About the Course

The Master of Genetic Counselling is a 2 year full time course designed to enhance your skills in clinical practice and research, drawing on the expertise of tutors who are leading clinicians, genetic counsellors and scientists.

Genetic counsellors work in multidisciplinary teams with clinical geneticists, nurses, social workers, dieticians and scientists, helping to communicate complex genetic information to individuals and families.

Tutorials are all conducted in the Health Education and Learning Precinct at the Melbourne Children’s Campus in Parkville. Students are encouraged to attend relevant seminars, journal clubs and clinical meetings to complement their studies.

With academic links to Manchester University, Cardiff University and the University of South Carolina, students can complete supervised placements in clinical genetics centres in the United Kingdom, USA, Canada, Malaysia, Singapore and New Zealand.

Students enrolled in the Masters program can choose to exit after 1 year with a Graduate Diploma of Genetic Counselling but the entry qualification for the profession of Genetic Counselling is a 2 year Masters. The Graduate Diploma may be chosen by those wanting to upskill in their own profession eg. IVF Social Worker wanting to learn more genetics.

Why Study at Melbourne?

Renowned for global leadership in health research, policy and practice, the University of Melbourne educates more health professionals than any other university in Australia.

As a student, you will benefit from our first-class study options, state-of-the-art facilities and extensive connections with specialist and general hospitals, leading research institutes and the community and private sectors.

The course offers:

- A practical tutorial approach, using case examples encountered in genetic counselling practice
- Clinical placements supported by reflective tutorials
- Options for international placements in recognised clinical genetics services
- Opportunities to complete a supervised research project at the internationally recognised Murdoch Childrens Research Institute
- Assessment tasks that mirror the skills needed in genetic counselling practice and for professional certification by the Human Genetics Society of Australasia (HGSA) Board accreditation

Testimonial

Melanie (Canadian international student 2014)

“The Master of Genetic Counselling course has a great balance between relevant coursework and practical experience gained through clinical and community placements. As an international student, the opportunity to learn from top researchers and clinicians appealed to me. I have thoroughly enjoyed the course, and believe it has equipped me with the necessary skills to succeed in the field of Genetic Counselling, either in Australia or my home country of Canada.”
Selection Criteria
The Selection Committee will evaluate the applicant’s ability to pursue successfully the course using the following criteria:

- Applicants will have an undergraduate degree from a recognised University, with a cognate genetics subject to second year undergraduate level.
- Preference is given to applicants who have demonstrated relevant volunteer or professional experience

Some applicants will be selected for an interview from the above criteria. Final selection will be made from these interviews. Interviews can be conducted by telephone or Skype for interstate or international applicants

Applicants need to satisfy the University’s English language requirements via the IELTS (International English Language Testing System: Academic English only) or the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) with a minimum score of 7.

Applicants are requested to submit a personal statement of 1,000 words to accompany their application, outlining their interest in and understanding of the genetic counselling role.

Career Opportunities
Graduates develop the skills to practise in many different settings, including prenatal, cancer, general, paediatric and adult genetics.

You will also be well-positioned to choose a career in a diverse range of fields – from genetic education, IVF and research, to opportunities to work as a project manager of screening programs, transplant coordinator, manager of community support networks or a coordinator of genetic registries.

Completion of the Master of Genetic Counselling allows you to immediately practise as a genetic counsellor. Once employed, graduates undertake Board certification through the Human Genetics Society of Australasia (HGSA).

Graduates are employed throughout the world, and can register to practise internationally in Canada, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, South East Asia and South Africa.

Partnerships and networks
Working with experts in the Victorian Clinical Genetics Services, the Murdoch Childrens Research Institute and the University of Melbourne’s Department of Paediatrics at the Melbourne Children’s Campus, the Master of Genetic Counselling has developed collaborations with many Melbourne based and regional hospitals and clinical genetics services.

Students have the opportunity to undertake supervised placements in a variety of organisations including: Austin Hospital, Cabrini Familial Cancer Centre, Melbourne IVF, Mercy Hospital, Monash Medical Centre, Peter MacCallum Familial Cancer Centre, Royal Children’s Hospital, Royal Melbourne Hospital and Royal Women’s Hospital.

We have established community links with support networks, including: Cystic Fibrosis Victoria, Down Syndrome Victoria, Genetic Support Network of Victoria, Spina Bifida Victoria, Thalassaemia Society of Victoria and Very Special Kids Hospice.

Accreditation
The Master of Genetic Counselling is accredited by the profession through the Human Genetics Society of Australasia, and by the Board of Censors in Genetic Counselling.

More information
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