

## Thinking about studying the Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning (PGCertTL), or Course 1: Learning to Learn?

### What is the Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning (PGCertTL)?

The Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning (PGCertTL) is a Masters' level programme which provides a foundation in learning and teaching theory and practice. Many universities offer this type of programme for teaching staff and consider it a key stage in your early teaching career. It is often part of probation for staff. Successful completion of the PGCertTL leads to Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy. The PGCertTL replaces the previous Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching (PGCILT).

### What is Course 1: Learning to Learn?

Course 1: Learning to Learn, is the first 15 credit course of the PGCertTL. It provides an introduction to teaching in higher education. Successful completion of the course leads to Associate Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy. Course 1: Learning to Learn replaces the previous Learning Enhancement and Development Skills (LEADS) courses.

### Is Course 1: Learning to Learn or the PGCertTL for me?

The Course 1: Learning to Learn and the PGCertTL is designed for colleagues who undertake university teaching as a substantive part of their work. This might be academic staff, professional services staff who support teaching and learning e.g. technicians, effective learning advisors etc., postgraduate students who teach (e.g. tutors) or anyone else with a substantive teaching element in their role.

We expect that staff undertaking course 1 might be in the following categories (these align with Descriptor 1 of the UKPSF):

- a. Early career researchers with some teaching responsibilities (e.g. PhD students, GTAs, contract researchers/post-doctoral researchers etc.).
- b. Staff new to teaching (including those with part-time academic responsibilities).
- c. Staff who support academic provision (e.g. learning technologists, learning developers and learning resource/library staff).
- d. Staff who undertake demonstrator/ technician roles that incorporate some teaching-related responsibilities.

- e. Experienced staff in relevant professional areas who may be new to teaching and/or supporting learning, or who have a limited teaching portfolio.

We expect that staff progressing to complete the PGCertTL might be in the following categories (these align with Descriptor 2 of the UKPSF):

- a. Early career academics.
- b. Academic-related and/or support staff holding substantive teaching and learning responsibilities.
- c. Experienced academics relatively new to UK higher education.
- d. Staff with (sometimes significant) teaching-only responsibilities including, for example, within work-based settings.

### **Do I need previous teaching experience to undertake Course 1: Learning to Learn or the PGCertTL?**

The Course 1: Learning to Learn and the PGCertTL are a practice-based. They teach the theory that underpins good higher education teaching practice. To understand the theory you need to have some previous teaching experience. This might be tutoring, demonstrating, mentoring others in education.

- For participation in course 1 only, you should either have
  - a minimum of FTE 30-40 hours of prior teaching experience in any HEI, or
  - you should be recommended by your Director of Learning and Teaching (or their appointed nominee) as having a forthcoming teaching commitment which requires you to complete the course and will enable you to undertake the assessments.
- For progression onto PGCertTL the you should have a minimum of FTE 120 hours of prior teaching experience in higher education in any HEI (in addition to the hours required for Course 1), including substantive personal teaching responsibilities such as designing and delivering teaching sessions, setting and marking assessment (formative and/ or summative), providing feedback to students, course development etc.

### **Do I need to be currently teaching to undertake Course 1: Learning to Learn or the PGCertTL?**

Yes, Course 1 and the PGCertTL is a practice-based programme therefore you need to be currently teaching to be able to undertake the assessments and achieve the learning outcomes. Teaching practice accounts for approximately 1/3 of each course, so you should be teaching at least 30 hours over the duration of each course. If there is a semester when you will not be teaching, please speak to the Programme team to ensure that you will be able to complete the assessments.

### **How is the programme delivered?**

The programme is delivered online via the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Students participate in live sessions and also asynchronous activities. This includes practical micro-teaching sessions and observed practice to allow the development and enhancement of teaching practice.

### **How much time will it take to study?**

The overall programme is 60 credits, this equates to c.600 hours of study. Each course is 15 credits i.e. 150 hours of study. This is approximately 15 hours of study per week of each course. This is standard practice in higher education. On the PGCertTL it breaks down as approximately 5 hours scheduled study including live sessions and asynchronous activities, 5 hours teaching practice and 5 hours self-study. You should ensure that you will have sufficient time for your studies before commencing the programme.

### **How does this impact on my workload and probation?**

You should discuss your workload with your line manager to see how the Course / Programme might fit with your other work responsibilities.

It may be that completion of the Course / Programme is a requirement of your probation. You should discuss this with your line manager.

### **How long does it take to complete Course 1: Learning to Learn or the PGCertTL?**

Course 1: Learning to learn is taught over 1 semester.

The PGCertTL is designed to be completed over 2 years part-time. It is not possible to complete the programme more quickly than this, however, should you require it you may take up to 4 years.

### **Are there programme and course representatives?**

Yes, there are course representatives for each course, and a student representative for the programme. These representatives participate in the Staff-Student Liaison Committee.

### **English Language requirements**

If your first language is not English, you have to demonstrate that your English language ability is strong enough to succeed on your programme. You will require 6.5 IELTS as stated in the [Heriot-Watt English Language Requirements](#).

### **Recognition of prior learning**

If you have previously been in higher education, have passed courses or have academically relevant professional experience, then this could count as credit towards your Heriot-Watt qualification. Full details of this is available in the [Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#).

If you have previously completed the Heriot-Watt LEADS programme, any of the courses on the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching (PGCILT) then you may be eligible for Recognition of Prior Learning.

### **How do I apply?**

Application is through completion of an application form and a short interview.

Please email [PGCertTL@hw.ac.uk](mailto:PGCertTL@hw.ac.uk) if you would like a copy of the application form or if you would like to discuss applying with one of the PGCertTL team.