

Programme Specification 2017-18

POSTGRADUATE AWARD IN EDUCATIONAL STUDIES

1	Awarding body	University of Cambridge
2	Teaching institution	Faculty of Education
3	Accreditation details	none
4	Name of final award	PAES
5	Programme title	Postgraduate Award in Educational Studies
6	JACS code(s)	X300
7	Relevant QAA benchmark statement(s)	Education
8	Qualifications framework level	FHEQ Level 7 (Masters)
9	Date specification was produced	July 2017

Aims of the Programme

The Postgraduate Award in Educational Studies (PAES) is 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. 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 PAES is awarded on the basis of one 30 credit module requiring an assignment of at least 4,000 words. On completion of the 30 credits required, students can elect either to exit the programme and receive a PAES or to use the credit accrued to continue on to the Postgraduate Certificate in Educational Studies, the Postgraduate Advanced Certificate in Educational Studies, the Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Studies or the Master of Education.

The PAES is designed to foster practice focused enquiry for teachers and others engaged in and/or interested in reflecting upon educational processes. It can either be completed through individual supervision or through courses focused on understanding improvements in policy and practice. . Participants are encouraged to pursue individual or collaborative development priorities through enquiry and reflection.

Programme Outcomes

Studying for the PAES is expected to promote critical reflection, reading for a purpose, presentational and enquiry skills, together with other specific skills and attributes dependent on the PAES project undertaken. 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 projects will change in response to the needs of schools and related institutions as well as in response to policy.

Recruitment and Admissions

The Practitioner Professional Development programme offers opportunities for education professionals to develop high levels of understanding and skills which relate directly to the policy and practice of the contexts in which they work. This programme involves studying at Master's level and it is therefore necessary that applicants demonstrate the potential to work at this level (see QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland 2008). However, since the PPD programme is aimed at practising professionals, professional experience and engagement are recognised as alternatives to recent academic qualifications as indicating the potential for working at Master's level.

Entry requirements for the programme are designed to ensure that candidates have a good chance of successfully completing the programme while not limiting recruitment to only those with strong academic backgrounds.

Entry Requirements:

Applicants for the PPD programme should have:

- a) Relevant experience of working in an education or related professional setting.
- b) Demonstrate a reflective and enquiring approach to their work which supports improvement in professional practice and/or policy.
- c) Demonstrate the ability to work independently and collaboratively with the support of Faculty supervision
- d) Demonstrate a willingness and ability to engage with academic and professional literature that will support empirical and/or literature-based enquiry into policy and/or practice.

It should be noted that Accredited Prior Learning (APL) (i.e. credits gained from other institutions) are not accepted to gain accelerated entry to the PPD programme, although these credits can be considered as part of an applicant's entry qualifications to support the application, if considered relevant.

Demonstration of Requirements

Applicants are given the opportunity to demonstrate that they meet the entry requirements listed above through a personal statement and a proposal for the intended enquiry. Applications should be supported by two references (preferably at least one who is able to comment on the academic potential of the candidate).

Since work produced for the PPD programme will be assessed at Master's level, it is particularly important that candidates demonstrate requirement (d) above. This may be through the following academic qualifications:

- A good honours degree
- A PGCE assessed at Master's level
- Recent (within three years) completion of professional qualifications at level six or above
- Overseas qualifications equivalent to the above (For an assessment of overseas qualifications contact National Academic Recognition Centre for the United Kingdom)
- Non-English speaking overseas applicants may also require a recent IELTS qualification with a minimum score of 7 in each element.

Requirement (d) may alternatively be demonstrated through professional writing, for example:

- Professional documentation, e.g. policy documents for a school or group of schools, substantial reports on present practice within or between schools, etc.
- Publications in professional journals or other forms of professional communication.
- Reviews of education publications.

Demonstration of requirement (d) should be supported by production of the relevant certificates and/or by an academic reference from a course tutor, publication editor or senior colleague who is able to comment on academic capability.

The Faculty welcome applications from students who have applied to a PPD course previously and were unsuccessful, but in these cases applicants must be able to demonstrate a change in their circumstances that improve their suitability for the course, e.g. further qualification or experience in order to support their new application. The faculty reserves the right to use information from a previous application in assessing a re-application and to seek further evidence of ability to follow this course if it deems necessary.

Please note that PPD students are members of the Faculty of Education with access to all Faculty services such as library membership and IT support. Successful completion of the PPD programme entitles students to a University of Cambridge award. Students do not though, have College membership. Use of some central University facilities may be restricted (for example sports clubs).

If you continue to the Faculty of Education's Master's programme, you will at that point be admitted to the central University, through the college system, as a full member of the University, with fees also going to a College.

Teaching and Learning Methods

A wide range of teaching and learning methods will be used for the different elements of the PDES. These will vary according to the subject and, where relevant, the particular environments in which participants are working. Teaching methods employed in the PPD programme presently include seminar/workshops, blended learning and individual or collaborative enquiry and/or development work.

Assessment

In addition to the requirement for diligent attendance, 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;

PAES Assignments

Assignments for the award of a PAES should be 4,000 words or equivalent. This need not be in the form of an academic essay. However, the assignments must include a substantial element of critical reflection/analysis that brings coherence to the work.

The PAES 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:

Generic criteria for accredited Postgraduate Professional Development (PPD)

PPD work submitted for accredited qualification is expected to meet Masters degree Level 7, according to the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ, 2008). This level of achievement is reflected in the expectations embedded in the general PPD assessment criteria, which identify key areas of knowledge, understanding, critical engagement and transferable skills. The demands of complex professional activity are realistically acknowledged and celebrated in PPD assessment, drawing on the FHEQ requirement for students to demonstrate that they:

... understand how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research. They will be able to deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, and they will show originality in tackling and solving problems. They will have the qualities needed for employment in circumstances requiring sound judgement, personal responsibility and initiative in complex and unpredictable professional environments. (pp 21-2)

FHEQ Level 7 achievement may be demonstrated through systematic enquiry in a number of forms. PPD students at the Faculty of Education are expected to engage in some form of enquiry work which might include:

- 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.

PPD work is assessed against the following generic Master's level criteria:

Focus of the study

- The determination of a clear and ethically acceptable focus which satisfies the specification of the assignment in question is expressed in an approved title and may address an appropriate professional purpose.

Knowledge and understanding:

- 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;
- Knowledge and understanding of ethical principles relevant to professional enquiry and/or development work.

Research and analytical skills:

- demonstration of ethical attitudes throughout their professional enquiry and/or development work;
- 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);
- commenting 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;
- provision of a thorough account of relevant ethical considerations for completion of the project and for reporting the project and disseminating the findings.

Skills in presentation:

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

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.

PPD awards may be cumulative with increasing numbers of Master's level credits attached to the higher levels of award. For students on a cumulative programme, there is an expectation of

progression towards the higher level awards. The extent to which the criteria are addressed by individual assignments is expected to develop throughout such a programme of study. There will however need to be clear evidence of achieving Level 7 criteria at diploma level or at entry to the second year of a master's programme.

Assessment Procedures

PAES level work is marked by the course tutor or supervisor. Submission dates are set by either the course tutor or the supervisor and should not usually be more than one term after the date of admission to the course. 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.

The PAES may be assessed as pass or fail:

- **Pass**
The report satisfies the assessment criteria sufficiently well for the award of an PAES.
- **Fail**
The report falls short of a pass standard in relationship to a substantial proportion of the assessment criteria.

Quality Assurance

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

- The involvement of research active Faculty staff in teaching, supervising and/or in overseeing the courses
- 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 Practitioner Professional Development (PPD) Management Group, the Learning and Teaching Committee and 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;
- Moderation of assignments by Examiners;
- External Examiner evidence, verbal and in written reports.

Accreditation for future learning

The course may be taken on a free-standing basis leading to the award of a **Postgraduate Award in Educational Studies (PAES)**. Alternatively, students who are currently studying or wish to enrol for a higher award on the PPD programme may count this as one of your units. All participants are expected to attend regularly and to complete a related assignment to the satisfaction of the course tutor.

The list of available courses in the PPD programme can be found on the PPD website at <http://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/courses/ppd/courses/>

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this programme specification. At the time of publication, the programme specification has been approved by the relevant Faculty Board (or equivalent). Programme specifications are reviewed annually, however, during the course of the academic year, any approved changes to the programme will be communicated to enrolled students through email notification or publication in the Reporter. The relevant faculty or department will endeavour to update the programme specification accordingly, and prior to the start of the next academic year.

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