DISTANCE LEARNING COURSE

MSc in Learning Innovation
Contents

Introduction to Institute of Learning Innovation 2
About the programme 3
Programme structure 4
Module descriptions 5
Your learning experience 7
Frequently asked questions 8
Entry requirements 9
How to apply 9
About distance learning at Leicester 10
Leicester credentials 10

Introduction to Institute of Learning Innovation

Technology-enhanced learning is a vibrant and maturing field of innovation and anyone with a stake in education should develop an awareness and understanding of these new technologies. They can provide innovative approaches that enhance learner experience, and benefit teachers and institutions.

Our MSc in Learning Innovation offers a unique, state-of-the-art survey of the field, providing you with both theoretical underpinnings and practical hands-on experience of the technologies in different learning contexts. Uniquely, the programme focuses on topical aspects of e-learning such as:

- New approaches to learning design
- Technology-enhanced learning spaces
- The use of Open Educational Resources
- The implications of social and participatory media for learning, teaching and research

The course will be delivered in collaboration with the University’s highly-respected School of Education. The programme team, led by Professor Gráinne Conole, has a strong track record of externally-funded research in this area and an international reputation based on their knowledge and expertise.

Contact details

If you are interested in this course and have any questions, please contact Dr Palitha Edirisingha:

t: +44 (0)116 252 3753
w: pe27@le.ac.uk
About the programme

This is a distance learning course. The modules make use of highly participative online learning activities, including hands-on and collaborative work. The design of the online components would include the use of Open Educational Resources, pathways between them and highly participative e-activities. The course activities will help you focus on specific issues and articulate informed and evidence-based views and results. The output of each learning activity provides a means for assessment and will benefit your reflective process.

Teaching and learning will be facilitated through:

- Material delivered by the core teaching staff (short videos, podcasts, narrated slides)
- Links to resources such as YouTube videos and lectures on iTunesU
- Online learning activities, both synchronous and asynchronous, that are moderated by both tutors and peers (e.g. discussion boards and wikis on Blackboard, postings on blogs)
- Collaborative activities carried out in small groups during the course
- A personal tutor who will oversee your development and progress during your studies

Who is this course for?

The MSc Learning Innovation programme is suitable for a range of professionals at all levels of education or training, including primary and secondary schools, further education colleges, universities, community and adult education, corporate, public and not-for-profit organisations.

Duration and start date

The duration of the programme is two years part-time. The programme will run in October each year.

Students who choose to leave the programme before completing the full Master’s can claim an exit award if they have successfully completed the required modules, namely Postgraduate Certificate in Learning Innovation (after two modules) or Postgraduate Diploma in Learning Innovation (after four modules).
Programme structure

Module 1
Technology Enhanced Learning
(30 credits)
Oct 2013 – Jan 2014

Module 2
Learning Design for the 21st Century
(30 credits)
Feb 2014 – May 2014

Module 3
Research Design and Methods
(30 credits)
Jun 2014 – Sept 2014

Module 4
Learning Innovation
(30 credits)

Module 5
Dissertation Research Project
(60 credits)
Feb 2015 – Sept 2015
Module descriptions

The programme consists of four 30-credit modules and a 60-credit dissertation.

Module 1: Technology Enhanced Learning

This module is intended to give you a broad overview of technologies, their associated characteristics and the ways in which they can be used to foster different pedagogical approaches across different learning contexts. You will gain experience of a range of technologies, experiment with them and critique their relevance to practice, as well as consider the implications for learning, teaching and research. You will be provided with opportunities to communicate and collaborate with peers through various technologies.

Where appropriate, you will benefit from the expertise of the international community via podcasts/videocasts and audio or video conferencing sessions. You will have the opportunity to create your own learning artefacts using different tools and you will be encouraged to become part of the broader TEL community (e.g., ALT, EDEN).

Assessment methods

You will be assessed by:
- An annotated bibliography of 1,500 words based on key texts on the theoretical perspectives of Technology Enhanced Learning
- A 4,500-word essay critiquing different e-pedagogies relevant to the field of Technology Enhanced Learning and how they can be used to support different pedagogical approaches

Module 2: Learning Design for the 21st Century

This module introduces you to new learning design methodology, which guides practitioners in making informed, explicit choices about which technologies can support different forms of learning.

You will study through a series of synchronous and asynchronous activities and you will work both independently and, where relevant, in collaborative groups. You will be exposed to the latest research in and materials on learning design, drawing in particular on research from Europe and Australia.

You will have the opportunity to explore a range of learning design visualisation and pedagogical planner tools to create your own learning design materials. Cloudworks will be used as a social networking site for you to share and discuss your learning materials.
Assessment methods

You will be assessed by:

- A 2,000-word written assignment critiquing learning design theory
- A story board depicting a conceptual model of a learning design and rationale for design, and a 2,000-word reflection on peer review feedback. A ‘story board’ is the visual representation of a sequence of learning activities and associated tools and resources, mapped to learning outcomes and assessment elements.

Module 3: Research Design and Methods

This module will provide you with a grounding in appropriate research methods to enable you to design, implement and evaluate learning innovations.

You will take part in a number of online activities, both in groups to develop your collaborative skills, and individually to enhance your knowledge development. Collaborative work will involve tutor- and student-led seminars and hands-on workshops (e.g. locating, assessing, critiquing and appropriation of OERs for research methods). You will also view, attend and discuss recorded and live lectures by experts in research methods. In order to develop online reflective and collaborative skills you will make regular entries in your reflective journal, and comment on at least two other students’ reflective journals.

In order to develop research methodology skills, you will carry out a number of fieldwork activities (e.g. small-scale interviews and a questionnaire).

Assessment methods

You will be assessed by:

- A ‘digital poster’ (or equivalent artefact, such as a website), accompanied by an explanatory narrative, that illustrates why and how a particular research design, methodology and associated methods are fit for a chosen research project in the field of learning innovation
- A draft research proposal of 4,000 words that focuses on the study of a learning innovation intervention relevant to you

Module 4: Learning Innovation

This module combines excellent practice in the design and selection of case studies with highly innovative approaches to teaching and learning. Through exposure to case studies, real-life scenarios and relevant literature, you will be encouraged to generate and peer-review your own case studies online. You will also develop criteria against which your case studies will be mapped by your peers.

Assessment methods

You will be assessed by:

- A 4,000-word evidence-based research proposal for a learning innovation, or a case study critiquing a previous learning innovation
- A 2,000-word written assignment consisting of a structured review of another student’s proposal or case study

Module 5: Dissertation Research Project

This module is supported by group and personal tutorials and a small number of online seminars. As part of your workplan, you will be required to conduct extensive private study and a limited amount of fieldwork appropriate to a small-scale research project.

Throughout the dissertation process you will be supervised and guided through extensive online support by a personal tutor and peers. You will be supported in the production of your research proposal through a series of e-tivities, critique of existing research proposals and tools for dissertation support. Emphasis will be placed on turning the proposals into rigorous research.

Assessment methods

You will be assessed by:

- A 20,000-word dissertation based on the completion of a small-scale research project
Your learning experience

You will benefit from the expertise and scholarship of the academic staff here and the active and progressive research environment that characterises the Institute of Learning Innovation. All modules have been developed by the MSc Learning Innovation academic team, which incorporates a broad range of expertise in learning innovation research and practice.

How you will learn

Our supported distance learning programme is built around specially created materials and the use of leading edge academic books and articles. The core materials, including handbooks, module guides and core readings will be available electronically via Blackboard, the University’s e-learning platform. To increase your engagement with tasks, we have designed online support through Blackboard.

You will have a personal tutor to guide you through the programme and the dialogue you have with them (usually via email, phone and other online communication tools) will prove a very powerful learning tool. Our academic and administrative teams take the delivery of distance learning very seriously and will make every effort to ensure your experience is enjoyable and rewarding.

Facilities

As well as the core materials provided, you will also have full access to the University’s extensive facilities, including our award-winning David-Wilson Library. We invest over £6m a year in library resources. The Library’s comprehensive online catalogue comprises thousands of electronic journals and 350,000 books. This includes the Leicester Research Archive, a digital collection of research papers and theses from members of the University. As a Leicester student, you will be able to access the online catalogue and download these resources free of charge – wherever you are in the world. Our Library receives official UK government publications and it is a European Documentation Centre. You are, of course, also welcome to come onto campus and use our library facilities at any time.

Support

To make distance learning work for you, you will need to develop or refine your skills in time management and self-motivation. However you will be supported by a dedicated team of tutors and support staff available through Blackboard and email. Your studies will be supported by a personal tutor who oversees your development and progress from the commencement of your first module right through to submission of your dissertation and completion of the programme.
Assessment

Each of the four 30 credit modules is assessed through a combination of text-based and a range of other assessment media (e.g., storyboards, podcasts) designed to enhance and widen the assessment regime and to reflect the principles of the course – learning innovation. There are no exams. Each of the four assignments should take around 225 hours of study, and the dissertation should take around 450 hours. You can expect to work around 14 hours per week. There is scope in the programme to block some of this workload into school holidays, reducing the demands during term time.

Flexible study

Our distance learning programme can be studied flexibly, meaning that you don’t have to take a career break to get ahead. It also means that you can apply new knowledge and insights to your work in education while you are still studying. If your circumstances change, you can take a break for up to 12 months, as long as you complete within a maximum of four years.

Frequently asked questions

Will I need access to the Internet?

Yes. You will need regular access to the internet in order to access electronic journal articles, to contact your tutor, to submit work and to engage with the full range of learning activities available on Blackboard and via other online tools.

Are there additional costs, such as buying additional learning materials?

As a student studying by distance learning, you will be provided with a full set of programme materials, and will not be required to purchase any additional books or resources. The Library holds over 300,000 e-books and has a dedicated distance learning service that can, on request, send up to 25 books by post. You will be encouraged to use and explore these resources.

As a distance learning student, will I be expected to visit the campus?

You will not be required to visit the campus during the programme. However, you are still a University of Leicester student and we hope that you will consider yourself as such. You will be issued with a University library/iD card and we encourage you to visit the University and make use of its facilities at any time. You also have the option of meeting your tutors if you wish to visit the university. You may like to plan to come here on graduation to celebrate your success and meet peers and some of the University staff.

What methods of funding might be available to me?

Many employers, both in the UK and overseas, contribute to the cost of fees because they realise the enormous benefits of the programme to their institution. Other options include Professional Career and Development Loans (UK students only), British Council schemes and Commonwealth scholarships (overseas students). We also offer instalment plans to help you spread the cost and guarantee that if you complete on time, your fees will not increase from one year to the next.
Entry requirements

The entry minimum requirements are:

- A second class honours degree, or its equivalent from a non-UK university
- E.g. GPA 3 (US equivalent) or above

Applicants will need to demonstrate a minimum of 2 years (not necessarily consecutive) in a professional role (paid or unpaid) in education, training or learning technology support. Applications are welcome from any educational and training context, formal or informal, and from state, corporate and non-governmental sectors. Applicants who do not fulfill the above criterion should demonstrate that they have engaged in education through a substantial element of their first degree.

English Language

If your first language is not English you will need to satisfy the University's English language requirement.

- IELTS 6.5 plus 6.0 in each component OR
- TOEFL 90 (IBT)

More information about meeting the University's English requirements can be found at www.le.ac.uk/englishskills

How to apply

Please complete our online application form. This can be done by going to www.le.ac.uk/pgapplyonline and finding the course.

We recommend that you submit your application at least four weeks before the programme is due to start, and preferably earlier.

Please submit the following:

- Your completed application form.
- Your two completed references, preferably from former university lecturers or current employers.
- Copies of your degree/qualification certificates.
- Copies of your transcripts of your modules and marks.
- Proof of English Language competence if applicable.

What happens when we receive your application...

Once we receive your application and all supporting documents, we aim to make a decision within three weeks. If your application is successful, confirmation will be sent to you with details about what to do next. If your application is unsuccessful, we will notify you by email.
About distance learning at Leicester

- We have over 20 years’ experience of offering high quality distance learning courses.
- More than 25,000 students have graduated from our distance learning programmes.
- Distance learning means studying at home in your own time and space, so you can combine achieving a qualification with work or family commitments.
- You will benefit from studying with a University that has a huge amount of expertise in this kind of learning.
- We have more than 8,000 students currently studying by distance learning with us, making it part of our core educational provision.

Leicester credentials

- We are consistently ranked in the top 20 of all UK national league tables.
- We are also ranked in the top 2% of universities in the world by the QS World University Rankings 2012 and THE World University Rankings.
- The University has won Times Higher Awards in 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and most recently in 2013 for Outstanding Fundraising Initiative and Outstanding Marketing and Communications Team. We are the only university to win seven consecutive awards.
- We are ranked fourth in the 2012 National Student Survey amongst 120 mainstream public universities in the UK. Our levels of student satisfaction have been consistently in the top 10 since the annual survey commenced in 2005.
- Leicester is ranked in the top 10 in the UK and top 100 in the world for research citations by the QS world rankings.
Contact Details

Institute of Learning Innovation
The University of Leicester
University Road
Leicester LE1 7RH, UK

t: +44 (0)116 252 3753
e: pe27@le.ac.uk
w: www.le.ac.uk/education

All information in this brochure was correct at the time of going to press. However, changes and developments are part of the life of the University, and alterations may occur to the programmes and services described in this brochure.