

Professional Masters Programme: Awards in Educational Assessment Leading to the Masters MA or MTeach in Educational Assessment

Last revised: 25th October, 2010

Educational assessment is something which is constantly in the news. The media implies there are issues surrounding the perceived “dumbing down” of examination content and concerns about the accuracy of examiners’ marking of public examinations.

This award will address these issues and many more.

Public examinations of one kind or another have been with us for well over 150 years. Today there is an almost bewildering choice of qualifications, GCSE, GCE, and IGCSE, BTEC, OCR Nationals the new 14-19 Diplomas and so on.

The system used for marking examinations has remained virtually unchanged for many years but there have been moves to try and put examining on a more professional footing. This led to the formation of the National Assessment Agency, working alongside the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), the founding of the Chartered Institute of Educational Assessors (CIEA) and the breaking up of QCA into the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency and OfQual, the Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator in April 2008.

Between them, these bodies contribute to our understanding of good practice in assessment. This programme links the CIEA vocational professional qualifications with the Bath Spa University PMP postgraduate awards in Educational Assessment.

Structure and content

You can gain a PG Cert (60 credits), PG Dip (120 credits) or Masters (MA or MTeach) in Educational Assessment. The Masters award requires you to have gained 90 credits linked to Educational Assessment and then to have undertaken Research and the Professional Parts 1 & 2 and the final Masters Research Project dissertation. See the generic PMP student handbook located on the CPD website at:

<http://www.bathspa.ac.uk/schools/education/cpd/default.asp>

The part-time flexible structure of the programme, its duration and the study hours are designed to accommodate the needs of professional teachers and educators that we recognise as having substantial parallel work commitments.

The modules offered are:

EA7001 Introduction to Educational Assessment

This module focuses on the development of public examinations and considers the role of government, regulators and the awarding bodies. It will also look at how examinations are conducted and the steps which are taken to ensure fairness and accuracy in marking. The changing role of coursework, first widely introduced as part

of GCSE from 1986 is looked at. The relevance of coursework in a variety of subjects will be considered. Concerns about plagiarism and collusion have led to a review of coursework in all subject areas and, in some cases, coursework has been scrapped altogether. This unit will look at how the concerns about plagiarism and collusion have affected the types of assessment available at NQF Levels 1, 2 and 3.

EA7002 Current Initiatives in Educational Assessment

This module builds on the previous one, but considers in depth the new qualifications that have become available, e.g. new syllabuses for GCSE and GCE and the introduction of the 14-19 Diplomas since September 2008. It will also look at the role of the Chartered Educational Assessor. It will investigate the design of assessment tools and their delivery, the construction of mark schemes, and the interpretation of test data. The module will not be confined to public examinations; and considers how good practice can be incorporated into assessment in general. Areas such as summative and formative assessment, including the role of Assessment for Learning are also reviewed in the context of preparing students for high stakes assessment.

EA7003 Theory and Practice: the Future of Educational Assessment

This module looks at the future of educational assessment. By its very nature it is not possible to be definitive here as assessment policy undergoes political change. However, the module will cover topics such as controlled assessment, e-assessment, work-based learning assessment for CPD training and so on.

Chartered Institute of Educational Assessors (CIEA)

Completing PMP postgraduate Educational Assessment Awards provides a fast-track route to Associate, Member and Fellow recognition status by the CIEA with the right to use the appropriate post-nominal letters. The level is determined by the Award gained from study, whereupon successful completion allows application for Associate Member for a PG Cert, full Member for a PG Dip and Fellowship for those achieving either an MA or MTeach – the MTeach registration and award available for students with or achieving Chartered Educational Assessor status .

General Professional Masters Programme enquiries can be made *via* the CPD Office.

The Modules and Award Leader for Educational Assessment is Cathy McKenna.

Specialist award and module enquiry details are available *via* contacting Cathy:

Telephone consultation (*after* 7pm – or answer phone message): 01206 391622.

Email contacts: ca_mckenna@hotmail.com or cmckenna@colne.essex.sch.uk

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

How is this award delivered?

This award is flexibly delivered by supervised distance learning. After successful registration and receipt of a Welcome letter and learning materials from the CPD office you are required to contact Cathy to negotiate and arrange an initial module induction telephone tutorial. You will then work through the required professional learning tasks given in the flexible learning module handbook and submit these (where indicated) as email postings to Cathy as the module tutor. These learning tasks and other information are given in the module handbook and this work builds into the final assessed assignment, which is then submitted for marking both electronically and as a hard copy *via* the CPD office located in Corsham, Wiltshire. Cathy will give you further instructions on how to do this nearer the time.

How do I Register and pay for modules?

This is done online via the PMP student portal. Please contact the module tutor for a guidance sheet and exact module code project number to use for online enrolment.

Payment can be made online with a credit card, or you may opt to give details of a sponsor, e.g. your employer, school, Local Authority etc. to be invoiced.

For troubleshooting any problems with enrolment please contact the CPD office:
Telephone: (01225) 875593.
cpdadmin@bathspa.ac.uk.

Can I get Recognition of Accredited Prior Certificated Learning (APL)?

Yes, in some cases, but have an initial conversation with your Award Leader Cathy McKenna before requesting and submitting an APL form with your evidence (the APL form is available by email either from Cathy or the CPD office). APL would generally be given for 30 Level 6 credits for either a recent PGCE or Chartered Educational Assessor recognition by the CIEA. Chartered Educational Assessors can also opt to enrol for an MTeach award in Educational Assessment.

What are the module start dates for AY 2010-2011?

All modules have ongoing flexible start dates until the end of June 2011:

- EA7001 – from 1st October 2010
- EA7002 – from 1st October 2010
- EA7003 - from mid-November 2010 (Check with Cathy *via* email given above)

How long will it take for materials to be delivered to me?

Module learning materials will be available shortly after online enrolment has been processed by Registry (1-2 weeks). These will be posted in hard copy format with a general Welcome letter to the enrolled student with any other instructions.

How is work assessed and submitted for marking?

There are no formal written summative exams and each module is formatively assessed by coursework. This typically involves an essay of 2,500 words for a 15 credit module and 5,000 words for a 30 credit module. Assessment for these modules is based on completing assignments related to professional learning tasks.

Further details on assessment and marking policy are available from the generic PMP student handbook from the CPD website at:

<http://www.bathspa.ac.uk/schools/education/cpd/default.asp>

Who is the Educational Assessment Award and Modules Leader?

Mrs Cathy McKenna

See Cathy's contact details above.

What happens when I get to 90 credits?

You are ready to start the research methods modules after you receive 90 credits of modules and/or APL recognition. At this stage you can flexibly enroll onto PR7101 Research and the Professional: Part 1. Please contact Dr Steve Coombs for further instructions on how to do this: s.coombs@bathspa.ac.uk