

A NATURE OF THE AWARD		
1	Programme Title	Paramedic Science
2	Final award	Foundation Degree (FdSc) in Paramedic Science
3	Intermediate awards	Undergraduate Certificate in Pre-Hospital Care* Undergraduate Diploma in Pre-Hospital Care*
4	Awarding institution/body	FdSc: University of London Undergraduate Certificate and Diploma: St George's University of London
5	Teaching institution	The Faculty of Health and Social Care Sciences of St George's University of London and Kingston University, with teaching input from Merton College.
6	Programme accredited by	Health Professions Council
7	UCAS/JACS code	n/a
8	QAA benchmark statements	Paramedic Benchmark Statement
9	Date specification produced	17 July 2006
		* The award of the Undergraduate Certificate or Diploma precludes progression to the FdSc and does not confer eligibility for HPC registration.

B FEATURES OF THE PROGRAMME		
1	Mode of study	Full-time for Year One (part distance-learning). Part-time for Year Two and Year Three (part work-based and part distance learning).
2	Usual length of programme	Three academic years.
3	Other features of the programme	A distinct pathway through Year One is available for IHCD-qualified Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) requiring fewer modules to be taken and some modules tailored specifically to qualified EMTs. Students not wishing or not permitted to progress to qualify as a Paramedic may be awarded the Undergraduate Certificate on satisfactory completion of 120 credits from Year One, or the Undergraduate Diploma on satisfactory completion of 120 credits from Year One and 120 credits from Years Two to Three.

C	EDUCATIONAL AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME
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The aims of the course are to ensure that students exit with;

- An understanding of the principles concepts and skills for safe and effective paramedic practice in the full range of paramedic practice settings.
- Competence in paramedic clinical practice to the level necessary to become a registered paramedic in the UK.
- The skills of critical reasoning and problem solving.
- The skills of independent study and self evaluation
- The ability to prioritise and adapt to changing needs and demands
- The ability to critically analyse and evaluate literature and practice
- The ability to apply academic and reflective skills to working with patients.

D	LEARNING OUTCOMES OF THE PROGRAMME	
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	<i>Advanced knowledge and understanding of:</i>	<i>Related teaching and learning methods and strategies</i>
1	Professional autonomy and accountability	Virtual on-line Self directed study Face to Face
2	Professional relationships within the complexity of the health and social care environment.	
3	The basic and applied science subjects underpinning paramedic practice.	<i>Assessment</i> On-line MCQs Quizzes Essay Study Guide
4	Social, health and behavioural sciences and their application to paramedic practice	

	<i>Cognitive skills: the ability to</i>	<i>Related teaching and learning methods and strategies</i>
1	Apply the skills to audit to reflect on and review their practice.	On-line evidence/ problem based learning Workshops Discussion boards
2	Demonstrate an understanding of body systems and processes as applied to paramedic practice.	
3	Demonstrate an understanding of research and evaluation methodologies	<i>Assessment</i> Case studies Reflective Accounts Written reports
4	Demonstrate the ability to utilise reflective practice.	

	<i>Practical skills: the ability to</i>	<i>Related teaching and learning methods and strategies</i>
1	Apply knowledge and skills to undertake an identification, and assessment, of health and social care needs.	Workbased learning Skills laboratory

2	Apply knowledge and skills to formulate treatment plans and carry out paramedic interventions to meet health and social care needs.	Simulation Practice visits
3	Demonstrate a detailed understanding of, and the ability to carry out, paramedic skills	<i>Assessment</i> Reflective accounts Practice portfolios
4	Demonstrate an understanding of risk assessment and the ability to maintain a safe working environment.	OSPEs

	<i>Transferable skills: the ability to</i>	<i>Related teaching and learning methods and strategies</i>
1	Use effective professional communication skills.	Virtual on-line Self directed study
2	Demonstrate the skills to critically evaluate the impact of, and response to, the treatment they provide.	Face to Face <i>Assessment</i> <i>MCQs on line</i> <i>Reflective accounting</i> <i>Practice portfolios</i>

E Programme structure and features

The programme leading to the FdSc normally lasts three academic years, commencing in September.

Students are registered with St George's University of London (under whose regulations they come), but also have Associate Student status with Kingston University.

Year One is a period of full-time study, combining teaching sessions, distance-learning and time spent visiting ambulance education centres for practical skills and experience. There is a special route through Year One for existing qualified Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) (the 'in-service pathway').

Years Two and Three have the same combination of learning modes, but part-time, as students progressing to these years will either be appointed as Trainee EMTs or already be qualified EMTs working with an ambulance service.

The programme is modular, with modules at either Level 0 or Level 1 ('Certificate' level in the QAA Framework) or Level 2 ('Intermediate' level). Students take most modules sequentially and are assessed on each module independently. Each module is allocated a number of credits, where one credit equates to approximately 10 hours study time.

For students on both the in-service pathway and the direct-entry pathway, the course commences with a Level 0 Preparatory module (15 credits), which acts as an introduction to studying at higher education level, particularly the combination of distance e-learning, work-based learning and classroom learning. The remainder of Year One consists of the following compulsory Level 1 modules totalling 135 credits for students on the direct-entry pathway:

Foundations of Ambulance Practice 1 (Level 1 – 15 credits)
Science for Paramedics (Level 1 – 30 credits)
Foundations of Ambulance Practice 2 (Level 1 – 15 credits)
Introduction to Emergency Trauma Care (Level 1 – 30 credits)
Introduction to Emergency Medical Care (Level 1 – 30 credits)
Ambulance Practice Portfolio (Level 1 – 15 credits)

Students on the in-service pathway take the following Level 1 modules totalling 75 credits:

Science for Paramedics (Level 1 – 30 credits)
Foundations of Ambulance Practice 2 (Level 1 – 15 credits)
Introduction to Emergency Trauma Care for IHCD-EMTs (Level 1 – 15 credits)
Introduction to Emergency Medical Care for IHCD-EMTs (Level 1 – 15 credits)

Students passing all Year One modules (see G below) may progress to Year Two. A student not wishing to progress to the FdSc (or who is not permitted to do so by SGUL because of concerns over fitness to practise) could be awarded the Undergraduate Certificate in Pre-Hospital Care on satisfactory completion of 120 credits, but could not then subsequently be awarded the FdSc. The Certificate does not carry with it any licence to practise at any grade of paramedic.

Years Two and Three are studied part-time, with all students taking the following compulsory modules:

Year 2:
Foundations of Paramedic Practice (Level 2 – 15 credits)
Public Health, Cancer and Immunology (Level 2 – 15 credits)
Cardio-Respiratory Care (Level 2 – 15 credits)
Medical Care across the Lifespan (Level 2 – 15 credits)

Year 3:
Gastro-Urinary and Endocrine Care (Level 2 – 15 credits)
Neurology and Psychology (Level 2 – 15 credits)
Emergency Care of Injuries (Level 2 – 15 credits)
Paramedic Practice Portfolio (Level 2 – 30 credits)

The description of the structure of the programme, including the lists of modules, is indicative and should not be regarded as full and definitive. For up-to-date information, see the course handbook.

Programme reference points – the following reference points were used in the preparation of this specification:

QAA Framework for Higher Education in England and Wales (for Levels and general outcomes)
QAA Benchmark Statement for Paramedics (for specific outcomes)
British Paramedic Association Curriculum Framework for Ambulance Education
Health Professions Council Standards of Proficiency for Paramedics

F General teaching and learning strategies

The approach to learning and teaching recognises that the majority of students will be mature learners bringing a diversity of background and work experience, but many may be new to higher education.

Students learn through a mixture of three main activities:

- (a) face-to-face learning in groups with teachers in classroom-based sessions.
- (b) mainly work-based visits (Year One) and mainly supervised practice (Years Two and Three) in ambulance education centres.
- (c) distance-learning, using the Virtual Learning Environment (a mixture of group/tutor work and independent study).

The balance of these activities varies from module to module: Some modules, such as Science for paramedics, are taught almost exclusively via the Blackboard e-learning environment, whereas most others use a blend of e-learning, face to face teaching, and placement based learning.

The e-learning components of the course use a range of activities to promote learning. These include discussion boards, group work, problem based learning and on-line tutorials.

Practical and clinical skills are taught by Faculty academic staff or clinical tutors, depending on the nature of the skill concerned. The specialist ambulance focussed skills required by paramedics are taught by clinical paramedics using high fidelity simulation in an approved Ambulance Education Centre. Practice Placement Educators continue to develop students' skills during placements.

G Assessment

Each module is assessed independently, and students are required to pass all modules. Modules are assessed by a variety of means including multiple-choice and extended-matching questions in formal written examinations, reflective portfolios, practice-based portfolio, course-work assignments, presentations, and practical skills-based assessments (Objective Structured Practical Examinations). Usually students are required to pass each separate assessment element in order to pass the module.

Much assessed work is undertaken by the student in his or her own time during the module, and submitted by the end of the module. Formal examinations and practical tests are usually scheduled towards the end of the module.

A student who does not pass a required assessment element may re-submit or re-take that element twice in the same academic year.

Students who are unable, for a good reason, to take assessments for one module in Year One may, exceptionally, be permitted to progress provisionally to Year Two.

H Support for students and their learning

Students have full access to the library and computing facilities of both St George's

and Kingston University, and will be taught largely on the St George's site.

Personal academic support to students is provided by the Course Director and individual module leaders. Each student is allocated a Personal Tutor for academic guidance and pastoral support, and students have access to the professional Student Counselling service at SGUL and the Occupational Health service at SGH.

Specific assistance with study skills, profiling, careers advice and module choices is provided by the Admissions Tutor and AP(E)L Adviser.

Student and module handbooks provide guidance on content and assessments
Module leaders and liaison lecturers provide links with clinical areas.

I **Criteria for admissions**

For admission to the programme a student should be employed or seeking employment within an ambulance service. Evidence of recent study and demonstrable ability via AP(E)L or profiling to engage with the level of study required for each pathway within the programme will be individually assessed.

The normal minimum entry requirements for the Foundation Degree are 1 A Level and 5 GCSEs (grade A-C including English and Maths) or equivalent.

For entry to the in-service pathway, applicants should already be qualified as an Emergency Medical Technician.

Applicants whose first language is not English will normally be required to demonstrate proficiency by attaining a score of 6.5 in the IELTS test.

All applicants will be required to attend a selection interview. All places are conditional on entrants satisfactorily passing a check with the Criminal Records Bureau at the Enhanced Level, and on passing an Occupational Health check.

J **Career opportunities**

Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and Paramedics provide emergency and unscheduled care to patients suffering from a wide range of injuries and illnesses. Paramedics are independent practitioners who are permitted to undertake a number of invasive and pharmacological emergency interventions. In contrast, EMTs are not independent practitioners and have a far more limited scope of practice.

Most EMTs and paramedics are employed by NHS ambulance services, although some are employed by organisations such as private ambulance services or the military.

Students who leave the programme with the Undergraduate Certificate or Diploma will receive counselling on their possible future career paths.

K **Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning**

Modules are subject to annual reviews by the Course Committee which includes

feedback from students, staff and those delivering work-based teaching. There is an annual audit of each clinical learning environment.

There is also an annual Programme Review undertaken by the Faculty Quality Committee.

The programme is subject to periodic review or re-validation by the Validation and Review Committee according to the rules defined in the Quality Handbook (including any major revisions to the programme).

All staff are subject to annual appraisal by their supervisor, and this includes peer-observation of their teaching. There is a structured Staff development programme for FHSCS staff to enhance and update their skills in teaching, assessment and programme development.

The Board of Examiners includes at least two Visiting Examiners from outside the teaching institutions, who make a report to the Board (copied to the Faculty Quality Committee) on standards and procedures. The Board of Examiners meets at least annually and reports directly to SGUL Senate.

The programme is managed by a Course Committee, which includes student representatives. This committee reports to the Faculty Quality Committee.

The Faculty Learning and Teaching Sub-Committee has oversight of all learning and teaching matters for the Faculty and is responsible for ensuring good practice is disseminated.

L Regulation of assessment

- Assignment guidelines specify what students need to achieve for each module
- Assessment Criteria specify general standards to be met at each level
- Students need to pass each module to achieve credit and awards
- Visiting examiners sample programme work and see all examination scripts
- The Board of Examiners approves all marks and final awards

M Indicators of quality and standards

- Module reports are reviewed by the Course Director
- The Course Committee meets termly and includes student representatives
- The Annual Programme Report is presented to the Faculty Quality Committee
- The Programme Report includes Programme Committee minutes and Visiting Examiner Reports
- Reviews of the programme will take place initially at the end of first year and at the conclusion of the first cohort's studies
- Any quality issues arising from the programme may be referred to the Academic Quality Assurance Committee and thence to Senate if required
- A summary of all Visiting Examiner reports and action taken is also compiled annually by the Academic Registrar and forwarded to the University of London

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be

expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the course handbook and, where they are produced, separate module guides.

Key sources of information are:

Course documents

Student Handbook

The SGUL prospectus and the Kingston University prospectus

Course leaflets

The SGUL internet site and the Kingston University internet site

The SGUL General Regulations for Students and Programmes of Study

QAA subject review reports

PJB

v.1.0 03/07/06

v.2.0 07/07/06

v.2.1 11/07/06

v.3.0 17/07/06

PB

V4.0 14/8/06