

What is CMALT?

CMALT is a portfolio-based professional accreditation scheme developed by ALT to enable people whose work involves learning technology to:

- have their experience and capabilities certified by peers;
- demonstrate that they are taking a committed and serious approach to their professional development.

CMALT holders are entitled to use "CMALT" as post-nominal letters.

What's in this document?

This prospectus summarises CMALT: for individuals who are thinking about getting certified; and for organisations that may benefit from staff undertaking CMALT.

Along with the views of stakeholders and people who have achieved CMALT, it provides:

- the ALT definition of learning technology and learning technologist;
- background information about CMALT, including where it came from, and how it is managed;
- the detailed requirements of CMALT;
- information about how to apply, and about the free CMALT workshops that we run;
- "small print" rules concerning eligibility, and the price of getting and remaining certified;
- a brief overview of ALT.

CMALT – background

2003 membership survey

ALT periodically surveys its membership by means of a web-based questionnaire covering different aspects of what we do. Members (organisational and individual) responded to the 2003 questionnaire with solid support for the development of "a simple, economical, voluntary, peer-based structure to accredit individual members as Learning Technologists, in collaboration with HE, FE, and industry bodies".

Research, development and piloting

With the help of grants from JISC and from the South Yorkshire Objective 1 Programme we commissioned a research and development study from a team led by Martin Oliver from the Institute of Education. After two successive pilot "runs" of CMALT we were ready to launch it.

Steering Group and management

The CMALT Steering Group, with membership drawn from ALT's Membership Services Committee and from amongst CMALT holders, determines the overall shape and direction of the scheme. ALT's Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the scheme, supported by colleagues in the ALT office.

Views from stakeholders and from people who have achieved CMALT

“The CMALT Portfolio application process encouraged me to reflect on what I already knew, within learning technology, (more than I imagined) and how I came to have this knowledge. It also helped me to focus on what I wanted to learn in the future and to set myself personal goals.”

Ged Fitzgibbon, Lead Instructional Designer,
Cranfield University

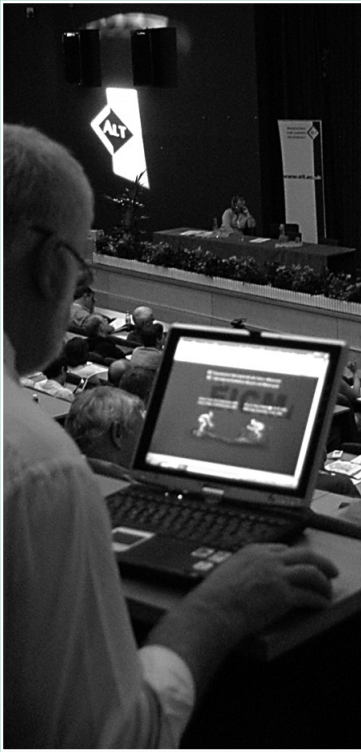
“Microsoft understands the importance of skilled IT professionals and users, which is why we've developed a wide range of certifications under the MCP (Microsoft Certified Professional) brand. However, we also recognise the value of schemes like CMALT, with its emphasis on enhancing the professional standing of people whose work involves the effective application of IT in teaching and learning, wherever they are employed. I wish CMALT every success.”

David Burrows, Director of Public Sector,
Strategy & Marketing, Microsoft UK

“The CMALT process was an opportunity for reflection – and connection. In a fast moving field like e-learning, taking the time to reflect on and make explicit the connections between learning and a variety of technologies was an opportunity all professionals should be given.”



Ellen Lessner,
ILT
Development
Coordinator,
Abingdon and
Witney College



“Learning technology” and “learning technologist”

Learning technology is the broad range of communication, information and related technologies that can be used to support learning, teaching, and assessment.

Learning technologists are people who are actively involved in managing, researching, supporting or enabling learning with the use of learning technology.

A very wide range of people in industry and in private and public sector education and training have learning technology as a core part of their role: you do not have to be called or to call yourself a learning technologist to be one.

CMALT – detailed requirements

Principles and values

The central tenet of the scheme is the definition of learning technology agreed within ALT. The other principles and values that inform the scheme are as follows.

- A commitment to exploring and understanding the interplay between technology and learning.
- A commitment to keep up to date with new technologies.
- An empathy with and willingness to learn from colleagues from different backgrounds and specialisms.
- A commitment to communicate and disseminate effective practice.

Core and specialist area(s)

Evidence is required under Core areas of work, and Specialist option(s).

Core areas of work

1. Operational issues. Applicants should demonstrate both their understanding and use of learning technology. ‘Use’ might include the development, adaptation or application of technology within teaching, training or the support of learning more generally. This should include evidence of:
 - a) an understanding of the constraints and benefits of different technology;
 - b) technical knowledge and ability in the use of learning technology;
 - c) supporting the deployment of learning technologies.
2. Teaching, learning and/or assessment processes. Applicants should demonstrate their understanding of and engagement with teaching, learning and assessment processes. ‘Engagement’ may include using understanding to inform the development, adaptation or application of technology. This should include evidence of:
 - a) an understanding of teaching, learning and/or assessment processes;
 - b) an understanding of your target learners.
3. The wider context. Applicants should demonstrate their awareness of and engagement with wider issues that inform their practice. This should include evidence of:
 - a) understanding and engaging with legislation, policies and standards.
4. Communication. Applicants should demonstrate their knowledge and skills in communication either through working with others or through interface design. This should include evidence of either (a) or (b).
 - a) Working with others.
 - b) Interface between human and technical systems.

Specialist option(s)

As well as the core areas, applicants are required to demonstrate evidence of independent practice in one or more specialist options. Here is an indicative list of specialist options:

- producing learning materials/content/courseware;
- project management, including resource management;
- training, mentoring and developing others;
- evaluating projects;
- research;
- designing tools and systems;
- institutional development/strategic work;
- knowledge and application of standards and specifications for learning technology;
- assistive technologies;
- VLE administration and maintenance;
- interface design;
- managing and sourcing content;
- copyright.

How to apply

All the documents relevant to applying, including the CMALT Guidelines, Frequently Asked Questions, the application template, and details of our “fee-waiver” for organisations wishing to put forward 5 or more members of staff for CMALT, can be found at www.alt.ac.uk/cmalt. In summary the application process is as follows.

Applicants supply evidence in a portfolio. A convenient way to do this is in a simple text-processed document, based on a Word template that we provide. However, so long as your application can conveniently be accessed by the assessors, and remains fixed during the assessment process, you may use other formats, for example an institutional e-portfolio system, or a web log.

Two assessors assess your portfolio: one nominated by you (and approved by ALT); and one appointed by ALT. The ALT-appointed assessor is a holder of CMALT.

In the case of applicants who do not nominate an assessor, or whose nominee declines, or is unacceptable to ALT, a second assessor (also a holder of CMALT) is appointed by ALT.

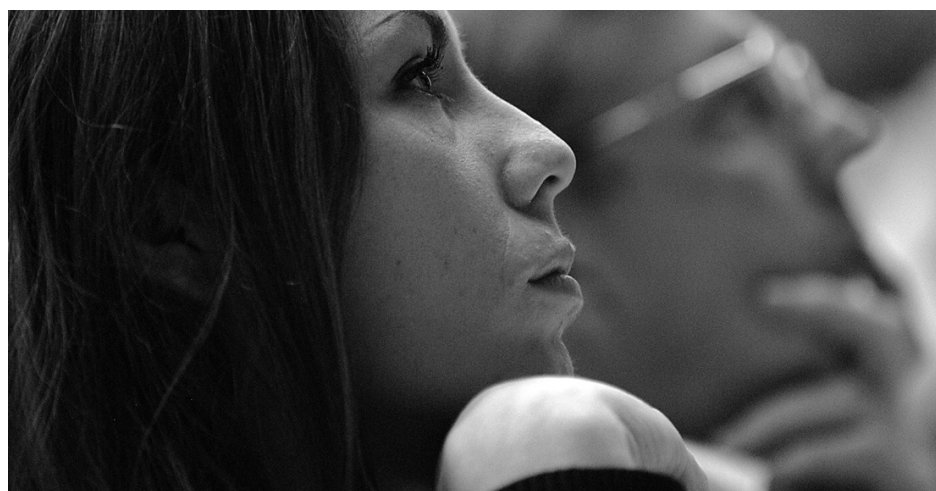
The assessment process is (from Autumn 2007) managed using an e-commerce enabled document workflow system.

CMALT workshops

ALT runs occasional free face-to-face 2 hour workshops in different parts of the country, often at the request of individual universities and colleges. These are designed for learning technologists wanting to get started with CMALT, and for managers and HR people who are considering adopting CMALT institutionally. We advertise these workshops on the ALT web site. If you would like to learn more, email cmalt@alt.ac.uk.

End notes

1. CMALT is evolving. Definitive documents relating to CMALT, including this prospectus, will always be found on the ALT web site under www.alt.ac.uk/cmalt.
2. You can receive occasional updates about CMALT by joining a low volume email distribution list at www.alt.ac.uk/lists.html.
3. If you have questions about CMALT which are not answered in this prospectus or on our web site, email cmalt@alt.ac.uk, alternatively, call Seb Schmoller on 0114 2586899.
4. For further information about ALT see www.alt.ac.uk.



More views from stakeholders and from people who have achieved CMALT

“As ICT becomes more and more pervasive in education and research, so the skills of learning technologists become more important to the future of these sectors. JISC is therefore delighted to support the development of CMALT and the greater recognition of these skills and of the role of learning technologists that it will bring.”



Malcolm Read,
Executive Secretary,
JISC

“The preparation of your CMALT portfolio of evidence is an invaluable opportunity to reflect on your career progress, as well as to identify your key skills and areas of interest in learning technology. The ALT certification also connects you to a meaningful community of like-minded leaders, dedicated to spreading awareness of the benefits of using technology to enrich learning and teaching.”

Katherine Pisana,
Learning Technologist,
Ashcroft International
Business School,
Anglia Ruskin University

About ALT

Aims

Formed as a Registered Charity in 1993, ALT is a professional and scholarly association which seeks to bring together all those with an interest in the use of learning technology. With over 200 organisations and over 500 individuals in membership, we:

- represent and support our members, and provide services for them;
- facilitate collaboration between practitioners, researchers, and policy makers;
- spread good practice in the use of learning technology;
- raise the profile of research in learning technology;
- support the professionalisation of learning technologists;
- contribute to the development of policy.

Activities

We organise:

- ALT-C, which is the UK's main conference for learning technologists - our 2007 conference – Beyond Control – was in Nottingham, and our 2008 conference – Rethinking the Digital Divide – will be in Leeds, between 9 and 11 September;
- conferences on topics of interest to learning-technology practitioners, for example the joint ALT/QIA 11 October 2007 conference for FE e-learning practitioners – e-learning: making it work – at the National College of School Leadership;
- a programme of 1-day workshops - for example on project management, writing funding bids, accessibility, use of mobile devices in teaching and learning;
- an occasional Policy Board - for example at our 2003 meeting the Secretary of State for Education and Skills launched the DfES's e-learning strategy consultation, and at our 2004 meeting, at HP Labs in Bristol, we consulted on a Learning Technology Research Strategy.

We produce:

- regular and influential responses to consultations relating to learning technology and e-learning;
- a fortnightly emailed digest;
- the peer-reviewed journal ALT-J Research in Learning Technology, which is devoted to research and good practice in the use of learning technologies;
- a quarterly Newsletter, available in web format at <http://newsletter.alt.ac.uk>;
- publications and case-studies for practitioners, often produced in conjunction with other organisations.

Organisation

Six of our seven staff are based at the ALT office in Oxford. Four operational committees (Further Education, Membership Services, Publications, and Research) reporting to the Central Executive Committee, decide ALT's policy and direction.

Association for Learning Technology (ALT)

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Registered Charity No 1063519

Small print – eligibility and prices

Eligibility

Individuals and organisations can join ALT irrespective of the nature of their work or activities, provided they support the aims of ALT. In contrast, Certified Membership of ALT is open only to individual members of ALT who achieve certification and subsequent re-certification against the requirements of the scheme.

Getting certified

Applicants for certified membership, or their employer, will be charged a certification fee of £95.

On payment of this fee, you will be entitled to submit a CMALT portfolio for assessment by ALT. Once ALT has assessed your portfolio we will let you know whether or not it meets the CMALT criteria. If it does meet the CMALT criteria you will be granted Certified Member status.

If your portfolio does not meet the CMALT criteria we will indicate in what respect(s) it falls short, and you will be entitled to submit it for assessment a second time. If following assessment your portfolio meets the CMALT criteria you will be granted Certified Member status.

If, after re-assessment, your portfolio still does not meet the CMALT criteria, and you want to continue with the certification process, you will need to apply afresh and a further certification fee of £95 will be due.

Both Individual Member and Certified Member fees are tax deductible.

Remaining certified

When your individual membership is next due for renewal, to remain in good standing as a Certified Member, your membership will be charged at a new certified member rate of £80 per annum (£53 for students, retired, unemployed; £93 overseas). Certified Members will normally be required to pay their membership fees annually by Direct Debit.

CMALT certification will remain valid for 5 years, with the strong likelihood that triennial "light touch" renewal will become a requirement, through resubmission of an updated portfolio for review by ALT. If ALT judges your updated portfolio to fall short of the CMALT standards then pertaining, you will be entitled to resubmit it for review once more. If after review your portfolio is judged by ALT still to fall short of the CMALT criteria you will revert to being an Individual Member, and, when your membership is next due for renewal, you will be charged at the individual rate - currently £52 per annum (£25 for students, retired, unemployed; £65 overseas).

These costs will apply until ALT's membership fees are next updated. Any changes will be shown on our web site at www.alt.ac.uk.

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