



Advanced Commissioning Course Frequently Asked Questions

Q: I have been a PCT commissioner for several years. Will I learn anything new on this course?

A: Commissioning is developing and changing. You will learn the latest thinking on commissioning and apply this through your work. There is also the opportunity to be part of a regional group of commissioners who are on the course together.

Q: I am the lead nurse within my PBC consortium. I am new to commissioning. Is this course suitable for me?

A: Yes. If you have a role that involves commissioning, even if you are new to that role this course is suitable for you.

Q: We are the lead GP and lead manager for our local PBC consortium and want to attend the course together. Can we make a joint application?

A: You should apply separately but make clear reference in your application to the advantages that you expect from attending the course together. The person verifying your application should also know that you intend to both apply.

Q: I work for the local authority in a role that involves commissioning community services. Is this course suitable for me?

A: Possibly. NHS and social care commissioners will increasingly need to work together to commission for health and well-being. Currently this course will not address the needs of purely local authority commissioning, but it may be suitable for you if as a social care commissioner you are already working with NHS colleagues – and particularly if you apply to go on the course together!

Q: I am a pharmacist involved with my local PBC consortium in commissioning medicines management services. I would like to develop my commissioning skills. Can I apply?

A: Yes. If you have a role that involves commissioning this course is suitable for you.

Q: I am not currently working in a commissioning role, but would like to do so in the future and would like to use this course to develop my career in this direction. Can I apply?

A: The course requires practical application of the learning through commissioning activities and to develop this in the work-based assignments. You will need to be currently involved in commissioning to successfully complete the course.

Q: What is expected from participants?

A: It is important that participants commit to attending each element of the programme, including overnight residential stays except for genuine extenuating circumstances. Each of the three modules has an associated work-based assignment which should be submitted by the date given. This applies to all course participants.

Q: Is it possible to take single modules?

A: Participants undertake all three modules as an integrated programme. It is not possible to take single modules.

Q: When do I need to decide whether or not to register for the post-graduate certificate?

A: Registration for the post-graduate certificate will not take place until the induction event when the process will be fully explained to all participants on the course and there will be the opportunity to ask questions of representatives of the University of Teesside.

Q: If I register for the post-graduate certificate will this involve more work?

A: No, it should not. The assignments are a compulsory part of the course for all participants. The only difference for people who are submitting their assignments for assessment as part of the post-graduate certificate is that the university guidelines for course work and the completion of assignments should be followed. Academic support will be available at the learning events and via the University of Teesside blackboard on-line resource.

Q: Do I need to have completed a first degree to study for a postgraduate certificate?

A: You need to demonstrate the ability to study at Masters level, but you do not necessarily need a degree. The principles of Masters level study are:

- Deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make informed judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences;
- Demonstrate self direction and originality in tackling and solving problems and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level;
- Continue to advance knowledge and understanding and develop new skills to a high level.

Questions related to Accreditation of Prior Learning and exemption from aspects of the course work will be addressed on an individual basis by staff from the University of Teesside. If you have any questions on accessing or studying at master's level please contact Jenny Kell.

Q: What is the application and selection process?

A: There are two application routes specified in the 2008-09 prospectus. Route 1: PCTs may purchase places as part of an Improvement Foundation support package.

Route 2: Individual applications made on-line through the Improvement Foundation website.

Q: I am interested in the course. Do I need to ensure that I have the agreement of my organisation to fund the fees before I make an application?

A: Yes. You will need to specify how the course fees will be paid in your application.