enables growth in confidence and the development of skills to talk about sex that allows the challenge of everyday work to become rewarding. It has the potential to substantially improve the quality of care for the patient/client. The course is provided in selected centres in different parts of the country, e.g. Bristol, Bedford, London and Kent.

Contact: www.psychosexualnursing.org.uk or by post to:

Education Lead
PO Box 2762
London W1A 5HQ

Reflective Practitioner

Level 7

This course builds on students' professional knowledge and experience to enable them to reflect on and reformulate their evidential basis for practice, using analytical and reflective skills to initiate change and advance practice.

Research and Development 1

Level 7

This course provides students with opportunities to develop competence in the exploration and examination of research evidence within a health and social care context. It also explores the issues and approaches of appraising evidence within a framework of dialogue and debate relating to:

- the nature of knowledge;
- the influence of differing disciplinary frameworks;
- the rise in qualitative research within health and social care.

The course is a prerequisite for the final work-based learning project for the MA Professional Practice in Health and Social Care (Sexual Health) programme.

Research Methods in Health and Social Care

Level 6

All graduates need to understand research methodologies and to use research as the basis for decision making in health or social care. This course introduces common research designs and methodologies used in both quantitative and qualitative health and social care research studies.

Sexual Health Skills

In association with the Department of Health and the Teenage Pregnancy Unit. Accredited by the Royal College of Nursing

Levels 5/6

This is the new e-learning version of the former RCN Sexual Health Skills distance learning course, credit rated by the university since 2004. It attracted over 1,700 participants in its first three years and is highly evaluated for its ability to be customised according to differing learners' needs and practice arenas. Students come from a wide range of clinical backgrounds, including those who identify particular sexual health aspects of their role without it being the main focus, as well as those moving into, or new to, the various sexual health sub-specialities, and others wishing to consolidate academic learning or broaden their sexual health horizons. The course content focuses on sexual health for holistic client care, enabling participants to make successful sexual health assessments of their clients, plus an overview of safer sex, contraception, sexual infections and HIV. The course is core to a number of programmes in this prospectus and can lead into further studies within the specialist branches of sexual health.

Sexual Health Teaching and Learning Practice

External provision delivered by fpa

Level 6

This course develops competence and confidence in the design, development, delivery and evaluation of sexual health training for those who are mandated to contribute to the professional training and development of peers and colleagues in a variety of settings.

Contact: helens@fpa.org.uk

The Menopause Course

External provision in association with the Menopause Clinical and Research Unit, Northwick Park Hospital, London. Accredited by the Royal College of Nursing

Level 6

This course develops practitioners' specialist knowledge and skills in order to empower women in making choices in how to best manage short- and long-term health issues around the menopause. Practitioners explore biological, social and psychological explanations of the menopause. The course promotes an in-depth knowledge of assessment and treatment strategies relevant to menopausal health. This course comprises of part self-directed learning and part face to face teaching.

Contact: kathy.abernethy@btinternet.com

Understanding Human Fertility

In association with Fertility Nurses Group. Accredited by the Royal College of Nursing

Level 6

Since the first IVF fertilisation, scientific advances have improved treatment for infertility. These developments have confirmed the need for education and training for health professionals. The course, commissioned by the Royal College of Nursing Fertility Nurses Group and run by the university via e-learning, is for practitioners who provide direct services, assist as members of a multidisciplinary team with investigations, treatment or aftercare for infertility or who are interested in learning more about these initiatives. The course gives practitioners knowledge to support couples undergoing fertility treatment.

This course is delivered online using WebCT. Sessions are selectively released in consecutive order each week, so students can work through each session at any time to suit their needs. All sessions are managed by the course co-ordinator. Subject specialists are available during the course.

Project

BSc Hons Health, BA Hons Social Care, BSc Hons Public Health, BSc Hons Professional Practice in Health and Social Care

Level 6

The purpose of this core course is to develop the student's skills. This is a fundamental component of professional research practice in health and social care, and is transferable to areas of employment. The project brings together concepts and ideas from other courses by examining and appraising research literature in an area of the student's choice, from health, social care or social work. This subject can either be taken in the classroom or by e-learning, via the Internet.

The university and its collaborators

The University of Greenwich



The university has approximately 26,000 students across its three campuses, at Greenwich and Avery Hill in south-east London and at Chatham Maritime in Kent.

Occupying key positions in the Thames Gateway, the university is a motor for regeneration in the area, working with the health service, government, local authorities and business. In partnership with employers, it is training the next generation of professionals in fields such as nursing, midwifery, paramedic science and social work, as well as teaching, architecture, computing and engineering.

The university combines strong regional links and a mission for access and lifelong learning with research excellence and an international role. It has won three research-based Queen's Anniversary Prizes for Higher and Further Education, which are national awards recognising outstanding achievement.

The School of Health & Social Care



The School of Health & Social Care offers a broad portfolio of programmes in nursing, midwifery, psychology, health, public health, social work and social care. The School

works in close partnership with health and social care providers across south-east England and is committed to ensuring that all students gain the professional, practical and academic skills that will equip them to work in health and social care. It has joint appointments with many trusts and other care providers, which help to ensure that its curricula are up to date.

The School is mainly based at the Avery Hill Campus, which offers a wide range of excellent teaching facilities, including several well-equipped skills laboratories. Two new buildings, providing teaching and office accommodation, were opened in 2006. The School also has newly refurbished accommodation at the Medway Campus. The School has about 2,000 full-time equivalent students and 123 staff. The students come from many backgrounds and the staff are familiar with the learning and pastoral needs of a multi-ethnic student population.

Much research takes place in the Centre for Research & Development. The centre offers a multidisciplinary approach to academic and applied research in the field of health and social care. Its research is concentrated under three broad themes: public health, the organisation and delivery of health care and the education and training of health professionals. The centre combines programmes of research which are of national significance with work that is designed to meet the needs of local health and social care providers. There are experts within the centre in social sciences, nursing, midwifery, public health, social

care, environmental health and complementary medicine. The centre works in partnership with local trusts, primary care trusts, local authorities and the voluntary sector within Kent and south-east London to address local problems.

The School of Health & Social Care is also active in practice development. It has taken a national lead in a number of areas, including education for extended theatre roles, for example, equipping nurses with greater skills in physical assessment. The School has also been developing e-learning in areas such as providing management education for the managers of nursing homes.

The Royal College of Nursing



With a membership of over a third of a million, the RCN is the largest professional association and union of nursing staff and students in the world. As such, it is

an influential voice for nursing at home and abroad. The RCN promotes nursing interests on a wide range of issues by working closely with the Government, Parliament, unions, professional bodies and voluntary organisations.

The RCN campaigns on behalf of its members and the people they care for, and is a leading player in the development of nursing policy and practice, and standards of care. It provides a comprehensive range of services and benefits for its members, including advice and support on a range of clinical and employment issues; the foremost nursing library in Europe; and RCN Direct, a telephone information and advice service for members. The RCN Accreditation Unit provides professional accreditation for events, conferences and learning opportunities, such as highlighted in this programme. The RCN continues with its custom of championing all aspects of sexual health nursing care through: its professional nursing advisors; the work, publications and conferences of the various forums; its wide relations with government, national and international sexual health organisations; and, not least, through its innovative sexual health educational initiatives, resulting in collaboration on courses and programmes highlighted in this publication.

The RCN Fertility Nurses Group



Fertility nursing is highly specialised. In a field where rapid scientific advances are soon incorporated into clinical practice, providing infertility treatment is professionally

challenging and often presents dilemmas for the multidisciplinary teams, patients and society.

The Fertility Nurses Group (FNG) was established in 1988 as a few nurses working in units providing infertility treatment, including the developing in-vitro fertilisation (IVF) programmes, realised the need for professional standards, guidance and mutual support and sharing of expertise. An initial task was to carry out a survey which confirmed the urgent need for education and training, later endorsed by other surveys which showed that the role of many fertility nurses was becoming more complex.

Many were extending their practice and undertaking tasks, such as ultrasound scanning and embryo transfer, which had previously been performed by medical doctors.

The speciality is also unique in that the assisted conception techniques, which involve the creation of embryos outside the body and use and storage of eggs and sperm, are regulated through the Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority. The FNG is committed to that and recognises that the practice needs of fertility nurses should be supported by an appropriate education and training structure to allow all practitioners to develop professionally in their field of choice. The FNG also recognises that nurses in other areas, such as gynaecology, family planning and general practice also need to know about the modern infertility treatments.

The RCN Sexual Health Forum



The Sexual Health Forum is one of the many RCN forums; this one representing nurses, midwives, and health visitors who either work directly in sexual health or have sexual health as part of their day-to-day work.

The forum provides an annual conference which endeavours to embrace the complete diversity within sexual health. The conference covers sexual and reproductive health issues, including HIV, showcasing new and innovative work and research undertaken across the UK. Interactive workshops are provided alongside plenary sessions to best facilitate learning in a more relaxed environment. The conference includes poster presentations, which highlight other aspects of sexual health nursing. This annual event dovetails into the fringe events that the forum regularly presents or supports at the RCN Annual Congress. Recent years have seen workshops on HIV testing, chlamydia, sexuality and more general sexual health issues.

The Sexual Health Forum is responsible for responding to the multitude of government papers, consultation events and NICE guidance documents on behalf of the wider RCN membership. The forum has either authored or contributed to many RCN documents for members on issues pertaining to sexual health. This RCN Forum has also provided training and guidance documents on IUD and sub-dermal implants. There is also a professional accreditation process accompanying much of these activities, too.

Forum committee members are drawn from the four countries of the United Kingdom and therefore are well placed to represent and speak on behalf of our members in sexual health.

Web: www.rcn.org.uk

The Association of Psychosexual Nursing



The association was formed in 1998 by a network of nurses in response to

concerns regarding the need to develop clinical skills to address the sexual anxiety or sexual distress presented within the routine of everyday practice. The association contributes to the preservation and protection of public health by promoting and providing training for nurses and other health care professionals in psychosexual care with particular reference to training methods as promoted by the Balint Society.

Web: www.psychosexualnursing.org.uk

fpa



fpa (formerly called the Family Planning Association) is the UK's leading sexual health charity working to improve the sexual health and reproductive rights of all people throughout the UK. fpa has worked with a variety of professionals in consultancy and training on the wider

issues of sexual health, sexuality and sex and relationships education. fpa is the leading training provider in this field.

Contact: helens@fpa.org.uk

Web: www.fpa.org.uk

The Menopause Clinical and Research Unit, Northwick Park Hospital

This unit is a busy NHS service offering a multidisciplinary approach to menopausal care. Led by a consultant gynaecologist, the team includes a GP specialist, psychotherapist, specialist pharmacist, clinical nurse specialist and a menopause nurse. As well as the general menopause clinic there is a young menopause service, aimed at women undergoing the menopause under 40 years of age, and a joint nurse-led service for women with menopausal symptoms who have had breast cancer. In 1999 the department won the "Hospital Doctor Team of the Year" award for its innovative practice in menopause. The associate director of the unit, a senior nurse specialist and course director, is a founding council member of the British Menopause Society and is now Chair of the UK RCN National Menopause Nurse Group.

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Web: www.sexualhealthgroup.com







UNIVERSITY
of
GREENWICH

**University of Greenwich
School of Health & Social Care**

Avery Hill Campus
Southwood Site
Avery Hill Road
London SE9 2UG

Medway Campus
Central Avenue
Chatham Maritime
Kent ME4 4TB

Website: www.greenwich.ac.uk

UK students

Enquiry Unit

Freephone: 0800 005 006
Fax: 020 8331 8145
E-mail: courseinfo@gre.ac.uk

International/EU students

International Office

Telephone: +44 20 8331 8136
Fax: +44 20 8331 8625
E-mail: international@gre.ac.uk



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