Programme Specification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme award and title:</th>
<th>MSc/Diploma/Certificate Strategic Health Communications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCQF Level:</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCQF Credit Value:</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Educational aims of the programme:
Concise (e.g. a few sentences), general statement of aims and broad purposes of the programme

This degree is a variant of the MSc Strategic Public Relations and Communication Management programme and offers specialist modules on Health Campaigns; Strategic Health Communications Project and Social Marketing. It is intended that at least one module will be made available on a stand-alone basis and that the degree will be made available on-line in due course (see separate submission).

Public relations encompasses a range of professional roles such as stakeholder relations, issues management, corporate affairs, corporate communications, public affairs, communication management, crisis management and corporate social responsibility. The programme is designed for academically able students from a variety of degree backgrounds to develop the appropriate intellectual skills at Masters Level for a management level career in Public Relations. The programme aims to help students develop a critical appreciation of the role of public relations in society and to develop key analytical and professional skills. The programme is recognised by the UK Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR).

Health public relations operates in a wide variety of contexts including: hospitals and government health services, health charities, conventional and alternative medicine companies and practitioners, international charities such as Red Cross and Red Crescent, pharmaceutical companies and other development charities. This specialist variant focuses strongly on campaign planning, multi-cultural contexts and evaluation.

Intended programme learning outcomes:
Outline (e.g. one or two paragraphs) of what the student will know, understand and be able to do as a result of their learning, expressed in the categories below. Please consider the contribution made to the student’s personal development planning (PDP) and future employability.

Knowledge and understanding
- Health campaign planning, implementation and evaluation
- Psychology of persuasion and theories of social influence
- Social marketing
- Community action and Health Action Zones
- Media panics
- Risk communication
- Critical appreciation of the role of public relations in society
- Stakeholder relations
- Public relations and communication management theory
- The role of traditional and technological media in a globalised world
- Ethical issues and corporate social responsibility
- Organizational culture, identity, climate and behaviour
- Public opinion, publics and activism
- Persuasion, rhetoric and discourse
- Globalisation and inter-cultural communication

Subject-specific skills and other attributes
- Stakeholder analysis
- Public relations programming, research and evaluation
• Media relations skills
• Communications audit skills
• Issues management and crisis planning
• Application of public relations, communications, media, management and organization theories to interpret public relations cass, diagnose problems and propose solutions
• Persuasive communication

Generic skills (e.g. information skills, communication skills, critical, analytical and problem solving abilities) and other attributes
• Interpersonal and team-building skills in multi-cultural settings
• Emotional intelligence, counselling, consulting and client-handling skills
• Research and evaluation skills
• Presentation skills including those needed for press conferences and broadcast interviews
• Writing skills for reports and executive summaries, news releases and web-writing

Learning, teaching and assessment strategies:
Outline (e.g. one or two paragraphs) on overall approach taken to develop and assess learning outcomes, including any distinctive features

• A very wide range of teaching and learning strategies have evolved to meet the needs of public relations students and to enable them to achieve the learning outcomes. These strategies are combined in such a way as to provide a rich and varied experience. Assessment procedures are regularly reviewed and revised in relation to student output. Students learn to be flexible in their approach to learning and self-development since they cannot simply apply routines from undergraduate work. Examples of assessment have included: short and longer term self-directed projected culminating in videotaped presentations and formal business-style reports; 4 hours case based exams incorporating original materials such as newspaper articles and research reports; textual analysis of theoretical sources (exam) and organisational literature (annual reports); self-reflective analysis using a postmodern organisational theory framework focusing on an organisation of which the student has been a member; crisis press conference (occasionally international video conference); press release and feature articles; open book exam; content analysis.

• Specific to MSc in Strategic Health Communications are health campaigns for large populations.

• Teaching is likewise varied incorporating lectures, seminars, workshops, case studies, small group tutorials, visiting speaker presentations. There are specialist modules in Strategic Health Communications Project; Health Campaigns and Social Marketing.

Professional/statutory body accreditation or recognition:
The MSc in Public Relations was one of the first degrees in the UK to achieve formal recognition by the CIPR, which it did in 1989. Since then it has been reappraised regularly, and will shortly be re-evaluated through a panel visitation and the submission of quality documents. It is hoped that the MSc in Strategic Health Communications will also be recognised in this way.

Further details:
Entry requirements: http://www.external.stir.ac.uk/postgrad/index.php
Programme structure: http://www.calendar.stir.ac.uk/
Relevant Subject Benchmark statement (if applicable): http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/benchmark/default.asp
Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework: http://www.scqf.org.uk/the_framework.asp
Introduction/revision date: