

Programme Specification 2025-26

Postgraduate Certificate in Clinical Research, Education and Leadership

1	Awarding body	University of Cambridge
2	Teaching institution	University of Cambridge Institute of Continuing Education*
3	Accreditation details	None
4	Name of final award	Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) Master of Studies (MSt)
5	Programme title	Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) in Clinical Research, Education and Leadership and Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) in Clinical Medicine and Master of Studies (MSt) in Clinical Medicine
6	UCAS code	n/a
7	HECoS code(s)	
8	Relevant QAA benchmark statement(s)	Medicine (Masters) 2002
9	Qualifications framework level	FHEQ Level 7 (Masters) PGT
10	Date specification produced	November 2024

* Cognate Faculty endorsement provided by: School of Clinical Medicine

Introduction

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.

Educational aims

The MSt and PgDip in Clinical Medicine and the PGCert in Clinical Research, Education and Leadership courses are designed to be flexible and accessible to healthcare professionals and to complement employment within a clinical environment. The programmes aim to:

- Provide professionally relevant teaching and learning informed by research in an integrated clinical and teaching environment.
- Create an international cohort of consultants, GPs, dentists, and other healthcare professionals able to pursue and develop their roles in a rapidly changing and challenging environment of clinical medicine
- Develop the confidence within this cohort to lead service improvement for safe and high-quality patient care, with the required knowledge, skills, and capability to have a positive personal impact on the work of others in their clinical team and wider service

- Develop clinicians with an understanding of teaching, professional development, and assessment in the field of clinical medicine
- Develop clinicians with an understanding of research methodologies and ethical considerations relevant to clinical medicine
- Encourage participants to develop as reflective practitioners with the emotional intelligence, resilience and astuteness required to be effective clinical leaders
- Encourage a commitment to intellectual challenge and evidence-based clinical practice informed by the latest conceptual and theoretical knowledge of medical education, research methods, ethics and clinical leadership and governance

Learning outcomes

As a result of studying this programme students should meet the following learning outcomes.

Knowledge and understanding:

- develop the knowledge and critical understanding of recent developments in clinical medicine directly relevant to future roles;
- develop the knowledge and understanding of teaching and assessment strategies for complex concepts and themes informed by research in a rapidly changing integrated clinical and teaching environment;
- enable deployment of new knowledge in clinical practice and leadership to have a positive personal impact on the work of others in the clinical team and wider service;
- develop the knowledge of leadership models and the ability as confident healthcare leaders of service improvement for safe and high-quality patient care;
- update and extend an understanding of research methodologies and ethical considerations;
- ensure a systems-based approach to the critical analysis and development of improvements in healthcare systems;
- provide work-relevant learning around current problems, best-practice, challenges and potential solutions in clinical leadership and education.
- critical engagement with and evaluation of the evidence base for effective clinical practice and measurement of outcomes;
- develop extensive knowledge and deep understanding of a specialised field within clinical medicine (MSt via dissertation);
- demonstrate detailed understanding of contemporary and future trends and issues in clinical research, education, leadership and for PgDip/MSt students healthcare data and law, and their implications for clinical practice
- advanced awareness of self and identity as a clinical leader and the impact of culture, values, and ethics on advanced clinical leadership (PgDip/MSt);
- advanced knowledge of research methodology (MSt).

Skills and other attributes

- the ability to critically review advanced theoretical discourses from a clinical perspective;
- develop new, creative approaches and concepts in response to contemporary issues and developments within clinical practice;
- acquisition and implementation of highly developed research, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills;

- design and execution of investigations to explore contemporary and future areas of theory and practice;
- selection of and critical evaluation of research methodology;
- advanced specialised evidence based clinical leadership skills for complex and evolving contexts;
- the ability to reflect on the application of contemporary thinking to specific areas of clinical practice and the value of different reflective models to reflect on practice;
- critical sensitivity to the ethical implications of developments and issues within clinical settings and impact on advanced clinical leadership.
- the ability to define, develop and implement the process of quality improvement in a healthcare context.

Programme structure

The programme consists of the following units:

1.Clinical Leadership	All courses	20 credits
2.Clinical Research	All courses	20 credits
3.Clinical Education	All courses	20 credits
4.Healthcare Informatics	PGDip/MSt only	20 credits
5.Advanced Clinical Leadership and Quality Improvement	PGDip/MSt only	20 credits
6.Healthcare Law	PGDip/MSt only	20 credits
7.Dissertation	MSt only	60 credits

Units 1-3 are taught in year 1; units 4-6 are taught in year 2 and the dissertation is completed in year 3. The order of units 1-3 and 4-6 may vary from year to year. The taught units are structured as follows:

Unit 1: Clinical Leadership

Aims:

To develop students as healthcare leaders with the required knowledge, skills, and capability to have a positive personal impact on the work of others in their clinical team and wider service. To empower students to lead on effective change and quality improvement projects in their clinical setting.

Indicative Content:

- Developing emotional intelligence, resilience and political astuteness required to be an effective healthcare leader in a rapidly changing and challenging environment;
- Commitment to safe and high-quality patient care;
- Leading for improvement and leading across a wider system of healthcare;
- Self-awareness and personal leadership qualities, managing difficult behaviour;
- Project/change management theories and practice;
- Completion of a change management or quality improvement project.

Unit 2 - Clinical Research

Aims:

To provide students with the framework to develop research ideas into publishable studies through acquisition of the skills and knowledge to understand the importance of research

activity in the future of clinical care within healthcare systems and tertiary health care institutions.

Indicative Content:

- study design, funding and management, research ethical and regulatory environments;
- knowledge of research and academic career pathways;
- the role of research in clinical practice and the role of clinicians in conducting research, and the elements of good clinical practice;
- research methodologies, funding applications and grant writing, literature reviews and critical appraisal, basic statistics and data presentation, publication, and dissemination;
- electronic completion of a Good Clinical Practice Course.

Unit 3 - Clinical Education

Aims:

To contribute to the continuing development of healthcare professionals by stimulating inter-professional education, the development of advanced skills for appraising and implementing the educational aspect of their work.

Indicative Content:

- Teaching practical clinical skills, effective clinical supervision, and small group teaching;
- The principles of assessment and appraisal;
- Technology enhanced learning - eLearning and simulation;
- Trainees in difficulty;
- Educational theories and research.

Year 2 – PGDip and MSt students only

Unit 4 – Healthcare Informatics

Aims:

To introduce students to the importance of Healthcare Informatics in a modern clinical setting to improve patient care through an understanding of the healthcare data needs of clinicians, health organisations, governments, and patients.

Indicative Content:

- the design, and wider implications, of information systems and data in a modern healthcare environment;
- the relevance of data models and data flows within the NHS;
- the importance of informatics in a modern health system and how this information can improve patient care;
- the impact of healthcare data
- the structure and organisation of healthcare databases, systems, and data storage;
- the governance, regulatory and ethical elements of healthcare data.

Unit 5 – Advanced Clinical Leadership and Quality Improvement

Aims:

This unit supports students to take on more significant leadership positions and effectively deliver improvements to clinical services. The curriculum maps to the Faculty of Medical Leadership and Management Professional Standards and the NHS Leadership Framework. Subject to accreditation candidates who successfully complete the module may be eligible for membership of other leadership organisations.

Indicative Content:

- the impact of, and how to enhance effective leadership within the clinical arena;
- improving leadership by inspiring shared purpose, leading with care, evaluation and connecting services;
- developing teams through shared vision, engagement, accountability via an evidence-based approach to people management;
- developing capability and influencing for results in large organisations.

Unit 6 – Healthcare Law

Aims:

To enable students to explore, and develop their understanding of, the laws that govern and influence medical practice and the way professionals and institutions are regulated and held to account.

Indicative Content:

- an introduction to statute and case law relating to common clinical scenarios and healthcare management;
- the concepts of consent, capacity and autonomy;
- Mental Health law;
- the process and importance of complaints, quality assurance and liability;
- confidentiality and data protection;
- the law in relation to fertility, reproduction, and care at the end of life.

Year 3 MSt students only

Unit 7 – Dissertation

Aims:

To enable students to apply and develop their learning from previous units through the production of an academically rigorous dissertation.

Indicative content:

- a dissertation addressing a clinically relevant project in the area of research, education, leadership, healthcare data or healthcare law, in a defined area of specialism.

Teaching Methods

The programme is delivered through a combination of in-person teaching sessions and asynchronous approaches provided via the course virtual learning environment. Some units are delivered through remote methods. Examples of the type of teaching methods use include, but are not limited to, live and pre-recorded lectures, seminars, group discussions,

online readings, quizzes, data handling exercises, group activities and discussion forums. Peer-to-peer learning forms an important element of course teaching.

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. Summative assessments will consist of tasks appropriate to the discipline of study and may include, but not be limited to, essays, reports, presentations, posters, critical reviews, data handling and analysis, and group activities.

Units 1-6 will each use summative assessment approaches of 3,000-4,000 words or their equivalent. Assessments are designed to ensure experiential learning and work-based relevance. Approaches may include but are not limited to critical analysis of case-studies, assessment of evidence-based portfolios, assessment of work and sector relevant group presentations and projects, short answer questions, essays, the ability to handle, analyse and visualise unseen datasets, and research dissertations.

Unit 7 will be assessed through the production of a dissertation of no more than 10,000 words in an area related to one, or more, of the areas covered by Units 1-6. This may focus on areas such as the completion of a research project, the design and implementation of an educational activity, quality improvement or leadership project.

Entry and/or progression requirements

Applicants are normally expected to hold a 2i degree or higher from a UK university or an equivalent from an overseas university in a relevant subject. Applicants without this level of academic qualification may be considered as non-standard applicants if they have an appropriate level of professional experience relevant to the programme.

Applicants are expected to demonstrate proficiency in the English language and must be able to satisfy the current English Language Competence requirements of the University's Postgraduate Admissions Committee in the year in which they apply for admission to the course and outlined on the course webpage.

Applicants to the PgDip in Clinical Medicine (top-up year) will be required to complete and pass the PgCert in Clinical Research, Education and Leadership before starting their studies. Applicants to the MSt in Clinical Medicine (top-up year) will be required to complete and pass the PgDip in Clinical Medicine (top-up year) before starting their studies.

Students are able to take a maximum of 8 years from the start of the PgCert in Clinical Research, Education and Leadership to the completion of the MSt in Clinical Medicine (top-up year). The maximum gap in study between either the PgCert in Clinical Research, Education and Leadership and the PgDip in Clinical Medicine (top up year), or the PgDip in Clinical Medicine (top-up year) and the MSt in Clinical Medicine (top-up year) is 5 years

Student support

All students are members the Institute of Continuing Education and have access to learning support via the Institute of Continuing Education, along with comprehensive details of the programme, contact details and academic and general advice. The course VLE holds generic and subject specific learning resources. MSt students, as matriculated members of

the University, have access to central University support services as well as those organised and arranged by their College.

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

The programme will be measured against quality indicators as identified in QAA FHEQ level 7 and relevant aspects of the benchmarks for Medicine (2002).

Graduate employability and career destinations

All students on this course will already be employed in a clinical or healthcare setting. Completion of the course will enhance long term career progression opportunities within a healthcare setting.

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/>