



MASTER'S OF PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAMME AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

The Master's in Public Health (MPH) degree provides a unique opportunity to learn the skills and concepts required to strengthen population health across South Africa and the continent. Students come to the UCT MPH from a range of backgrounds, including Health Sciences (including the allied Health Sciences), Humanities and Social Sciences, Life Sciences, Engineering and Law.

We offer specialisations in:

- Epidemiology & Biostatistics
- Social & Behavioural Sciences
- Environmental Health
- Health Systems
- Health Economics
- Community Eye Health

After completing the degree, our students go on to careers focusing on different aspects of public health practice or research, including work with NGOs, government or academia. For further information, including admissions criteria and course details, please visit www.publichealth.uct.ac.za

THE CLOSING DATES FOR 2022 APPLICATIONS ARE: 31 JULY 2021 (INTERNATIONAL APPLICATIONS) AND 30 SEPTEMBER 2021 (SA APPLICATIONS)

Public health needs people from diverse fields

"With more public health professionals in the work force and the political will to promote public health as a priority, South Africa has incredible potential," says Professor Landon Myer, Programme Convenor of UCT's Masters in Public Health.

The internationally recognised and well-respected programme receives hundreds of applicants from all over the world each year. Increasingly, graduates from diverse backgrounds are recognising fulfilling career opportunities in public health.

"Public health is intersectoral and requires a wide range of disciplines to improve the health of populations. It is a way for people who do not have clinical training, but who are interested in health and health care, to develop a highly productive career.

"To see this, it's important to understand the difference between clinical and health services. It is the difference between caring for the health of an individual patient versus an entire community or population. In South Africa, we are struggling to supply public health services even though we have great doctors, nurses and other health professionals to help individual patients. What is missing is a larger group of public health professionals to help the system maximise its resources, promote health, and deliver services to the people."

People with a health qualification (such as doctors or nurses) are not necessarily trained to deal with the management of health programmes, strengthen health systems, promote healthy behaviours or advocate for policy change. However, people in law, engineering and other fields in the humanities and social sciences have the basic training and skill sets to contribute in these areas. For example, one critical component of public health is the focus on prevention of illness, and often the best way to do this is through policies and laws, or to work with other sectors of government such as sanitation, education or welfare.

Admission is competitive: UCT receives more than 300 applications annually for approximately 60 places in the programme. In the admissions process, they emphasise diversity: the degree seeks people from different backgrounds to follow the different tracks offered.

There are good job opportunities in public health, says Myer, both here and abroad. The minimum requirement for most of these, however, is a Masters in Public Health.

"South Africa has incredible resources and spectacular infrastructure compared to other African countries. What we are missing is a cadre of public health professionals to help promote health and prevent disease in society," he concludes.



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