

# EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT

## Master's (MA)

Educational assessment is something which is constantly in the news. There are issues surrounding the authenticity of coursework, the perceived “dumbing down” of examination content and concerns about the accuracy of examiners’ marking of public examinations.

This new 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, GCSE Applied, the new Vocational 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 has led to the formation of the National Assessment Agency, working alongside the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 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 qualifications with the award in Educational Assessment.

### Structure and content

You can gain a Postgraduate Certificate (60 credits), Postgraduate Diploma (120 credits) or Master’s award (MA or MTeach) in Educational Assessment. The Master’s award requires you to have gained 90 credits linked to Educational Assessment and then to have undertaken Research and the Professional Part 1 & 2 and the Master’s Research Project.

The part-time structure of the Educational Assessment programme, its duration and the contact hours are designed to accommodate professional teachers and educators with substantial commitments and workload.

The modules offered are:

#### Introduction to Educational Assessment

This module focuses on the development of public examinations and will look at 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 role of coursework, first widely introduced as part of GCSE from 1986 is looked at closely. 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 plagiarism and collusion might be prevented and the steps which have

been taken by QCA in this respect.

#### Current Initiatives in Educational Assessment

This module will build on the previous one, but will look in depth at the new qualifications which have become available, eg new syllabuses for GCSE and GCE and the introduction of Specialised Diplomas from 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 but will look at how good practice can be incorporated into assessment in general, both summative and formative. Completion of this module will provide an opportunity to become a Member of the Chartered Institute of Educational Assessors.

#### 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 things are changing all the time, but it will cover topics such as controlled assessment, e-assessment, assessment in the workplace and so on.

#### Award Leader

For further information please contact Geoff White.

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