



Centre for Strategic Health Information and Operational Research

Operational Research Course

Course Brief

1. Purpose

To develop the practical skills for conducting operational research and publishing the findings

2. Course curriculum

The course is composed of three modules which will be held at The Union's headquarters in Paris, as follows:

Module 1a: Research questions and protocol development / 9 – 13 July 2012

This will be a five day module to help the participants develop a thorough understanding about what operational research is all about and to ensure that a draft research protocol is produced before they return to their own countries. The teaching will be through lectures, discussions, exercises and use of completed and published operational research. Participants will have the opportunity to present and discuss their written protocols with the facilitators

Brief content overview

- Introduction to Operational research
- Research Terminology
- Asking the right research questions
- Aims and Objectives
- Developing research protocols
- Patients and data
- Simple analysis
- Ethics

Output → Draft protocol

Module 1b: Data management and data analysis / 16-20 July 2012

This will be a five-day module to help participants understand data management and data analysis. The module will consist of:

3.5 days: Data entry (Ensure efficient quality assured data entry)

1.5 days: Data analysis and presentation

Brief content overview

- Designing an efficient data entry instrument for the project protocol
- Making an efficient computer data entry questionnaire
- Entering and validating data entry
- Introduction to data analysis
- Producing relevant analysis results in tabular form
- Daily homework on own electronic data entry instrument

Output → Draft electronic data entry instrument

Module 2: Paper writing / 3-7 June 2013

This will be a five-day module to help participants write their scientific papers and deal with on-line submission and editors' and reviewers' comments

Brief content overview

- Learn the principles of writing a scientific paper
- Learn how to deal with peer review

Output → Draft paper to be submitted to a scientific journal



3. What does the participant's organisation gain?

- A person who is well trained in operational research, with affiliations to The Union and its Centre for Operational Research
- A person who can help their programme or institution undertake relevant operational research to identify challenges and improve programme performance

4. What does the participant gain?

- Skills for undertaking the entire operational research process from concept to publication
- The experience of learning and sharing knowledge within a team of motivated and talented participants from different countries
- An opportunity to excel and gain visibility in operational research and to prepare for increased research responsibilities and research leadership in their country

5. Course follow-up

- Participants will be contacted intermittently after course completion to determine accomplishments and will become part of an operational research "alumni" organisation
- Course facilitators will be available to provide advice upon request

6. Criteria for successful applicants

- Involvement actively in the running of a national or state programme or major health institution in the field of TB, HIV, lung health, tobacco control or non-communicable diseases
- Committed to attend all three modules of the training course
- Committed to return to their programme or institution after the course and implement course knowledge at programme level
- Support, investment and commitment from supervisor to carry out research
- Commitment from a stated mentor at the country level
- Ability to mobilise the funding required to carry out operational research
- Masters in Public Health (MPH) **or** an equivalent **or** a strong recommendation
- Fluent in written and spoken English
- Computer literate

Nurses meeting the above criteria are strongly encouraged to apply

7. Research Questions – guidance

- **In your application you will be asked to formulate and submit a research question based on a perceived problem within the programme or health system in which you work. The research will have to be carried out within a 6 - 8 month time frame and therefore we strongly encourage simple research projects that are based on monitoring and evaluation data that are already collected and available in registers or treatment cards. Prospective studies and studies involving patient interventions and patient questionnaires are less likely to be accepted as suitable for this course as they cannot usually be completed within the time frame.**



8. Sponsorship

The Centre will provide a full scholarship to **successful applicants**. The scholarship includes all tuition fees, travel expenses, meals and accommodation.

9. Application deadline: 31st March 2012

For any queries, please contact Ms Cécile Sevel, the course coordinator at cor-courses@theunion.org

*Special thanks to our collaborating partner Médecins
Sans Frontières - Brussels Operational Centre,
Luxembourg*

