

Programme Specification 2025-6

PgCert Dental Education

Awarding body	University of Cambridge
Teaching institution	University of Cambridge, Institute of Continuing Education
Accreditation details	None
Name of final award	<i>Postgraduate Certificate</i>
Programme title	<i>Dental Education</i>
UCAS code	N/A
HECoS code(s)	[]
Relevant QAA benchmark statement(s)	None
Qualifications framework level	FHEQ Level 7
Date specification produced	May 2023

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.

There is a growing expectation that dental care professionals are selected, trained and developed for their educational roles. These roles span initial professional formation (undergraduate training and, in the UK, Dental Foundation Training), postgraduate training (for those pursuing one of the 13 specialist dental training pathways recognised in the UK and EU), and those supporting the continuing professional development of dental care professionals.

Dentists work in a range of settings – general dental practice, community and special care dentistry and secondary care (hospital) settings. Educational roles in dentistry include clinical supervision (direct oversight of the day-to-day practice of a dental student or trainee), educational supervision (overview of the performance and development of one or more trainees), formal teaching in academic settings (undergraduate and postgraduate) and specific educational leadership roles, such as those of training programme director.

This innovative, flexible programme is designed to meet the educational development needs of dental care professionals supporting the learning and development of members of the dental care workforce throughout the continuum of UG education, PG training and CPD. Uniquely, it combines a flexible, open access CPD offer with a progression route into a series of m-level awards in dental education.

Educational aims

The programme aims to develop individuals able to adopt an informed and critically reflective stance to their own and others practice as dental educators, whether working in academic or practice settings. This includes opportunities to develop their teaching practice (including approaches to the design, implementation and evaluation of teaching) and to develop a strong rationale for approaches they adopt, drawing on contemporary learning literatures, within and beyond dental education.

The course has been developed to reflect professional standards for dental educators, in particular COPDEND (2013) standards for dental educators¹ and the Academy of Medical Educator (2021) Standards for Medical, Dental and Veterinary Educators².

Learning outcomes

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

Demonstrate the ability to;

- Exercise sound judgement, adopting a learner-centred approach when designing and facilitating the education and training of dental care professionals
- Demonstrate personal responsibility and accountability in the ways they seek and respond to feedback on their teaching and/or supervision, whether through peer review and/or learner /stakeholder evaluation
- Demonstrate scholarship by drawing upon learning and assessment theory to offer a rationale for current and/or planned approaches to practice as a dental educator
- Work in conditions of uncertainty, reflecting upon their own practice and identify the ways in which they may further develop their practice
- Adopt an informed and critically reflective stance to the practice of dental education, with a clear rationale for practices adopted and/ or proposed

Programme structure

The PgCert Dental Education is a 60 credit award, offered as two 30-credit modules. *Core Skills in Dental Education* followed by *Supporting Dental Learning* offered over one academic year. There is the option to complete a micro-masters award

¹ COPDEND (2013) standards for dental educators, accessed at: <https://www.copdend.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Guidelines-for-Dental-Educators-.pdf> [Last accessed 19/05/23].

² AOME (2021) Professional Standards for Medical, Dental and Veterinary Educators (Forth Edition). Accessed at: <https://www.copdend.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Guidelines-for-Dental-Educators-.pdf>. [Last accessed 19/05/23]

(*Developing as a Dental Educator*) that has equivalency to the first 30 credit module; verified students successfully completing the capstone course and admissions process would therefore join at module two.

The selection and use of learning and teaching methods reflect the educational philosophy of our programmes for medical, dental and healthcare educators.

- Firstly, that our students experiences (as learners, as teachers) are a rich resource for their learning.
- Secondly, opportunities to offer and receive feedback, in a range of ways, are vitally important when seeking to develop your practice as an educator.
- Thirdly, exposure to, and critique of, a wide range of educational practices (modelled by faculty) can support students' development as reflective and reflexive educators.

The award bearing courses are purposefully designed as blended learning programmes, involving synchronous learning opportunities (face to face and on-line) and supported, on-line learning activity.

The foundation of the micromasters programme is, of course, that the open-access version is on-line and self-directed. However, the subscription version also provides opportunities for synchronous on-line learning, including interaction with faculty and peers.

Further information on how the course is structured are provided in the tables below, firstly the standard route, secondly the micromasters route.

PgCert in Dental Education (standard route)

PgCert Dental Education:	Key content	Assessment
Module one: 4 contact days <i>Core skills in Dental Education (30 credits)</i>	Approaches to supervision: developing a reflective practitioner. Adopting a coaching mindset	Formative: peer review of a planned teaching or supervision session (linked to the curriculum) or development of a completed session in light of student/stakeholder feedback. The plans should include a short reflective account (250 words max) offering a rationale for plans /planned changes.
	Teaching at the chairside One to one teaching approaches: from design to delivery	
	Workbased assessment and feedback	Summative: a 4500-5500 word assessment, in the reflective genre focussed on the design, delivery and evaluation of 3 hours of teaching /supervision activity. This must include a linked action plan for their
	Planned teaching Working with individuals and groups	

		future development as an educator in light of their experience and feedback from peers and/or learners.
Module two: 3 contact days <i>Supporting dental learning</i> (30 credits)	Views on learning and how they shape our practice	Formative assessment: draft of summative assessment for tutor review and feedback. Summative assessment: academic essay (4500-5500 words) focussed on ways they are developing their practice as educators. This should build upon their action plan from module one /capstone course. Choose up to three theoretical tools that have the potential to inform /shape their practice.
	Teaching in the 'classroom': the influence of psychology (behaviourism, constructivism)	
	Teaching in the clinical workplace: the influence of sociology and anthropology (Socio-cultural theory, communities of practice)	
	Assessing clinical learning: principles of programmatic assessment	

PgCert in Dental Education: Micromasters route

The course is designed so that those who successfully complete the capstone course for the micromasters (The Reflective Dental Educator) are able to apply for the PgCert in Dental Education and, if successful, join a module two cohort in order to complete their award.

MicroMasters: Developing as a Dental Educator Note that all courses will include a scheduled webinar for verified students.		
	Key content	Formative assessment
Supervision essentials	Working with individual learners: the supervisory alliance Supporting transitions throughout education and training Forming a learning contract Adopting a coaching mindset	Reflective task 150 words: choose a key transition point for your learners (one that you support). What are the significant differences they encounter? What can you do to support this transition effectively?
Chairside teaching	Chairside teaching challenges and opportunities Approaches to teaching clinical skills Strategies for effective verbal feedback	Session plan: 150 words /simple diagram/table. Identify a core skill you wish to teach your learner(s). Produce a short, written plan showing how you will approach the task.
Workbased assessment	Key assessment principles Effective use of WPBA tools Strategies for effective written feedback	Skill rehearsal. Watch the short video (depicting someone teaching /doing a dental procedure). Have a

		go at writing some feedback for the learner (no more than 150 words).
Working with groups	Designing teaching sessions of different types Small group teaching strategies Working with larger groups of learners (face to face or online) Evaluating our teaching	Reflective writing (150 words): chose a recent teaching/supervision moment to reflect upon. What did you learn about yourself as a teacher? How does feedback from peers /learners support your position? How might you adapt /develop your approach for a future session with the same group or another group of learners.
CAPSTONE COURSE (verified learners only)		
The Reflective Dental Educator Webinars and supported on-line learning.	What is reflective practice? What do reflective practitioners do? What have you learned so far (key changes in thinking and practice) How do we write reflectively?	Formative: peer review of a planned teaching session (linked to the curriculum) or development of a completed session in light of student/stakeholder feedback. The plans should include a short reflective account (250 words max) offering a rationale for plans /planned changes. Summative: a 4000word assessment, in the reflective genre focussed on the design, delivery and evaluation of 3 hours of teaching /supervision activity. This must include a linked action plan for their future development as an educator in light of their experience and feedback from peers and/or learners.
MODULE TWO: Supporting Dental Learning (with traditional PgCert Dental Ed. intake)		
Module two: 3 contact days <i>Supporting dental learning</i> (30 credits)	Views on learning and how they shape our practice	Formative assessment: draft of summative assessment for tutor review and feedback.
	Teaching in the 'classroom': the influence of psychology (behaviourism,	Summative assessment: academic essay (4-5000 words) focussed on ways they are developing their practice as educators. This should build upon their action plan from module one
	Teaching in the clinical workplace: the influence of sociology and anthropology	

	(Socio-cultural theory, communities of practice)	/capstone course. Choose up to three theoretical tools that have the potential to inform /shape their practice.
	Assessing clinical learning: principles of programmatic assessment	

Students completing the certificate, would be eligible to apply for the PgDip in Dental Education, taught in parallel with the existing PgDip in Medical Education. This course runs over one academic year, with an October intake. Anticipated first intake October 2026-7 with the linked MSt in Dental Education being launched in October 2027-8.

Teaching methods

The **PgCert Dental Education** programme is delivered through a combination of in-person teaching sessions, synchronous and asynchronous approaches provided via the course virtual learning environment and web-based platform (zoom). This includes seven contact days, including synchronous in-person teaching. Examples of the type of teaching methods used include, but are not limited to, workshops, seminars, group discussions, online reading, group activities and discussion forums. Peer-to-peer learning forms an important element of course teaching.

The micromasters courses are delivered in partnership with EdX and are offered as flexible, on-line, standalone CPD courses under an umbrella title **Developing as a Dental Educator**. Those who wish to verify their learning undertake the capstone course, which includes peer-assessed formative and tutor-assessed summative assessments.

Micromasters courses will offer a blend of teaching and learning opportunities, including peer formative assessment activities. Typical methods include: pre-recorded micro-lectures, guided reading and discussion forums. Verified learners will have access to other resources, including quizzes or scenario based tasks and webinars.

The capstone course, **The Reflective Dental Educator**, is for verified learners only and offers the opportunity to review, and to reflect upon, their learning across completed micromasters courses. New content, focussed on understandings of reflective practice and how to write in the reflective genre, will be offered through webinars and supported peer on-line learning activity. The primary focus of this course is formative peer review (mandatory) and a summative assessment of 4000 words (see below).

Assessment methods (see tables above for overview)

The assessment strategy for this course combines formative and summative elements. Peer review and feedback is an integral element. The assessments are designed to ensure students can demonstrate achievement of all learning outcomes and that they are making strong connections between their learning on the course and their practice as dental educators. This approach to assessment design mitigates the assessment risks posed by the emergence of generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT. Other strategies include assessment tasks that build on regular use of a reflective learning log, linked to course specific learning events and requirements to contextualise their assessment activity, linking it explicitly to their own practice, using illustrative examples and exemplars (artefacts). It is also worth noting that plagiarism is a probity issue for healthcare professionals with significant sanctions. This is something students are very aware of.

There are two summative assessments, of equal weighting completed at the end of each module (or at the end of the capstone course is students have joined through the

micromasters route). Each summative is preceded by a formative assessment task, designed to help them develop their ideas and academic literacies.

Module one /Capstone course. There is a mandatory formative assessment task focussed on peer review of *either* a planned teaching session *or* a plan to develop a teaching session in light of student /stakeholder feedback. This is followed by the summative assessment task written in the reflective genre and has a word limit of 4500-55000 words.

The assessment focusses on the design, implementation and evaluation of up to three teaching sessions with one or more learners (to include feedback from learners and/or a peer observer). In total, this will be for up to 3 hours of teaching (so they might offer a plan for a 3 hour workshop/seminar, or for 3x 1hr tutorials or a mix of different teaching sessions such as 1 hr lecture, 1 hr skills teaching, 1 hr supervision). This should include an action plan for their future development as an educator.

Module two: there is an opportunity to submit a draft of work in progress to their tutor for formative assessment . The second summative assessment should build upon the action plan developed in the first summative task.

The second summative assessment requires learners to choose up to three learning theories / theoretical tools that have the potential to shape /inform the development of their practice. In other words, they are required to offer an educational rationale for the ways in which they are developing their practice as dental educators /leaders of dental education. We would expect them to make reference to learning (and assessment) literatures (including reference to primary literature/accounts) and clinical education literatures. This assessment should be grounded in their practice whilst showing a sound grasp of educational theory and principles. The assessment task is 4500-55000 words in length.

Entry and/or progression requirements

The programme is open to dental care professionals who have a relevant undergraduate degree and who are engaged in education and training activities commensurate with their level of experience and as is relevant to their professional roles and responsibilities. It is suitable for 'early career' educators as well as those with more experience.

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.

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.

Students on the programme are assigned a tutor who supports formative assessment activity and meets with them each module to support engagement with the course and address any issues arising.

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/>