Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching in Higher Education

Module Handbook: Exploring Practice in Teaching and Learning (THE7001)

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Module leader:
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Introduction
Welcome to the first module of the Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching in Higher Education (PGCTHE). This module aims to improve your ability to operate as an effective teacher or facilitator of learning in higher education. It provides a vehicle for you to engage - as a reflective/critical practitioner - with different concepts, models and theories to inform your professional practice and therefore enhance your own students’ learning. The module also aims to develop intellectual and practical skills relevant to teaching and facilitating learning in higher education. Particular attention will be given to problem-solving, creativity and innovation, utilising technology to enhance student learning and academic writing.

The module covers areas of activity, core knowledge and professional values that are relevant to meeting Descriptor 1 of the United Kingdom Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) for teaching and supporting learning in higher education.¹

¹ For details see the Programme Handbook.
Learning Outcomes & the dimensions of the United Kingdom Professional Standard Framework (UKPSF) for teaching and supporting learning in higher education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>On successful completion of the module participants will be able to:</th>
<th>UKPSF Areas of Activity (A), Core Knowledge (K) Professional Values (V) engaged with:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Discuss the nature of the higher education environment within which they operate and critically analyse its influence on their practice.</td>
<td>A1 A2 K2 K3 V2 V4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Explain and critically analyse, drawing upon relevant literature, the factors influencing the students’ learning experience (both generally and in their subject) and how it impacts upon approaches to teaching and assessment, including the appropriate use of learning technologies.</td>
<td>A3 A4 A5 K1 K2 K3 K4 V3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Critically evaluate their practice utilising a collaborative approach that draws upon peer and student feedback and takes into account their personal and professional values and the values of others.</td>
<td>A5 K5 V1</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Demonstrate that they are able to identify and critically analyse different ways of improving their practice and their students’ learning.</td>
<td>A2 A4 A5 K1 K2 K4 V3 V4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Demonstrate the ability to keep to the assignment guidelines set out in the module and programme handbooks.</td>
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See the UKPSF (p. 3) for details of what the areas of activity, core knowledge and professional values include. This is available online at: [http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/documents/ukpsf/UKPSF_2011.pdf](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/documents/ukpsf/UKPSF_2011.pdf). A copy of the UKPSF is also available on Blackboard under ‘General Programme Information’.
Module content

The module covers the following topics:

- **The reflective practitioner**: The role of reflection in enhancing professional practice; different approaches to reflective practice; and the role of professional development in enhancing practice.

- **Understanding the higher education environment**: The economic, demographic, social, cultural and political context within which universities operate. This will be discussed at the macro, meso and micro level.

- **The academic/support role**: The nature of the different roles within higher education institutions and the relationship between teaching, research, service and student learning.

- **Student learning: theory to practice**: A critical review of different concepts, models and theories of student learning and achievement and the practical application of these to teaching and student support.

- **Innovative practice**: A critical review of innovative approaches to teaching and learning, including the application of technology enhanced learning.

Plan of face-to-face sessions

Information on the dates, times and rooms for face-to-face sessions are posted on Blackboard. Details of the content of sessions; essential and useful reading; and any other activities/exercises required for sessions are also included on Blackboard.
Teaching and learning strategies

The module utilises a range of approaches to teaching and learning, including the use of lectures, case studies, video and written material (i.e. articles, chapters from textbooks, etc.) and links to the World Wide Web (www). The module requires participation in face-to-face sessions delivered on a fortnightly basis. In the intervening period you are expected to engage with materials on Blackboard. These materials support and complement the face-to-face sessions.

The module encourages a collaborative learning environment in which participants share their experiences in order to facilitate a better understanding of their students and develop more effective teaching and assessment strategies. This will be facilitated by in-class and on-line discussions, group activities and peer review. You will be encouraged to create learning sets to facilitate reflection on your practice and to help you prepare for submitting your assignment.

The module uses writing activities to facilitate the learning process and prepare participants for their assignment. For example, in the early stages of the module you will be required to write a philosophy of teaching statement which will be discussed and reviewed by your Personal and Academic Tutor (PAT). You will also be encouraged to submit a draft of your assignment to your PAT for formative feedback on your academic writing.

Inclusive Learning

We aim to make the sessions accessible to everyone. If you require information in a different format (e.g. electronic copy, large print, etc.) or you need any other modifications please let the module leader know. Other support is also available (see the Programme Handbook for details of the type of support available from the SpLD Support Team).
Assessment

Task
You are required to reflect on, and critically review, an aspect of your practice. This could range from something very specific such as a particular lecture, seminar or workshop to the consideration of a series of interconnected activities (e.g. lectures and seminars relating to a particular topic you teach). You may also review activities such as supervising students on dissertations or placements. It is important that you evaluate whether the use of technology could enhance the practice you are critically reviewing.

It is expected that you will involve other people, such as your own students and peers, to help you reflect. You should keep evidence of this (in case it is asked for), but you do not have to include this in your assignment. From this critical review/reflection you should identify how you are going to improve the activity you focused upon. You should also set out any professional development needs arising from this review/reflection.

Your assignment should be no more than 5,000 words in length (including appendices and foot/end notes, but excluding the list of references).

Although it will not be marked you must also include your philosophy of teaching. You may of course refer to your philosophy of teaching in your assignment. The philosophy of teaching is not included in the 5,000 word count.

The assignment must meet all the module learning outcomes and the relevant UKPSF’s areas of activity, core knowledge and professional values.

Submission date: 26th April 2016
Submission requirements

Your assignment and statement of your philosophy of teaching should be submitted electronically as ONE document using Blackboard’s Grade Centre. You should also submit your assignment and philosophy of teaching to Turnitin.

Details about the format of assignments are set out in the programme handbook.

Please ensure you include the following at the front of your assignment:

- Name
- Student number
- E-mail address
- Module number and name

Always keep an electronic copy of every assignment you submit.
## Assessment criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning outcomes</th>
<th>Pass</th>
<th>Merit</th>
<th>Distinction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Discuss the nature of the higher education environment within which they operate and critically analyse its influence on their practice.</td>
<td>Identification of some of the key factors (economic, cultural, social, etc.) influencing practice, although some relevant factors may be omitted or not given sufficient attention. There will be a useful discussion of how these factors influence practice. There will be evidence of some attempt at adopting a critical approach.</td>
<td>The key factors (economic, cultural, social, etc.) influencing practice will be identified. There will be a good discussion of how these factors influence practice. This will include a critical approach with some pertinent comments made.</td>
<td>Excellent coverage of the factors influencing practice will be identified. A very well developed critical analysis of the way in which these factors influence practice will be incorporated into the assignment.</td>
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<p>| 2. Explain and critically analyse, drawing upon relevant literature, the factors influencing the students' learning experience (both generally and in their subject) and how it impacts upon approaches to teaching and assessment, including the appropriate use | The description of an aspect of practice will generally be succinct and understandable, but there may be one or two areas that would benefit from further and/or more explicit explanation. There may also be one or two areas where a more succinct approach could be adopted. A range of relevant reading from mainly high quality and up-to-date sources will be utilised. There will | The description of an aspect of practice will be succinct and understandable. A wide range of relevant, high quality and mainly up-to-date literature will be utilised and critically engaged with. There will be evidence of a very good understanding of the literature and the ability to synthesise different sources of information. Pertinent and useful | The description of the aspect of practice reflected upon will provide a clear and succinct picture of the aspect of practice to be discussed. An extensive range of relevant reading, adopting an interdisciplinary approach and utilising high quality and up-to-date sources will be utilised and critically engaged |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>of learning technologies.</th>
<th>be evidence of a good understanding of the literature, an appreciation of different perspectives and the ability to make useful links between theory and practice.</th>
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<td>links between theory, practice and student learning will be made.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ability to effectively synthesise disparate sources of information and make very effective, pertinent and expert links between theory, practice and student learning.</td>
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<td>3. Critically evaluate their practice utilising a collaborative approach that draws upon peer and student feedback and takes into account their personal and professional values and the values of others.</td>
<td>Use will be made of feedback from peers and students, although this could have been expanded upon.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>In interpreting feedback there will be some evidence that their personal and professional values have been considered and perhaps the values of others.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effective use will be made of feedback from peers and students.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>When interpreting feedback a reflexive approach that considers, not only their own values (personal and professional), but the values of others will be in evidence.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very good and extensive use will be made of peer and student feedback.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There will be evidence that a reflexive approach that takes into account not only their own values (personal and professional) but the inter-play between these and the values of others.</td>
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<tr>
<th>4. Demonstrate that they are able to identify and critically analyse different ways of improving their practice and their students’ learning.</th>
<th>The assignment will include a critical analysis of some of the ways in which this reflection will, in the future, benefit their practice and enhance their students’ learning.</th>
<th>The assignment will include a critical examination of a range of different options available to improve practice and student learning in the future. Some consideration of the decision-making processes involved in reaching a conclusion will be included.</th>
<th>The assignment will include a detailed and critical examination of a range of options to improve practice and student learning in the future. There will, in the range of options considered, be evidence of effective decision-making and creative thinking.</th>
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<tr>
<td>5. Demonstrate the ability to keep to the assignment guidelines set out in the module and programme handbooks.</td>
<td>The assignment will, with one or two exceptions, be professionally presented in line with the guidelines provided in the module and programme handbooks. This includes a requirement that the assignment should be no more than 5,000 words in length.</td>
<td>The assignment will, with one or two minor exceptions, be professionally presented in line with the guidelines provided in the module and programme handbooks. This includes a requirement that the assignment should be no more than 5,000 words in length.</td>
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Learning Resources

Textbooks, journal articles, etc.

Essential reading


Useful reading


Journals

British Educational Research Journal
Education and Training
Higher Education Quarterly
Journal of applied Research in Higher Education
Journal of Further and Higher Education
Journal of Higher Education
Reflective Practice
Research in Post-Compulsory Education
Studies in Higher Education
Teaching in Higher Education
Tertiary Education and Management

On-line resources

A range of on-line resources are accessible through Blackboard.