

Certificate in Strategic Educational Leadership

A short, accessible level 7 module for school business professionals who want to demonstrate their strategic educational leadership.

20 credits at level 7

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

Who is the module aimed at?

The module is aimed at individuals who wish to continue their professional development at level 7 (masters level).

You may want to:

- Demonstrate the level at which you are working at or are capable to working at. The module is open to anyone who currently works in school business role within an appropriate setting.
- Apply for ISBL Fellowship – If you do not already have a SBP qualification at level 6 or above, then completing the Certificate in Strategic School Leadership will allow you to meet the qualification requirements when applying for ISBL Fellowship.
- Ensure your knowledge and skills are current so that you can demonstrate not only your continued learning but also your strategic insight which could support you as you progress into executive and specialist roles.
- Research a specific area of interest to you as professional or one that will benefit your school/trust.
- Explore studying at this level without committing to a full PG Cert or Masters programme. Completing this module allows you to start to study at level 7 in a manageable and cost effective way, paving the way for further study and qualifications in the future.

What can do once I've completed the module?

The Certificate in Strategic School Leadership is one of the modules in the PG Cert in Educational Leadership and the Masters in Education Leadership.

The module provides you with 20 credits at level 7 (masters degree level).

On completion, you could continue your study and complete 2 more modules to achieve a postgraduate certificate in educational leadership (PgC) qualification. You do not have to do this immediately, you can take a break and then re-join us later on in the academic year to continue your studies.

You can study part-time either by attending taught session in Chester on two Saturdays per term, or online. (Please note, that not all modules are available online). You can select from a range of modules offered each term to ensure that the learning you undertake is bespoke and meets your individual career, development or organisational needs.

I've not undertaken any formal learning for a while, does that matter?

No, we will provide you with guidance and support however, there is an expectation that on a masters level module that you will take the initiative to contact us for help and clarification if you need to.

How long does it take to complete?

The module lasts one academic term.

How much studying/work will I need to do each week?

All of our courses are designed for busy professionals who combine work and family life. Tutors of the masters degree have all studied this way and fully understand the pressures that studying brings. We therefore try to minimise the amount of work outside of session that are required.

Webinars for this particular module are undertaken during the evening, once every two weeks and last for an hour. During these sessions we will provide you with some teaching and make reference to pre-selected resources that you will have access to. It is up to you how much additional reading you do. We provide sufficient resources on our online portal for you to pass the module. Your assignment will be due in at the start of the following term and your tutor will advise you of the date. This will also be on the portal.

How is this different from other studying I've done?

This module is at postgraduate level, but don't be put off. We will support you through, but you need to ask for help if you are struggling. Unlike courses you may have done previously, we will not be chasing you for your assignment. At Masters level you are expected to manage your own workload, meet deadlines and seek support when required.

What does the 'Negotiated Field' mean?

The 'Negotiated Field' is the area or topic that is being studied. This is agreed with the tutor at the start of the module. Examples of the negotiated field could include, a specific project you have worked on as an SBP, an area of the ISBL Professional Standards you want to research and develop in, or an area of strategic school leadership.

What support will I get?

There are resources online for you to access and you will always have a named tutor. You can contact your tutor at any time to arrange a tutorial to discuss any aspect of your module.

How is this module delivered?

The Certificate in Strategic School Leadership is delivered 100% online. You will not need to attend any sessions at the University of Chester. All delivery is carried out via webinars, virtual tutorials etc.

If you decide to continue onto to the postgraduate certificate you can select which modules you wish to study. These either take place face-to-face or online depending on which modules are chosen.

How will I be communicated with?

As a university student you will have access to a range of resources, including the library, either in person or via our portal. All students receive a university email address, which is their student number followed by @chester.ac.uk
For example, 123456@chester.ac.uk

This is the primary means of communication and all announcements from our portal go to this email address. If you know that you will not be logging into this email account regularly, then we suggest you set a rule to forward emails to an account that you do check. That way, you won't miss any important information.

Are there any taught sessions?

There are a series of webinars which are scheduled. These are not mandatory, but we do recommend that you attend them. They combined a taught element with a discussion. You do not need to do any preparatory work for these sessions. Webinars will be recorded and made available for those who cannot attend sessions.

How is the module assessed?

Individuals will complete one written assessment of 4500-5000 words, covering the 4 learning outcomes stated above and the agreed element of the tier 4 ISBL Professional Standards.

In order to pass the assessment, students will need to achieve a mark of at least 50%.

Example submission timeframes are below:

- Autumn term cohort - assignment submission in January
- Spring term cohort - assignment submission in May
- Summer term cohort - assignment submission in September

Can you look at a draft of my assignment?

Yes, we will look at a draft of your assignment and provide general feedback. We will not provide you with a mark on your draft work, only points to help you improve. We are happy to look at multiple iterations of your work, to ensure that you progress towards successfully completing the module.

What do I write the assignment on?

Often individuals look at a project or aspect of their role that they are involved with and use that as a basis for their assignment. We would like assignments to reflect what it is you do. However, when writing at postgraduate level, we want to you go into the area in some depth. We are looking at your depth of understanding, not your breadth of understanding.

Can my assignment be used to help the school business profession?

Yes, your assignment is hugely beneficial to other SBPs. We would ask to include the document on the ISBL website member library under our research repository. This area serves to assist other colleagues who are undertaking professional development and wish to reference prior research, journals and articles. ISBL also ask individuals to share their findings through the inclusion of articles in The Voice (ISBL Member magazine) and via blogs which are hosted on our website.

Can achieving this module be used to support my application for ISBL Fellowship?

To meet the criteria for ISBL Fellowship, you must hold a qualification at Level 6 or above in school business management or in a subject which supports your professional practice in at least one of the following areas of school business management outlined in the ISBL Professional Standards.

Achieving this module will help you meet this criteria and support your application for ISBL Fellowship.

Some school business professionals may not have achieved a formal qualification for a number of years, and this module can help you demonstrate that you are working at level 7 and provide recognition of your skills and experience.

Will I get a certificate?

Yes, however, it does take a while for the certificate to come through. You will get your assignment mark and feedback 4 weeks after the submission deadline. This will tell you whether you have passed and what mark you achieved.

The certificates are only issued after the university examination boards which happen twice per year, which is when marks are ratified by the examiner and the various university committees.

I have already achieved the CIPFA Diploma in School Financial and Operational Leadership. Can I receive any credits for it towards the Postgraduate Certificate in Educational Leadership or the MA in Educational Leadership?

Yes, you can. The Diploma in School Financial and Operational Leadership can be accepted as part of the MA in Educational Leadership or the Postgraduate certificate in Educational Leadership. As the qualification is not conferred by an HEI it is not an automatic progression and you would have to go through the accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL) process. This would involve a short discussion with your tutor, lasting about 20 minutes, in order to ensure that the learning is at level 7 and that it is underpinned by the necessary theory. The CIPFA Diploma in School Financial and Operational Leadership would then count as 20 credits towards the educational leadership qualification.

This means that once you have achieved the Certificate in Strategic Educational Leadership and the CIPFA Diploma in School Financial and Operational Leadership, you only need to achieve one more module to gain the Postgraduate certificate in Educational Leadership.

I have previously completed the module prior to September 2020, can I change my certificate to reflect the new title of the module?

Prior to September 2020, this module was known as the ISBL Bridging Module. This module was updated to reflect the current needs of school business professionals and the education landscape in which they operate.

Unfortunately, you are unable to change the certificate to reflect the title of the module. The new certificate applies to September 2020 students only. However, your existing certificate carries the same benefits and credits as the updated one.

How do I book a place on this module?

We aim to have a new cohort start at the beginning of each term. These dates are advertised on the ISBL website and you make your initial booking and payment there.

Once your booking has been paid for and confirmed with ISBL, you will be sent details of how to register at the University of Chester. ISBL will act as your sponsor and will provide a letter confirming this so that you do not get invoiced by the University of Chester.

Once you have registered with the University of Chester, the module tutor will contact you with details of the module introductory webinar.

Visit the [ISBL Training Calendar](#) to see when the next cohort dates are.