



Master of Arts in Ageing and Dementia Studies

Course overview:

The Master of Arts in Ageing and Dementia Studies makes a valuable contribution to the interdisciplinary development of dementia care knowledge, research and practice. It is designed in a way to promote collaboration between the disciplines of nursing, medicine, occupational therapy, social work and other professionals working with persons with dementia and their carers. As a graduate of this Master Degree, you will be enabled to promote and develop excellence in dementia care in your practice setting - thus, ensuring that older persons with dementia live a dignified and meaningful life, so that their citizenship rights are fully acknowledged and respected.

Learning outcomes:**(a) Subject knowledge and understanding.**

The Master of Arts in Ageing and Dementia Studies lists and explains the social, psychological, and biological theories applied within the field of ageing and dementia studies. More specifically, to:

- explain demographic trends of population ageing,
- recognise how the heterogeneity of older populations leads to unequal levels in quality of life in old age,
- describe theoretical frameworks to national and international accounts about current issues in dementia care,
- demonstrate an awareness of the contributions different theoretical perspectives for understanding dementia care,
- develop knowledge of ethical principles when evaluating social and health care practices in dementia care,
- list a range of approaches and activities which can contribute to the wellbeing of people with dementia,
- develop critical knowledge on assistive technology, and its role in the care and support of older people with dementia.

(b) Intellectual development.

The Master of Arts in Ageing and Dementia Studies provides students with opportunities to develop their thinking ability, approach texts critically, and use the library resources to learn about past, ongoing, and innovative practices in ageing and dementia care. More specifically, to:

- describe the experiences of older persons with dementia at key points in their journey from diagnosis to death,
- differentiate between different care pathways due to unequal levels of informal support,
- analyse the diversity in the experiences of older persons with dementia and the influence of age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, specific diagnosis, co-morbid conditions and other factors on their life course,
- demonstrate awareness of current policy and practice responses at different stages of dementia,
- list the characteristics of carers of older persons with dementia and the challenges they generally face,
- explain the multidisciplinary approach to working with older persons with dementia and their carers,
- develop knowledge of relevant policy/service issues in relation to supporting/caring for older persons with dementia.

(c) Key/transferable skills.

The Master of Arts in Ageing and Dementia Studies is not solely an intellectual exercise but also provides you with hands-on experience that enables them to:

- (i) examine assessment measures used in dementia care,
- (ii) learn the diverse practical approaches to improve assessment measures and practice,
- (iii) acquire skills in evaluating dementia care,
- (iv) review and evaluate different published dementia care evaluations, and
- (v) assist in the involvement of older persons with dementia in the assessment and evaluation of dementia care.

At the same time, the Master Degree in Ageing and Dementia Studies provides you with the needed research skills to investigate ageing and dementia care issues by enabling them to:

- (i) identify and define both the quantitative and qualitative research methods, subject sampling techniques, and approaches to assessing the validity and reliability of measurement instruments,
- (ii) develop an understanding of the ethical issues,
- (iii) evaluate policy strategies on dementia care,
- (iv) draw up a case study report that assesses care settings for older persons with dementia, and
- (v) assist in the planning of better community, respite, and long-term services for older persons with dementia.

(d) Other skills relevant to employability and personal development.

Having a trained workforce is fundamental to accomplish optimal levels of dementia care. In recent years, health and social care managers have been advertising for internal posts that call for staff having access to dementia-care training (skills development) that is consistent with their roles and responsibilities. The Master Degree advances a collaborative approach between various professionals (including clinical dementia specialists, nurses, psychologists, occupational therapists, speech language pathologists and other allied health professionals) that form the multidisciplinary team. Hence, promising significant improvements in the quality of dementia care on behalf of social and health care professionals. The Master of Arts in Ageing and Dementia Studies equips you with the knowledge and practical skills to support people with dementia and their families, to maximise choice and control in their lives, and to strengthen a sense of belonging and being valued. Students will gain an excellent understanding of how services are organised and run, and be able to contribute to improving service quality in ageing and dementia care. A successful reading of the Master of Arts in Ageing and Dementia Studies enables you to:

- (i) participate in the initial pre-admission evaluation of potential patients,
- (ii) planning and coordinating therapeutic programme schedules which meet the spiritual, social, emotional, physical, and intellectual needs of older persons with dementia, and

(iii) assessing the educational needs of care workers in dementia care regarding dementia specific knowledge, behaviour management, and communication skills.