

Postgraduate Diploma in Health Economics

Programme Guide

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School of Public Health
Faculty of Health Sciences
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 UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
YUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA - UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD

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1. WELCOME

Welcome to the programme guide for the Postgraduate Diploma in Health Economics. In this guide, we have summarized some of the most important information about the diploma; we hope this will make it easy for you to understand the requirements, financial- and time commitment needed for a successful learning experience. We are passionate about health economics and believe that it offers an important way of thinking and an important methodology that can help countries to track progress and achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC), one of the key United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Despite this, health economics skills are scarce in many low-and middle-income settings. This diploma is one important avenue for developing these skills, and we hope that the mixed learning mode (mainly distance learning with some contact time) will make this an accessible learning option. We look forward to engaging with you online, meeting you in Cape Town, and to a successful and beneficial learning journey for all of us.

2. COORDINATION

PROGRAMME COORDINATION AND ADMINISTRATION
Programme Convenor: Prof Susan Cleary Susan.Cleary@uct.ac.za
Programme Administrator: Ms Latiefa Adams Latiefa.Adams@uct.ac.za

3. OVERVIEW OF THE POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA IN HEALTH ECONOMICS

3.1. HISTORY

The Postgraduate Diploma in Health Economics was launched in 2007 at the University of Cape Town (UCT) using grant funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. The aim of the programme was to introduce key health economics values, principles and concepts to an audience from diverse backgrounds. It built on materials developed by the late Professor Gavin Mooney, one of the founding fathers of health economics. While he was an Honorary Professor at the Health Economics Unit, Prof Mooney worked with us to orientate the focus of the diploma to low-and middle-income country health systems. This version of the diploma was a continuation of a similar teaching programme that Prof Mooney had offered from a number of university settings, most recently from Curtin University in Perth, Australia.

In 2015, a decision was made to re-design the programme to focus on some of the specific health economic skills and concepts needed in the pursuit of universal health coverage (UHC). As noted by the 2010 World Health Report on financing for UHC: “Raising sufficient money for health is imperative, but just having the money will not ensure universal coverage. Nor will removing financial barriers to access through prepayment and pooling. The final requirement is to ensure resources are used efficiently.” The need for efficiency points to the importance of the purchasing function of health financing; purchasing is the critical link between resources mobilised for UHC and the effective delivery of quality services. Moreover, in order to ensure that the universal health system is equitable, it becomes essential for a country to explicitly choose a package of health care benefits (and revise it periodically). To this end, most countries have committed to institutionalizing Health Technology Assessment (HTA) processes so that considerations of cost-effectiveness and affordability become a part of benefit package design. However, in many low and middle-income country settings, including South Africa, HTA is in its infancy and there are few skilled health economists who are able to understand and conduct analyses of cost-effectiveness or financial risk protection. This diploma aims to contribute towards building crucial health economics capacities that can be of service in the movement towards UHC.



Prof Gavin Mooney received an Honorary Doctorate from UCT for his contribution to Health Economics globally

3.2. LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this postgraduate diploma, we hope that you will:

1. Be able to include health economics tools within your work. Whatever your background, we hope that adding this diploma to your set of skills will enable you to either include more

health economics in your current role, or to be able to find new employment using health economics tools. Your first degree(s) and your experience will shape your suitability to different roles, but we would hope that you could seek employment and career advancement within a range of settings including district, provincial or national Departments of Health, private health consulting companies, medical scheme administrators, pharmaceutical companies, international organizations (World Bank, World Health Organization), and non-governmental organizations (Clinton Health Access Initiative, Medecins sans Frontieres). While there is no health economics professional body that defines the level of qualification before you can call yourself a 'health economist', if your work includes a substantial amount of health economics, then you are a 'health economist'!

2. Understand the role of health economics within the UHC agenda. This is a foundational health economics qualification, and as such, much of the focus will be on understanding the most important health economics concepts in relation to UHC. While we acknowledge that this means that certain things are left out, we believe that our focus in this diploma will be useful to anyone wanting to work as a health economist in South Africa and similar settings.
3. Be exposed to a limited number of analytical skills. During our contact blocks, we will offer case studies and group projects that will require you to use and learn certain analytical tools. If you have strong Excel skills, you will find these tasks straightforward, so we encourage you to brush up on your Excel early on during this diploma (part of self-study).
4. Be inspired to take your health economics studies further, by enrolling for a Masters or PhD degree.

3.3. MODE OF LEARNING

This is a mixed mode diploma that is structured into 8 courses (or modules) and 2 contact blocks held on the Health Sciences Campus at UCT. After initial registration, learners will receive a login and password that will allow them to access the course materials from VULA (an online learning environment). Learners will also be assigned a coordinator for each course who can be contacted at any time with specific questions. A two-week contact block will be offered annually which will give learners the opportunity to interact with their fellow learners and lecturers, and to learn key health economic analytical skills. Assessments include 2 written assessments in each of the 8 courses submitted at a distance, as well as 1 class test and 1 group-based presentation during each contact block.

3.4. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The diploma is designed for graduates in social or health sciences. The entry requirement is at least an undergraduate degree in economics, health or social sciences, or equivalent, from an approved university. Fluency in English, both written and spoken, is also required. Proficiency with Excel is a core skill required for successful completion of the diploma, particularly for building analytical models. Students should be confident in the use of basic Excel functions before beginning the first contact week, including (but not limited to):

- Creating, saving and sharing Excel workbooks
- Constructing formula for basic mathematical functions
- Using cell references and named cells within worksheets and across workbooks to create formula
- Creating and manipulating basic graphs

3.5. DURATION OF THE DIPLOMA

While we encourage learners to take the modules consecutively (i.e. starting with module 1, next module 2, etc) it is possible to complete the diploma over a minimum of two or a maximum of four years. For example, if you want to complete over four years, in year one you could take modules 1 and 2; in year two modules 3 and 4 and contact block 1; in year three modules 5 and 6 etc. However, if you are an international student, spreading the diploma over a 3- or 4-year period is going to increase your fees substantially as the international student fee is incurred on an annual basis (and is not linked to the modules for which you are registered).

3.6. TIME COMMITMENT

As this diploma contains a substantial component of distance and self-directed learning, it is important that students understand the time and participation requirements that will be expected of them. These include:

- Following a set timetable for course preparation by timeously reading materials provided, conducting self-directed learning activities by going beyond the materials provided, and diligent application to the various tests and assignments that constitute each course
- Taking tests and handing in assignments on time
- Attending synchronous learning activities (generally via MS Teams or similar) and/or watching the recording
- Attending the contact block in Cape Town that is of two weeks' duration

In addition to the reading and assignments that are set for each course, students are required to attend (in full) two contact blocks in Cape Town. These blocks are for 10 working days each per annum, spread over a 2-week period (there is no teaching over the weekend, but students are required to work on their assessments over the weekend). Assessments during the contact block include 1 test and 1 group-work assignment.

4. CURRICULUM

This section provides a brief introduction to each of the eight modules and two contact blocks that comprise the diploma. Ideally, modules will be taken consecutively, starting with module 1 and ending with module 8; and contact blocks will also be taken consecutively. However, sometimes this won't be possible, and we will try to help you to make a plan that will work for your unique circumstances. Please also refer to the section on the duration of the diploma in section 3.5 above.

Module 1: Introduction to Health Economics PPH4018F

Aim

To provide an introduction to some of the most important health economics concepts that will be used throughout this postgraduate diploma as well as the role and value of economic evaluation within a system of universal health coverage.

Topics

- The fundamental concepts and principals of health economics (e.g. scarcity, opportunity cost, utility, equity and efficiency) and their application to the health sector

- The importance of Health Technology Assessment processes for a system of universal health coverage
- The role of economic evaluation within Health Technology Assessment

Module 2: The Economics of Health Systems PPH4019F

Aim

To provide an understanding of health systems, different forms of organisation and financing of health systems, and to introduce learners to the key elements of strategic purchasing.

Topics

- Introduction to health systems:
 - What are health systems?
 - Health system components
- Universal health coverage goals:
 - Financial risk protection
 - Health service access
- Overview of health care financing functions:
 - revenue collection
 - pooling
 - purchasing
- Key issues in revenue collection to promote equity, efficiency and sustainability
- Key issues in risk pooling to promote equity, efficiency and sustainability
- The key elements of strategic purchasing
- Introduction to importance of economic evaluation and health technology assessment in strategic purchasing

Contact block 1: Theory and Application of Economic Evaluation

Aim

To introduce principles of economic evaluation within a face-to-face learning environment; to learn key skills in health economic costing, outcome measurement and modelling.

Topics

- Introduction to economic evaluation
- Introduction to health economic modelling in excel

Module 3: Priority Setting and Health Care Decision-Making PPH4020S

Aim

To provide an overview of the economic and other approaches to priority setting for health care decision-making, in terms of both efficiency and equity.

Topics

- Review of priority setting
- The use of economic evaluation in health care decision-making
- Budget impact analysis in economic evaluation
- Programme budgeting and marginal analysis
- Burden of disease and priority setting
- Equity issues in decision-making

Module 4: Key Features of Economic Evaluation PPH4021S

Aim

To provide an understanding of the concepts, methods and applications of economic evaluation in health-related interventions.

Topics

- Principles of economic evaluation
- Different techniques of economic evaluation
- Cost-effectiveness/utility analysis
- Cost-benefit analysis
- Key issues in costing
- Sources of data
- Presentation and analysis of cost data
- Adjusting for inflation and discounting
- Costing patient inputs
- Measuring health outcomes
- Non-monetary
- Monetary
- Case study

Module 5: Economic Evaluation for Health Care Decision-Making PPH4022F

Aim

To equip learners with the skills to interpret cost-effectiveness ratios and to critique published economic evaluation studies.

Topics

- Evidence Based Medicine
- Decision analytical models in economic evaluation
- Interpretation of cost-effectiveness ratios
- Alternative methods for handling uncertainty
- Pros and cons of the reference case
- Case study

Module 6: Strategic Purchasing 1 PPH4023F

Aim

To develop a detailed understanding of the key strategic purchasing actions in relation to both population served and providers.

Topics

- Determining health service entitlements
 - Comprehensive services with rationing versus specified benefit packages
 - Population health needs
 - Drawing on economic evaluation information
 - Informing the population of their entitlements
- Identifying appropriate health care providers:
 - Distribution relative to population

- Ability to provide required range of services
- Quality of care
- Taking action to promote service access
- Establishing contracts or service agreements with providers

Contact block 2: Health Economics and Universal Health Systems

Aim

To introduce the tools for assessing health financing systems within a face-to-face environment; to deepen skills necessary to appraise health financing systems in the move towards universal health coverage.

Topics

- Assessing financial risk protection in health systems
- Examining Social Determinants of Health in relation to universal health coverage

Module 7: Strategic Purchasing 2 – Influencing Providers PPH4024S

Aim

To develop an understanding of provider payment methods and other mechanisms that will encourage providers to enhance and maintain service quality and efficiency.

Topics

- Standard treatment guidelines and formularies for medicines and medical supplies
- Provider payment mechanisms:
 - Health facilities
 - Individual providers
 - Setting spending limits
 - Ensuring financial protection for users
- Monitoring provider performance (particularly quality and service availability):
 - Requirements for information from providers
 - Feedback from citizens
 - Balance of power between purchaser(s) and providers

Module 8: Strengthening Progress to Universal Coverage PPH4025S

Aim

To provide learners with an overview of other actions required to promote universal coverage, and to review existing international experience of priority setting and strategic purchasing.

Topics

- Enhancing transparency and accountability: governance of key health system organisations
- Key issues in promoting financial risk protection
- Key issues in ensuring access to effective, quality health services
- Case studies of international experience with priority setting and strategic purchasing

5. ASSESSMENT

Assessment takes the form of continuous assessment. Learners will be assessed on the basis of written assignments, tests and presentations throughout the postgraduate diploma. Assessments are listed below:

- Module 1: Assignment 1.1 and 1.2
- Module 2: Assignment 2.1 and 2.2
- Module 3: Assignment 3.1 and 3.2
- Module 4: Assignment 4.1 and 4.2
- Module 5: Assignment 5.1 and 5.2
- Module 6: Assignment 6.1 and 6.2
- Module 7: Assignment 7.1 and 7.2
- Module 8: Assignment 8.1 and 8.2
- Contact block 1: class test and group presentation
- Contact block 2: class test and group presentation

In order to complete the diploma:

- Each *module and contact block* needs to be passed with a minimum of 50% (i.e. if you receive 40% for assignment 1.1, you will need to gain a minimum of 60% for assignment 1.2 to get an overall average of 50%. Please note that not all assessments are equally weighted across all modules)
- Each contact block needs to be attended in full (approximately 09h00 to 16h30, Monday to Friday; over the weekend students will have time to study towards their class test)

The final integrated diploma mark is calculated as an average across these ten components (eight modules or courses weighted at 10% each and two contact blocks weighted at 10% each).

6. PROGRAMME RULES

6.1. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR PROGRESSION AND RE-REGISTRATION

This section summarizes the official university published rules for the diploma. Please read this section very carefully.

FPT4

A student who fails to meet the following minimum requirements may be refused permission to renew his/her registration for the diploma:

- a) In each year of study, the student shall complete at least half the courses for which he/she is registered, with the exception of the final year of study, in which the student will be expected to complete the requirements for the diploma.
- b) The student must be able to complete all requirements for the diploma within four years.
- c) Students shall complete the first-year courses before progressing to the second-year courses. The programme convener will consider deviations on a case-by-case basis.
- d) Students are required to attend all classes in the compulsory contact blocks. Each contact block includes ten days of class activities spread over a two-week period.

FPT5.1

For the eight courses, students are assessed through a combination of tests and individual written assignments.

FPT5.2

In addition, each student needs to attend two contact blocks, each of which includes ten days of class activities spread over a two-week period. Each contact block includes two assessments.

FPT5.3

The final integrated assessment mark is calculated as an average across these ten components (eight courses weighted at 10% each and two contact blocks weighted at 10% each).

FPT5.4

Students must pass each course (with 50% on average) and each contact block (with 50% on average) in order to pass the diploma.

FPT6

The diploma may be awarded with distinction (an average of 75% - 100%, with not less than 70% for any course or contact block).

6.2. EMAIL COMMUNICATION

Once registered, students will be given a UCT student email address. This is the email address that we will use for all communication and it is also the email address that central UCT will use to send you important information pertaining to registration, fees, and graduation. If you are unable to access this email address on a daily basis, we suggest that you set up an auto forward from your UCT student address to another email address that you use. **Please note that we cannot communicate with you on non-UCT email addresses.**

6.3. WITHDRAWAL FROM THE POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA

If you decide that you can no longer continue your studies, you must give notice of intention to discontinue studies in writing by completing the Cancellation of Registration Form. Please contact the Postgraduate Diploma administrator for assistance.

6.4. DROPPING A COURSE OR MODULE

At the beginning of the year, you will register for a set of courses. However, if you find that you won't be able to complete the requirements of a course, it is better to withdraw as early as possible. The deadlines for dropping first semester courses are mid-February to receive 100% fee adjustment and 1 March to receive 50% fee adjustment. For second semester courses the dates are mid-July to receive 100% fee adjustment and 1 August to receive 50% fee adjustment.

6.5. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Any candidate seeking to break registration must apply for leave of absence in advance to the faculty officer and the programme convenor (please contact the diploma administrator for assistance). This application must be motivated and if accepted will be granted for one year only. Retrospective leave of absence is not granted. For example, if you did not register and pay fees in 2019, and you did not have a leave of absence, then if you are permitted to continue in 2020 you will need to pay full fees for 2019 in addition to paying your 2020 fees.

6.6. PEOPLESOFT

PEOPLESOFT is the name of the UCT student self service administration system. You will gain access to this system after initial registration, and you can use it to:

- Check application status
- Check current enrolments
- Access student results
- Request proof of registration document
- Check and maintain address details
- Check and maintain bank account details
- Check fee account
- Get an unofficial academic transcript

We recommend that you check PEOPLESOFT from time to time. Please note that UCT requires that students are themselves responsible for keeping all of their details up to date etc.

7. FEES

(See: <http://www.uct.ac.za/apply/fees/>)

The University's course-based fee structures allows students to calculate the cost of their academic studies at UCT during any given year. Students can use the course codes listed in this brochure to look up the fees for each of the courses. The sum of these costs will give the total cost for the set of chosen courses for the particular year of study. A fee breakdown is provided below – please bear in mind that fees will increase in line with inflation on an annual basis.

Southern African Development Community (SADC) international students are required to pay a non-refundable administrative service fee during each year of study. In addition to the administrative fee, non-SADC international students will need to pay an 'out of– state' or 'international levy' called the International Term Fee. These fees (admin fee and international fee) are incurred on an annual basis. If you are an international student, we therefore recommend that you complete the postgraduate diploma within the minimum timeframe (2 years) to minimize these international fee payments.

All students from outside South Africa and other SADC countries should refer to fees for international students. Visit <http://www.iapo.uct.ac.za> for more information.

Proforma invoices can also be requested for an estimate of the total cost of the course fees by completing the following: <https://www.uct.ac.za/usr/finance/fees/feeforms/fee09proform.pdf>

Table 3: Breakdown of student fees (2019 prices)

First year modules		2019 fee	Basis
Module 1	Introduction to health economics	5,740	per module
Module 2	Economics of health systems	5,740	per module
Module 3	Priority setting and health care decision-making	5,740	per module
Module 4	Key features of economic evaluation	5,740	per module
Second year modules			
Module 5	Economic evaluation for health care decision-making	5,740	per module
Module 6	Strategic purchasing I	5,740	per module
Module 7	Strategic purchasing II	5,740	per module

Module 8	Progress to universal health coverage	5,740	per module
International student additional fees			
SADC administrative fee (for international students from SADC)		3,750	per annum
International term fee (for non-SADC African students)		44,320	per annum
International term fee (for non-African students)		59,400	per annum
Other costs			
Travel and attendance at the contact block each year in Cape Town; typically you will need to stay in Cape Town for 12 days per block		Variable	per annum

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8. FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES POSTGRADUATE ADMINISTRATION

While Latiefa Adams and Susan Cleary are the postgraduate diploma programme administrator and convenor respectively, registration of all students takes place via the Faculty of Health Science's Postgraduate Administration function.