

Practitioner Professional Development (PPD) Admissions Guide

This Admissions Guide should be used to assist prospective students in preparing their application for the PPD programme offered by the Faculty of Education, Cambridge University. It supports the work of admissions staff and partner organisations in relation to the PPD programme's admissions process.

All PPD applicants should read this document before submitting an application.

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1 Admissions Statement

The University of Cambridge, Faculty of Education is committed to the highest standards of research and teaching and is a significant contributor to the improvement of educational policy and practice in partnership with schools, colleges and other educational agencies both in the UK and internationally. We welcome applications from those students who have the relevant work experience and/or academic potential and motivation to succeed on the PPD programme.

For further details on the University of Cambridge's Admissions policy please see the Graduate Admissions website.

2 Responsibilities of the Applicant

In order to process applications in a fair and effective manner, we place certain obligations upon the applicant as follows:

- To provide complete and accurate information as required on the application form. It should be noted that email will be the principle method of communication used throughout the admissions process so applicants should ensure this information in particular is correct at all times;
- To update the PPD Administrator (ppd@educ.cam.ac.uk) if any information provided should change;
- Where required, to attend an interview in order to assess suitability for the course;
- If offered a place, to reply promptly to positively accept or decline the offer no less than four weeks before the start of the course;
- To provide photo ID, visa documentation if required and evidence of any qualifications/experience referenced to support an application.

3 What the Applicant can expect from us

We aim to make our approach to the admission of PPD students:

- Transparent
- Fair
- Consistent
- Accessible
- Professional, and
- Timely

All personal data will be handled confidentially and in compliance with GDPR.

4 Admission to study on the PPD programme

4.1 The PPD Programme

The Cambridge University Faculty of Education Postgraduate Professional Development programme offers opportunities for education professionals to develop high levels of understanding and skills which relate directly to the policy and practice of the contexts in which they work. This programme involves studying at Masters level and it is therefore necessary that applicants demonstrate the potential to work at this level (see QAA Framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Documents/FHEQ08.pdf>).

However, since the PPD programme is aimed at practising professionals, professional experience and engagement are recognised as alternatives to recent academic qualifications as indicating the potential for working at Masters level.

Entry requirements for the programme are designed to ensure that candidates have a good chance of successfully completing the programme while not limiting recruitment to only those with strong academic backgrounds.

4.2 Entry Requirements

Applicants should:

- 4.2.1 Have relevant experience of working in an education or related professional setting;
- 4.2.2 Demonstrate a reflective and enquiring approach to their work which supports improvement in professional practice and/or policy;
- 4.2.3 Demonstrate the ability to work independently and collaboratively with the support of Faculty supervision;
- 4.2.4 Demonstrate a willingness and ability to engage with academic and professional literature that will support empirical and/or literature-based enquiry into policy and/or practice.

It should be noted that Accredited Prior Learning (APL) (i.e. credits gained from other institutions) are not accepted to gain accelerated entry to the PPD programme, although these credits can be considered as part of an applicant's entry qualifications to support the application, if considered relevant.

4.3 Demonstration of Requirements

The PPD application form asks for information relating to the requirements specified above.

Applicants are given the opportunity to demonstrate that they meet requirements 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 through a personal statement. Demonstration of requirements 4.2.1 to 4.2.3 should be supported by a professional reference from a senior colleague in an education context.

Since work produced for the PPD programme will be assessed at Masters level, it is particularly important that candidates demonstrate requirement 4.2.4. This may be through the following academic qualifications:

- A good honours degree;
- A PGCE assessed at Masters level;
- Recent (within three years) completion of professional qualifications at level six or above;

- Overseas qualifications equivalent to the above (for an assessment of overseas qualifications contact National Academic Recognition Centre for the United Kingdom);
- Non-English speaking overseas applicants may also require an IELTS qualification with a minimum score of 7 in each element.

Requirement 4.2.4 may alternatively be demonstrated through professional writing, for example:

- Professional documentation, e.g. policy documents for a school or group of schools, substantial reports on present practice within or between schools, etc;
- Publications in professional journals or other forms of professional communication;
- Reviews of education publications.

Demonstration of requirement 4.2.4 should be supported by production of the relevant certificates and/or by an academic reference from a course tutor, publication editor or senior colleague who is able to comment on academic capability.

We welcome applications from students who have applied to a PPD course previously and were unsuccessful, but in these cases applicants must be able to demonstrate a change in their circumstances that improve their suitability for the course, e.g. further qualification or experience in order to support their new application. The Faculty reserves the right to use information from a previous application in assessing a re-application and to seek further evidence of ability to follow this course if it deems necessary.

5 How to apply

5.1 Which PPD route?

Students can choose to complete individual modules or courses and exit the PPD programme with a certificate at that stage. Alternatively they may wish to accumulate credits by taking more than one module. Credits must be accumulated within a course. For example, in order to obtain a 90-credit PACES qualification a student could take three 30-credit Transforming Practice modules, but not two 30-credit Transforming Practice modules and the 30-credit Introduction to Counselling course.

On completing 90 credits students will be offered one of two options:

- Exit with a qualification of Postgraduate Advanced Certificate in Educational Studies (PACES);
- Use the 90 credits to apply to be admitted to the second year of the MEd (there is no automatic right to continue). If they are unsuccessful in their applications, option (a) above would remain available to them.

All awards are at FHEQ Level 7. Research training is embedded within the modules (with the exception of the Counselling courses).

The Faculty requires that students wishing to obtain the MEd complete the full route (PACES and Masters elements) within five years.

Please note that once a student has chosen to exit the PPD programme and realise their credit with the award of a qualification, they cannot then re-enter the programme and have their award revoked in order to use the credits towards a higher qualification. However, credit gained on the PPD programme remains valid for a four-year period.

5.2 The Application form

Applicants should download the application form available on the faculty website [here](#). All sections should be populated as incomplete applications may not be considered. Completed forms should be emailed to ppd@educ.cam.ac.uk. Applicants should note that email will be the main method of contact throughout the application process so it is important that email details are correct on the application form.

If application forms are handwritten, applicants should ensure that they are populated in block capitals and are legible.

5.2.1 References

Applicants are asked to provide contact details for two Referees (preferably at least one who is able to comment on the academic potential of the candidate). The Referees should be able to comment on the applicant's suitability to study on the PPD programme. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that references are sent on headed paper (or with an attached business card) to the PPD Administrator (ppd@educ.cam.ac.uk) independently to the application form.

References should include the following information:

- How long the referee has known the applicant;
- In what context the referee knows the applicant;
- Suitability of the applicant for the course applied for;
- If the applicant's native language is not English, the referee should comment on applicant's fluency and proficiency, particularly in relation to academic work;
- As PPD courses are part time, referees should comment on the applicant's ability to manage different responsibilities.

5.2.2 Personal Statement

In approximately 500 words or less applicants should provide a statement outlining why they have applied for the course and what they hope to gain from it.

5.2.3 Additional documentation

All applicants are required to submit evidence of their identity and nationality, and you should upload a scan of your current passport, or alternative ID.

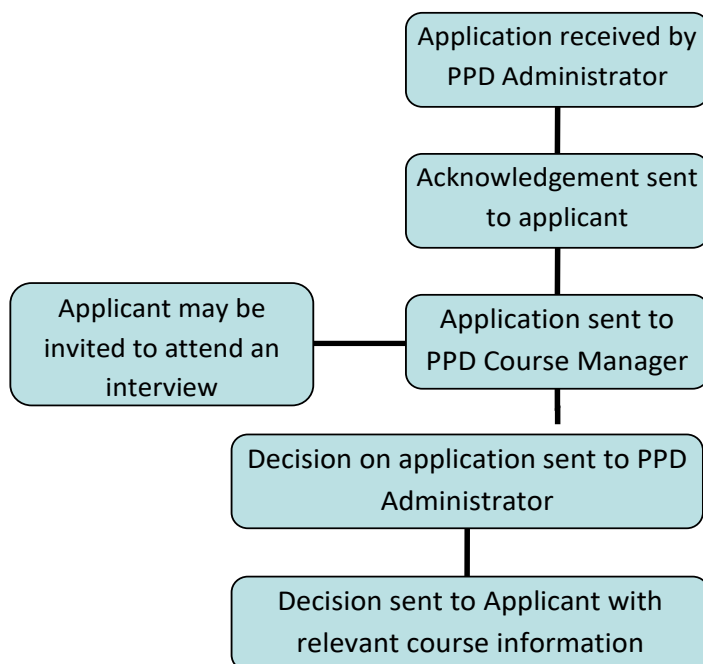
You should also send scans of certificates and transcripts for your academic qualifications.

5.3 Application Deadlines

Application deadlines are published on the website for each course. Please be aware that applications received after the course deadline may not be considered. Unless stated otherwise on the course webpage, all applications decisions are communicated after the published deadline.

6 What Happens Next?

The application process is outlined below.



Course Managers are responsible for assessing all applications and making a decision on admission. Applications will be assessed on their own merit and, in some cases in competition with other applications to the same course. As such there may be a delay in conveying application decisions to allow applications to be considered together. Some PPD courses (e.g. Counselling Diploma) may require attendance at an interview, where an action plan is discussed. In these cases, applicants will be notified of the interview arrangements by the PPD Administrator. If applicants are overseas at the time of interview, or face-to-face interviews are not possible, Skype or Zoom interviews may be arranged.

7 Our Decision

We aim to make a decision on an application within six to eight weeks after the application closing date. Where an interview is required or where applications need to be considered as a group, additional delays may be incurred. Applications will be assessed for suitability for the course applied for.

Applicants who are offered a place will be made an offer by email. This will include further course information such as start date and fees (also available on the website). Depending upon the timing of the offer in relation to the start of the course, the offer may be accompanied by detailed course materials and starters information, or, if appropriate, these may be sent at a later date.

In some cases, the Course Manager may advise an alternative route for the applicant in the PPD Programme. In this instance the alternative course may be offered to the applicant for further consideration.

Applicants who are offered a place on the PPD Programme are expected to indicate whether they wish to take up the place offered in writing (by email) no less than four weeks before the start of the course. Any applicants who fail to do so may lose their place on the course. By accepting an offer the applicant is agreeing to payment of the course fee as stated on the website or offer email.

In cases where the applicant is unsuccessful in their application to the PPD programme, the applicant will be issued a formal letter by email. The Faculty cannot give reasons for not offering admission, nor advise applicants how to improve an application. It should be noted that the Course Manager's decision on any application is final and appeals cannot be made on academic judgement.

Appeals may only be made on procedural grounds where the applicant feels they have been treated unfairly during the admissions process.

The University reserves the right to withdraw any offer made if it is found that an application has contained fraudulent or misleading information, or which has omitted information likely to have affected the admissions decision.

8 Deferrals

Applicants who have been offered a place on a PPD course may request that their offer can be deferred to the intake immediately after the one they were originally offered admission to. Such requests will be considered by the Course Manager. Applicants should not presume that an offer of admission for one intake guarantees an offer for a future intake. Students should also be aware that not all taught PPD courses run every academic year so deferrals are not always available. The decision of the Course Manager is final on matters of deferral.

9 Progression to MEd

PPD students who have successfully completed 90 credits on the PPD programme are eligible to apply to enter the second year of the MEd and to complete the MEd in a further year of part time study. MEd applications are dealt with separately and further information on this can be found on the faculty website [here](#).

10 Disability Support

We welcome applications from students with disabilities and are committed to making reasonable adjustments where necessary, in order to provide an accessible and supportive environment for students with additional requirements. Further details of the University's Disability Policy are available [here](#).

11 Equality and Diversity

The University policy on Equality and Diversity is available on the website [here](#).

12 International Students

We welcome applications from international students and are able to offer letters in support of visa applications for students accepted on the Educational Assessment and Transforming Practice PPD courses.

We are not able to offer this for applicants for our Counselling programmes. Therefore, international students wishing to study these courses are required to provide evidence of an alternative visa that would permit study on the course applied for in the UK. Overseas fees are published on the website available here.

13 Criminal Convictions

Applicants are requested to declare any criminal convictions on the application form. This information will be assessed for potential risk of harm to others (staff, fellow students and external parties where relevant) by the Course Manager with appropriate professional input, if required.

14 Complaints procedure

If an applicant feels they have been mistreated during the admissions process, they can put their concerns in writing to the PPD Administrator at ppd@educ.cam.ac.uk. We aim to deal with any complaint as quickly and sensitively as possible. Procedures will normally be completed within eight weeks of receipt.