Programme Specification 2024-2025

Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

Awarding body	University of Cambridge
Teaching institution	University of Cambridge, Institute of Continuing Education
Accreditation details	None
Name of final award	Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education
Programme title	Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education
UCAS code	N/A
HECoS code(s)	*[leave blank, will be completed centrally]*
Relevant QAA benchmark statement(s)	None
Qualifications framework level	Level 7
Date specification produced	November 2023

* Cognate Faculty endorsement provided by: Faculty of Education

The mission of the Institute of Continuing Education (ICE) is to support the University of Cambridge's promise to prioritise and enable learning throughout life and to promote the widest possible access for learners to the University. ICE uses the expertise of its staff, the collegiate University, and its wider networks to deliver a broad portfolio of research-informed world-leading qualifications. ICE delivers supportive and inclusive education and welcomes learners seeking to engage with higher education for the first time, returning after an extended break, seeking opportunities to learn later in life and looking to advance their careers.

The Cambridge Centre for Teaching and Learning (CCTL) supports the professional education and development of Cambridge staff who teach / support the learning of Cambridge students; contributes to developing an evidence base for designing and evaluating enhancement activities and provides a sustained institutional focus on complex educational priorities.

This Postgraduate Certificate Programme in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education is delivered collaboratively by the University of Cambridge Institute of Continuing Education (ICE) and the Cambridge Centre for Teaching and Learning and is directed by Dr Meg Tait (Head of the CCTL).

Educational aims

The Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education gives participants opportunities to: extend their understanding of how students learn; extend their repertoire of teaching, learning and assessment methods; and develop a cogent personal philosophy of education drawing on understanding, use and critical awareness of scholarly approaches to evaluating teaching, learning and assessment, and reflective practice.
In doing so, the programme aims to provide opportunities for its participants to address educational challenges and contribute to improvements in the education of students at Cambridge and at tertiary level more broadly. The programme is also designed to facilitate cross-disciplinary discussion of teaching, learning and assessment

Learning outcomes

By the end of the Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, within the constraints of the course, students should be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge and understanding

- How students learn, both generally and within their subject / disciplinary areas;
- appropriate methods for teaching, learning and assessment in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme;
- the implications of quality assurance and quality enhancement for educational practice
- practical understanding of how research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in higher education;
- appropriate personal qualities and professional attitudes, including empathy and collegiality and commitment to inclusive and equitable educational practice and an appreciation of the wider context in which higher education operates.

Skills and other attributes

- intellectual skills
- Ability to critically evaluate current research and advanced scholarship in higher education theory and practice;
- ability to reflect critically on individual continuing professional development needs within teaching and independently to identify ways of fulfilling those needs;
- ability to deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, making sound judgements in the absence of complete data;

- practical skills
- Ability to making informed judgements about using a wide variety of teaching, learning and assessment methods in order to contribute towards students' learning;
- designing and using evidence-informed approaches, including the outcomes from research, scholarship and continuing professional development in order to develop integrated approaches to educational practice.

- other transferable skills
- The course is designed specifically for educators in higher education and equips them with a range of skills transferable on a daily basis to complex situations in higher education, as well as an ability to exercise initiative and take decisions in complex and unpredictable situations. These skills are equally applicable in a wide range of careers within higher education and beyond.

Programme structure

The programme in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education is a part-time Postgraduate Certificate which is equivalent to 60 credits at level 7. It is made up of three units, taught over three terms. The Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education is accredited at Descriptor 2 by Advance HE. On successfully completing the course, participants are entitled to claim Fellowship of the HEA.The programme is designed to enable participants to define and pursue their own independent enquiries, with appropriate tutor support and formative feedback. The programme design also encourages the formation of peer-learning networks within the programme, as a complementary source of collegial learning and support; in particular, this peer-to-peer learning is encouraged through reciprocal peer observation of teaching and through collaborating on giving and receiving

formative feedback on draft assignments throughout the programme. The programme's VLE provides access to core materials and structured activities which enable participants to develop their knowledge of influential theoretical perspectives and their understanding of how to pursue well designed lines of enquiry into teaching and learning in higher education.

Programme Overview

The course is structured around three modules, providing a core contact time of 60 hours (including structured activities on the programme's Moodle site, workshops and individual tutorials). A significant amount of independent study in preparation for modules and between modules is assumed, including via supported self-study units on Moodle.

Participants will also draw on their work in teaching, assessment and preparation during the course of the programme.

The programme has three units: Developing as an enquiring university educator; Teaching & learning strategies & techniques; Designing teaching, learning and assessment. During the year, participants develop three separate written assignments (4,000 words) and will submit each assignment for formative assessment. In the final months of the programme, participants prepare a reflective account of learning which they present to peers and to the programme team as a contribution to the final day school, receiving and contributing to constructive feedback in a collegial setting.The programme is characterised by continuing formative feedback between peers (using a developmental framework) and from the participant's tutor. Participants revise formatively assessed assignments to prepare a Portfolio (13,000 words) which is submitted for summative assessment at the end of the programme year.

Programme details

Unit 1, 'Developing as an enquiring university teacher', includes three workshops which open and close of the programme. The first and second workshop days are held just before the start of the academic year and the third, concluding workshop, is held in July. The unit introduces participants to the programme as a whole, to debates concerning the nature of 'teaching expertise' in higher education, to scholarly approaches to evaluating practice in higher education, to engaging critically with educational research, and an introduction to the ethical dimensions of educational research and scholarly evaluations of practice. The assignment for this module is submitted shortly before the start of Lent Term. The assignment (4,000 words in total) is in two parts: (1) a proposal for a research-informed evaluation of practice (2,000 words) and (2) a critical commentary on two articles in peer-reviewed education journals which are relevant to the proposed evaluation of practice (2,000 words). Selection of articles and the proposed evaluation design must be confirmed as appropriate by a tutor.

Participants are supported in preparing this assignment through guided activities on the VLE, during the day schools, in self-organised discussion with their peer learning group and through a tutorial. Guidance is provided by the course team to support participants' independent preparations and their discussions with their peer learning group.

The assignment and engagement with peer feedback are formatively assessed by the participant's tutor. The end-of-course portfolio includes either a developed version of this assignment (4,000 words) or a report on the completed research-informed evaluation of practice (8,000 words).

Unit 2, 'Teaching and learning strategies and techniques', enables participants to explore theoretical perspectives on teaching and learning formats, including large- and small-group teaching, guiding independent learning and debates concerning online and blended learning. The module provides participants with an opportunity to explore a range of strategies and techniques and to consider their implications for what and how students learn. Recognising that individual educators' choices over teaching and learning formats are often limited by institutional norms and cultures, we consider means of shaping techniques and strategies to improve outcomes for students and teachers. We also investigate students' and educators' conceptions of feedback and evaluation and explore approaches to making both more effective.

This unit also provides an introduction to debates concerning peer observation of teaching and developmental peer observation models. During this unit, , participants design and undertake a reciprocal peer observation or teaching development exercise.

Participants intending to include an assignment on this module as part of their portfolio prepare a draft (4,000 words); participants who do not intend to include an assignment on this module in their portfolio prepare a research-informed report on their evaluation of practice practice. In either instance, preparation and submission are as outlined above. The particular focus of the assignment is determined by the participant, with support from the tutor and peers.

Unit 3 investigates theoretical perspectives on curriculum and course design. The module invites participants to develop a critical awareness of debates concerning the nature and purpose of higher education study and to consider what these mean for the design and practices of teaching, learning and assessment. We return to consider theories of learning which we encountered in the first module in connection with debates concerning learning outcomes, the relationships between assessment and learning, and conceptions of feedback and its contribution to learning. We explore principles and practices of assessment, including conceptions of standards, reliability and validity. Participants intending to include an assignment on this module as part of their portfolio prepare a draft (4,000 words); participants who do not intend to include an assignment on this module in their portfolio prepare a research-informed report on their evaluation of practice. In either instance, preparation and submission are as outlined above. The particular focus of the assignment is determined by the participant, with support from the tutor and peers.

The plenary elements of the programme conclude with the further workshop on 'Developing as an enquiring university teacher'. This provides structured opportunities for participants to review what they have learnt during the programme and their progress in preparing the portfolio. The portfolio represents an opportunity for participants to demonstrate their grasp of the field of study; understanding and evaluating research and methodologies; and structure communication and presentation. The portfolio is a flexible assessment format which enables participants to pursue their own enquiries into aspects of theory and practice which are particularly important to them and to reflect both on their own development during the course of the programme and to identify directions and methods to support continuing professional learning after completing the programme.

Unit 1: Developing as an enquiring university teacher

format	Provisional dates	Hours face-to-face / online	Topics to include
VLE: preparatory reading,	Available four weeks before	Core: 12 hours online (non-	

structured activities	programme commencement and for the duration of the programme	moderated) prior to and subsequent to workshop – signposts to further individualised self-study	• introduction to programme • debates surrounding teachers' professional expertise;
Workshop, days 1 & 2	September	6 hours, in-person	• debates surrounding education research; • reflective and reflexive practice; • engaging critically with education research; • ethics in evaluating practice; • theoretical perspectives on student learning; • peer observation of teaching: debates and models.
Tutorial (individual)	Arranged by participant, aligned with formative assessment	1 hour, in-person	• formative feedback on written assignment; • preparation of reflective account of learning.
		Formative assessment (submitted one week before the start of Lent Term)	4,000-word assignment: a research-informed proposal for evaluating practice (2,000 words) and a critical commentary on two articles published in peer-reviewed education journals and relevant to the prosed evaluation of practice (2,000 words).
VLE: preparatory reading, structured activities		Core:8 hours online (non-moderated) prior to and subsequent to workshop – signposts to further individualised self-study	• review of project progress; • further development of written assignments; • completion of portfolios; • further directions in professional learning.
Workshop, day 5	July	6hours, in-person	

Unit 2: Teaching and learning strategies and techniques

format	Provisional dates	Hours face-to-face / online	Topics to include
Moodle: preparatory reading, structured activities	Available four weeks before workshop and for the duration of the programme	Core: 12 hours online (non-moderated) prior to and subsequent to workshop – signposts to further individualised self-study	- perspectives on large-group teaching; - strengths and limitations of lectures as a format; - different approaches to large-group teaching and learning - dynamics and roles of participants in small group learning; - different ways of leading and facilitating small-group learning; - online learning and teaching; - inclusivity and diversity; - approaches to evaluation: small-group learning and lectures
Workshop	1 week before Lent Term begins	6 hours, in-person	
Tutorial (individual)	Arranged by participant	1 hour, in-person	- formative feedback on written assignment; - preparation of reflective account of learning.
		Formative assessment, submitted submitted one week before the start of Easter Term	4,000-word assignment: EITHER on an aspect of teaching and learning strategies and techniques as defined by participant OR: report on research-informed evaluation of practice

Unit 3: Designing teaching, learning and assessment

format	Provisional dates	Hours face-to-face / online	Topics to include
Moodle: preparatory reading,		Core: 12 hours online (non-moderated) prior to and	Theoretical perspectives on

structured activities		subsequent to workshop – signposts to further individualised self-study	curricula and course design; • theories of learning; • debates on course design: aims, objectives, learning outcomes; • relationships between assessment and learning; • debates concerning feedback and student learning; • standards, reliability and validity in assessment.
Workshop	1-2 weeks before start of Easter Term	6 hours, in-person	
Tutorial (individual)	Arranged by participant	1 hour, in-person	• formative feedback on assignment; • preparation of reflective account of learning.
		Formative assessments • 4,000-word assignment submitted 4 weeks after end Easter Term • peer learning group presentation on 'reflection on learning' is given at day school 5 and forms basis of 1,000-word reflective account of learning	• 4,000-word assignment: EITHER on an aspect of designing teaching, learning and assessment as defined by the participant OR report on research-informed evaluation of practice; • reflective account of learning (1,000 words).
Summative assessment.		Portfolio (13,000 words): Model A: • report on research-informed evaluation of practice(8,000 words); • 1 x assignment (4,000 words); • reflective account of learning and directions in professional learning (1,000 words). Model B: • 4,000-word assignment: a research-informed proposal for evaluating practice (2,000 words) and a critical	

	commentary on two articles published in peer-reviewed education journals and relevant to the prosed evaluation of practice (2,000 words).
	• 2 x written assignments (2 x 4,000 words);
	• reflective account of learning and directions in professional learning (1,000 words).

Teaching methods

The programme is delivered through a combination of in-person teaching sessions and asynchronous approaches provided via the course virtual learning environment.

The programme aims to enable participants to develop as enquiring university educators. Teaching and learning methods include guided reading and structured activities and online seminars on the course VLE, interactive workshops, large- and small-group work, individual tutorials, self-directed study and reading in preparation for and between in-person sessions. Peer-to-peer learning forms an important element of course teaching.All participants prepare a critical commentary on a peer-reviewed publication and develop a scholarly design for evaluating practice, which provides an opportunity to integrate learning and practice during the course of the programme. Students are supported in developing a robust approach to reflecting on their experience as learners and on teaching and learning processes as well as content.

Assessment methods

The programme will contain items of formative (not counting towards the final mark) and summative (counting towards the final mark) assessment. Formative assessment will receive tutor and/or peer feedback and is designed to facilitate completion of the summative assessments. Participants revise formatively assessed assignments in response to tutor feedback and their own developing knowledge during the programme year to comprise a Portfolio (13,000 words) which is summatively assessed at the end of the programme year.

Entry and/or progression requirements

Students admitted to the programme must have teaching / learning support commitments at Cambridge and should normally expect to have at least three years' full-time experience (or equivalent) of teaching in higher education, in order to have an appropriate level of experience on which to draw in framing and conducting a research-informed evaluation of practice and practical activities.. This programme is not normally open to PhD students.

Credit awarded by the Institute can be transferred into the degree programmes of some other higher education providers. The amount of credit which can be transferred into degree programmes varies from institution to institution and is always at the discretion of the receiving institution.

Student support

ICE provides all students with access to learning and welfare support via the Institute's virtual learning environment. This includes generic and subject specific learning resources and wider support services, including those focused on wellbeing.

Management of teaching quality and standards

The University ensures high standards of teaching and learning in the following ways:

- Participation in the biennial Education Monitoring and Review Process to explore provision, share good practice and suggest constructive courses of action
- Scrutiny of the reports of External Examiners for all teaching programmes
- Encouraging student engagement at both the local level, through involvement in Faculty and Departmental Committees, and at a central level by participation in nationally-benchmarked surveys
- Mentoring, appraisal, and peer review of staff, and encouraging staff participation in personal development programmes

Graduate employability and career destinations

Preparation for employment in general is provided in the opportunities for the acquisition of relevant transferable skills outlined in this programme specification. Where programmes with a significant vocational or professional element are accredited by Professional, Regulatory or Statutory Bodies details are given above.

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 academical 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 academical year.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for all awards of the University is available online at: https://www.camdata.admin.cam.ac.uk/