

MA/Postgraduate Diploma in Career Education, Information and Guidance in Higher Education

For students entering in 2007-8

Awarding Institution: University of Reading

Teaching Institution: Faculty of Arts and Humanities, School of Continuing Education

Programme length: Flexible delivery up to 72 months

Date of specification: March 2007

Programme Director: Mr P T McCash

Board of Studies: Career Guidance Programmes

Accreditation: Not applicable

Summary of programme aims

A version of this course has been available since 1992 through a unique collaboration between the University and the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS). The course provides bespoke professional development for careers practitioners working in universities and colleges across the higher education sector in the UK and Ireland. It is designed to integrate theory and practice in the field of career education, information and guidance in higher education.

Postgraduate diploma in career education, information and guidance in higher education

Designed for those who possess a minimum of three years relevant experience. It is expected, by AGCAS, that the Postgraduate Diploma will become the benchmark qualification for careers professionals in higher education.

MA in career education, information and guidance in higher education

The dissertation phase of the MA is designed for those who have completed the Diploma, and enables the student to make an original contribution to research underpinning the profession. Students are free to choose a dissertation topic of their own in conjunction with their supervisor. If they are in receipt of an AGCAS/HECSU (Higher Education Careers Service Unit) bursary, the topic may need to be approved by the AGCAS Research and Innovation Group.

Transferable skills

Students will be expected to enhance their skills in written communication and career development. Specific transferable skills are described in relevant module specifications and include: working with others, verbal communication and numerical skills.

Programme content

The programme is designed to offer progression from individual modules through to the MA dissertation. There are five awards possible: individual module; post-experience certificate; post-experience diploma; postgraduate diploma and MA. The two post-experience awards are legacy qualifications that represent an earlier phase in the evolution of the courses. Remaining students will continue to be awarded these qualifications and new entrants will no longer be accepted for either award from 2007/8 academic year onwards.

Individual module

Students can enrol upon individual modules in order to support a particular area of professional development and in order to provide an introduction to the courses available. Individual modules of 10 and 20 credits can be awarded.

Post-experience certificate (discontinued)

An award of 40 level M credits consisting of four 10 credit modules: two core modules and two of the optional modules from Table 1.

Table 1

Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Level
	Core		
Tba	Challenges of career work in higher education (foundation)	10	M
Tba	Theories of career development and models of guidance (foundation)	10	M
	Optional		
Tba	Group work (foundation)	10	M
Tba	Information management (foundation)	10	M
Tba	Advice and guidance skills (foundation)	10	M
Tba	Employer relations (foundation)	10	M

Post-experience diploma (discontinued)

An award of 80 level M credits consisting of four 20 credit modules: two core modules (CDMF01 and CDMF02) in Table 2, and two optional modules selected from either optional category in Table 2. Note that students wishing to progress to the MA dissertation phase must complete the Special Study (CDMF09) in Table 2.

Postgraduate diploma

An award of 120 level M credits consisting of six 20 credit modules: two core modules from the core list in Table 2 (CDMF01 and CDMF02 only), one module from the role-related options list and three modules from any category in Table 2. Note that students wishing to progress to the MA dissertation phase must complete the Special Study (CDMF09) in Table 2.

MA

An award of 180 level M credits. The Special Study (CDMF09) must be completed either as part of the Diploma or in addition to it in order to progress to the dissertation phase. There are three routes to complete this award:

1/ Completion of the 120 credit Postgraduate Diploma (CEIGHE) and a 60 level M credit dissertation.

2/ Completion of the 80 credit Post-experience Diploma (CEIGHE) and a 100 level M credit dissertation (CDMF14).

3/ Completion of the 80 credit Post-experience Diploma (CEIGHE), two further modules from Table 2 (one of which must be the Special Study CDMF09) and a 60 level M credit dissertation (CDMF13).

Table 2

Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Level
	Core		
CDMF01	Challenges of career work in higher education	20	M
CDMF09	Special study	20	M
CDMF02	Theories of career development and models of guidance	20	M
	Optional (role-related)		
CDMF03	Advanced guidance skills	20	M
CDMF04	Information management	20	M
CDMF06	Group work	20	M
CDMF05	Career development learning (programme design)	20	M

CDMF18	Employer relations	20	M
	<i>Optional (general)</i>	20	M
CDMF08	Effective communication	20	M
CDMF10	Labour market intelligence	20	M
CDMF07	Psychometric assessment	20	M
CDMF11	Training and coaching	20	M
CDMF12	Enhancing the quality of your service	20	M
CDMF19	Equal opportunities	20	M
CDMF20	Working with higher education students in further education colleges	20	M
CDMF21	Managing change	20	M
CDMF13	Dissertation A	60	M
CDMF14	Dissertation B	100	M

Part-time/Modular arrangements

The course is only offered on a part-time distance learning basis.

Progression requirements

Progression is designed to take place from individual module through to Diploma and Masters via the Postgraduate Certificate (see relevant programme specification). Note that students wishing to progress to the MA dissertation phase must complete the Special Study (CDMF09) in Table 2.

The course is designed to be flexible in order to meet the needs of students working in a range of HE contexts therefore it is not usually necessary to pass a module in order to register for another module. It is normally expected that the student will complete the Diploma within 60 months and this will be the limit specified in publicity materials. Pre-entry and on-course advice is available from the course team.

Summary of teaching and assessment

A range of distance learning teaching methods are used including: written learning materials, tutorials, supervision and, in some cases, residential courses. Assessment is via course work, e.g. written assignment or dissertation.

The University's taught postgraduate marks classification is as follows:

<u>Mark</u>	<u>Interpretation</u>
70 – 100%	Distinction
60 – 69%	Merit
50 – 59%	Good standard (Pass)
<u>Failing categories:</u>	
40 – 49%	Work below threshold standard
0 – 39%	Unsatisfactory work

For Masters degree

To pass the Masters degree students must gain an average mark of 50 or more overall in modules worth 180 credits including a mark of 50 or more for the Dissertation *and have no mark below 40*. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 50 must not exceed 30 credits.

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more overall including a mark of 70 or more for the Dissertation will be eligible for a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more overall including a mark of 60 or more for the dissertation will be eligible for a Merit.

For Postgraduate diploma

To pass the Postgraduate Diploma students must gain an average mark of 50 or more in modules worth 120 credits and have no mark below 40. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 50 must not exceed 30 credits.

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more will be eligible for the award of a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more will be eligible for a Merit.

For Post-experience diploma

To pass the Post-experience Diploma students must gain an average mark of 50 or more in modules worth 80 credits and have no mark below 40.

For Post-experience certificate

To pass the Post-experience Certificate students must gain an average mark of 50 or more in modules worth 40 credits and have no mark below 40.

Admission requirements

The standard academic entry requirement is a degree of any discipline however non-graduates with relevant experience and/or an equivalent qualification will be considered.

- The *Postgraduate diploma* is suitable for candidates who possess a minimum of three years relevant experience. Direct entry is possible for those individuals lacking the three years experience but who have obtained a Postgraduate Diploma in Career Guidance or other equivalent professional qualification.
- Entry to the *MA* is dependent on completion of the *Diploma* programme.
- Evidence must be provided, usually through a reference from the line manager, of institutional support for the student's course of study.

Students wishing to seek APL/APEL must provide appropriate evidence using the University procedure. APL/APEL is normally awarded up to a maximum of 40 credits as part of the Postgraduate Diploma. Credit transfer is possible up to a maximum of 60 credits for those candidates progressing to the MA and holding directly equivalent qualifications such as a Postgraduate Diploma in Career Guidance.

Admissions Tutor: Mr P T McCash

Support for students and their learning

University support for students and their learning is provided via two routes:

1/ Learning support includes the University Library, which is located across three sites, holds over a million volumes, subscribes to around 4,000 current periodicals, has a range of electronic sources of information, and houses the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@IL) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. The electronic journal collection is of particular value to the distance learning students on this programme. Learning support additionally extends to IT Services, which provides several hundred computers for student use.

2/ Student guidance and welfare support is provided by the Programme Director, the Career Advisory Service, the University Special Needs Advisor, Study Advisors, and the Students' Union.

Career prospects

Students are already employed in career work in higher education in the UK and/or Ireland. The course is part of their continuing professional development and is designed to enable career progression within and/or beyond existing roles.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

Not applicable.

Educational aims of the programme

The overall aim of the Postgraduate Diploma/MA (CEIGHE) is to provide a course of education and training that will enable students to understand, evaluate and undertake the work of career practitioners within the higher education sector in the UK and Ireland. The course was originally focused on the work of career advisers, but over time it has evolved to encompass a range of roles including: career information officers, career educators and employer liaison professionals. The course is also designed to develop career work as a research-based profession through the Special Study and Dissertation modules. In particular, the MA dissertation provides students with an opportunity to make an original contribution to the professional discipline.

In order to promote the integration of theory and practice, the following methodology is used to underpin the design and delivery of the curriculum:

- Links between theory and practice are explored and developed through each module.
- Opportunities are provided for reflective practice in both group and individual tutorial settings.
- Students are able to record evidence of their development through the completion of learning review logs and/or distance learning materials.

Through these methods students are expected to become familiar with the research literature and key issues relating to career education, information and guidance in higher education.

Programme outcomes

Knowledge and understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding:

All students will develop the following knowledge and understanding:

- 1) Theories of career development relevant to career work in higher education.
- 2) The social, political and economic challenges of working in higher education career services.
- 3) The integration of theory and practice through a module choices related to their particular role in higher education career work.

Students progressing to the MA dissertation will, in addition, develop the following knowledge and understanding:

- 4) The research methods required to complete a dissertation.
- 5) Completion of a research topic within the field of career work in higher education.
- 6) Awareness of the relevant literature related to the research topic.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Students will build on their existing knowledge and understanding of career education, information and guidance in higher education via a range of teaching methods including: distance learning materials, workshops, residential courses, tutorials and supervision sessions. Students will be directed to selected texts and journal articles for further study. For example, students studying the *Theories of Career Development* module will be supported by a day-long Understanding Theories workshop and comprehensive distance learning materials.

Students will attend a research methods workshop. Research methods will be illustrated through: case studies, visiting speakers and relevant texts.

Assessment

Assessment of knowledge and understanding will include written assignments such as reports, essays, dissertation and/or accreditation of prior learning. For instance, formative assessment of theoretical knowledge may involve completion of introductory exercises involving responses to activities in a workbook.

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills

All students will be able to:

- 1) Undertake analytical and evaluative assessment.
- 2) Demonstrate independence of thought.
- 3) Show critical awareness of issues relating to higher education careers work.
- 4) Show sensitivity to issues of equality.
- 5) Undertake research relevant to role.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The intellectual skills required will be embedded in the module learning outcomes. Teaching of these skills will be undertaken via distance learning materials, residential courses, individual workshops and distance tuition via email and telephone contact.

For example, as part of the *Employer Relations* module teaching materials, the student will research relevant employers and labour markets. This will involve use of relevant web sites and/or field work.

Assessment

Assessment of intellectual skills will include written assignments such as essays, reports, dissertation and/or accreditation of prior learning. For example, report-writing is often used as a form of assessment in the *Challenges* and *Employer Relations* modules.

C. Practical skills

All students will be able to:

- 1) Demonstrate professional skills in an appropriate area.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

All students are encouraged to integrate current work experiences within their coursework. Practical skills teaching will be undertaken via distance learning materials, residential courses, individual workshops and distance tuition via email and telephone.

In order to develop the necessary practical skills, professional skills training will be provided through residential courses and workshops. For example, the *Guidance Skills* module will be supported by a 5 day residential programme involving a range of activities including: guidance models presentation; guidance skills in practice workshop; and role plays.

Assessment

Depending on the route chosen, students will be required to present some aspect of their professional role for assessment. For example, the assessment used in *Guidance Skills* could involve the production of an audiotape or DVD with an accompanying critique of a career guidance interviewing session.

D. Transferable skills

All students will be able to:

- 1) Communicate in writing.
- 2) Undertake career development.
- 3) Demonstrate specific transferable skills depending on options chosen. Individual transferable skills are embedded in relevant individual module specifications and include: working with others, verbal communication and numerical skills.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

In order to develop the necessary transferable skills, skills training will be provided through residential courses, workshops and tutorials. For example, the *Training and Coaching* module will involve training in developing professional practice and career development.

Assessment

Depending on the route chosen, assessment will include: written assignments, practical assignments, dissertation and/or accreditation of prior learning. Assessment of specific transferable skills will vary according to the individual module. For instance, students on the *Training and Coaching* module will complete a reflective diary based on a coaching or mentoring relationship.

At course level, students will facilitate their career development as they progress from Diploma to Masters within the programme.

Please note - This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module description and in the programme handbook. The University reserves the right to modify this specification in unforeseen circumstances, or where the process of academic development and feedback from students, quality assurance processes or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.