

# ADDICTION STUDIES, MASTER OF SCIENCE (M.S.)

VCU, King's College London and the University of Adelaide collaborate to offer students the opportunity to complete a fully online program of study to obtain a Master of Science in Addiction Studies conferred by all three universities.

## Program goal

The mission of the International Program in Addiction Studies leading to a Master of Science in Addiction Studies degree is to offer students cross-cultural exposure to the critical prevention, treatment, research and policy issues facing the field. Through a collaboration arrangement including VCU, King's College London and the University of Adelaide in Australia, students complete a program of study using distance-learning technologies to obtain the degree. The program is designed to prepare students for local, national and international policy positions, prevention/treatment program management and other leadership positions in the addictions field. This program will speed the dissemination of the latest international addictions-related knowledge, especially to remote locations around the world, and help students compare international perspectives and translate this knowledge into more effective prevention and treatment practices and evidence-based policies within their own countries.

Students in the program will:

1. Demonstrate a detailed knowledge of the field of addiction science (including comparative international policies and practices) to prepare them for leadership roles in a variety of settings (including addiction research, policy and treatment venues).
2. Be able to synthesize and apply addiction-related knowledge, including comparative international perspectives and approaches, to address key issues related to the advancement of addiction science.
3. Develop the ability to design, implement and interpret experimental approaches which address key questions in addiction science.
4. Communicate both core knowledge of addiction as well as experimental design, result and interpretation in a variety of formats.

## Student learning outcomes

1. Integrated knowledge of addiction science: The student will demonstrate an appropriate level of knowledge of the current elements of addiction science as related to disciplinary specialization and a more detailed understanding of the individual area of scholarship, including an appropriate familiarity with the research literature and the ability to evaluate and critique publication.
2. Problem-solving skills: Students will demonstrate an appropriate level of skill in the identification and selection of meaningful problems to be addressed in addiction research and practice, including the ability to defend said identifications and to design and develop appropriate methods to solve said problems as measured by rubric.
3. Research design: Students will demonstrate the achievement of an appropriate level of competence in the ability to appraise, develop and implement research studies.
4. Written communication skills: The candidate will use effective written communication skills to present information related to addiction causes, interventions, treatments and policies using appropriate vocabulary, figures, tables and citations.

## VCU Graduate Bulletin, VCU Graduate School and general academic policies and regulations for all graduate students in all graduate programs

The VCU Graduate Bulletin website documents the official admission and academic rules and regulations that govern graduate education for all graduate programs at the university. These policies are established by the graduate faculty of the university through their elected representatives to the University Graduate Council.

It is the responsibility of all graduate students, both on- and off-campus, to be familiar with the VCU Graduate Bulletin as well as the Graduate School website (<http://www.graduate.vcu.edu/>) and academic regulations in individual school and department publications and on program websites. However, in all cases, the official policies and procedures of the University Graduate Council, as published on the VCU Graduate Bulletin and Graduate School websites, take precedence over individual program policies and guidelines.

Visit the **academic regulations section for additional information on academic regulations for graduate students.** (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/>)

## Graduation requirements

As graduate students approach the end of their academic programs and the final semester of matriculation, they must make formal application to graduate. No degrees will be conferred until the application to graduate has been finalized.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following graduation requirements as published in the Graduate Bulletin for a complete list of instructions and a graduation checklist.

Visit the **academic regulations section for additional information on graduation requirements.** (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad-graduation-info/>)

## Other information

### School of Medicine graduate program policies

The School of Medicine provides policies applicable to all programs administratively housed in the school. Information on **master's programs** is available elsewhere in this chapter of the Graduate Bulletin.

Apply online today. (<https://www.vcu.edu/admissions/apply/graduate/>)

## Admission requirements

Degree:	Semester(s) of entry:	Deadline dates:	Test requirements:
M.S.	Fall	Jul 1	TOEFL

In addition to meeting the minimum requirements for graduate study at VCU, successful applicants to the Master of Science in Addiction Studies program must:

1. Have qualified in a related discipline for an international honors degree (level 2A or 1) or a bachelor's degree from a recognized tertiary institution in the U.S. (For students with a U.S. bachelor's degree, a minimum GPA of 3.0 is strongly preferred. Applicants who have completed a bachelor's degree but who do not meet

these criteria may be considered if holistic review of the application demonstrates significant commitment to the field or potential for success in graduate study as evidenced by significant work or volunteer experience or successful completion of additional post-graduate course work in a related area and strong academic or professional letters of reference.)

2. Submit two letters of recommendation from university instructors or professional references in the applicant's intended field of study (Letters should address the applicant's academic and professional abilities and preparation for graduate study. Personal character references are not accepted.)
3. Submit a one-page letter of intent indicating reasons for their interest in the program and the educational and professional objectives they hope to achieve by pursuing their planned course in addiction studies
4. Submit a current curriculum vitae
5. Have a high level of proficiency in English demonstrated by completion of a university degree studied in English, or by successful completion of VCU's English Language Program (minimum score of 70) or King's Pre-sessional English Language courses (Pass, Band 7)

Students not meeting the level of proficiency criteria must take an English-language proficiency test. The following tests and associated scores are considered acceptable. Please note that all test scores are valid for two years from the test date.

- International English Language Testing System (academic or online): 7.0 overall (Writing and Speaking 7.0)
- TOEFL iBT, TOEFL iBT home edition or TOEFL iBT paper edition: 100 overall (Writing minimum of 25)
- Pearson Test of English (academic): 75 for graduates (Writing and Speaking minimum of 70)
- Duolingo Test Score: minimum overall of 125

Students in good standing in either concentration in the addiction studies certificate program may petition the VCU program director to be admitted to the Master of Science in Addiction Studies program. Final decisions on acceptance into the M.S. program will be made by the program committee, comprising the program directors of the three participating universities. If accepted, students may have the courses completed during their certificate program count toward the M.S. as long as they meet all admission requirements of the Graduate School. Courses taken more than four years prior to enrollment in the M.S. program will not be considered current and must be repeated.

## Degree requirements

In addition to the general VCU Graduate School graduation requirements (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/graduation-info/>), students are required to successfully complete a minimum of 36 credit hours, which can be done either full time (12 months) or part time (24 months). Six of the required credit hours are assigned to a final research project examining a relevant addictions-related topic. VCU, King's College London and the University of Adelaide confer degrees jointly through a single diploma.

## Curriculum requirements

Course	Title	Hours
IPAS 600	The Biological Basis of Addiction	4
IPAS 601	Treatment of Addiction: Psychosocial Interventions	4

IPAS 602	Public Health Issues and Approaches to Addictions	4
IPAS 603	Addiction Policy	4
IPAS 604	Treatment of Addiction: Pharmacotherapies	4
IPAS 605	Treatment of Addiction: Critical Issues	4
IPAS 606	Research Methodology in Addictions	6
IPAS 692	Research Project in Addictions	6
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>36</b>

**The minimum total of graduate credit hours required for this degree is 36.**

Students who complete the requirements for this degree will receive a Master of Science in Addiction Studies.

### Contact

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**Program website:** [ipas.vcu.edu](http://ipas.vcu.edu) (<http://ipas.vcu.edu/>)