

Description

1. Introduction

1.01 Welcome to the University of Manchester and the School of Biological Sciences

1.02 This handbook is accurate at the start of the 2025/6 academic year

[intense_snippet snippet_id=18600 snippet_title=SBS Welcome from Head of School 25-26]

1.04 Key contacts

If you have any queries or concerns at any time during your period of study at The University of Manchester, there is a range of people you can approach. The Programme Administration Teams will be your first point of call for general issues. Alternatively, you may wish to contact the Programme Director for specific aspects to do with the course or your Academic Advisor for career development issues. If you wish to raise a confidential matter at School level, you should approach the Head of Teaching, Learning and Student Experience – contact details below.

Responsibility for overall management of the Programme lies with the Programme Director who has assembled a Programme Committee, which meets regularly, to advise on content, structure, management, student supervision, and regulatory matters such as Programme improvement and refinement. The Committee also includes the student representative who is democratically elected by you to attend these meetings.

Programme Administration Team

Your first point of call should be directed as follows:

Student SharePoint site: [School of Biological Sciences Student Information Home](#)

- Student Hub
- sbs.hub@manchester.ac.uk

- Student Support
- sbs.wellbeing@manchester.ac.uk

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- Assessments
- sbs.assessment@manchester.ac.uk

- Programmes and Curriculum
- sbs.programmes@manchester.ac.uk

- **Student Representative**
- To be appointed democratically

- **Director of Education (UG and PGT)**
- Professor Nicky High
- nicky.high@manchester.ac.uk

- **Head of Teaching, Learning and Student Experience**
- Kerry Mycock
- kerry.mycock@manchester.ac.uk

- **Teaching and Learning Manager**
- Kelly Salimian
- kelly.salimian@manchester.ac.uk

- **Student Service, Support & Development Manager**
- Sam Green
- Sam.green-1@manchester.ac.uk

- **Programme Directors**
- Dr Margherita Bertuzzi
- margherita.bertuzzi@manchester.ac.uk
- Professor Michael Bromley
- Mike.Bromley@manchester.ac.uk

1.05 Key dates in the academic year

A summary of the key dates is given below and additional information can be found here:

<http://www.manchester.ac.uk/discover/key-dates/>

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•19128â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Responsibilities of staff and studentsâ?•]

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1.09 Changes/Updates to your personal details recorded in the Student System

It is your responsibility to ensure that the Student System is kept up to date with changes to your recorded personal or programme details. Any change of personal details must be completed online via My Manchester. Incorrect information can lead to problems with your fees and funding, at Examination times and with other official processes.

Please read guidance available on the University of Manchester Student Support webpage for details on [Updating your bank details](#) and changes to your [personal information](#) (for example, your address or name).

If you need any help, please contact the [Student Support Hub](#)

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[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18627â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Health and safety information 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18629â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? University learning resources 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18631â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Library 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18633â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Computers 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18635â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Developing Digital Skills 25-26â?³]

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[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18647â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Other facilities/resources â?? 25-26â?³]

2. About your programme

2.01 Programme overview for the MSc Infection Biology

2.02 Aims and Learning outcomes of the programme

- Equip students with a detailed theoretical and practical understanding of molecular microbiology and immunology, delivered in-context during laboratory-based research and self-directed research of the literature, and via integration of molecular and cellular information to understand the genetic basis of microbial virulence, host responses to pathogen challenge, and complexity of infectious disease, diagnostics, and antimicrobial therapies
- Enable students to understand the principles of modelling of host and microbial aspects of infection to characterize the host-pathogen interaction
- Equip students with an understanding of methods for analysing the biological functions and physiological relevance of microbial virulence factors and host responses to pathogenic challenge
- Equip students with a working knowledge of mechanistic approaches to problem solving in molecular and cellular biomedical science
- Equip students with a working understanding of the application of a wide repertoire of advanced scientific methods at the cutting edge of scientific research, including flow cytometry, single cell technologies, imaging and mathematical modelling
- Enable students to harness critical thinking and synthesis techniques by integration of data of varying types, and from a range of sources
- Equip students with transferable skills in critical reasoning and reflection, collaborative team working, communication, use of IT/health informatics, innovation in the application of knowledge to practice and logical/systematic approaches to solving problems and making decisions (Cert, Dip, MSc)
- Equip students with the core knowledge, critical awareness and skills in a range of specialist areas to enable them to pursue a research career in this discipline
- Equip students with a critical understanding of the current issues and problems at the forefront of the discipline that will allow them to make independent, informed judgements in relation to these issues
- Provide graduates who will meet the regional, national and international demands for research staff skilled in infection studies
- Acquire a detailed and systematic understanding of the principle concepts of infection and antimicrobial immunity
- Integrate and apply knowledge to synthesise new theories on mechanistic basis of disease
- Be aware of the practical issues and problems associated with conducting high quality research, including ethical issues
- Acquire an understanding of the theory and practise of research methods and scientific techniques basic to the discipline
- Work individually and collaboratively to identify appropriate methodology during experimental planning, interpret and present scientific data, interrogate relevant scientific literature and develop research plans

- Recognise potential methodological failings and strategize accordingly
- Understand scientific methodology together with the philosophical contexts within which research is conducted in science and medicine
- Communicate effectively through writing, oral presentations and IT to facilitate further study or employment in molecular, cellular and physiological science Exercise theoretical and practical knowledge required for employment in a variety of biomedical environments
- Write and defend research reports, which appraise the results of laboratory based scientific study

2.03 Summary of the programme structure

In Semester 1, you will complete MEDN69920 Research Methods, BIOL68931 Journal Club, BIOL68911 Technologies Workshops and BIOL68921 Host Pathogen Interactions and BIOL66121 Research Project 1

In Semester 2, you will complete BIOL68942 Grant Writing and BIOL66132 Research Project 2. More information on all course units can be found below.

2.04 Modes of Study

This is a full-time Master's course.

2.05 Programme specification

These documents are stored internally within the School.

2.06 Course Units

All course unit specifications were reviewed March 2025.

MEDN69920 Research Methods

[Course unit information at MyManchester](#)

BIOL68931 Journal Club

[Course unit information at MyManchester](#)

BIOL68911 Technologies Workshops

[Course unit information at MyManchester](#)

BIOL68942 Grant Writing

[Course unit information at MyManchester](#)

BIOL68921 Host Pathogen Interactions

[Course unit information at MyManchester](#)

BIOL66121 Research Project 1

[Course unit information](#) [MyManchester](#)

BIOL66132 Research Project 2

[Course unit information](#) [MyManchester](#)

2.07 Information on the way in which a student can progress through the programme

Please be aware this programme has some higher requirements to the University degree regulations and details of these are outlined below:

The programme will not permit compensation rules to be applied to Research Project 1 Reassessment will be permitted in up to half of the taught units plus Research Project 1 (i.e. 50% of total number of taught units (60 credits) + Research Project 1 (30 credits) = 45 credits).

The University Postgraduate degree regulations can be found online:

[Postgraduate Degree Regulations](#)

In order to progress to the dissertation/research project you must have satisfactorily achieved the relevant pass mark in taught course units, including by use of resit and/or compensation as outlined in the degree regulations, in order to continue to this element of the programme.

[intense_snippet snippet_id=18875 snippet_title=SBS Consequences of unsatisfactory progress 25-26]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=18877 snippet_title=SBS Programme Specific Regulations 25-26]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=18649 snippet_title=SBS Professional and statutory body requirements 25-26]

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2.13 Degree classification algorithm

During your degree programme, you will complete 180 credits; which will comprise of both Taught (teaching-based) course units and two larger Research-based course units. Each course unit carries a weighting in credits and an average is calculated at the end of your degree programme of the marks you have achieved and this serves as your final degree mark out of 100. Course units are counted in to your degree mark based on their weighting in credits, so a 60 credit course unit would be counted in to the average 4 times, whilst a 15 credit course unit would be counted in to the average once. All degree

marks are rounded to 1 decimal place. Please see below an example degree mark calculation:

Unit 1 (15 Credits): 67

Unit 2 (15 Credits): 55

Unit 3 (15 Credits): 78

Unit 4 (15 Credits): 70

Unit 5 (30 Credits): 75

Unit 6 (90 Credits): 66

The calculation would be:

$$67 + 55 + 78 + 70 + 75 + 75 + 66 + 66 + 66 + 66 + 66 + 66 = 816 / 12 = 68$$

Please note that in cases where students have approved mitigating circumstances for some of their marks, the final mark may be calculated differently, at the discretion of the exam board, for example a 15 credit unit where the student has under-performed may be excluded from the final calculation.

Degree Classification

For Masters Programmes, students must achieve an overall average of at least 50 to be eligible for an MSc award. If you achieve an average below 50, you will not be awarded an MSc award, but may be eligible for a lower exit award of a Postgraduate Diploma or a Postgraduate Certificate.

Degree classifications are awarded as follows:

Final mark of 50 – 59.9 : Pass

Final mark of 60 – 69.9: Merit

Final mark of 70 or above: Distinction

Classification Review:

For final degree marks which fall within the boundary zone; within 2 marks of the higher classification (68 – 69.9 for a Distinction or 58 – 59.9 for a Merit), the examination board will consider whether there is a case for the student to be awarded the higher classification and in some cases students will be awarded the higher classification where their final degree mark falls in the boundary zone.

PLEASE NOTE: There is no guarantee if your final degree mark falls in the boundary zone that you will be awarded the higher degree classification. This will only be awarded automatically if you have achieved a degree mark above the degree classification boundary (e.g. 70 for a Distinction).

If your mark falls in the boundary zone; you will be awarded the higher degree classification in the following situations:

- If two thirds or more of the credits you have completed during your degree programme (120 credits or more) are marks at the higher degree classification, you will be automatically promoted to the higher degree classification (so 120 credits with marks above 70 would be needed to be promoted to a distinction)
- If you do not have two thirds of credits at the higher classification but are in the boundary zone, there will be an independent review of your final research project by the external examiner who will make a recommendation to the board as to whether or not there is a case for the student being awarded the higher degree classification. The board will then make a decision based on this and on the mark profile whether or not to promote the student to the higher classification. This is at the discretion of the examination board, is not a guarantee, and is a decision that cannot be questioned or challenged.

There is no classification review available for the classification of Pass; any degree mark below 50 cannot be awarded an MSc degree under any circumstances.

3. Assessment and academic standards

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3.04 Laboratory work and practical reports

Not relevant to programme

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18788â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Examination Boards and release of marks 25-26â?³]

3.06 Programme-specific assessment requirements

Please be aware this programme has some higher requirements to the University degree regulations and details of these are outlined below:

In order to progress to the dissertation/research project you must have satisfactorily achieved the relevant pass mark in taught course units, including by use of resit and/or compensation as outlined in the degree regulations, in order to continue to this element of the programme.

The programme will not permit compensation rules to be applied to BIOL66121 Research Project 1

Reassessment will be permitted in up to half of the taught units plus BIOL66121 Research Project 1 (i.e. 50% of total number of taught units (60 credits) + BIOL66121 Research Project 1 (30 credits) = 45 credits)

In order to progress to the dissertation/research project you must have satisfactorily achieved the relevant pass mark in taught course units, including by use of resit and/or compensation as outlined in the degree regulations, in order to continue to this element of the programme.

The University Postgraduate degree regulations can be found online:

[Postgraduate Degree Regulations](#)

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18663â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Prizes and awards 25-26â?³]

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3.12 External Examiner

External Examiners are individuals from another institution or organisation who monitor the assessment processes of the University to ensure fairness and academic standards. They ensure that assessment and examination procedures have been fairly and properly implemented and that decisions have been made after appropriate deliberation. They also ensure that standards of awards and levels of student performance are comparable with those in equivalent higher education institutions.

The External Examiner for the MSc Infection Biology is Dr Fraser Scott, who is based at the University of Strathclyde.

Please note that it is inappropriate for students to make direct contact with External Examiners under any circumstances, in particular with regards to a studentâ??s individual performance in assessments. Other appropriate mechanisms are available for students, including the Universityâ??s appeals or complaints procedures and the UMSU Advice Centre. In cases where a student does contact an External Examiner directly, External Examiners have been requested not to respond to direct queries. Instead, External Examiners should report the matter to the School contact who will then contact the student to remind them of the other methods available for students.

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4. Student Voice

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4.03 Role of the Programme meeting

The PGT Programme meeting meets twice a year. The committeeâ??s functions and responsibilities are to maintain the standards of teaching, to evaluate and revise the programme in the light of feedback, to monitor student progression and to provide a forum for discussion between the University and the students.

The meeting reviews the annual monitoring report and acts on recommendations arising from the annual monitoring process.

The membership of the meeting includes: the Programme Directors; the Programme Administration Team; Teaching Staff and Student Representatives.

The PGT Programme meeting reports to the PGT Programme Committee.

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18679â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Mechanisms for collecting and 25-26â?³]

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[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18683â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Student Complaints 25-26â?³]

5. Attendance requirements, interruptions and mitigating circumstances

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5.04 Procedure for reporting ill health

Absence from examinations due to ill health

You should make every effort to participate in all examinations. It will not be possible to make special arrangements to take the exams in an alternative location, unless this has been arranged through the Disability Advisory Support Service.

If you are so ill you are unable to take an exam, you **must** contact the SBS Hub â?? email sbs.hub@manchester.ac.uk or telephone **0161 275 1387** as soon as possible, and certainly **no later than the**

day and start time of your examination. You should complete a Mitigating Circumstances application which must be accompanied by appropriate evidence.

Illness not resulting in absence from examinations

You may be unwell but able to proceed with an examination but feel that your performance will have been impaired. If you wish this to be taken into account, you must follow the same procedures as stated in the earlier Section Absence from Examinations due to Ill Health by applying for mitigation. Note that typical levels of exam stress that are not diagnosed as a long-term condition, would not normally be considered a mitigating circumstance. If you anticipate or experience high levels of stress related to your exams, or studies in general, we strongly recommend you contact the Student Support and

Wellbeing team (sbs.wellbeing@manchester.ac.uk), who will be able to support you.

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18693â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? How to change, interrupt or 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18695â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Mitigating circumstances 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18697â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Policy on Supporting Health 25-26â?³]

6. Support for students

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[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18705â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Counselling and Mental Health Service 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18707â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS -Disability Advisory and Support Service 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18709â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Student Occupational Health Service 25-26â?³]

6.07 PASS (Peer Assisted Study Schemes)

Not applicable to programme.

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18714â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Careers Service 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=18716 snippet_title=SBS University College 25-26]

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[intense_snippet snippet_id=18720 snippet_title=SBS International Society 25-26]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=18722 snippet_title=SBS University Centre for Academic English 25-26]