



**Joint Master's Programme in  
"Applied Public Health"  
Petre Shotadze Tbilisi Medical Academy and GIPA – Georgian Institute of  
Public Affairs**

(Catalog)

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## General Information

The Applied Public Health program is a joint project of the Petre Shotadze Tbilisi Medical Academy (TMA) and the Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA), within the framework of which the master's students are offered education in accordance with international public health standards, in the field of medicine by TMA and in public policy by the GIPA.

Cooperation of two universities in the academic space is the first successful example of joint efforts in the country. The academic staff implementing the program has high level expertise in public health, biostatistics, epidemiology, health promotion, scientific research, management, business administration and other fields.

The program fully covers all the challenges and directions that are relevant in the field of public health. At the same time, the program differs from other master's programs in public health in Georgia with a special emphasis on the development/mastering of practical skills. Within the framework of the program the mandatory practice is provided in partner organizations. This opportunity gives the student a future vision and experience, which will help them in professional development and in employment process. The variety of elective subjects allows the students to deepen the knowledge in the field of their interest.

TMA is recognized by/member of the following international organizations:

- World Directory of Medical Education (WDOMS)
- Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER) -
- Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECMG)
- NMC – National Medical Commission (India)
- International Association for Health Professions Education (AMEE)
- Association of Medical Schools in Europe (AMSE)
- European Medical Students Association (EMSA)
- WFME -World Federation for Medical Education
- World Health Organization – (WHO AVICENNA)

## TMA's Mission

TMA, as a student-oriented higher education institution, primarily seeks to teach and develop national and international healthcare professionals in an innovative manner by using evidence-based knowledge, whilst practically benefiting the community in Georgia through research-based outreach activities

## GIPA's Mission

GIPA's mission envisages to educate leaders with up-to-date knowledge and committed to democratic values for an independent Georgia. In line with the above missions, the vision of the educational programme in applied public health is to educate professionals equipped with international evidence-based and practice-based knowledge and skills who shall in the future take part in the development of public health for communities, societies and countries.

## Programme Description

- The programme is based on the needs of the population and requirements of contemporary public health, which was clearly highlighted through analyzing findings of labor market research and prospective employer surveys. The programme is designed with particular focus on the integration of the directions, characteristic for modern education.
- The programme provides students with a unique opportunity to obtain experience both at the university space, as well as in the field, through implementing obligatory internships. Internships are conducted at affiliated organizations, which carry out research, programs, and work out policies in the field of public health. During internship periods students will be able to develop further relevant skills in analytical, qualitative, quantitative and laboratory methodologies, problem identification and solving strategies and practical application of public health directions in real life situations. Thus will deepen their knowledge and gain experience in various areas of public health.
- Majority of academic staff, which is appointed to deliver educational programmes, is represented by valued members and specialists from different areas of public health, who possess exhaustive knowledge and vast experience in terms of development and implementation of public health programmes and interventions, including key areas, such as intervention planning, management and implementation. Academic personnel, who are appointed to implement each particular study course of the aforementioned Master's Degree, are leaders in the general disciplines of public health, as well as scientific-research areas.

## Admission prerequisites

The Master's Programme in Applied Public Health is intended for individuals, who already possess a higher education degree and wish to continue their studies in the field of Applied Public Health.

The obligatory prerequisites for enrolling the Master's Degree are:

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent academic degree
- Successfully passing Unified National Master's Examinations
- Successfully passing internal admission procedure, which in its turn consists of following steps:
  - Analyzing candidate's documentation
    - o Analysis of the application form, submitted by the candidate, which considers assessment of the applicant's professional biography;
  - Successfully passing English language test organized by the program (demonstrating B2 level of competence at least)
    - o The candidate, who by the moment of the application can either demonstrate a valid language certificate, confirming their corresponding level of fluency (TOEFL IELTS), or proof of graduation from an English-taught undergraduate or postgraduate programme, is not required to pass the English language test.
  - Successfully passing examination in subject specific discipline, which in its turn aims to assess the candidate's knowledge of the field.

- o Sample examination questions (in English language and field specific disciplines) will be posted in advance on the websites of higher educational institutions.

Enrollment in a master's degree program without passing Unified National Master's Examinations is possible in a higher educational institution "On the approval of the procedure for submission and review of documents by Applicants/Master's Degree Candidates/Students who have the right to study without passing the Unified National Exams/Unified Master's Exams" in accordance to the Decree N224/N of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia, issued at December 19, 2011, for the following persons:

- a) For candidates for master's degree, who received a document confirming the academic degree of the relevant higher education in a foreign country;
- b) For citizens of a foreign country (except for students participating in a joint higher education program), who study/studied and received credits/qualifications in a foreign country in the master's degree of a higher educational institution recognized in accordance with the legislation of this country;
- b1) For citizens of Georgia (except of the students, enrolled to the joint higher education degree and students, participating in the exchange programmes), who reside/resided, study/studied and obtained credits/qualification, at a foreign (or recognized by the legislation of a foreign country) Master's programme in accordance to the Paragraph D1 of the Decree 224/N of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia (issued at December 19, 2011);
- c) For master's degree candidates who were enrolled in a higher educational institution in accordance with the first paragraph of this article;
- d) For citizens of foreign countries who obtained the right to continue their studies at a higher educational institution of Georgia before the implementation of the Law of Georgia "On Higher Education" and have a certificate of higher education recognized by the state issued in Georgia.

## Programme Objectives

Main objective of the degree programme is to prepare Public Health specialists, which will carry out practical activities towards various directions of public health, including the fields of disease control, prevention and health promotion. The program is also focused on training specialists with knowledge of local and international standards.

Main objectives of the Master's Degree is to ensure that students obtain and develop the following:

- Structured and in-depth knowledge and corresponding practical skills, necessary for ensuring public health through application of basic healthcare tools (epidemiology, biostatistics, behavioral sciences, health promotion and communication )
- Relevant skills in independent research planning, data collection, analysis and interpretation, as well as formulating relevant conclusions, through application of the latest methods and advancements of the field, in accordance with the requirements of applied public health discipline.
- Necessary skills for research project preparation and application, project development, planning and management at the regional, national and international levels through application of interdisciplinary teaching methods and involvement in scientific-research activities.

- Ability to design and implement relevant health policies, in order to address actual challenges of public health, in accordance with the evidence-based findings; as well as skills for evaluating and communicating results, while advocating for public health/health promotion policies and programmes.

## Learning outcomes of the programme

### Knowledge and understanding

- Learning outcome 1** – Provides a deep and thorough definition to the influence of behavioral, biological, social, cultural and political factors on the health of the population.
- Learning outcome 2** - Identifies and provides in depth descriptive outlines to elaborate practical and scientific ways for problem-solving in the process of public health policy making and administering.
- Learning outcome 3** - In the process of public health policy development, he/she establishes and describes in a structured manner the main strengths and limitations of different approaches in terms of multiple disciplines .

### Skill

- Learning outcome 4** - Prepares a plan for scientific research activity, analyzes qualitative and quantitative data using most up-to-date information technologies and relevant biostatistical and epidemiological methodologies and develops appropriate recommendations in accordance with the evidence-based decisions.
- Learning outcome 5** - Plans and develops budget of the intervention in accordance with the principles and theories of financial management independently, while systematically classifies and analyzes relevant expenses and draws financial forecasts, in order to choose and employ the best possible alternative.
- Learning outcome 6** - Develops criteria for managing, monitoring, and evaluating public health programmes, as well as plans a public health policy, programme, project, or intervention in accordance to the actual needs of the target population.
- Learning outcome 7** - Presents his/her conclusions, arguments and research findings in English, using modern information technologies both to the academic and professional communities, in accordance with the standards of academic conduct.

### Responsibility and autonomy

**Learning outcome 8 -** Makes independent decisions in order to solve actual problems of Public Health, while adhering to the norms of professional ethics corresponding legal regulations.

**Learning outcome 9 -** Determines prospective vision independently, effectively delegates duties and tasks during team work and promotes mutual cooperation, through employing the principles of leadership, guidance and management in the process of independent decision-making.

## Learning Plan

Status	Learning course	ECTS	Semester
Mandatory	Public Health Statistics	6	I
	Statistical analysis in SPSS	4	I
	Epidemiology	6	I
	Academic Writing	4	I
	Qualitative Research Methods	6	I
	Health information systems	4	I
	Health Policy	4	II
	Behavioral science and health education	5	II
	Global Health	5	II
	Laboratory Practice in Public Health	4	II
	Project management	4	II
	Leadership and professionalism	4	II
	Financial management in public health	6	III
	Public Health Ethics and Legislation	4	III
	Health Economics	4	III
	Public health communication and marketing	4	III
	Practice	8	III
	Master's Thesis	30	IV
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Elective	Maternal and Child health, Reproductive Health	2	II - III
	Planetary Health	2	III
	Public Health and Non-communicable Diseases	2	II - III
	Public Health and Infectious Diseases	2	II - III
	Mental health	2	III
	Substance use prevention, treatment and policy	2	III
	Tobacco control	2	III
	Public Health Nutrition	2	II - III
	Public Health and Aging	2	II - III
	Basics of Geographical information Systems	2	III



## Teaching methodologies

Teaching process will be implemented using two types of classroom-based activities, namely in the form of lectures and seminars, as well as student independent work. Student independent work considers both individual and group assignments. Aside from classroom-based teaching, the study process considers development of practical skills and their application to particular situations. During mandatory practical placements, students will develop necessary skills in analytical and quantitative research methodologies, as well as problem-solving and adapting obtained knowledge to real-life situations around the fields of public health. During practical placements, students will be able to work at the affiliated public health organizations and take active part in the ongoing research projects or contribute to planning of prospective research activities. In addition, students will obtain experience in the field of applied research.

Lectures will be conducted using a variety of visual means, in an interactive format. Lectures are included in both obligatory and elective courses. The details and content of the lectures are represented from diverse areas and their scope varies from one course to another. Throughout the seminars will be carried out following activities: a) detailed and in-depth revision of the key points, which were covered at the lectures; b) enhancement and promotion of student engagement; c) discussion of topics, distributed throughout individual and group presentations, as well as other course assignments and papers; d) assessment of students' participation in the study process. The aforementioned is implemented using various teaching-learning methods, which are indicated in the syllabus of each training course.

During the seminars, students will have the opportunities to deliberate and tackle specific areas from a rather detailed perspective, which later may serve as the core topic for the student's end-of-the course paper. The lecturers will facilitate students with understanding the material, as well as help with clarifying relevant details. The seminars will include various types of student-oriented group work, such as discussions/debates, discussion of current topics, practical activities, individual and group work with the lecturer, etc.

Taking into consideration the specific needs or requirements of a particular study discipline, some courses of the programme may imply laboratory placements and field work, which in its turn considers carrying out visits to various organizations and institutions. In addition, the study courses may employ problem or demand-based learning types, real-life problem or scenario groups, project application, e-learning, internship, voluntary activities and work projects, as well as diverse and multicultural events

## Student knowledge assessment system

The student will be awarded with corresponding credits for each study course, if he/she receives positive evaluations following completion of the course. The student's knowledge is assessed with a 100-point system through intermediate assessments and a final exam

The components of intermediate assessment and distribution of points, as well as number of assessments and their criteria differ in accordance to the specifics of the particular discipline and along with a minimum competency threshold for midterm and final assessments are determined individually within the study course syllabi.

After completing the study course, a student is awarded with the ECTS credit only if he/she accumulates at least 51 points after completing the final exam. If the student's final grade is within the range of 41-50 points, he/she is allowed to retake the exam. An additional exam is scheduled at least 5 days after the final exam results are announced. If the student's final grade is less than 41 points, he/she must retake the course.



## Human Resource

The academic and invited teaching staff, who are designated to implement study courses within frames of this Master's Degree are public health professionals with valuable experiences in designing, management and implementation of public health interventions.

## Infrastructure

The institution provides all the necessary spaces for implementation of the study process, namely - lecture and seminar rooms, conference halls, modern laboratory with relevant inventory and up-to-date equipment, virtual learning tools and resources, as well as the Examination center, equipped with computers and corresponding software, continuously expanding library, special spaces for student group work, work spaces of administrative staff, archive, sanitary units etc. Aside from stated above, students will be able to employ the library resources of both TMA and GIPA. Both institutions, TMA and GIPA, have active, functioning libraries, which includes reading halls and spaces for student independent and/or group work. The reading hall is equipped with all the necessary technical devices, including computers, which are connected to fast wireless internet. The library vaults include all the core literature, indicated throughout the course syllabi, scientific-research papers, as well as other types of literature and sources of information.

The students are provided with access to following resources: EBSCO, JSTOR, Cambridge Journals Online, eDuke Journals Scholarly Collection, Oxford journals Collection, BioOne, SAGE Premier, New England Journal of Medicine, Royal Society Journals Collection, ChemSpider, Cochrane Library, HINARI Research for Health, ELSEVIER (ScienceDirect, Scopus), Edward Elgar Publishing Journals and Development Studies e-books, ImechE Journals, Openedition Journals.

## Employment opportunities

The graduate of the programme represents a specialist of Public Health, who is able to get employed at the governmental, non-governmental organizations, international and/or private enterprises, academic institutions and healthcare providing facilities. Career development opportunities consider particular focus on collection of epidemiological research and evidence-based data, development of larger or smaller scale projects in health promotion, project administration, supervision, monitoring and evaluation, as well as communicating findings and so on.