

MSc Medical and Molecular Virology

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

- 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
 - kerry.salimian@manchester.ac.uk
-
- **Student Service, Support & Development Manager**
 - Sam Green
 - sam.green-1@manchester.ac.uk
-
- **Programme Directors**
 - Prof Pam Vallely
 - pamela.j.vallely@manchester.ac.uk
-
- Prof Paul Klapper
 - paul.klapper-2@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?•]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18603â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Canvas 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18617â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? My Manchester 25-26â?³]

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](#)

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18619â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? The Student Charter 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18621â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? The Digital Equity Charter 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18726â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Dignity at Work and Study 25-26â?³]

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

Compulsory Introductory Course

All students are automatically enrolled onto an introductory unit (BIOL62000) that provides information on health and safety, academic malpractice and academic literacy. Completion instructions for each of these sections are clearly defined within the course.

Completion of the academic malpractice and health and safety sections is mandatory for all students. All assessments must be completed as soon as possible after the programme begins, with the academic malpractice assessment completed **before** the first piece of coursework is submitted and no later than **31 October 2026**. Completion of these assessments is monitored by the School.

All students are also strongly advised to complete the academic literacy section.

[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]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18637â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Social Space 25-26â?³]

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

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18641â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? University General Regulations 25-26â?³]

2. About your programme

2.01 Programme overview for the MSc Medical and Molecular Virology

Medical Virology is a highly topical and vitally important subject. Many of the Worldâ??s greatest global health challenges arise from viral infections. Recent examples of new and emerging viruses include outbreaks caused by novel coronaviruses, ebola and zika viruses. More commonly, every year millions of people across the globe become seriously ill as a result of influenza and 100â??s of thousands die. Whilst other diseases for which effective vaccines exist such as measles and polio still cause serious illness in a number of countries. In order to tackle these major health threats well trained virologists with the knowledge and skills to diagnose, treat and prevent such disease are a vital requirement.

The MSc in Medical and Molecular Virology will give you the opportunity to gain the skills and knowledge to participate in tackling the global challenges posed by existing and emerging viral infections. The course will offer in-depth training in medical and molecular virology with integration of relevant immunology, molecular biology, and bioinformatics knowledge and techniques to help you develop the attributes required by a modern virologist.

2.02 Aims and Learning outcomes of the programme

The Programme aims to:

- Develop graduates who possess the knowledge, understanding, specialist practical skills and critical analysis skills to take up roles as virologists in the context of clinical, medical, diagnostic, academic or research settings
- Develop graduates who will understand the global health impact of viral infections and be able to make a positive contribution to tackling the challenges associated with managing this impact.
- Develop in each student, an appreciation and understanding of research along with the practical and intellectual skills needed to undertake independent problem solving in virology.
- Offer the opportunity for students to participate in and further develop our current virology research interests and community of practice.

2.03 Summary of the programme structure

In Semester 1, you will complete 4 course units: BIOL65201: Introduction to MMV; BIOL65211: Viruses and Disease 1, BIOL65221: Viruses and Disease 2 , BIOL65231: Viruses and Disease 3 These units will allow you to acquire the in-depth knowledge and understanding of viruses, of the diseases they cause and how they cause them, as well as how to diagnose, control and prevent infections in an individual and a community. Students will experience a variety of teaching and learning methods including lectures, seminars and tutorials, practical laboratory based sessions and eLearning materials for independent study.

In Semester 2, you will complete BIOL65242 Research skills in Practice which will prepare you to undertake your substantial research project and the research project BIOL65252: Research Project. 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

BIOL65201: Introductory Medical and Molecular Virology

[Course unit information Æ± My Manchester](#)

BIOL65211: Viruses and Disease 1

[Course unit information Æ± My Manchester](#)

BIOL65221: Viruses and Disease 2

[Course unit information Æ± My Manchester](#)

BIOL65231: Viruses and Disease 3

[Course unit information Æ± My Manchester](#)

BIOL65242 Research skills in Practice (short version)

[Course unit information Æ± My Manchester](#)

BIOL65252: Research Project

[Course unit information Æ± My Manchester](#)

[intense_snippet snippet_id=18643 snippet_title=SBS Information on the way 25-26]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18875â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Consequences of unsatisfactory progress 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18877â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Programme Specific Regulations 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18649â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Professional and statutory body requirements 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18651â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Fieldwork and placements or study abroad 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18653â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Additional costs 25-26â?³]

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 one larger Research-based course unit. 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:

$$67 + 55 + 78 + 70 + 75 + 75 + 66 + 66 + 66 + 66 + 66 + 66 = 834 / 12 = 69.5$$

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; 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

[intense_snippet snippet_id=18772 snippet_title=SBS Assessment 25-26]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=18659 snippet_title=SBS Dissertation 25-26]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=19015 snippet_title=SBS 3.03 Examinations and coursework (PGT)]

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

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

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18661â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Statement about the use of Turnitin 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18665â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Plagiarism and academic malpractice 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18795â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Referencing and Proofreading statement 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18667â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Artificial Intelligence (AI) statement 25-26â?³]

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 Medical and Molecular Virology is Dr Kate Templeton at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary.

Please note that it is inappropriate for students to make direct contact with External Examiners under any circumstances, in particular with regards to a student's individual performance in assessments. Other appropriate mechanisms are available for students, including the University'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.

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18673â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Academic Appeals 25-26â?³]

4. Student Voice

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18675â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Representation at programme 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18677â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Role of the Student Voice Committee 25-26â?³]

4.03 Role of the Programme committee

The PGT Programme meeting meets three times 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]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18681â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Use of University unit surveys and 25-26â?³]

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

5. Attendance requirements, interruptions and mitigating circumstances

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18686â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Attendance Requirements 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18689â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Student Engagement 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18691â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Consequences of paid employed 25-26â?³]

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

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18699â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Student Support microsite 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18701â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? The role of the Programme Director, AA, SS Hubs 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18703â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Studentsâ?? Union and SU Advice Service 25-26â?³]

[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]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18711â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? PASS (PGT) 25-26â?³]

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

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18716â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? University College 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18718â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Stellify 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18720â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? International Society 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18722â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? University Centre for Academic English 25-26â?³]