

Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice: **Written Statement on Assessment**

The Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP) comprises three 20 credit modules which all need to be passed for satisfactory completion of the programme. Each module is subject to a different attendance requirement and approach to assessment as follows:

Module 1 – *Learning, Teaching and Assessment in Higher Education*

Attendance Requirement:

Eleven workshops, two online activities and a teaching observation

Summative Assessment:

Critical Experience Analysis (CEA) Portfolio (2,500 words) and associated viva (lasting up to one hour). Satisfactory completion of both the module 1 assessment and the specified minimal attendance is required before submission of the module 2 assessment is permissible.

Formative Assessment:

Participants are encouraged to submit a sample of their CEA Portfolio to their academic supervisor for formative feedback prior to summative submission.

Assessment Criteria:

Summative assessment of the participants' work will be undertaken only after the viva has taken place. Assessment will involve combining the CEA portfolio and the proceedings of the CEA viva discussion and judging them holistically against the following criteria:

Clear and coherent coverage of all five Module 1 learning outcomes	Assessors will expect the portfolio to be clearly and appropriately organised and to include a genuine CEA attempt for each of the module's five learning outcomes although not all five will necessarily be considered during the viva. The written (portfolio) and spoken (viva) English should be of a good standard.
The ability to reflect effectively and convincingly upon practice	Assessors will expect the reflection to be credible, involving a genuine consideration of practice where conclusions are reasonable and logically derived from the preceding analysis of experience.
The capacity to recognize and consider the needs of students in teaching	Assessors will be looking for evidence that participants' practice has been influenced, to an appropriate level, by explicit consideration of the students that they are teaching.
The capacity to adopt approaches that are appropriate to the subject matter and level of learning	Assessors will expect to see that participants' approaches to teaching have taken account of, and are appropriate to, the specific nature of the subject matter being covered and the level at which it is being taught.
The ability, as appropriate, to evaluate the applicability of higher education learning and teaching theory to practice	Assessors will not necessarily expect participants to have engaged fully with educational literature and research in the CEA portfolio, but they will expect an awareness, and ability to consider the relevance, of key theories addressed within the core PGCAP sessions as and when appropriate.

Module 2 – *Developing Academic Practice*

Attendance Requirement:

Three workshops, three online activities and a reciprocated teaching observation

Summative Assessment:

Reflective Portfolio on Work-Based Practice (3,500 words), addressing participants' personal development in the core areas of their role. Satisfactory completion of both the module 2 assessment and specified minimal attendance is required before submission of the module 3 assessment is permissible.

Formative Assessment:

Participants are encouraged to submit a sample of their Reflective Portfolio to their academic supervisor for formative feedback prior to summative submission. In addition to this, participants will receive formative feedback from the programme director and peers on the programme through the completion of two online activities, the 'products' of which are intended to be incorporated within their portfolios.

Assessment Criteria:

In order to progress through PGCAP module 2 participants will need to demonstrate:

Clear and coherent coverage of three Module 2 learning outcomes (including learning outcome 1)	Assessors will expect the portfolio to be well organised and to address the requisite number of learning outcomes in depth through reflection and the effective integration of evidence. The written English should be of a good standard.
The ability to be consistently and critically reflexive	As well as being credible, reflection in the Module 2 portfolio should be critical. It should not rely on description or unsupported statements; it should demonstrate an awareness of how practice is situated in broader (social, historical, economic, political and policy) issues and further it should provide evidence of an ability to identify personal assumptions on practice and to consider whether these are justifiable.
The capacity to implement change and develop as a result of effective evaluation of practice	Assessors will be looking for a genuine engagement with evaluation and a willingness to change practice when appropriate. This will include discussion of the ways participants have considered changing, or actually have introduced change, why and what the intended benefit of the change was.
The ability to engage with, and evaluate the usefulness of, relevant research, theory and literature in their practice	Participants must be able to demonstrate that they are aware of relevant generic / discipline-specific pedagogical theory, research and literature and are able to evaluate its applicability and / or accuracy with relation to their own experience. This need not occur continuously throughout the portfolio, but it must be evident and well integrated in at least learning outcome 1.

Module 3 – *Planning for Career Progression*

Attendance Requirement:

Two workshops and one online activity

Participants have a choice of two assessments depending upon whether they are seeking accreditation by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) or not. Satisfactory completion of one of these assessments and the

specified minimal attendance is required before participants will be considered to have completed the programme.

Non-NMC Assessment

Summative Assessment:

A Strategic Career Plan (2,000 words), addressing participant future development in their role.

Formative Assessment:

Participants are encouraged to submit a sample of their Strategic Plan to their academic supervisor for formative feedback prior to summative submission.

Assessment Criteria

To pass module 3 participants' strategic plan assessment must demonstrate:

Clear and coherent structure and communication	It is expected that participants may exercise considerable flexibility in constructing their strategic plan. However, a good standard of English and a logical and coherent structure is expected throughout.
An ability to engage with critical self-evaluation of professional practice	Assessors will be looking for participants to reflect honestly upon both their current strengths and weaknesses with regard to their professional practice generally and with regard to one strand of practice in particular.
A clear vision and understanding of career development opportunities and obstacles within their discipline / field of work	Assessors will expect participants to show personal insight into the nature of their particular discipline / field of work in terms of how they may progress their career within it and what the potential difficulties with doing so may be. Where appropriate, participants might also choose to discuss the opportunities and obstacles they envisage characterise career progression at the University of York.
A realistic and achievable strategy for medium term personal and professional development	It is to be anticipated that the strategies participants propose for moving along a career trajectory will be highly personalised. However, assessors will expect to see that the plan for development appears reasonable, credible and is clearly thought through.

NMC Assessment

Summative Assessment:

A Learning Contract through which participants will be supported in pursuing certain goals to further develop their competence, role and expertise.

Formative Assessment:

Participants are encouraged to submit a sample of their Strategic Plan to their NMC accredited facilitator for formative feedback prior to summative submission.

Assessment Criteria:

To pass the NMC-accredited module 3 assessment, participants must:

- 1. complete the six outcomes as set out in the Learning Contract Handbook**
- 2. provide evidence to support each outcome**
- 3. organise and present the material in a competent and clear manner**
- 4. demonstrate enhancement of professional skills in the planning and execution of the activities appropriate to each outcome**

5. employ a high standard of English grammar and spelling

Marking Procedures

PGCAP operates to a Pass/Fail marking scheme only; there is no provision in any of the assessments for marking to a 100-point scale. Given the nature of PGCAP assessment, marking is not undertaken anonymously. However, all written submissions are subject to blind double-marking by two members of the Board of Studies for Academic Practice (all NMC scripts are marked by at least one NMC accredited marker). The viva element of module 1 will involve both markers of the CEA portfolio. In the event that a decision as to whether an assessment is a pass or fail cannot be resolved between the two markers, the submission will be further moderated by a third marker whose judgement will be final. All marks are collated centrally by the programme administrator and entered onto the programme database. Participants are informed within six weeks of submission of the result of the assessment although these results remain subject to ratification by the PGCAP Exam Board.

External Examiner and Exam Board

All individuals from the Board of Studies involved in PGCAP assessment, and additionally the Board of Studies secretary, will convene in the last week of the Autumn term to standardise marks and agree recommended grades to be forwarded to the Board of Examiners. The formal PGCAP Board of Examiners comprises these individuals and additionally the PGCAP External Examiner and NMC External Examiner. The External Examiners have responsibility for advising on programme standards and on the fairness and equity of assessment systems and marking. This will involve inspection of a sample of participant portfolios in advance of the Board of Examiners' meeting. The PGCAP Board of Examiners, which meets once every academic year in the last week of the autumn term, will consider all assessment results anonymously.

Potential External Examiners are identified by the Programme Director and proposed to the Board of Studies. The Board of Studies will prioritise the proposals and potential nominees will be approached in order of preference. Once an acceptance has been secured the Board of Studies will inform the Examinations Office.

Resubmission

If, after an assessment has been submitted and marked, it is decided any of the criteria have not been sufficiently addressed to allow it to pass and it receives a 'fail' grade, the participant will receive an explanatory report. On receiving this feedback, participants will be offered a resubmission deadline providing they have not been offered a resubmission opportunity for an earlier failed module. If, after the resubmission, the assessment is still judged unsatisfactory, this will constitute a final fail of the module in question.

Please note that the resubmission opportunity is not offered to participants who fail to submit their assessment by the specified deadline, or an agreed extension date, unless mitigating circumstances explaining the lack of submission are provided and accepted by the Board of Studies.

Mitigating Circumstances

In the event that a participant feels there are personal circumstances, medical or other, that may impact upon their ability to successfully complete PGCAP assessment they should make contact with their supervisor as soon as possible. Any consideration of mitigating circumstances will normally require some form of evidence to be produced to substantiate the claim. This may result in the participant being encouraged to apply for an extension or a leave of absence rather than submit work they feel is sub-standard. If work is submitted it will be assessed without regard to the submitted mitigating

circumstances. These circumstances will subsequently be considered by a special meeting of the Board of Examiners and a decision made as to what to recommend to the formal Board of Examiners' meeting in December.

If a participant is wishing to have mitigating circumstances taken into account that were not disclosed before the submission of a piece of assessment, it is essential that they discuss the issue(s) with their supervisor prior to the Board of Examiners meeting in December. Appropriate evidence should be produced to support the claim for mitigating circumstances. The application will be considered by a special meeting of the Board of Examiners and a decision made as to what to recommend to the formal Board of Examiners meeting in December. The normal compensation following acceptance of mitigating circumstances that are disclosed after the date of assessment submission is for the participant to be permitted to resubmit the work in question.

Appeals

Where an assessment submission is judged a fail by the examiners, participants do have the right of appeal in accordance with University Regulation 2.9:

<http://www.york.ac.uk/admin/aso/ordreg/r2.htm#2.9>

Timing of Assessment Submission and Resubmission

The deadlines for the submission of assessment are published annually in programme handbook and are as following:

	Submission Date	Viva Date	Resubmission Date
Module 1 CEA Portfolio and Viva	Last Wednesday of September (Year 1)	By 1 st Wednesday of November (year 2)	Last Wednesday of November (Year 2)
Module 2 Academic Practice Portfolio	First Wednesday of Summer Term (Year 2)		Last Wednesday of September (Year 2)
Module 3 Strategic Career Plan (two-year completion)	Last Wednesday of September (Year 2)		Last Wednesday of November (Year 3)
Module 3 Strategic Career Plan (three-year completion)	First Wednesday of Summer Term (Year 3)		Last Wednesday of September (Year 3)

Assessments are submitted to the programme administrator, Professional and Organisational Development, Heslington Hall and should be accompanied by an assessment cover sheet which includes a tear-off receipt.

Because PGCAP operates a pass/fail grading scheme there is no provision for penalising late submissions through the deduction of a percentage of marks and therefore the above deadlines are absolute. Any submission received after these deadlines will be awarded a fail unless mitigating circumstances are presented.

It is assumed that most participants will complete the programme in two years; however, where it proves necessary, it is possible to extend into a third year for the submission of the module 3 assessment (NMC candidates must finish in two years).

Extensions

Although it is expected that participants will operate to the deadlines of the programme, it is recognised that situations can arise which may on occasion make this difficult. In this situation, extensions to submission deadlines can be negotiated within a specified framework.

- Participants should formally submit for an extension using the form *Request for Extension to Assessment Submission Date* (available from the PGCAP VLE site) to the Programme Administrator.
- The Board of Studies has responsibility for accepting or rejecting the application and will inform the participant once a decision has been made. An extension request will not normally exceed 20 working days. If a participant feels they need a longer extension they should consider whether applying for a leave of absence would be more appropriate.

Academic Misconduct

Participants are made aware of general issues surrounding academic misconduct in the *Principles of Assessment* session on PGCAP. Issues relating to specific module assessment tasks are addressed in each module introductory session. Participants are required to provide signed confirmation for each piece of submitted assessment that all unacknowledged work therein contained is original and their own. Where cases of academic misconduct are suspected they will be addressed in accordance with University regulation 5.4.

Accredited Prior (Experiential) Learning

It is recognised that on occasion participants' prior experience or learning may mean that attendance at particular PGCAP workshops is inappropriate. In these situations participants may apply for accredited prior (experiential) learning (AP(E)L) to the Board of Studies using the *AP(E)L Application* form (available from the PGCAP VLE site).

On rare occasions it may be that a participant feels their experience / learning should be acknowledged through partial exemption of one or part of one of the PGCAP assessments. In these situations the participant will be required to demonstrate how their prior experience and/or learning maps onto relevant PGCAP learning outcomes to a satisfactory standard. It is advisable to contact the programme director for advice in these circumstances.