

## University of Cambridge: Programme Specifications

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this programme specification. Programme specifications are produced and then reviewed annually by the relevant faculty or department and revised where necessary. However, we reserve the right to withdraw, update or amend this programme specification at any time without notice.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for all awards of the University is available online at: [www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/camdata/archive.html](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/camdata/archive.html)

### POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE OF PROFESSIONAL STUDY, EDUCATIONAL ENQUIRY, AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

1	<b>Awarding body</b>	University of Cambridge
2	<b>Teaching institution</b>	Faculty of Education
3	<b>Accreditation details</b>	25 Masters Level credits
4	<b>Name of final award</b>	PCPS/PCEE/PCSD
5	<b>Programme title</b>	Postgraduate Certificate of Professional Study Postgraduate Certificate of Educational Enquiry Postgraduate Certificate of Staff Development
6	<b>JACS code(s)</b>	X300
7	<b>Relevant QAA benchmark statement(s)</b>	Education
8	<b>Qualifications framework level</b>	7 (Masters)
9	<b>Date specification was produced/ last revised</b>	April 2011
10	<b>Date specification was last reviewed</b>	April 2011

### Aims of the Programme

Postgraduate certificate level courses are suitable either for participants looking for an introduction to an aspect of policy, practice or enquiry that is new to them or for those wishing to extend and develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in established areas of expertise, with a view to progressing on to Diploma or Masters courses in the future. Participants' work is expected to lead towards some form of **impact** upon practice or policy and to help students prepare for potential career advancement.

**The Postgraduate Certificate of Professional Study (PCPS)** is used to accredit the Faculty's taught Postgraduate Professional Development (PPD) courses. These courses comprise 60 hours of study with written work equivalent to 4,000 words. The PCPS is designed essentially to foster practice-focused enquiry for teachers and others engaged in and/or interested in reflecting upon educational processes. PCPS courses provide continuing professional development focused on understanding improvements in policy and practice, and help students prepare for potential career advancement.

**The Postgraduate Certificate of Educational Enquiry (PCEE)** is equivalent to the PCPS in terms of level of study and credit accumulation and requires 60 hours of study and an

assignment of 4000 words or equivalent. The PCEE enables participants to pursue individual or collaborative development priorities through enquiry and reflection under supervision rather than by attending a taught course. Participants wishing to engage in practice-focused enquiry in an emerging or established area of interest or expertise may be interested in using the PCEE to accredit their work. This may follow from having completed a PCPS taught course or having attended a Faculty –based/organised conference or from participating in a collaborative research project with Faculty staff.

**The Postgraduate Certificate of Staff Development (PCSD)** is again equivalent to the PCPS in terms of level of study and credit accumulation and requires 60 hours of study and an assignment of 4000 words or equivalent. Participants can study for a PCSD when they are involved with the Faculty in providing or supporting professional development opportunities for others, for example, as tutors or mentors within a taught programme. Participants would be expected to bring to this relationship some measure of expertise relating either to practice or to the processes of study and enquiry. Participants may gain the PCSD in recognition of skills, knowledge and understanding gained in relation to staff development.

### **Programme Outcomes**

It is expected that participants will develop their substantive knowledge and understanding in a specific area of study. This will include knowledge of recent relevant research and policy as well as of seminal work and practical application. The substantive content of individual courses change in response to the needs of schools and related institutions as well as in response to policy. However, there are some major themes within the Faculty and Partnership provision.

Major themes within PPD courses are:

- Improving teaching, learning and assessment practice, including subject studies;
- teacher led development work and leadership for learning;
- counselling, personal and social education and citizenship;
- nurture groups;
- mentoring less experienced practitioners;
- careers and information, advice and guidance (IAG) in the curriculum;
- special educational needs and inclusion;

Details of the current range of PCPS courses are to be found on our website:

<http://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/ptpd/ppdprog.html>.

Studying for the PCPS is expected to promote critical reflection, reading for a purpose, presentational and enquiry skills, together with other specific skills and attributes dependent on the PCPS course undertaken.

## **Recruitment and Admissions**

PCPS courses are aimed at professionals working with children and young people in schools and other settings. Most courses mainly recruit students with qualified teacher status (QTS). Some courses recruit teaching assistants (TAs), career advisors, counselors or others who do not necessarily have QTS but who contribute to the education and development of young people. The PCPS may also be used to accredit the work of practitioners carried out as part of whole school or inter-school professional enquiry or development work in partnership with the Faculty of Education.

Publicity materials are sent to schools in the local area (Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk). These materials alert potential students to the type of PPD Faculty-based courses run each academic year and direct interested individuals to more detailed information about courses on the Faculty website. The website indicates how the PCPS might be used to progress through different PPD routes to an Advanced Diploma or Masters qualification.

Faculty partnerships with schools, including those with 'Teaching Schools' will facilitate the identification of need and the development of relevant (sometimes be-spoke) courses.

Courses are also advertised by relevant professional associations and this 'targeting' has been successful in attracting students to some courses. Much recruitment is achieved through the recommendations of previous students demonstrating the value placed on courses by participants.

Prospective students may seek further information from the PPD office and apply for a PCPS course using the application procedure outlined on our website:

<http://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/ptpd/ppdapp.html>

## **Teaching and Learning Methods**

Students encounter a wide range of teaching and learning methods which vary according to the subject and the particular environments in which they are working. Teaching may include: lectures, seminars, workshops, peer-teaching, blended learning, self-study, practical work, individual supervisions and student presentations. Most taught courses will involve students in applying ideas from courses in their own contexts and in reflection on the effectiveness of these ideas.

Each course tutor is available to give advice and support to students. Where courses are run outside of the Faculty, further support is available from one of the Faculty's link lecturers. Administrative issues are dealt with by the Course Administrator.

## **Assessment**

In addition to completing the 80% attendance requirement, participants will be expected to, for example:

- participate in course processes and activities provided as an integral part of the course programme;
- complete any tasks set in association with the course and specified in the course proposal or description;

- bring together any materials gathered or developed through course tasks or activities and present these as evidence of enquiry, for example, in the form of a portfolio or as a set of handouts for fellow participants;
- provide a critical and reflective commentary contextualising the materials; explaining their relationship to course-related enquiry; and summarising the learning that has taken place as a result of participation in the course, for example, in the form of a written account, a portfolio of materials or as a presentation to colleagues.

### **Assessment criteria for assignments**

Assignments for the award of a PCPS should be 4,000 words or equivalent. This need not be in the form of an academic essay. Possible formats include the products of activities suggested in the section above regarding expectations of participants. However, the assignments must include a substantial element of critical reflection/analysis that brings coherence to the work. The PCPS is accredited at Masters Level and this should be reflected in the quality of the work produced for assessment. This work should show some evidence of development in relation to each of the generic PPD Masters level criteria below:

#### *Knowledge and understanding* including

- the development of understanding of key concepts and issues within the fields studied;
- knowledge of those fields of study and familiarity with a range of relevant literature;
- knowledge, understanding and critical awareness of methodological issues related to professional enquiry and/or development.

#### *Research and analytical skills* including:

- critical reflection and analysis (as shown in the account of learning based on the courses attended by the participant and/or in the accounts of systematic enquiry);
- comment upon and evaluation of reading that has been carried out;
- the ability to link the analysis and interpretation of data with theoretical perspectives;
- the structuring of information so that it is intelligible to a reader who has no knowledge of the research work undertaken.

#### *Systematic enquiry.* This may take a number of forms, including:

- empirical work which is planned and sufficiently rigorous for the purpose;
- literature-based enquiry for a clear professional purpose;
- development work soundly based on relevant literature and/or rigorous enquiry;
- rigorous professional self-review and self-analysis.

Any enquiry is likely to entail the application of ideas from the literature as well as data gathering and analysis.

#### *Skills in presentation* including:

- the use of clear and accurate English, which should also conform to the usual academic protocols;
- the use of an appropriate range of presentational devices, e.g. tables, figures and appendices;
- the ordering, sequencing and labeling of ideas made coherent by the provision of an explanatory commentary within the report.

*Transferable skills*, for example:

- skills in planning and time management;
- written and verbal communication skills;
- skills in evaluating evidence of impact upon individual professional learning, and upon individual practice or the practice of colleagues

## **Assessment Procedures**

PCPS level work is marked by the course tutor or supervisor in the case of a PCEE. On completion this work should be handed to the relevant tutor/supervisor by the date set. Feedback will be given which relates to course specific guidance for the assignment as well as to the generic assessment criteria above. Feedback will include formative comments to support progression in the completion of further PPD assignments. There are three levels at which work might be assessed in relation to the above:

- a secure pass;
- a pass with some areas for improvement;
- needs to be re-submitted after improvements.

## **Quality Assurance**

The high quality of the PCPS is supported by the following:

- The involvement of research active Faculty staff in teaching and/or in overseeing the courses as link lecturers;
- systematic programme of course evaluations, requiring responses from students, course tutors and link lecturers;
- A formal evaluation of students' experience is conducted at the end of the year, and issues arising are considered within the Faculty of Education by the Postgraduate Professional Development (PPD) Management Group, the Standing Committee for PPD and the Faculty Board with a view to enhancing the programme for the future.
- overview of courses and course outcomes by the PPD manager;
- Internal Examiner's moderation of assignments from a rotating representative sample of courses;
- External Examiner evidence, verbal and in written reports.