

Master of Medical Science (Genetic Counselling)
Faculty of Medicine, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

Introduction

Clinical genetics has been recognised as a sub-specialty (Paediatrics) under the National Specialist Register, Ministry of Health (MOH). Currently, the service is largely provided by a clinical geneticist. As the field is expanding rapidly, there is a need for qualified genetic counsellors to provide support and guidance to patients and families affected or at risk of genetic diseases.

A genetic counsellor is a health professional who provides counselling to affected individuals or family members who may be at risk of having genetic disorders. This includes providing information about the condition (e.g. testing and implications), interpretation of family and medical history (risk assessment) and support for families to make an informed choice and adapt to the genetic risk and condition.

This Master's degree is designed to prepare students for clinical practice in the field of genetic counselling suitable with the needs of qualified genetic counsellors in Malaysia with strong emphasis on human and clinical genetics, counselling and communication skills. The programme comprises course work, clinical attachment in various genetic centres and a dissertation/research project (either clinical/laboratory based). The module will be taught through a combination of lectures, tutorials, practical, group discussions, role play and will be assessed through assignments, case studies, presentations, reflective writing, log books and supervisor reports.

Objectives

- 1) To ensure that students understand the key principles of human and clinical genetics and its application to function independently as genetic counsellors at the end of the programme.
- 2) To train the students to acquire counselling skills that can be applied when working with patients, families, colleagues and other allied health professionals.
- 3) To train students who are able to evaluate cases that require management from a clinical geneticist and cases that can be managed by genetic counsellors taking into consideration both social and ethical issues.
- 4) To provide students with the knowledge and skills of conducting clinical research related to genetic counselling.
- 5) To fulfill the needs for qualified genetic counsellors in Malaysia, in keeping with the needs of a developed country.

Duration of study

The programme is conducted for 4 semesters (2 years) and students must be registered full time with UKM.

Entry requirements

Candidates who wish to apply must fulfill the following -

Medical or dentistry degree from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) or from other universities that is recognized by the Senate of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM);

or

Bachelor Degree in pharmacy, nursing, science (biomedical, biology, genetics) from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) or from other universities that is recognized by the Senate of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM);

Clinical exposure or experience working in a caring role with vulnerable children or adults or social work (includes voluntary and paid, full-time or part-time) is an important prerequisite entry criteria for applicants from a Science based degree.

All application is through <https://www.ukm.my/join/>. Selection of candidates to this course will be based on an interview after short-listed by the programme coordinator.

Course content

Year 1

Semester 1 Human Genetics I, Clinical Genetics I, Genetic Counselling I

Semester 2 Human Genetics II, Clinical Genetics II, Genetic Counselling II, Clinical Practice I, Dissertation I, Research Methodology

Year 2

Semester 1 Genetic Counselling III, Clinical Practice II, Dissertation II

Semester 2 Clinical Practice III, Dissertation III

Contact person

Please contact the programme liaison person, Ms. Sharifah Azween Syed Omar, email: shazween@ppukm.ukm.edu.my for further details.