

MA in Leading Community Learning

An innovative postgraduate programme for all those involved in the leadership and management of community-based learning



continyou
Changing lives through learning

Leading community learning

The MA in Leading Community Learning provides a route for the professional development of people engaged in managing aspects of community learning. The programme explores the concepts of leadership and learning in community-based contexts. This is particularly relevant given that:

- the Every Child Matters agenda emphasises the need for multi-agency working to provide coherent services to children and their families
- increasing credibility is being given to claims that suggest that engaging the whole community in learning is an important means of continuing to raise achievement
- the provision of community-based learning is increasingly seen as a valuable way of engaging some adults in learning activities
- new methods of teaching and learning need to be explored if targets to increase basic skills levels are to be reached
- efforts are being made to provide learning in different contexts, such as regeneration, housing, health and justice.

Our programme provides professionals working in these fields with the opportunity to consider and develop their understanding of these evolving concepts so as to improve current practice.

Who is the programme for?

- Extended schools and extended services development staff from schools and local authorities (LAs)
- School leaders
- Youth work leaders
- Senior staff from other agencies that work closely with schools and communities (such as health, regeneration, justice, social care)
- Advisers and others working across LAs with a community focus
- Individuals with responsibility for the community aspect of schools
- Sure Start/children's centre staff

What are the programme aims?

- To be rooted in the practice of participants
- To develop a critical rationale for the leadership and management of community-based learning opportunities
- To examine models of leadership for learning
- To test the applicability of models of social capital

This programme emphasises the development of critical thinking. This is reflected in the design of the assessments, which aim to promote reflection on practice.

Theoretical perspectives will be introduced and developed to suggest possibilities which might not otherwise be considered, to question assumptions which might be taken for granted and to prompt astute thinking on what is really happening in particular circumstances.

Careful attention to research and evidence is a key part of this process and the course is committed to the notion of evidence-based learning.

How is the programme organised?

The MA programme is made up of three stages:

Postgraduate Certificate in Leading Community Learning (60 credits)

This stage consists of two modules (twelve taught days and independent learning activities):

- Module 1: Community learning and social capital (content includes extended schools, parental involvement, engaging the 'hard-to-reach' learner)
- Module 2: Strategy and development in community learning (content includes innovation and leadership, leading learning in community settings, evaluation)
- two work-related written assignments
- academic tutorial support from course tutors.

Postgraduate Diploma in Leading Community Learning (60 credits)

This stage consists of two modules (twelve taught days and independent learning activities):

- Module 1: Leading through community partnerships (the Every Child Matters agenda from the point of view of schools, health services, and so on)
- Module 2: Evaluating participation in community education and development (content includes neighbourhood regeneration projects, community leaders)
- two work-related written assignments
- academic tutorial support from course tutors.

MA in Leading Community Learning (60 credits)

This stage further develops the research skills of students. Students are supported in preparing a dissertation on a subject of their choice, to be agreed with the University. This enables students to make a substantial contribution to theory and practice.

Students need to achieve 180 credits to graduate with an MA in Leading Community Learning.



Student profile: Romy Warren

Reasons for choosing this programme

I had been looking for a flexible, relevant and stimulating masters course which was manageable round a large family and a very busy job. I was attracted by the quality and range of the speakers, all of whom have either national/international reputations, or have significant local knowledge and expertise of their area/project. The topics covered looked relevant, interesting, varied and stimulating.

Experiences of the programme so far

The input from the speakers has been everything that I had hoped for. The presentations have been based on either academic research or real experience, or a mixture of both, and have been both accessible and stimulating. I have learnt a lot, and been challenged and exposed to new ideas and the latest thinking in the community learning field.

Benefits of the programme

I often come back from taught sessions with ideas and insights that I can immediately use in my work – sometimes even the following day! My growing depth of knowledge and understanding from the taught sessions and the research are enabling me to perform at a higher level, and give substance to back up my views and to inform my policy making as well as everyday practice.

I expect the short-term benefits to continue, and that this will enhance my career development, not only in having the qualification, but – almost more importantly – in having a stronger understanding of a very fast moving and complex field.

Course management team

Katy Vigurs, Award Leader and Tutor,
Staffordshire University

Michelle Lowe, Tutor, Staffordshire University

Contacting a tutor

If you would like to speak informally to one of the tutors about your suitability for participating in the programme, contact: Katy Vigurs (email k.vigurs@staffs.ac.uk or call 01782 294 270). If you have an admissions/application enquiry, call 01782 294922 to speak to Sharon Hemmings, Admissions Officer.

Entry requirements

Entrants to the course need to:

- have a minimum of five years' management experience in a relevant professional area or a good first degree (students will be asked to provide evidence of their highest qualifications gained to date)
- be currently employed in a relevant community learning role
- provide two written references (one from a current employer and one other)
- be proficient in spoken and written English
- have access to a computer with internet access.

Reading list

Key publications

Gelsthorpe, T and West-Burnham, J (eds) (2003) *Educational leadership and the community*, Harlow, Pearson Education

Cummings, C et al (2007) *Evaluation of the full service extended schools initiative: final report*, London, DfES

Dyson, A (2003) *Schools and area regeneration*, York, Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Putnam, RD (2000) *Bowling alone*, New York, Simon and Schuster

The full reading list for each module will be available on registration.

Starting dates

The next course starts on Tuesday, 8 September 2009.
Each day will last from 11 am to 4.30pm.

Location

The taught days will take place at Staffordshire University in Stoke-on-Trent. The venue is a short walk from Stoke-on-Trent station and easily accessed via road links (M6/A50).

How to register an interest

To book a place, please contact Bipun Lord.
Phone 024 7658 8470, email
bipun.lord@continyou.org.uk or write to the
address overleaf.

Fees

Please contact Bipun Lord (see above) for up to date course costs and payment methods.

'Having the opportunity to listen to and learn from some of the most respected practitioners in education has been a real privilege. People like Charles Desforges, John West-Burnham and Alan Dyson have influenced education substantially over the last decades with grounded theoretical perspectives and practice. ...

'The course has helped me to develop into a reflective practitioner and has also helped me move my thinking to a level where I am confident to take risks in my professional practice.'

(Ema Kirbyson, Extended Services Co-ordinator, Worcestershire County Council)

Leading community learning

Initial enquiry form

You can use this form and return it to Bipun Lord at the address overleaf or you can fax it back on 024 7658 8441.

Please use block capitals. Complete one form per participant, photocopying as necessary.

I wish to register my interest in applying for the MA in Leading Community Learning.

Name:

Job title:

Organisation:

Address:

Postcode:

Tel:

Fax:

Email:

Please let us know if you have any special access requirements, including auditory needs:



Booking method

Fill in the form overleaf and either:

- fax it to Bipun Lord on 024 7658 8441
- post it to Bipun Lord at ContinYou, Unit C1, Grovelands Court, Grovelands Estate, Longford Road, Exhall, Coventry CV7 9NE.

About ContinYou

ContinYou is a national learning charity that aims to open up learning opportunities that are accessible to everyone.

We believe in the power of learning to transform people's lives, their families and their communities. We believe that excellent and enjoyable opportunities for learning should be available to everyone, giving them the skills, knowledge and self-confidence they need to lead fulfilling and happy lives.



Unit C1, Grovelands Court
Grovelands Estate
Longford Road
Exhall, Coventry CV7 9NE

Tel: 024 7658 8440
Fax: 024 7658 8441
Email: info.coventry@continyou.org.uk

Website: www.continyou.org.uk

Registered charity number: 1097596

Last updated February 2009