

University of Birmingham

**Request for Exemption from Regulations Governing Maximum Periods of  
Study for the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice**

**Topic and Purpose of the Paper**

1. To seek an exemption from the regulations governing the maximum period of study for a Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PCAP).

**Consultation**

2. This request is the result of extensive consultation of the current cohort, Heads of College, Heads of School and Markers/Moderators regarding the new structure of PCAP and the maximum period of time required to complete the full qualification.
3. The Board of Studies, which governs the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice, were consulted regarding the move from a five year PGCert (current Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in HE) to a three year maximum registration period for the new programme. This is in line with the three year probationary requirement for academic staff.
4. The proposed exemption to regulations has been further discussed between the Centre for Learning and Academic Development, who handle the delivery of the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice, and Academic and Student Administration.

**5. Background**

6. A proposal for the award of PCAP was approved at the University's Programme Approval Review Committee of 04 May 2011. This programme will replace the existing PGCert Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (PGCert L&T in HE) with effect from 2011/12.
7. The PGCert L&T in HE was granted an exemption from Regulation 6.2.2 (a) in 2008, which was later extended in 2009 in order to allow students to have a maximum period of 5 years in which to complete the qualification. This exemption was granted until the academic session 2012/13.

**Proposals/Recommendations**

8. That an exemption be granted to Regulation 6.2.2 (a), the relevant sections of which follow:

*The minimum and maximum periods of study permitted for prescribed for postgraduate and graduate Award shall be:*

<u>Award</u>	<u>Minimum period</u>	<u>Maximum period</u>
Postgraduate Certificate	4 months	2 years

9. That instead, the maximum period of study for the PCAP shall be three years.

### **Arguments to Support Proposals/Recommendations**

10. The PCAP is an externally accredited Higher Education teaching qualification designed to aid professional development and ensure the standards of teaching of new academic staff and others involved in teaching are kept high.
11. Although new staff are expected to register for the PCAP, and there is time nominally set aside for them to undertake this work, the Board of Studies and the Centre for Learning and Academic Development deems that the competing pressures to establish a research profile and to develop and run successful programmes, modules and options weigh heavily on new staff. In these situations it is difficult for new staff to effectively prioritise the completion of a teaching qualification over other demands. Consequently, the PCAP has been designed as a three year programme in line with typical probationary requirements.

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