

Diploma in Tropical Medicine & Hygiene (DTMH) Update

LSTM are making changes to the DTM&H. This follows feedback from academic staff, alumni, current students and survey feedback from applicants.

How has the format of the course changed for 2021 and beyond?

- The course has been changed to a blended format i.e. a mix of face to face/blended teaching in Liverpool and online learning.
- After the initial online learning/preparation week (week 0), we plan that weeks 1-8 will be face-to-face/blended teaching in Liverpool and weeks 9-12 will be delivered remotely using our online platform. Students will be able to leave Liverpool at the end of week 8.
- Weeks 1-8 will include the themed weeks on malaria, respiratory disease/TB, causes of febrile illness, HIV and child health and all of the laboratory-based teaching.
- Weeks 9-12 will cover other important topics including maternal health.
- Public health will be taught during both periods.
- The content remains unchanged from the traditional face-to-face course
- Please note that within the face to face/blended element, there will be some days or half-days that are delivered online in order to comply with social distancing and capacity issues that are COVID-related.

Why has the course changed for this cohort to the blended format?

- Much of the teaching for our Autumn 2020 cohort was delivered online with very positive feedback from the students.
- Online teaching brings several advantages including greater ability for teaching from our staff based overseas in low-income or middle-income economies (LMICs).
- Given the ongoing uncertainty and restrictions regarding travel and face-to-face teaching, we are keen to develop a more flexible course by delivering some of the content online.
- Increasing the online elements of the course also gives us more flexibility to respond appropriately to COVID-19 restrictions.

What will happen in the four online weeks 9-12?

- The course remains full-time with up to 8 hours of study/day.
- Several different learning formats will be used including live presentations, recorded presentations, online break-out groups, discussion boards, essential reading with formative assessment and seminars.
- In general, live sessions will be in the mornings and asynchronous/"off-line" sessions and group work in the afternoons.
- All live sessions will generally be recorded and, together with the asynchronous/"off-line" learning, allow greater flexibility when materials are studied.
- The online Virtual Learning Environment (Brightspace) is the same VLE we use to host all of the face to face teaching too. Students will therefore be well versed in the system before the main online teaching begins.

Will I be disadvantaged if I have not studied online before?

- No. The blended format allows a broader range of teaching approaches thereby better accommodating student's learning preferences.
- As mentioned previously, the VLE is the same one used in the face-to-face teaching which will give you a good grounding in the system and how to use it. Online learning tools have developed greatly in terms of their accessibility and user-friendliness and are being successfully deployed across Higher education for several years. Full support is also provided for both face to face and online teaching.

Will the course lose its unique characteristics of an intensive, "hands-on" course and an opportunity to make new friends and network?

- No. We consider that the 8 weeks face-to-face teaching will retain the unique features of our course.
- The face-to-face teaching will be at the beginning of the course to allow students to meet their peers and share the LSTM experience.

What about exams?

- We plan to adapt our usual exam formats for the blended learning model.
- Provisionally, an MCQ (multiple choice question) and laboratory practical will be held at the end of week 8 covering the material taught so far.
- An online exam consisting of short-answer questions would be scheduled for the end of week 12.

Will the cost of the course change?

- The DTMH is an intensive programme with multiple resources and teaching from experts across the globe. The organisation and delivery of this programme requires significant resourcing at a high cost. High quality blended learning delivery is just as expensive, and sometimes even more so than traditional face to face delivery. The cost of the programme will therefore not change.
- The overall cost of the course will be less for many students due to the shorter time spent in Liverpool and reduced associated costs.
- We are confident that we can deliver an excellent course and excellent "value for money" using the blended format and, indeed, this format brings several advantages.

Will the September 2021 course also be in a blended learning format?

- Yes. The format for the September 2021 will be blended, albeit with some minor potential tweaks to reflect student feedback from the May student cohort.
- We are aware that students will need to book accommodation in Liverpool and we will ensure that we will provide adequate notice.