

Helpdesk Report: Short Distance Learning Courses on Development and Nutrition

Date: 17 January 2010

Query: 1. Which academic institutions in the UK run short distance learning courses in development, and which of these in nutrition related issues (please provide weblinks for the relevant courses). If possible how many students do they have on distance learning courses?
2. Which academic institutions globally run distance learning courses in nutrition in development?

Enquirer: DFID UK

Content

1. Overview
2. University of London
3. Open University
4. Nutrition in development courses from other institutions
5. Additional information

1. Overview

The University of London and the Open University are the main two academic institutions in the UK that run short, distance learning courses in development.

The London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), an institute of the University of London, directs a module on Nutrition and Infection. Students register for this course through the University of London International Programme.

There are 1700 students enrolled on short course programmes at LSHTM. It wasn't possible to find student numbers for the individual nutrition course.

The Open University were able to give enrolment figures for their undergraduate course International Development: Challenges for a World in Transition. For the academic year 2010/11 there are 543 students enrolled. In 09/10 enrolment was 499 and 420 in 08/09. This indicates an upward trend for enrolment in this subject.

The search for courses that were both short and studied through distance learning yielded limited results. Many development courses were offered through distance learning where modules could be taken on a part-time basis. But these appeared to only be offered as part of a degree programme and not as short courses. Similarly short courses were found on nutrition that were not run as distance learning courses.

One course on nutrition in development run through distance learning outside the UK was found. The Leadership Programme on Nutrition Security and Sustainable Development run

by the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), India. The course material is India focussed.

2. University of London

University of London, International Programmes

<http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/>

Through the University of London International Programmes, the University of London has made accessible its degree programmes to students all over the world. It has almost 50,000 students in every corner of the globe studying on more than 100 different programmes.

Students who want to undertake distance learning courses register through the international programme. Individual programmes are then conducted under the academic direction of the colleges and institutes of the University of London.

Institutes that direct development courses include:

- The London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM)
- The School of African and Asian Studies (SOAS)
- The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)

Some of these courses are outlined in the rest of this section.

Nutrition and Infection, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM)

http://www.dl4d.ac.uk/course/nutrition-and-infection_28.html or

http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/prospective_students/postgraduate/lshmt/id/syllabus.shtml#id202

This MSc programme module addresses the relationship between nutritional status and susceptibility to infection, together with consideration of the impacts of infection on nutritional status. You will be helped to critically examine the evidence for the many popular beliefs surrounding these subjects.

Details:

- Assessment 70% exam and 30% written assignments.
- Study of 100 hours over 35 weeks.

Other short course modules available at LSHTM are in the areas of Clinical trials, Epidemiology, Infectious diseases and Public health. Details and can be found at this link http://www.lshtm.ac.uk/prospectus/short/shortcourseunits_distance.html.

There are around 1700 students enrolled on the MSc short courses. It was not possible to find out numbers specifically for the Nutrition and Infection course.

Centre for Development, Environment and Policy (CeDEP); School of African and Asian Studies (SOAS), University of London

<http://www.soas.ac.uk/cedep/shortcourse/>

The Short Course Scheme enables you to study one or more individual modules outside the structure of a formal CeDEP degree programme.

Modules include:

- Economics and institutions for development
- Understanding poverty
- Climate change and development
- Gender and social development

**Short Courses in Economics, Management, Finance and the Social Sciences;
University of London, International Programmes**

http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/prospective_students/shortcourses/lse/index.shtml

Economics, Management, Finance and the Social Sciences (EMFSS) is a set of degrees and diplomas awarded by the University of London through the University of London International Programmes, with academic direction provided by The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). More than 90 courses available on EMFSS programmes are available as short courses.

3. Open University

Open University

<http://www.open.ac.uk/>

Course programmes include:

Global Development Management

<http://www3.open.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/environment-development-and-international-studies/global-development-management/index.htm>

International Studies

<http://www3.open.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/environment-development-and-international-studies/international-studies/index.htm>

A list of all the courses available in Environment, Development and International Studies:

<http://www3.open.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/environment-development-and-international-studies/courses/index.htm>

Enrolment figures for the short course International Development: Challenges for a World in Transition are as follows:

- 543 for the academic year 2010/11
- 499 in 09/10
- 420 in 09/09

4. Nutrition in development courses from other institutions

Leadership Programme on Nutrition Security and Sustainable Development

<http://www.ignouonline.ac.in/save/NSSD.htm>

A collaborative programme of The Coalition for Sustainable Nutrition Security and Chair for Sustainable Development, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)

The programme on Nutrition Security and Sustainable Development under the aegis of IGNOU undertakes to review the current situation in India, the complex causes of poor nutrition, and evidence of what works to improve nutrition. Its objectives are to sensitise and guide policy and programme leaders to rely more on evidence based programming for achieving nutrition security and sustainable development.

The Leadership Course on Nutrition Security and Sustainable Development programme will be available online on SAVE (Sustainable Action and Virtual Education) platform. It is a complete virtual learning environment suite covering all activities from registration to certification. The programme can be completed in a period of minimum of one month and maximum of six months.

People's Open Access Education Initiative: Peoples uni

<http://www.peoples-uni.org/book/courses-offered>

One of the overall objectives of the peoples-uni is to provide capacity building in Public Health for those working in low- to middle-income countries who would otherwise not be able to access such education, via Internet based e-learning. The use of Open Educational Resources freely available on the Internet, and volunteers to staff the Initiative, allows this to be offered at very low cost. The Initiative is based in the UK. It appears not to run academic degree programmes so would not be classed as an academic institution.

Course modules offered include: Public Health Nutrition.

This module covers the concept of 'public health nutrition' - that it is not just the science of human nutrition and the individual problem of under- or over-nutrition (although the basics of these are core knowledge) but the whole context of food production, food supply and food choices, with a population focus.

5. Additional information

Author

This query response was prepared by **Laura Bolton** l.bolton@ids.ac.uk

Contributors

Administrator, University of London External Programmes
Information Office, Open University
Lawrence Haddad, IDS
Stephanie Watson, IDS

About Helpdesk reports: The HDRC Helpdesk is funded by the DFID Human Development Group. Helpdesk Reports are based on up to 2 days of desk-based research per query and are designed to provide a brief overview of the key issues, and a summary of some of the best literature available. Experts may be contacted during the course of the research, and those able to provide input within the short time-frame are acknowledged.

For any further request or enquiry on consultancy or helpdesk services, please contact just-ask@dfidhdc.org

Disclaimer

The DFID Human Development Resource Centre (HDRC) provides technical assistance and information to the British Government's Department for International Development (DFID) and its partners in support of pro-poor programmes in education and health, including nutrition and AIDS. The HDRC services are provided by three organisations: Cambridge Education, HLSP (both part of the Mott MacDonald Group) and the Institute of Development Studies. The views in this report do not necessarily reflect those of DFID or any other contributing organisation.