

## What's the difference between the UCD Higher Diploma in Safety, Health and Welfare at Work, the Graduate Diploma in Occupational Safety and Health, and the MSc in Occupational Safety and Health?

The Centre for Safety and Health at Work in the UCD School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science offers three major programmes for OSH professionals; one at *Undergraduate* level and two at *Postgraduate* level:

- Higher Diploma in Safety Health and Welfare at Work (*Undergraduate, 2 years part-time*);
- Graduate Diploma in Occupational Safety and Health (*Postgraduate, 2 years part-time*); and
- Masters in Occupational Safety and Health (*Postgraduate, 2 years part-time or 1 year full-time*).

This document explains the differences between each programme so that you can choose the right programme for you.

### Higher Diploma in Safety, Health and Welfare at Work

The Higher Diploma in Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (HDipSHWW) is a 90-credit, level 8 (NFQ), two-year, part-time multidisciplinary programme, designed to meet the academic competency needs of practicing OSH professionals. It is suitable for persons with a professional interest in Safety, Health and Wellbeing in the workplace. Applicants must be at least 23 years of age, be working in OSH, and have at least 3 years relevant work experience at the time of application. Applicants should have educational qualifications of at least matriculation standard (Leaving Certificate with two higher level subjects and at least one science subject, or equivalent) including demonstratable knowledge of the sciences. Applicants do not have to be degree graduates, although some are. Applicants that do not meet the minimum educational qualifications will be required to submit a mature learning portfolio to demonstrate continuous professional development, experiential learning and knowledge of the sciences.

### Graduate Diploma / Masters in Occupational Safety and Health

Our taught Masters programme, the *MSc in Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)* is available as both a two-year part-time and a one-year full-time programme. Nested within the part-time MSc is the part-time *Graduate Diploma in OSH*, which is essentially the MSc minus the dissertation. The part-time programmes are only available to residents of Ireland. The full-time programme is available to residents of Ireland and international applicants.

The taught *GradDip/MSc in OSH* is a 60/90-credit, level 9 (NFQ), multidisciplinary graduate programme, which is designed for graduate Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) professionals, who have not previously achieved a higher (third level) qualification in occupational safety and health. Applicants to the GradDip/MSc **must be Honours graduates of a level 8 degree, in a cognate discipline**, and should be working in the area of OSH (although this is not absolutely essential, we give priority to applicants who are working in OSH who apply on time); MSc applicants must have an interest in carrying out research in the area.

### The Differences between the Programmes

The full-time MSc is completed in one full year (3 semesters). All core modules take place on a Tuesday and Friday between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Elective modules take place at varying times throughout the week.

Both of our part-time programmes are designed to be completed over two full years (6 semesters for HDip and MSc; 5 semesters for the GradDip). For part-time students in first year of each programme, lectures and classes are normally held on Fridays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and in second year of each programme, lectures and classes are normally held on Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., in both cases in UCD, Belfield, but very occasionally learning activities take place outside of these times, and appropriate notice is provided.

The HDip and MSc programmes share teaching on a number of modules (you will see modules with similar names, but different codes, on the brochures), so students attend many of the same lectures, but there are two important differences:

1. Students on each programme will complete assessment at different levels (same lectures, different expectations from assessment tasks); the learning outcomes of the HDip programme are at level 3 or level 2 in the UCD system (Level 8 NFQ) and much of the assessment is based on work-related assignments; the learning outcomes for the GradDip/MSc programme are at level 4 in the UCD system (Level 9 NFQ), and the assignments tend to be shorter, but expect a high level of analysis and should be evidence-based.
2. In the HDip, the credit size of many of the modules (the amount of student effort in terms of time required) is greater, because work-related experiential learning is included in the workload, evidenced by the larger work-based assessment, in addition to which most modules on the HDip are also assessed by end of semester examination – thus many modules are 10 credit modules. On the GradDip/MSc, most of the modules are 5-credit modules, as the research for assignments tends to be desk-based, and there are fewer examinations; this is partly because MSc students will be working throughout the programme on their 30-credit dissertation.

If you have a primary degree it is important that you consider carefully before you decide which programme to apply for, as it is not possible to transfer from one programme to another once you have commenced the programme (because of the difference in levels and credits). If you are sponsored by your employer, ensure that they understand which programme you are planning to accept.

### National and International Recognition

The HDipSHWW and the GradDip/MSc in OSH are recognised by the UK Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) for granting Chartered Membership of the Institution, subject to appropriate experience. The following link shows the UCD Minor, Special Purpose and Supplemental Awards with associated levels and credit ranges: [Link to Awards](#)

### UCD OSH Programmes

