

Curriculum for the Master of Headache Disorders (MHD) programme at the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences, University of Copenhagen

This curriculum comes into force on 1 September 2025 and shall apply in relation to students admitted on or after that date.

The curriculum was approved by the Dean on 10 March 2025.

This subject-specific curriculum, the course descriptions in the overall University of Copenhagen course database and the general curriculum provisions together comprise the curriculum for the Master of Headache Disorders.

Part 1 Objectives and competence profile

§ 1 Objectives

1.1 The objective of the Master of Headache Disorders (Master i hovedpinesygdomme) is to educate specialists to diagnose, treat as well as perform research within headache disorders. The masters will have highly specialized knowledge of Headache Epidemiology; Public Health; Burden of Headache; Clinical Headache Care; Clinical Care of Facial Pain; Multidisciplinary Headache Care; Basic Headache Mechanisms; Clinical Headache Research; Headache Genetics, and educational aspects within Headache and Facial Pain.

1.2. Successful completion of the programme gives the right to use the title Master of Headache Disorders (master i hovedpinesygdomme).

1.3. The degree is worth 60 ECTS credits.

1.4. The programme belongs under the Study Board for the Professional Master's Degree Programmes at the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences.

1.5 The master's programme is affiliated with the Core of Danish Medical Examiners (Censorkorpset for Lægeuddannelsen).

§ 2 Admission requirements

2.1 A maximum of 25 students can be admitted to the programme.

2.2 Applications will be assessed by an Admissions Committee after the application deadline. The selection of the admitted students will be based on an overall evaluation of the application including evidence of qualifying degree, relevance of work experience in pain medicine and/or headache field, and the motivation and goals for applying to the programme.

2.3 It is a condition for admission that the applicant:

- holds a relevant degree. Qualifying degrees are: Master's degree in pharmacy, master's degree in medicine, neurology, master's degree in psychology, master's degree in public health, professional bachelor's degree in nursing, professional bachelor's degree in physiotherapy or equivalent.
- can document knowledge of Statistics equivalent to high-school Mathematics level A.

- has at least two years of relevant work experience after having completed the qualifying course of study. Relevant work experience is clinical competences and work experience from pain medicine and/or within the headache area.
- requires a mastery of English corresponding to level B English at Danish upper secondary level. Applicants must document proficiency in English as stated in the programme webpage
- meets the language requirements as stipulated in the general curriculum provisions for all master programmes.

2.4 The admissions committee may on the basis of an individual assessment admit applicants who do not hold one of the above-mentioned degrees if the applicant is deemed by the admissions committee to possess comparable educational qualifications.

2.5 The courses offered under the Master programme can be taken as single courses. The same admission requirements apply to students taking single courses. If the number of applicants for a given module exceeds the number of seats, priority will be accorded to students enrolled in the full Master programme.

§ 3 Competence profile

The Master of Headache Disorders programme equips graduates with the following knowledge, skills and competences:

Knowledge:

A graduate from the Master of Headache Disorders will have obtained knowledge on how to:

- Diagnose primary and secondary headache phenotypes as well as cranial neuropathies and other facial pains, including knowledge about differential diagnosis and co-morbid diseases
- Obtain a detailed understanding of the international classification of headache disorders and be able to use this in clinical practice
- Identify and analyse possible inconsistencies and thereby help to improve and validate the international classification of headache disorders
- Master the latest knowledge on pain physiology and understand the link between human and animal headache models (translational research)
- Master the latest knowledge on pharmacological development and intervention in headache disorders on an international scientific level
- Identify complex scientific issues and knowledge on current research theories and methods
Critically analyse scientific controversies and scientific literature
- Obtain in depth understanding of the development of new treatment modalities

Skills:

A graduate from the Master of Headache Disorders is able to:

- Plan, execute, analyse and critically evaluate own and others clinical or experimental research projects.
- Use botulinum toxin treatment, apply GON blockade, test pericranial muscle tenderness and other quantitative sensory testing in accordance with current clinical standards
- Investigate and treat headache patients using evidence based treatment principles
- Use the IHCD-classification, apply and analyse a headache diary in a clinical setting as well as develop and improve current clinical tools using evidence based principles
- Critically evaluate test-results and clinical characteristics and together with colleagues make proper working hypotheses
- Communicate knowledge to patients and their relatives and other clinical personnel

Competences:

A graduate from the Master of Headache Disorders is able to:

- Collaborate in a multidisciplinary working environment and to work individually and in teams as well as being able to suggest evidence based solutions in headache treatment.
- Collaborate in a clinical setting focusing on the best patient care.
- Take responsibility for a continued development and training of colleagues and other clinical personnel
- Independently organize and develop own learning-processes in headache treatment Diagnose and treat both simple and complex headache conditions
- Continually search and use the latest scientific news and literature
- Implement research and developmental projects under the current conditions in a given health care system
- Administer and allocate the available resources in headache treatment as fair as possible
- Strive to promote all aspects of headache research in epidemiological, social and health care sectors

Part 2 Modules, instruction, maximum duration of study

§ 4 Modules, and methods of instruction

The modular structure of the programme is designed to provide students with overall academic qualifications within a prescribed timeframe, which is defined in terms of ECTS points. All courses in the programme are subject to a modular structure.

§ 5 Maximum duration of study

5.1 The Master of Headache Disorders is a part-time master programme, totalling 60 ECTS. The programme is completed over a period of two years. The programme must be completed within a maximum of six years following commencement.

5.2 In exceptional circumstances the Study Board may grant exemptions from the six-year time limit under extraordinary circumstances.

Part 3 Study and exam activities

§ 6 Study and exam activities

The Master in Headache Disorders comprises the following compulsory courses and exams:

Placement	Course	ECTS
Semester 1	Epidemiology and Diagnosis of Headache and Facial Pain SHDM16001U/SHDM16001E	7,5 ECTS
	Mechanisms and Comorbidities of Headache and Facial Pain SHDM16002U/SHDM16003E	7,5 ECTS
Semester 2	Investigations and Management of Headache and Facial Pain SHDM16003U/SHDM16003E	7,5 ECTS
	Organization of Headache Care and Clinical Practice SHDM16004U/SHDM16004E	7,5 ECTS
Semester 3	Clinical Course at a Specialized Headache Centre SHDM16005U/SHDM16005E	10 ECTS
Semester 4	Master's Thesis SHDM16006U/SHDM16001E	20 ECTS
Total		60 ECTS

§ 7 Compulsory, constituent subject elements and elective elements

7.1 The programme consists of 60 ECTS credits from compulsory study and exam activities of which the master's thesis is worth 20 ECTS credits. The programme does not include elective study and exam activity.

7.2 The programme's constituent subject elements are:

- All compulsory study and examination activities and
- The Master's thesis

§ 8 Group exams

There are no group exams in the master programme.

§ 9 Instruction and exam languages

English is the language of instruction for and examination at the Master of Headache Disorders.

§ 10 Elective elements

There are no electives in the master programme.

§ 11 Master's thesis/project

11.1 The program concludes with a master's thesis/project, as stipulated in § 11, paragraph 1, no. 2 of the master's regulation. The student must have completed and passed all courses and examinations in the program before the oral defense of the master's thesis; otherwise, the student will be deregistered. The thesis/project must demonstrate the student's ability to formulate, analyze, and process issues within a relevant, delimited scientific subject in a qualified manner.

11.2 The master's thesis/project is prepared individually.

11.3 The thesis/project must adhere to length guidelines specified in the course description for the master's thesis/project and fall within the topic of the approved master's thesis/project agreement.

11.4 The thesis/project must include a summary in English, not exceeding 1 A4 page. The summary contributes to the overall assessment of the thesis/project.

11.5 In assessing the master's thesis/project, emphasis is placed not only on the academic content but also on the student's spelling and writing skills. Academic content is given the greatest weight.

11.6 The master's thesis/project is worth 20 ECTS points.

11.7. The master's thesis/project must be written in English; this also applies to the oral defense.

Part 4 Specific provisions

§ 12 Transitional arrangements

There are no transitional arrangements in this curriculum.

Part 5 Concluding remarks

§ 13 Exemptions from these provisions

In exceptional circumstances, the study board may grant exemptions from any curriculum provisions within the sole remit of the study board.

§ 14 Date of commencement

This curriculum takes effect from 1 September 2025.