

MANCHESTER
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The University of Manchester

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

TRANSFORMATIVE ONCOLOGY

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WHAT MAKES THIS PROGRAMME DIFFERENT FROM OTHER ONCOLOGY MASTER'S PROGRAMMES?

The programme focuses on three key areas:

Integration of Science and Medicine

Students develop an understanding of both the scientific and clinical aspects of oncology, helping bridge the gap between research and patient care.

Professional Skills Development

The curriculum incorporates communication, leadership, teamwork, critical thinking, and research skills that are directly applicable in professional practice.

Social Responsibility

The programme includes topics such as:

- Patient and public involvement and engagement (PPIE)
- Health inequalities
- Shared decision-making
- Global cancer challenges
- Environmental sustainability

This broader perspective helps students understand oncology within a wider healthcare and societal context.

IS THE COURSE AVAILABLE FULL-TIME?

No. The Transformative Oncology programme is delivered on a part-time basis.

Students can choose from several award pathways:

- Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert)
- Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip)
- MSc Transformative Oncology

The flexible structure allows students to spread their studies over a longer period if required.

IS PROFESSIONAL REGISTRATION REQUIRED?

No. Professional registration is not a requirement for admission to the programme.

CAN I STUDY ADDITIONAL OPTIONAL UNITS?

Students must complete the required credits for their chosen award (PGCert, PGDip or MSc).

Where optional units are available, students select those that best fit their interests and programme requirements. Additional standalone learning opportunities and future micro-credentials are also being explored to support ongoing professional development beyond the core programme.

IF I HAVEN'T STUDIED CANCER BIOLOGY RECENTLY, WILL I STRUGGLE?

Not necessarily. While the programme assumes a basic understanding of biological sciences, the taught content is designed to support students from a variety of backgrounds.

Additional learning materials are provided throughout the programme, and students are encouraged to revisit key concepts before starting. The teaching materials are designed to provide the knowledge required to successfully complete the assessments.

ARE STUDENTS FROM DIFFERENT HEALTHCARE BACKGROUNDS AND COUNTRIES REPRESENTED ON THE PROGRAMME?

Yes. The programme attracts a diverse international cohort, with approximately half of students based in the UK and half overseas.

Current and recent students have included:

- Medical doctors
- Clinical researchers

- Pharmacists
- Advanced clinical practitioners
- Clinical trial specialists
- Healthcare managers

This diversity enriches discussions and provides valuable opportunities for networking and collaborative learning.

HOW MUCH INTERACTION IS THERE WITH LECTURERS AND OTHER STUDENTS?

Although learning materials are accessed asynchronously, each unit includes several live online sessions, such as:

- Tutorials
- Q&A sessions
- Assessment guidance sessions
- Ask-the-Expert events

Students also engage through discussion boards and collaborative learning activities within the University's online learning environment.

The programme attracts students from around the world, creating opportunities to learn from diverse healthcare systems, research environments, and professional perspectives.

HOW DIFFICULT IS IT TO BALANCE THE COURSE WITH A FULL-TIME JOB?

The programme is designed specifically for working professionals and is delivered part-time online. Students are typically advised to dedicate around 15–20 hours per week to their studies.

Learning materials are available asynchronously, allowing students to study at times that suit their schedules. There are also discussion forums, knowledge checks, and regular opportunities to contact academic staff for support.

The programme team recognises that work and personal circumstances can change, and flexibility is available where students need to pause and resume their studies.

DOES THE PROGRAMME COVER EMERGING CANCER TREATMENTS SUCH AS IMMUNOTHERAPY AND CAR T-CELL THERAPY?

Yes. The curriculum includes dedicated teaching on advanced cancer therapeutics, including:

- Immuno-oncology
- CAR T-cell therapy
- Precision medicine approaches
- Emerging treatment strategies

Content is regularly updated to reflect developments within the rapidly evolving field of oncology.

HOW IS THE PROGRAMME KEPT UP TO DATE?

The programme is reviewed and refreshed annually to ensure that students are learning the latest developments in cancer research and treatment.

The programme team continually updates teaching materials and is developing additional opportunities for students to engage with emerging topics and recent advances across the oncology landscape.

DOES THE PROGRAMME HAVE LINKS WITH CANCER RESEARCH GROUPS AND INSTITUTES?

Yes. The programme benefits from strong links with the Manchester Cancer Research Centre (MCRC), which brings together:

- The University of Manchester
- The Christie NHS Foundation Trust
- Cancer Research UK Manchester Institute

Teaching staff are active researchers and clinicians with extensive national and international collaborations across the oncology sector.

WILL THIS COURSE HELP ME MOVE INTO CANCER RESEARCH OR A SPECIALIST ONCOLOGY ROLE?

Yes. The programme has been designed to support progression into a wide range of oncology-related careers, including:



Research

- Academic research
- Biotechnology
- Pharmaceutical industry
- Clinical research organisations

Healthcare

- Oncology services
- Diagnostics and screening
- Clinical practice
- Advanced practitioner roles
- Healthcare management

Other Professional Roles

- Medical science liaison
- Science communication
- Policy development
- Medical charities and funding organisations
- Industry partnerships

Students also develop highly transferable skills including critical thinking, communication, collaboration, problem-solving, and reflective practice.

CAN THIS PROGRAMME HELP ME PROGRESS TO A PHD?

Yes. The MSc pathway includes a substantial research-focused component called Research Skills in Practice, which develops key research competencies such as:

- Formulating research questions
- Literature review and critical appraisal
- Research methodology
- Ethics and governance

Students often develop research proposals based on challenges and opportunities within their own workplaces, providing practical experience that can support future PhD applications.

The programme is also taught by leading researchers and clinicians, offering opportunities to engage with experts in a wide range of oncology specialisms.





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