Year of entry: 2021/22

Programme Specification

1	**Awarding body**	University of London						
2	**Teaching Institution**	**Birkbeck College**						
3	**Programme Title(s)**	**Cert HE Life Sciences for Subjects allied to Medicine**						
4	**Programme Code(s)**	UCHLIFSC (1 Year, full-time) UCHLIFS2 (2 Years, part-time)						
5	***UCAS code (if applicable)***	N/A						
6	**Home Department**	Biological Sciences						
7	**Exit Award(s)**	Cert CE						
8	**Duration of Study** (number of years)	1 year (UCHLIFSC, UCHLIFS9) 2 years (UCHLIFS2, UCHLIF29)						
9	**Mode of Study**	FT	**X**	PT	**X**	DL		
10	**Level of Award (FHEQ)**	Level: 4						
11	**Other teaching depts or institution**	N/A						
12	**Professional, Statutory Regulatory Body(PSRB) details**	N/A						
13	***QAA Benchmark Group***	N/A						

14	**Programme Rationale & Aims**
	Aims: • To widen and encourage participation of mature learners in science; • To promote equal opportunities to higher education for non-traditional learners needing to study in the evening; • To provide a sound framework and body of knowledge for understanding the ideas and methodology of the life sciences; • To provide laboratory work which aids understanding of underlying scientific concepts and encourages the solution of practical problems; • To develop laboratory skills and safe practice; • To provide an enjoyable and stimulating learning experience; • To encourage and support the development of self-confidence and independence in the learning of science; • To provide a programme of study that will enable successful students to progress to more advanced programmes of study in life sciences and subjects allied to medicine; **Programme Rationale:** The programme was developed in order to: • Enable progression to a wide range of further study in science both at Birkbeck and at other HEIs. The departments of *Biological Sciences* and *Economics, Mathematics and Statistics* at Birkbeck encourage progression of students from this award, and where learners' aspirations are to disciplines not within the College's portfolio, particularly

	within medicine and related fields, progression is offered by many of the other Colleges of the University and other HEIs. • Provide a firm foundation which relates to the subject benchmarks for the Biosciences and Chemistry to ensure not only progression but which will sustain success of learners within the next phase of their studies. • Meet the needs of adult learners who wish to study Life Sciences via a part-time mode of study. • Provide a stopping–off point for those participants who wish to widen their knowledge and understanding of science without immediate progression to further study beyond the Cert HE. • Contribute to the national endeavour to widen participation in science e.g. in line with the SET and STEM agendas by increasing the number of students able to progress to science based disciplines; to raise the profile of science and to encourage participation by non-traditional groups e.g. in line with the WISE agenda. • Meet Birkbeck's mission to provide access to science to a wide audience and in-line with principles of Equal Opportunities. • Include 2 modules, one focussing on study and research skills, and one on personal progress and development planning, to be in-line with Birkbeck's mission and policies on the development of general skills such as communication, IT, team working, and career management.

15	**Entry Criteria**
	Given the very diverse background of students entering the programme, there are no formal entrance requirements. Applicants are advised that this intensive programme requires a high level of commitment and that although there are no formal qualifications required for admission they need to have a keen interest in science and sufficient time to devote to their studies All applicants for this programme first have to complete short self-assessment exercises at home in biology, chemistry and numeracy (or physics if appropriate) and then attend for interview with members of the lecturing team or the programme director. The completed diagnostic material provides a good idea of students' skills in relation to the starting level of each module and assists students and lecturers in deciding which modules meet applicants' interest and potential, and whether they should study the programme over one or two years. Those offered places may be required to attend one of the summer top-up courses or be set pre-coursework to revise and improve their numerical and/or science skills before the start of the modules in September.

16	**Learning Outcomes**
	On successful completion of this programme a student will be expected to be able to: **Subject specific:** 1. Demonstrate knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with the life sciences and be able to evaluate and interpret these within the context of their studies;

	2. Apply chemical and biological concepts to a diverse range of issues and to the solution of problems; 3. Analyse and interpret data collected personally in the laboratory or provided in exercises; **Intellectual:** 4. Extract, evaluate and accurately document relevant information from scientific sources; 5. Present and interpret qualitative and quantitative data, develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with basic theories and concepts; 6. Communicate the results of their study/work accurately and reliably in writing with structured and coherent arguments and using academic conventions; 7. Demonstrate scientific and mathematical literacy; **Practical:** 8. Use standard laboratory equipment confidently and correctly; 9. Demonstrate an awareness of laboratory safety and materials handling issues; 10. Take measurements, handle, record and process data; **Personal and Social:** 11. Work independently and in a group including in a laboratory setting; 12. Manage their time and work to deadlines; 13. Identify and apply for a further programme of study as appropriate; 14. Demonstrate qualities and transferable skills which would be necessary for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility.

17	**Learning, teaching and assessment methods**
	A wide range of teaching methods including lectures, laboratory experiments and demonstrations, problem-solving, group work and presentations are used. On-line learning materials (module and programme guides, lecture overheads and handouts, assessments and past papers, other relevant materials and links) are provided on Moodle. All modules emphasise the development of active and scholarly engagement with the curriculum. The module *Study and Research Skills for Life Sciences* supports students in the acquisition of independent study skills including skills for revision and examination preparation. The module *Personal progress and Development Planning* assists students with their application for further study and career planning. Diagnostic exercises set in the first two weeks of the Autumn Term enable students to identify gaps in their skills and on-line material is provided to assist them in the practice and enhancement of skills in identified areas. Booster sessions provide additional face-to-face assistance, as do the peer support sessions run by former students. Home study is encouraged by referenced weekly reading and text book problems, question sheets, and by a programme of home assignments.

	Assessment in the first two modules of Biology and Chemistry is entirely though a range of different types of coursework, including: • Theory (home) assignments; • On-line (short) quizzes; • On-line assignments; • Practical assignments (assessment of report either written in class or at home); • End-of-module in-class tests (unseen). The unseen in-class end-of-module tests provide formative examination practice for the final examination at the end of Module 3. Students are strongly encouraged to attempt all of the assessments and the overall mark for each of the Part 1 & 2 modules is calculated from a suitable weighted average of all the elements of assessment. Obliging students to take the end-of-module test for these modules allows students to treat these as formative assessments in line with QAA guidance of avoiding premature summative assessment and the provision of sufficient time for students to mature and synthesise the knowledge. The final module (Part 3) for each subject is assessed by a final unseen 3 hour examination, which contributes 80% of the final mark for the module. The remaining 20% is calculated from a coursework assignment. Both, the examination and the coursework element must be passed in order to gain an overall pass for each Part 3 science module. *Personal Progress and Development Planning* is assessed as Pass/Fail only and involves coursework assignments such as an online application and personal statement for further study or employment and an essay/report based on career research. *Study and Research Skills for Life Sciences* is assessed as Pass/Fail only and involves putting together a skills portfolio exhibiting a range of necessary science-based skills and a critical review of web-sites and background texts. The assessment strategy is designed to support the students' development with a balance of coursework, in-class tests and examination changing as the programme progresses. The final examinations for the Part 3 science subject modules are double-marked, and all coursework and tests are subject to sampling and moderation. The minimum pass mark for each module is 40%, and students must pass all eight modules to be awarded the *Certificate of Higher Education*. Students may apply for re-assessment in modules they failed at the next possible opportunity, which is usually in the August of that year or the subsequent academic year.

18	**Programme Description**
	The programme may be undertaken over a single academic year in full-time mode or by part-time study over two academic years. Subject-specific modules will provide a sound foundation in basic chemistry as well as in cellular and molecular biology. Thus successful completion will provide you with the knowledge and skills needed to progress to degrees in the life sciences and subjects allied to medicine. The programme also includes modules that will focus on your overall personal and academic development, and which will assist you in planning your applications for further study.

19	**Programme Structure**

Full-Time, 1 Year (October Start): Cert HE Life Sciences for Subjects Allied to Medicine

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
4	FFSC011H4	Biology: Part 1 of 3	15	Core
4	FFSC021H4	Biology: Part 2 of 3	15	Core
4	FFSC031H4	Biology: Part 3 of 3	15	Core
4	FFSC012H4	Chemistry: Part 1 of 3	15	Core
4	FFSC022H4	Chemistry: Part 2 of 3	15	Core
4	FFSC032H4	Chemistry: Part 3 of 3	15	Core
4	SCBS041H4	Personal Progress and Development Planning	15	Core
4	FFSC200H4	Study and Research Skills for Life Sciences	15	Core

Full-Time, 1 Year: Biology & Physics pathway

Three modules in Chemistry may be replaced by 3 modules in Physics. This is to enable students who aim to progress onto degree programmes and careers in Radiography which require background in Physics and Biology.

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
4	FFSC011H4	Biology: Part 1 of 3	15	Core
4	FFSC021H4	Biology: Part 2 of 3	15	Core
4	FFSC031H4	Biology: Part 3 of 3	15	Core
4	FFSC013H4	Physics: Part 1 of 3	15	Core
4	FFSC023H4	Physics: Part 2 of 3	15	Core
4	FFSC033H4	Physics: Part 3 of 3	15	Core
4	SCBS041H4	Personal Progress and Development Planning	15	Core
4	FFSC200H4	Study and Research Skills for Life Sciences	15	Core

Part-Time, 2-years: Cert HE Life Sciences for Subjects Allied to Medicine

Year 1

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status
4	FFSC011H4	Biology: Part 1 of 3	15	Core
4	FFSC021H4	Biology: Part 2 of 3	15	Core
4	FFSC031H4	Biology: Part 3 of 3	15	Core
4	FFSC200H4	Study and Research Skills for Life Sciences	15	Core

Year 2

4	FFSC012H4	Chemistry: Part 1 of 3	15	Core
4	FFSC022H4	Chemistry: Part 2 of 3	15	Core
4	FFSC032H4	Chemistry: Part 3 of 3	15	Core
4	SCBS041H4	Personal Progress and Development Planning	15	Core

Part Time, 2-years: Biology & Physics pathway				
Year 1				
Level	**Module Code**	**Module Title**	**Credits**	**Status***
4	FFSC011H4	Biology: Part 1 of 3	15	Core
4	FFSC021H4	Biology: Part 2 of 3	15	Core
4	FFSC031H4	Biology: Part 3 of 3	15	Core
4	FFSC200H4	Study and Research Skills for Life Sciences	15	Core
Year 2				
Level	**Module Code**	**Module Title**	**Credits**	**Status***
4	FFSC013H4	Physics: Part 1 of 3	15	Core
4	FFSC023H4	Physics: Part 2 of 3	15	Core
4	FFSC033H4	Physics: Part 3 of 3	15	Core
4	SCBS041H4	Personal Progress and Development Planning	15	Core

Status*

CORE – Module must be taken and passed by student; COMPULSORY – Module must be taken, mark can be reviewed at sub-exam board; OPTIONAL – Student can choose to take this module

20	**Programme Director**	Dr Paul King
21	**Start Date** ***(term/year)***	Autumn 2010
22	**Date approved by TQEC**	Autumn 2009
23	**Date approved by Academic Board**	Spring 2010
24	**Date(s) updated/amended**	May 2015