



## SAHLGRENSKA ACADEMY

### **Master's Programme in Public Health Science, 120 credits**

Masterprogram i folkhälsovetenskap, 120 högskolepoäng

Programme code: M2PHP

*Second cycle / Avancerad nivå*

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#### **1. Confirmation**

This programme syllabus was confirmed by the Dean of the Faculty on 04-12-2019 (GU 2019/3032) to be valid from 01-07-2020, Autumn semester 2020.

*Responsible Department/equivalent:* Institute of Medicine

#### **2. Purpose**

This master's programme (120 credits) in the main field of study Public Health Science has two specialisations, that are chosen at application: Health Economics and Health Equality. The aim of the programme is to prepare for continued studies at postgraduate level and for successful participation in strategic and practical public health work in regional, national and/or international institutions.

Public Health Science is an interdisciplinary field that places questions about health and disease in a social context. Its breadth implies that a specialisation in specific themes is required in order for students to gain the level of knowledge and proficiency that a second cycle degree requires. The programme is therefore designed so that students in both specialisations acquire broad knowledge in the main field of study by initially studying courses together that focus on the points of departure for Public Health Science, its main arenas for application as well as common research methodologies. Both specialisations then contain advanced courses. These advanced courses are part of the Public Health Science field, but apply partially different theories and methods for the analysis of health issues and they direct conclusions and recommendations towards different aspects of public health work. The programme also includes elective courses that focus on special areas of application as well as an elective internship course where students have the opportunity to apply theoretical perspectives in the respective specialisation in a national or international organisation.

Public Health Science focuses on how the organisation of society and other structural factors (e.g. political, economic and cultural) affect health status in a group or population, i.e. through studies of the social determinants of health (e.g. income and educational level, discrimination

and access to health care). With these starting points the discipline processes questions about the distribution of health outcomes within a population and “upstream” factors generating unjust differences, i.e. if variations in health status between different groups can be explained by structural factors and are therefore possible to change.

All programmes at the Sahlgrenska Academy aim to contribute to 1) an increased consciousness about gender, equality and equal treatment, and 2) a sustainable development that safeguards a healthy and good environment, economic and social welfare as well as justice for current and future generations. Public Health Science deals specifically with these themes through mapping of population health, studies of the determinants and processes that influence population health, and studies of how strategies and interventions that aim to promote sustainable health development can be formulated, implemented and evaluated. The focus can be on global, national or local processes, institutions and health issues. A human rights perspective is highlighted throughout, including the participation of civil society for the realization of the right to health.

### 3. Entry requirements

Qualification for admission to the programme requires:

- Professional degree/Bachelor's degree of at least 180 credits in a health science, social science, science, economics, arts or engineering field of education.
- Grade Passed/E in English B/English 6

Entry requirements for courses within the programme are stated in respective course syllabus.

### 4. Higher education qualification and main field of study

This programme leads to a Degree of Master of Medical Science (120 credits) with a major in Public Health Sciences (Medicine masterexamen med huvudområdet Folkhälsovetenskap).

### 5. Outcomes

Second-cycle study programmes shall involve the acquisition of specialist knowledge, competence and skills in relation to first-cycle courses and study programmes. In addition to the requirements for first-cycle courses and study programmes, second-cycle programmes shall:

- further develop the ability of students to integrate and make autonomous use of their knowledge,
- develop students' ability to deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations, and
- develop students' potential for professional activities that demand considerable autonomy, or for research and development work.

#### General outcomes for Degree of Master (120 credits)

##### *Knowledge and understanding*

For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the main field of study, including both broad knowledge of the field and a considerable degree of specialised knowledge in certain areas of the field as well as insight into current research and development work, and
- demonstrate specialised methodological knowledge in the main field of study.

### *Competence and skills*

For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate the ability to critically and systematically integrate knowledge and analyse, assess and deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations even with limited information
- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues critically, autonomously and creatively as well as to plan and, using appropriate methods, undertake advanced tasks within predetermined time frames and so contribute to the formation of knowledge as well as the ability to evaluate this work
- demonstrate the ability to, both in speech and in writing, clearly report and discuss his or her conclusions and the knowledge and arguments on which they are based, in dialogue with different audiences nationally and internationally, and
- demonstrate the skills required for participation in research and development work or autonomous employment in some other qualified capacity.

### *Judgement and approach*

For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments in the main field of study informed by relevant disciplinary, social and ethical issues and also to demonstrate awareness of ethical aspects of research and development work
- demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used, and
- demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for his or her ongoing learning..

## **Local outcomes**

### **Master's programme (120 credits) in Public health science with Health economics specialisation**

#### *Knowledge and understanding*

For the Health Economics specialisation the student shall:

- Describe and explain Public Health Science's ethical, theoretical and methodological foundations, arenas as well as fields of application,
- Describe and explain regional and social variations in the burden of disease, the processes that lead to these variations as well as how such knowledge can be the foundation for structural efforts as well as efforts directed to specific target groups,
- Describe and discuss the ability of different welfare and health systems to promote a satisfactory and equal population health development,

***Competence and skills***

For the Health economics specialisation the student should be able to:

- Apply qualitative and epidemiological theories and methods on current public health challenges for the mapping and follow up of populations' health status and the identification of risk factors and particularly vulnerable groups,
- Explain the foundations of Public Health Science as well as evidence concerning different public health challenges and interventions, orally and in writing, and for different audiences (e.g. decision-makers, civil servants and the public),
- Discuss and explain the correlation between macro-economic variables and health and apply micro- and macro-economic theories on public health issues, including inequality in health,
- Plan for and carry out basic health economic evaluations by applying health economic theories and methods on public health problems and interventions,

***Judgement and approach***

For the Health Economics specialisation the student shall:

- Critically review and evaluate political priorities, policy and programmes at local, national and international levels with the right to health as a point of departure for a social, economic and environmental sustainability,
- Critically evaluate and reflect on the strengths and limitations of health economics research with regard to theoretical points of departure, methodological aspects and as a basis for policy- and decision-making concerning public health problems and interventions,,
- Analyse the connection between resource utilization, prioritation and general welfare issues as well as compare and evaluate public health strategies and interventions on the basis of sustainable development, ethical and health economics perspectives.

**Local aims****Master's programme (120 credits) in Public Health Science with Health Equality specialisation*****Knowledge and understanding***

For the Health Equality specialisation the student shall:

- Describe and explain Public Health Science's ethical, theoretical and methodological foundations, arenas as well as fields of application,
- Describe and explain regional and social variations in the burden of disease, the processes that lead to these variations as well as how such knowledge can be the foundation for structural efforts as well as efforts directed to specific target groups,
- Describe and discuss the ability of different welfare and health systems to promote a satisfactory and equal population health development,

***Competence and skills***

For the Health Equality specialisation the student shall:

- Apply qualitative and epidemiological theories and methods on current public health challenges for the mapping and follow up of populations' health status and the identification of risk factors and particularly vulnerable groups,
- Explain the foundations of Public Health Science as well as evidence concerning different public health challenges and interventions, orally and in writing, and for different audiences (e.g. decision-makers, civil servants and the public),
- Identify and explain the systematic social determinants and processes that contribute to inequality in health,
- Formulate, suggest and implement specific measures that can support a satisfactory and equal health development on group and population levels,

### ***Judgement and approach***

For the Health Equality specialisation the student shall:

- Critically review and evaluate political priorities, policies and programmes at local, national and international levels with the right to health as a point of departure for a social, economic and environmental sustainability,
- Analyse and explain reciprocal relationships between health equality, and (a) the organisation of welfare institutions, (b) the social determinants of health (e.g. educational level, gender, income), and (c) people's agency and room for manoeuvre (e.g. lifestyle, trust and influence),
- Critically evaluate and reflect on strengths and limitations of epidemiological and other public health research, both as research methodology and as policy tool.

### **Sustainability labelling**

The programme is sustainability-focused, which means that at least one of the outcomes clearly shows that the programme content meets at least one of the University of Gothenburg's confirmed sustainability criteria. The content also constitutes the programme's main focus.

## **6. Content and structure**

### **Specialisations**

(MPHH)	Health Economics	Hälsoekonomi	120 credits
(MPHJ)	Health Equality	Jämlik hälsa	120 credits

The master's programme (for course overview see table below) starts with students in both specialisations together taking courses that focus on the foundations of Public Health Science, its fields of application and common research methodologies. One of the most important foundations of Public Health Science is to examine how inequality in health can be analysed and structurally counteracted. While there is a specialization in Health Equality, this is relevant also for the Health Economics specialisation. An introduction to this theme is therefore included in the initial courses of the programme's first semester.

The programme's second semester starts with a course in epidemiology and biostatistics that prepares for later advanced courses by focusing on quantitative methods that form the basis of studies in Health Economics and Health Equality. The semester then continues with an

advanced course in each respective specialisation.

The Health Equality specialisation contains a course in social epidemiology. This is the form of epidemiology that focus on mapping those social factors (e.g. educational level, socio-economic position, gender) that affect, positively or negatively, the distribution of health outcomes within a population. This course further develops the attention within Public Health Science to how people's different opportunities to attain a satisfactory health level can be studied and understood, as well as which societal sectors and areas of life such studies include. The course also deals with possible policy implications of social epidemiology research results, the purpose being that students, after the master's degree, should be able to study and apply scientific evidence concerning processes and factors that promote equality.

The programme's Health Economics specialisation offers, in a similar way, an advanced course during the latter part of the second semester. This course focuses initially on how the field of Health Economics combine Public Health Science theories and economic theories. It then continues with a presentation of methods and fields of application for macro- and micro-economic perspectives on health. Macroeconomic perspectives highlight the general health related strategies of national and international institutions, e.g. how these are connected to economic development, poverty reduction etc. A central theme is investments in the broader health care sector and other social welfare systems, as well as how efficient these systems are. Microeconomic perspectives on health focuses partly on supply and demand for different types of health interventions, how these are used and to what extent they are cost efficient in relation to the health goals that are sought. An important part of the Health Economics field is also ethical reflection around necessary priorities in a health care sector with limited resources e.g. whether some priorities favour particular groups or certain aims more than others.

The third semester of the programme consists of elective courses. These can be substituted with optional courses at the University of Gothenburg, at other universities in Sweden or abroad. Within the programme it is also possible for students in both specialisations to apply for a semester-long internship course where theoretical knowledge in respective specialisation is applied in a public health workplace.

In the Health Equality specialisation of the programme students can instead choose an advanced course that focuses on how to handle unjust differences in health and manage health development through strategic governance, different programmes and methods and continuous evaluations towards a more equal distribution of health within a population. This builds upon the social epidemiology course by focusing in more depth how public health evidence can influence policy formulations, and how concrete efforts can be developed and evaluated to achieve the aim of equal health development.

Similarly, the programme's third semester contains an advanced course for the Health Economics specialisation. It builds on the second semester course, now with a special focus on health economic evaluations. This field has often been directed towards the cost-effectiveness of biomedical interventions, but as health promotion and disease preventive efforts have increased (in need and quantity) so too has the requirement for a strong evidence base of efficacy. The programme's courses in Health Economics provide students with the possibility to gain an advanced understanding of economic perspectives on society and health, of similarities and differences between evaluation of biomedical and public health interventions as well as when and how health economic evaluations can and should be carried out.

During the latter part of the third semester, additional elective courses are offered which

students in both specialisations can take. These courses focus on the areas of 'work and health' and 'migration and health'. The programme is then completed with a degree project that can include field studies and should be linked to the respective specialisation.

Progression in education is achieved through gradual broadening in the main field of study as well as increased attentiveness to the respective specified specialisation. The teaching is based on current research in the field of Public Health Science and the teaching methods are adapted in relation to content and subject area, yet a variation in teaching styles is sought. The pedagogy is inspired by principles of student centered learning and should promote students' active and interactive knowledge acquisition, creativity and critical thinking.

The order of the courses may vary within the respective semester.

Please also see the appendix. Overview M2PHP, reviderad.

## 7. Guaranteed admission

Students who have been admitted to the programme and follow the prescribed study pace according to the programme syllabus have guaranteed admission to the mandatory courses of the programme. Limited guaranteed admission applies to the elective courses of programme. In both cases provided that student satisfy entry requirements for admission to respective course.

## 8. Transitional regulations

Programme syllabus apply for students who start their studies as from autumn semester 2020. Students who after approved study leave want to resume their studies should contact the study counselor for study planning, which then takes place in accordance with the currently valid programme syllabus.

## 9. Other information

The study programme will be followed up and evaluated in accordance with the applicable *Policy för kvalitetssäkring och kvalitetsutveckling av utbildning vid Göteborgs universitet* (Policy for the Quality assurance and Quality Development of Education at the University of Gothenburg).

In addition, students are invited to evaluate each individual course included in the program, both orally and in writing. These evaluations form the basis for the continuous development of the program. The evaluations will be compiled in writing and returned to the students together with the course managers' responses. The students will also be given the opportunity to participate in a written and/or oral evaluation of the entire program.

Courses containing elements of internship/field studies may entail costs for students, i.e. travel, accommodation and subsistence expenses.

The language of instruction is English. Students may be allowed to be examined in Swedish, according to the respective syllabus.

<b>M2PHP Master's Programme in Public Health Science</b>			
<b>Sem</b>	<b>Health Economics</b>	<b>Health Equality</b>	<b>Course type</b>
1	MPH211 Public health foundations and areas of application 15 hec		Mandatory main area course, fulltime
	MPH212 Health equality and the Right to health 7,5 hec		Mandatory main area course, part time
	MPH213 Qualitative methods in public health 7,5 hec		Mandatory main area course, part time
2	MPH221 Epidemiology and biostatistics 15 hec		Mandatory main area course, part time
	MPH222 Health economics: foundations, areas of application and methodology 15 hec	MPH223 Social epidemiology: theories, methods and practical implications 15 hec	Mandatory main area course, fulltime
3	MPH231 Advanced course in health economics evaluation 15 hec	MPH323 Governing health equality: policy, interventions and evaluations 15 hec	Elective main area course, fulltime
	MPH233 Work and health: health promotion and disease prevention 7,5 hec		Elective course, part time
	MPH234 Migration and health in a social, demographic and political context 7,5 hec		Elective course, part time
	MPH235 Public health work: interventions, implementation and evaluation 30 hec		Elective course, fulltime
	MPH302 Public health work: intervention planning and evaluation, 15 hec		Elective course, fulltime
4	MPH241 Master's thesis in public health science 30 hec		Mandatory main area course, fulltime