

Programme Specification 2025-26

PGCert in MEDICAL 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>Medical Education</i>
UCAS code	N/A
HECoS code(s)	<i>[leave blank, will be completed centrally]</i>
Relevant QAA benchmark statement(s)	None'
Qualifications framework level	Level 7 (All PG and Masters)]
Date specification produced	November 2024

* Cognate Faculty endorsement provided by:

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.

All doctors have a professional obligation to contribute to the education and training of other doctors, medical students and other professionals allied to medicine working in the healthcare team (General Medical Council 1999). Doctors need to be prepared to oversee the work of less experienced colleagues and students.

Teaching skills are not innate and basic teaching skills training forms part of the undergraduate medical curriculum in Cambridge and in most medical schools. Doctors and other professionals allied to medicine that have special responsibilities to teach need to take steps to ensure that they develop and maintain their educational skills in order to fulfil their role as educators. Doctors also have a responsibility to assess and appraise their colleagues and need to be able to be both objective and honest when doing so.

This programme builds on expertise and experience to allow those involved in teaching Cambridge medical undergraduates, other medical students from outside the East of England region, and other healthcare professionals including dentists and nursing professionals to develop their knowledge and understanding and to develop as medical educators. The programme is designed to provide practical solutions to teaching undergraduates or postgraduates as individuals, small groups and larger groups. It will look at the theory behind teaching in medical settings and how these apply in real life situations. It is also designed to provide help in developing skills in giving feedback, appraisal and assessment.

Educational aims

The programme aims to:

1. Contribute to the commitment of the School of Clinical Medicine and the Faculty of Biology to the continuing professional development of clinical and pre-clinical staff involved in undergraduate and postgraduate medical education within an integrated clinical and teaching environment.
2. Develop and create a cohort of doctors and other professionals allied to medicine who will pursue and develop their roles as teachers in the field of medical education.
3. Expand the number of staff within the faculties who have specialist skills in teaching within the University and can demonstrate the University's commitment to meeting the standards of doctors and other allied professionals and to maintaining these at the highest level.
4. This postgraduate programme is open to medical educators (both medical and professionals allied to medicine) of undergraduate students as well as postgraduate tutors and supervisors within the UK as well as from around the world.
5. The programme aims to stimulate more inter-professional education.

Learning outcomes

Students who complete this programme successfully will have gained the skills and knowledge defined by The Higher Education Academy and The General Medical Council (and as adapted by The Academy of Medical Educators).

The Academy of Medical Educators guidance divides the skills and knowledge into a framework of seven themes. The proposed programme is designed to ensure that students (medical educators) are aware of these and for each one acquire the knowledge, skills and practice that underpin each of the seven framework areas as follows:

1. Ensuring safe and effective patient care through training
2. Establishing and maintaining an environment for learning
3. Teaching and assessing learning, and applying core theoretical principles to their own educational contexts
4. Supporting and monitoring educational progress
5. Guiding personal and professional development
6. Continuing professional development as an educator

Students will acquire through the course a basic grounding in each of these areas, which will be backed up by referral to the evidence base available in medical educational literature. The teaching is experiential and is designed to expose the students to not just theory but demonstration as to how it can be used. The students are required to maintain an educational log in electronic form where they can reflect on what they have learned as well as reflect on how they put this into practice. The Postgraduate Certificate has an important formative element of reflection, peer review.

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

Domain Based on AoME professional standards 2022	Intended Learning Outcomes: By the end of the course the student should be able to	Assessment All assignments are mandatory
EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE	▪ Write a literature review of key texts describing theoretical models relating to medical education ▪ Critically appraise and reflect on the effects of educational theory and how it applies to your role as medical educators	Term 1 Write a literature review demonstrating an understanding of key educational theories discussed on the course in terms of how they relate to your current/future work as a medical educator.
EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP	▪ Use appropriate theoretical educational models in your own practice as a teacher in health care settings ▪ Explain the role of statutory bodies and the regulation of medical educators ▪ Apply quality assurance strategies in your role as a medical educator ▪ Reflect on your contribution to the development of other people involved in the education of health care professionals within your local team, faculty or department	Term 2 Produce a teaching plan based on the student's own experience as a learner on the course and be prepared to present this and discuss it with their tutor and fellow course members. This plan needs to be submitted and presented to the tutors and peer group and is used for formative review. This assignment is not assessed summatively but formative feedback supports the Term 3 assignment.

Domain Based on AoME professional standards 2022	Intended Learning Outcomes: By the end of the course the student should be able to	Assessment All assignments are mandatory
DESIGN AND PLANNING OF LEARNING ACTIVITIES	▪ Plan and deliver teaching using a range of appropriate methods, concepts and resources ▪ Consider the needs of the learners in planning and delivery of teaching and assessment ▪ Create and evaluate intended learning outcomes for effective teaching and learning ▪ Respond to feedback, peer review and evaluation of the role of medical educator	Terms 1, 2 and 3 Throughout the course the student should keep reflective logs, evidencing their development as a learner on the course and as a teacher. Their log entries can take any format, but key entries should be uploaded onto the VLE ready for discussion with tutors at two meetings, one in Term 1 and one in Term 2. All log entries should be available for review by members of the course team. Journal entries are not marked but will provide material for the Term 3 assignment.
TEACHING AND SUPPORTING LEARNERS	▪ Use students' feedback and evaluation to develop their teaching ▪ Demonstrate the effective use of experiential learning when delivering teaching ▪ Facilitate your students' use and understanding of reflective practice ▪ Use reflective practice as a professional, as a student on the course and as a medical educator	Terms 1, 2 and 3 Reflective logs (see above)

EVALUATION OF TEACHING ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK TO LEARNERS	▪ Design, evaluate and enhance appropriate assessment of learning, aligned with intended learning outcomes ▪ Consider the merits of different types and methods of assessment and how they apply to different situations and learners ▪ Give effective feedback on learning using appropriate methods for the situation and type of learning ▪ Demonstrate how they have considered the resources, methods and learning experiences that they provide to meet the intended learning outcomes and the stage of their learners ▪ Combine personal, student and peer feedback to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching, and plan for enhancement	Term 3 Using their reflective logs and peer review, students identify a selection of teaching episodes which provide evidence of planning, delivery and assessment of learning, and that show how they have developed over the duration of the course. Write a reflective essay showing how they have considered particular theories in their planning, delivery and assessment of learning. Demonstrate how they gave effective and appropriate feedback, and how they have used student and peer feedback to consider their practice, and enhance it. Include evidence of reflection about how the learner has developed and will plan to develop further in their role as teacher in the future
---	--	--

Programme structure:

The Postgraduate Certificate is a one-year part-time M-level programme resulting in 60 FHEQ level-7 credits and the University of Cambridge award. There are three modules with significant additional between-module reflection, study and assignment work. The modules are structured as follows:

Michaelmas Term-

Module 1: Core skills in medical education

Topics to include	AoME agenda
Basic theory in medical education Principles of teaching with patients	Ensuring safe and effective patient care through training Establishing a safe and supportive learning environment
Applying core skills when teaching in clinical settings	Teaching and facilitating learning
Applying core skills when working with small groups	Teaching and facilitating learning
Applying core skills to learner's individual roles as educators.	Ensuring safe and effective patient care through training

Special groups to include, e.g.: GP registrars, hospital supervisors etc.	
4500 to 5500 word assignment	Summative assessment: Written assignment

Lent Term-

Module 2: Applying teaching skills

Topics to include	AoME agenda
Teaching about skills teaching and applying this to clinical reasoning	Ensuring safe and effective patient care through training
Teaching clinical examination	Ensuring safe and effective patient care through training
Applying core skills when working with larger groups, Effective lecturing and when teaching face to face and remotely	Teaching and facilitating learning
Applying skills to learner's individual roles as educators	Ensuring safe and effective patient care through training
Assignment	Mandatory but formative peer review of teaching plan in preparation for final assignment, this is presented to peers and the course tutors

Easter Term-

Module 3: The role of assessment, Feedback and Evaluation

Topics to include	AoME agenda
Principles of assessment Work-based assessment Assessing trainees in the workplace Principles of feedback	Enhancing learning through assessment, feedback and appraisal
Observing teaching Being an observer of teaching episode Giving feedback in practice	Enhancing learning through assessment, feedback and appraisal
Reflection on peer review process Reflection on giving feedback	Enhancing learning through assessment, feedback and appraisal
Evaluating teaching Reflection on the course	Evaluating teaching and reflective learning
4500-5500 word assignment	Summative assessment: Written assignment

Teaching methods

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

The programme is a blended programme whereby the majority of the teaching is delivered face to face but usually 3 days are delivered remotely using a virtual learning platform. The programme delivery face to face is workshop based and not lecture based and so recording of face-to-face sessions is not practicable however parts of the sessions delivered remotely are recorded but as the breakout facility is frequently used the recording cannot cover the whole of the teaching session. Due to large numbers in the workshops, we have found that synchronous remote delivery is not practicable.

Teaching sessions introduce concepts, conceptual frameworks and theory relating to the topics being covered and there is online material to complement each session to allow students to follow these in greater depth after the formal face-to-face sessions. There are also reflective online components and resources, which form part of the teaching material. The reflective components are designed to be interactive to encourage feedback from students and course tutors.

Periods of self-directed study and reading between face-to-face sessions are required and preparation for forthcoming sessions. This is enhanced through the programme's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

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. The volume of work required to complete the award shall be 9,000–12,000 words or the equivalent.

Students are assessed formatively throughout the three modules of the programme using a variety of techniques and interrelated strategies including evidence of regular reflection in their online reflective diary/blogs; demonstration of active participation in the programme will also be required. There is also a requirement for the students to take part in peer review of other students both as the observer and as the learner and then to provide a written reflection on that process.

In summary, formative (but mandatory) assessment consists of providing material uploaded to the ICE VLE, which demonstrates:

- Evidence of active participation in the course including an online reflective component
- Participation in peer-review process with evidence of this process
- A written teaching plan or action proposal at the end of Lent term, which demonstrates evidence of deeper investigation of one or two educational concepts and a plan for implementation of these in a teaching plan or action proposal.

A summative assessment in the form of:

- Two written assignments one at the end of Michaelmas term which is a literature review relating to the evidence and theoretical models applied to medical education and another at the conclusion of the course where the participants reflect on the application of theory, its effects on their teaching and their development as medical educators.

Assessors and examiners are appointed following standard procedures and assessment of the summative elements will follow the standard graduate-level procedures, with (moderating) external examination.

Entry and/or progression requirements

Applications are invited from doctors who have completed their Foundation 1 year of postgraduate training up to Consultant level. Doctors can apply from primary, secondary and tertiary care. Other health care professionals that are involved in teaching at undergraduate and postgraduate levels are also encouraged to apply. It is a requirement that potential applicants should have had at least one year of experience as a teacher prior to starting the course.

Eligible employees within health care settings are encouraged to apply especially where they have a role in training and appraising health-care professionals who are learning whilst working.

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.

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

The majority of students are already in full or part-time clinical employment. The majority continue in this employment but may increase their commitment to teaching allowing them to develop as Tutors, Directors of Clinical Studies and as members of Educational Deaneries at undergraduate and postgraduate level. Increasingly other applicants from health care settings allied to medicine are interested in applying especially those who have roles as educators in their specific clinical fields.

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/>