UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge Centre for Teaching & Learning

Year in Review 2025-26

www.cctl.cam.ac.uk
www.rdp.cam.ac.uk

We specialise in educational development and postgraduate researcher development. Working in collaborative, research- and evidence-informed ways, we provide accredited teaching programmes and workshops for colleagues who teach and support the learning of Cambridge students, and a suite of opportunities for postgraduate research students to develop their academic and professional skills. We convene events and networks, encouraging staff and students to share ideas, learn from each other and improve education at Cambridge.

This *Year in Review* highlights some of the ways in which we provide contextualised support, both responding to bespoke requests and through our central programmes.

Links to our projects and resources are embedded throughout.

CCTL

Events

Cambridge Teaching Forum

Enhancing Assessment Forum

Annual Meeting for Undergraduate Education Leaders

Annual Meeting for Postgraduate Education Leaders

Developing Teaching

Teaching & Learning Recognition Scheme

Advancing Educational Practice Programme

Writing Retreats

Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching & Learning in HE

Student Skills Strategy

Scholarship at Cambridge

One-to-One Support

Supervising Postgraduate Students

Students as Partners Guide

AI and Cambridge Education

Researcher Development Guidance

Introduction to Undergraduate Supervision

Assessment Good Practice Guide

Educational Journeys in Computer Science

Researcher-Led Events Funding

Postgraduate Research Supervision Support Project

Cambridge Skills Educators' Network

Royal Literary Fund Writing Tutorials

Teaching & Learning Community of Practice

Skills Development Workshops and Events

Cambridge Higher Education Studies Research Ethics Committee

Researcher Development Forum

PG Education & Development

Resources & Support

Projects & Networks

Developing Teaching

694
new undergraduate supervisors completed our introductory training

207
colleagues accredited via our development programmes

17
colleagues participated in our bespoke SBS programme

Postgraduate Education

7,018
places offered on our postgraduate research student workshops

83
writing tutorials provided by our Royal Literary Fund Fellows

471
visitors to the Supervising Postgraduate Students resource

Events

429
registrations across our suite of annual and one-off events

174
delegates attended the Cambridge Teaching Forum

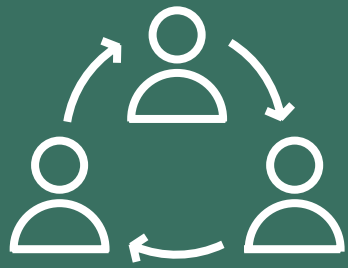
28 of 31
Colleges had delegates at the Cambridge Teaching Forum

Projects & Networks

406
colleagues in the Teaching & Learning Community of Practice

102
institutions in the Educational Development Community of Practice

83
members of the Cambridge Skills Educators' Network



Resources & Support

16
applications received by the HE Studies Research Ethics Committee

1,895
subscribers to the termly Teaching & Learning Newsletter

39,587
visits to our websites across the 2025-26 academic year

Adapting a Cambridge educational development programme to the School of Biological Sciences context

Our Advancing Educational Practice Programme is a 9-month course, accredited by Advance HE, which enables participants to extend their understanding of teaching and learning and develop their practice as educators at Cambridge. We were asked by the School of Biological Sciences to provide an adapted version of the programme for their pre-clinical lecturers, after a similar initiative we delivered for clinical-years lecturers last year was well received.

This 'SBS AEPP' aimed to bring the programme to the educators, providing a shorter and more focused course tailored to their questions, challenges and ambitions.

"Working alongside colleagues who also teach in my department, we were able to focus on some subject-specific issues as well as looking at how to improve common aspects of undergraduate teaching."

We devised a condensed programme for the School's experienced educators, structured around three sessions focusing on the most important themes:

(1) How students learn: from theory through to practice at Cambridge

(2) Curriculum design and assessment: what do we want our students to learn?

(3) What we do when we teach: our personal philosphies and teaching choices

Each session was supported by a 'learning journal' containing carefully selected pre-readings, so that in-person sessions could focus on discussion, prompted by the readings completed beforehand. Our aim was to facilitate opportunities for participants to reflect on their practices and engage with their peers.

"As someone with lots of experience as a teacher who has had very little formal education in pedagogy, I found the rapid introduction to concepts that I often hear references to in educationalist conversations particularly valuable."

After completing the programme, participants were supported one-to-one in writing and submitting an application for accreditation as a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. We have been asked by the School of Biological Sciences to run it again next year following highly positive feedback.

For more information, contact Dr Mary Beth Benbenek (mbb37).

“My only regret is not having pursued education of this type much earlier in my teaching career.”

Embedding themed initiatives within the postgraduate researcher development programme

The Researcher Development Programme, delivered by our Postgraduate Education & Development team, supports postgraduate research students though workshops designed to foster their development as professional researchers. This year featured, in addition to our ongoing programme, one 'themed month' each term: 'Academic Writing Month', 'PhD Recharge', and 'Life Beyond the PhD'.

The first to be introduced, Academic Writing Month in 2023-24, was inspired by and aligns with the national 'AcWriMo' initiative in November. The complementary workshops comprising the programme support academic and creative writing skills, enabling students to make tangible progress on their research outputs.

"The workshops helped me structure my writing more effectively and develop a more consistent writing routine."

The success of Academic Writing Month encouraged us to develop a second themed month. 'PhD Recharge', introduced in February 2024, aims to address the mid-PhD dip in motivation which is a common experience for research students. Through our curated programme, students develop practical strategies and connect with peers to navigate common challenges associated with doctoral study and make meaningful progress with their research.

"I now have a concrete strategy for when situations don't go as planned."

Our final themed month, 'Life Beyond the PhD', was piloted in June this year. Building on insights from our research with postgraduate research students last academic year - see our 'Year in Review 2024-25' for further information - this programmed combines workshops and alumni panels so that students could explore careers, reflect on their skills and build their confidence for transition within and beyond academia.

Colleagues in the Careers Service, Wellbeing, University Libraries and Public Engagement contribute their expertise to making these themed months a success. Students describe the resulting "really comprehensive" programmes as making a positive difference to their PhD experience, from advancing their research to developing their professional skills. Engaging with students and our colleagues across Cambridge, we will continue to develop these initiatives over the coming year.

"The workshops have provided invaluable expertise and experience that have already enhanced my research."

For more information, contact Dr Jessica Scott (js2962) and Dr Annette Mahon (am354).

Photograph by Alicia Henderson, ‘Snapshots of Doctoral Success’ runner-up 2026

Educational frameworks for thinking through genAI

Generative AI poses fundamental questions for how we educate students. CCTL has been responding to requests for support from departments, developing sessions which generate discussion and practice-sharing amongst colleagues. Given their bespoke nature, we have adapted the focus and format of each session to bring out specific questions of relevance to the concerns of distinct audiences and contexts.

The first request came from the Faculty of Modern & Medieval Languages & Linguistics to provide guidance at a 'Supervisor Summit' that could help colleagues supervising postgraduate research students. For this occasion, we devised a session which focused on the pedagogical implications of genAI, exploring educational challenges and frameworks to support the development of teaching, learning and assessment.

"In under 30 minutes you surveyed the complexity of the problem, contextualised it in pedagogical theory and practice, and empowered us with a roadmap for futher action. I could not have envisioned a more incisive and constructive session."

To bring this work to a wider audience, the session was adapted and extended for the CCTL-hosted Annual Meeting for Directors of Undergraduate Education & Senior Tutors (January 2026). We provided more Cambridge-specific examples of student use, expanded discussion of the educational implications of genAI - exploring dialogic learning, ethical use and the development of evaluative judgement - and made more time for small-group discussion. Conversations continued after the close of the meeting. Colleagues valued the "pedagogical basis for discussion" and commented that "hearing about educational research and gaining new references and terminology helps me bring back informed views to my department".

Most recently, in time for the 2026-27 academic year CCTL have led the drafting of new guidance for undergraduate supervisors. Starting from the educational purposes of undergraduate supervision, the guidance includes prompts for reflection with examples of practices provided by students and supervisors.

For more information, contact Dr Cassie Lowe (cvl29), Dr Mary Beth Benbenek (mbb37) and Dr Meg Tait (mebt1).

Photograph by Anna Mika, ‘Snapshots of Doctoral Success’ winner 2026