Initial Teacher Education – Teacher Training (Secondary)

University PGCE and School Direct PGCE programmes
Each year, the PGCE programme caters for approximately 200 student teachers training to teach in secondary schools. The age range covered is 11-19, which includes A-level. We offer core PGCE and School Direct (non-salaried). Our programme is approved by the Department for Education (DfE) and leads to the recommendation for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). We work in partnership with a range of secondary schools, academies and FE colleges in our area.

We are proud of our reputation as a leading HE provider of Initial Teacher Education, and feel that we can offer you an outstanding level of training. At our last Ofsted inspection in 2010/11 the School was recognised with ‘Outstanding Provider’ status, and the programme was ranked in the Top 5 of the Good Teacher Training Guide 2017. More broadly, the QS World Rankings placed the School of Education at Bristol in the top 50 education departments in the world. As a research-intensive Russell Group university, our PGCE programme is informed by both professional practice and academic excellence. You will be taught by tutors who not only have a great deal of direct experience in the teaching profession but are also leading experts and innovators in the field of teacher education, educational fields more broadly, and in education policy.

Together with our partnership schools we manage, design and work jointly on all aspects of the experiences needed to enable student teachers to achieve the Teachers’ Standards and become effective professional practitioners. This enables us to integrate the work of the programme in placement institutions and at the university throughout the year, allowing student teachers to learn alongside effective teachers and to reflect on their experiences to develop their own teacher identities.

We are committed to the University of Bristol’s Green Apple Scheme. This is a university-wide scheme to explore the issues around sustainable development and its links with education and the education of teachers. We work with the Cabot Institute at the University of Bristol and we aim for student teachers to explore how their curriculum area can support global themes.

We hope that our relationship with you as a teacher and educator won’t end once you have completed your PGCE. As part of the PGCE programme you can also gain 60 Master’s credits, which can be used to continue to study with us for a full Master’s degree in support of your professional development. We maintain excellent networks with our local schools and many of our PGCE alumni – as a student teacher on our PGCE programme, you would join our wide education community.
The School of Education works in partnership with local schools, colleges and academies to deliver two programmes in secondary teacher training.

These programmes are:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>University PGCE</th>
<th>School Direct PGCE (non-salaried)</th>
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<tr>
<td>You receive training at the university and have placements in at least 2 schools.</td>
<td>You are recruited by a local school.</td>
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<tr>
<td>You are closely supported by school mentors and your university tutor during this time.</td>
<td>You know where your placements will be in advance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>You will follow the same programme as the University PGCE and have the full support of the university, including a university tutor and access to all facilities.</td>
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There are 10 secondary subjects offered in our PGCE programme:
- English (page 3)
- Geography (page 4)
- History (page 5)
- Mathematics (page 6)
- Modern Foreign Languages (French, German, Italian, Spanish) (page 7)
- Music (page 8)
- Religious Education (page 9)
- Science – Biology (page 10) – Chemistry (page 11) – Physics (page 12)

Each curriculum area is staffed by experienced and well-qualified subject specialists, who bring their expertise and knowledge to the PGCE, along with a range of additional experiences for student teachers. All student teachers are supported by subject specialists throughout the programme.

Programme content
The programme is a minimum of 36 weeks in duration and starts in mid-September. The programme structure is comprised of three major components:
- curriculum and professional studies – your main subject specialism,
- educational and professional studies (EPS),
- school experience.

Everyone can remember a novel that they read at school. Most can do so because it made a deep impression on them; many can do so because it was taught by an English teacher who enabled the story to ‘live’ off the page. Yet type ‘English teaching resources’ into a search engine and you are likely to return thousands of hits that include uninspiring terms such as ‘grammar’, ‘integrated skills’, ‘assessment’. The PGCE English programme invites you to bridge these two poles – imaginatively and practically – and explore the world between them.

Approaching this creative subject in a creative manner, we focus on how teachers can best support young people to develop into confident, articulate and able speakers, readers and writers.

The programme includes a focus on drama, media and the place of technologies in English. It is underpinned by current academic research and philosophical thought. It is challenging but rewarding: many of our alumni say that they have learnt more about ‘English’ on this course than throughout their undergraduate degrees.

‘Choosing the PGCE as a route into teaching was the best decision I ever made. The subject tutors are phenomenal – kind, supportive and genuinely there for you even after you graduate. They work so hard and are so inspiring – you will truly miss them once you start a full-time job!’
PGCE English student 2016-17

There are 10 secondary subjects offered in our PGCE programme:
The course is structured to support your progression in becoming a geography teacher, establishing and developing confidence and competence in the teaching of Geography to school students aged 11-19.

University sessions are designed to combine the practical application of skills and knowledge in schools with the consideration of contemporary issues in geography education. Specific topics covered in these sessions include planning over a range of scales from individual lessons to the curriculum; the development of resources and their use in helping pupils to ‘think geographically’; supporting the progress of all learners; assessment at GCSE and A-level; consideration of the place and value of information technology and of fieldwork.

In the autumn term the focus is on becoming familiar with how geography is taught in schools, gaining experience through structured observations and supported teaching.

The spring term allows the use of these ‘building blocks’ to develop skills in an extended school placement.

During the summer term, the focus of the course widens to explore more deeply geography’s role in education and its place on the school curriculum. Within the geography cohort there will be a range of expertise in various aspects of subject knowledge and there are opportunities within the course, across the year, to learn from each other.

Our PGCE graduates are very successful in gaining employment both locally and nationally. Many of our school-based geography mentors trained with us and therefore are able to offer excellent, well-informed support drawing from their own experiences of successfully undertaking this course.

‘I felt very well prepared when I started as an NQT. The PGCE programme covered a good amount of practical skills as well as the wider pedagogy and academic perspectives. I was placed in two placement schools during the PGCE and was constantly supported by the university throughout these placements. My subject tutors were incredible and even now, as an NQT, I know that if I was really struggling, they are only an email away and would continue to support me.’

PGCE geography student 2016-17

Good history teaching can and does take a variety of forms. The programme enables each individual student teacher to discover how best to use themselves and their talents to teach history effectively. The history programme is intellectually demanding and requires full commitment and a great deal of energy. You will need to be fit and well-prepared for a busy, but highly rewarding and exciting year.

Our aim is for you to become a confident, reflective, innovative, and flexible teacher of history through:

- collaborative working with other student teachers;
- collaborative working with strong practitioners in partner schools;
- introducing you to the underpinning concepts in history education which shape a history curriculum at KS3, GCSE, and A-level;
- equipping you with a wide variety of strategies to engage, motivate and challenge students in the process of historical enquiry;
- providing high level tuition at professional and Master’s level with leading subject specialists;
- working in a variety of schools with different practices and comparing and contrasting those experiences;
- participating in local history teacher professional networks;
- participating in interdisciplinary initiatives which address global challenges.

Our history PGCE graduates are sought after for first appointments locally and nationally and employment rates are very high.

The group of student teachers will have a range of age, work, and historical interests.

‘I chose the University of Bristol because of their outstanding reputation. I was already aware of the high level of support that UoB tutors offer to their students. I could not be happier with my choice. The tutors got to know me and made sure my placement schools were places which would most develop my teaching skills. Not only did I graduate from the PGCE feeling confident and ready to start my NQT year, but I also have 60 credits towards a Master’s in Education.’

PGCE history student 2016-17
There is not one way to teach mathematics. Schools use a variety of approaches and we see the programme as allowing each individual student teacher to experience that variety by:

• working in at least two different schools with different approaches, supported by an Associate Tutor (AT) in each school;
• sharing the impressions of other student teachers on the PGCE programme;
• having day visits to schools;
• discovering how best to use themselves and their talents to teach mathematics effectively to those children with whom they work, supported by sharing perspectives on reading and research;
• developing flexibility of approach in their classroom;
• learning new skills.

You will find a range of age, work experience, technological skills, mathematical interests and mathematical expertise within the group. The programme aims to use the strengths of the group of student teachers in partnership with the PGCE tutors and the ATs.

‘The attraction to teaching was immersing myself in the subject I love, attempting to pass my enthusiasm for maths on to students and see that ‘lightbulb moment’ when they understand a new concept for the first time. The programme more than lived up to my expectations. I felt very well prepared for my NQT throughout the PGCE and it has focussed my mind on constantly improving lessons and being the best teacher I can be.’

PGCE maths student 2016-17

Each year, we recruit a large cohort of talented linguists onto our PGCE MFL course. The course is intensive and challenging, and high levels of support are offered throughout.

On the Bristol course, there are dedicated tutors for each of the three main languages offered (French, German and Spanish). Along with the large cohort size, this means that our student teachers are offered a wide range of opportunities to prepare them effectively for their future lives as teachers of MFL. MFL specific workshops and seminars are delivered by the MFL tutors and by guest speakers who are practising teachers in our partnership schools. These give a thorough grounding in MFL pedagogy and in the curriculum and examinations system. There is a focus on creativity and on ICT skills. Throughout the course, we also work with student teachers on strengthening their language skills through target setting, dedicated peer teaching sessions and workshops run in the target language. Italian specialists have the opportunity to deliver a GCSE course to other members of the cohort and in the summer term an optional Latin module is offered to student teachers of MFL, English and history.

We work with a large number of schools and our student teachers are known for their professionalism and commitment. Unsurprisingly, a large number of the MFL student teachers find jobs in the local area; this gives us the opportunity of continuing our support through regular meetings for Newly Qualified Teachers.

‘There are undoubtedly pressures placed on those who work in this noble and fulfilling profession. However, overcoming these challenges created a supportive close-knit PGCE cohort. University tutors and mentors in school were always there ready to offer valuable and personalised support and advice.’

PGCE MFL student 2016-17
Lave and Wenger’s idea of ‘a community of practice’ (1991) is at the core of the Music PGCE. Student teachers work together closely on practical and written tasks, supporting each other, and being supported by a wide range of school teachers, musicians and music/arts educationists. We have strong links not only with schools but also with a local music technology sixth form/degree college and the Bristol Music Education Hub, enabling trainees to study and experience music learning and teaching in non-formal as well as school settings.

Aside from engaging student teachers in a range of practical music workshops, we place a strong focus on music technologies: complete beginners as well as those experienced in the use of sequencing and recording software are supported in developing skills and pedagogies that are now so essential to 21st century school music teaching. Through our links with the Music Education Hub, two local charities that focus on music for students with special needs/disabilities (SEN/D) and the Bristol-based British Paraorchestra, we also provide opportunities for student teachers to develop understandings of ways in which technologies can support inclusion in music. Those who have a particular interest in SEN/D are also able to gain practical experience in this area of school and/or community work.

‘The technology support was great – I’d never used Cubase, Logic before. Excellent help to teaching and how to apply to own teaching practice.’
PGCE music student 2016-17

Why train to teach religious education and which course will help me to become the RE teacher I want to be? These are two key questions; the first will you decide but the second will be yourself and our partnership. Together we can help you to become an outstanding RE teacher who will engage and challenge future students through stimulating and thought-provoking lessons. Religious education is the subject where teachers and students engage in some of the most challenging questions, making sense of life and the issues raised from religious, ethical, philosophical and non-religious viewpoints.

The University of Bristol RE PGCE provides opportunities to debate and explore the subject within the PGCE group, with specialist teachers or members of local religious and non-religious groups, as well as opportunities to visit centres of faith and places of interest. In addition, you will receive excellent and varied practical experience to develop your teaching skills, access to expert practitioners both in the University and during teaching placements. Here at Bristol you will be supported by two very experienced subject specialist tutors, national figures at the cutting edge of research and practice, supported by outstanding teachers from within the partnership.

You will know that your RE course is held in the highest regard nationally; last year all student teachers were successful in gaining a job in teaching and external scrutiny confirmed the quality of the programme (RE External Examiner’s Report 2017). You will be part of, experience and contribute to a vibrant and exciting introduction to teaching religious education.

‘The RE programme provided great teaching, support and discussion of all the necessary issues involved with teaching RE. There was a great balance of time in schools and tutor meetings. The trips to religious sites and RE conferences were extremely interesting and helpful. The course helped me to enter straight into, and feel a part of, the professional community of RE teachers.’
PGCE RE student 2016-17
The PGCE biology programme is based on practical experience. In addition to spending time in schools, you will have laboratory-based sessions that will enable you to look at both well-established and new approaches to biology. Trends in Applied Biology, such as biotechnology and tackling difficult ethical issues, are given particular emphasis. PGCE biologists also undertake a field trip where they can gain experience of ecological and environmental work, think about how to plan such trips, and assess the value of learning in informal contexts.

We welcome applications from good biology graduates who, ideally, also have a strong background in at least one other science at A-level. The nature of degree study means that student teachers often have quite specialised biological knowledge, so our workshops are designed to help student teachers develop their subject knowledge across all the aspects of biology that are relevant to the school curriculum.

These sessions are practical and active in approach, giving you the chance to develop your subject and pedagogical knowledge. The workshops are based in our facilities in the School of Education and in ‘We The Curious’, an internationally renowned hands-on Science Centre in Bristol. You will also be developing your knowledge of chemistry and physics, enabling you to teach across the sciences to GCSE level in school. Hence, collaborative learning and teaching with student teachers from the PGCE biology and physics programmes will be an important feature of your work, with sessions at the University providing you with the opportunity to work in specialist and mixed subject groups. You will be in a tutor group that meets regularly and we view the science tutor as someone who is accompanying you on your journey of learning to teach science.

‘The support of tutors at the university and in my placement schools has been superb. All science subject workshops and sessions have been of high quality. They have managed to retain my enthusiasm for science while helping us to explore the challenges of helping school students to understand the scientific concepts.’

PGCE biology student 2016-17

The programme provides opportunities to investigate the curricular, pedagogical and practical aspects of chemistry including hands-on activities designed to improve learning. Dramatic and attention-grabbing reactions are very much part of the course, but we examine how to use these effectively to maximise engagement and learning in the classrooms. There will be a focus on concepts that progress from the introduction of a particle model of matter towards an understanding of structure and bonding. Representational conventions such as equations are also important and are therefore given attention.

We value applications from good chemistry graduates who, ideally, also have a strong background in at least one other science at A-level. We do consider applications from people with some chemistry background (e.g. part of their degree or experience gained in the workplace) and might need to do a subject knowledge enhancement (SKE) course prior to starting our PGCE. If we recognise that you have the attributes to make a competent and inspiring chemistry teacher then we will offer you a conditional place and refer you to a suitable SKE course.

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‘I’ve really enjoyed the support from within the science department (in university) and the creative ways teaching and engaging students has been approached.’

PGCE chemistry student 2016-17
The PGCE physics programme has a strong bias in favour of practical experience. Underpinning much of the work will be the development of concepts and pedagogy in key curriculum areas such as forces, energy, and electricity. Tackling the challenging areas of physics is a key component of the programme, along with thinking about how to help children engage with difficult topics. We are looking for student teachers who are enthusiastic and inspirational, with a desire to widen the appeal of physics.

In addition to people having physics degrees, we encourage applications from those who have some physics background (perhaps A-level or experience gained in the workplace) and might need to do a subject knowledge enhancement (SKE) course prior to starting our PGCE. If we recognise that you have the attributes to make a competent and inspiring physics teacher then we will offer you a conditional place and refer you to a suitable SKE course.

We are aware that some physics applicants may have an interest in teaching maths. There is scope within the programme for linking up with our PGCE maths colleagues to take part in school based projects and to examine some of the key issues involved in effective teaching and learning of maths.

Our workshops are designed to help student teachers develop their subject knowledge across all the aspects of physics that are relevant to the school curriculum. These sessions are practical and active in approach, giving you the chance to develop your subject and pedagogical knowledge. The workshops are based in our facilities in the School of Education and in ‘We The Curious’, an internationally renowned hands-on Science Centre in Bristol. You will also be developing your knowledge of biology and chemistry, enabling you to teach across the sciences to GCSE level in school.

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‘I have really enjoyed the subject-specific university courses, especially the physics workshops. I have found the science lectures really inspiring and motivating.’
PGCE physics student 2016-7

As on all PGCE programmes, and in accordance with the Department for Education (DFE), student teachers must spend approximately two-thirds of their training programme in school placements.

The University of Bristol uses a wide range of schools, approximately 60, which are based in the city centre and surrounding counties.

Your school experience will be completed in four complementary placements in at least two schools. We work in close partnership with school mentors (Professional and Associate Tutors) in our placement schools who are dedicated to offering support and advice throughout. They are committed to ensuring that your training is focused on developing your practice in the classroom and catering to the individual pupils’ needs within it.

Student teachers will be allocated their first placement shortly after registering at the University in September.

The strength of the partnership is clear and is characterised by a common understanding, commitment from all parties involved and, at the heart, the passionate belief that it is everyone’s job to prepare student teachers to become inspirational and outstanding teachers, capable of critical reflection and of making a difference to young people’s lives.’

Chief External examiner 2017

The majority of schools in our partnership are within commutable distance from Bristol, however in a small number of cases placements will be further afield. Discussions will be had with those concerned and support is given with alternative accommodation and travel. A travel reimbursement scheme is currently offered and reviewed on an annual basis – please note this may be subject to change.

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The University and PGCE Team recognise that the PGCE is an intensive one year full-time programme and that student teachers have a range of different needs. Our student teachers regularly evaluate very highly the support offered during the PGCE programme at the University of Bristol.

The programme seeks to provide student teachers with support in the following areas:

**Academic**
All student teachers receive extensive training in their subject area as well as in key aspects of education in general through the EPS programme (educational and professional studies). All University sessions provide student teachers with expert training in their subject curriculum to enable them to become outstanding practitioners in the classroom. Advice on careers and applying for jobs are offered to student teachers in EPS sessions and by subject tutors.

**Pastoral**
Each student teacher is allocated a Personal Tutor with whom they can discuss academic and personal matters. If the student teacher would prefer to separate the two, there are additional people within the school to offer non-academic support; these are the Programme Director (Partnership), PGCE Administration Manager and Senior Tutor.

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**How will I be supported?**

**Peer support**
Each year we have several student teachers join the programme who bring with them caring responsibilities, pre-existing health conditions, or who are more mature or career changers. At the start of the year we host an event at which student teachers who fit into these categories can meet with each other, as well as NQTs who have recently completed the programme, for support and reassurance.

**School Placement support**

**School Mentors**
Each student teacher is allocated a Professional Tutor (School-based mentor) and an Associate Tutor (School-subject based mentor). The role of these tutors is to provide guidance and support to student teachers during their placements.

**University Support Services**
The University of Bristol is dedicated to student welfare and has a dedicated team of advisors and services that all student teachers have access to. Services offered include Student Counselling, Disability Services, Students’ Union, International Advice and Support.

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**How to apply**

Applications are made through UCAS Teacher Training (www.ucas.com/ucas/teacher-training) which acts as the clearing house for admissions to PGCE programmes across the UK.

Applications can be made from mid-October and throughout the year, depending on vacancies. Universities and colleges will begin to consider candidates once applications open, early application is advised in view of the demand for places in most subjects. The University has an active equal opportunities policy and applications are particularly welcome from graduates from minority ethnic backgrounds and those with disabilities.

**Entry requirements**
We need a minimum of a 2:2 degree in a subject related to the one you wish to teach. You also need a minimum of maths and English GCSE at Grade C or above (grade 4 or above from summer 2017 onwards).

We do accept overseas qualifications but you would need to get confirmation through NARIC that these are equivalent to British qualifications. A list of common qualifications is available on our website.

All candidates must have passed the Literacy and Numeracy Skills Tests before starting the course. Tests slots can be booked on the Department for Education’s website (www.sta.education.gov.uk).

If you have graduated within five years of your proposed start date of the programme, we ask for an academic reference.

In addition to the above, offer-holders will need to complete a health questionnaire and an Enhanced DBS Disclosure. These will be reviewed and approved by the University prior to registration.

The PGCE at Bristol is extremely competitive: each application is considered on its own merits and the decision on whether to invite applications for interview is based on all the information supplied on the UCAS Teacher Training application form.

All candidates need to be interviewed, in person, in Bristol. We do not conduct interviews via Skype. The reason for this is that we include a group interview task, which allows us to test candidate’s interpersonal skills, skills that are crucial for being a teacher.

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In 2016-17 95% of student teachers said their professional and personal support was Very Good or Good.
Tuition Fees
Currently tuition fees are based on the undergraduate fee structure. This may be liable to change.

Student Loans
Student teachers from England can apply for a tuition fee loan via Student Finance England (www.gov.uk/student-finance).

In 2018/19 EU student teachers can apply for a tuition fee loan to the Student Finance Services European Team (www.gov.uk/student-finance) on +44 (0)141 243 3570. This may be subject to review for 2019/20 onwards.

Teacher training bursaries
Bursaries are available for eligible student teachers on PGCE courses in England. Bursary amounts will vary depending on teaching subject and degree class. Further up-to-date information on fees, funding and bursaries can be found on the Department for Education website (getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/funding-and-salary/overview).

Further information about financial help for PGCE students can be found on our website (bristol.ac.uk/fees-funding/postgraduate/pgce).

Over 50% of our student teachers choose to remain in the Bristol area and have successfully secured teaching posts within our partnership schools.

Many of our student teachers progress quickly in their careers, taking on roles such as subject leader and head of year. Some have gone beyond this, joining senior leadership teams.

School of Education, 35 Berkeley Square
The School of Education is situated in Berkeley Square, Clifton. It is a short walk from Park Street and Clifton Triangle, which has a range of quirky shops and places to eat.

It is also situated near other University buildings, Wills Memorial Building and the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery.

The School also overlooks the scenic gardens of Brandon Hill.

Bristol as a vibrant city
Our students always say how much they love the city of Bristol – from its friendly people and fantastic music scene, to its vibrant harbourside, green spaces and buzzing centre. Bristol was named the best place to live in the UK, 2017 (Sunday Times).

Discover what Bristol has to offer our students (bristol.ac.uk/city).

Accommodation
The University’s Accommodation Office will help you find somewhere to live, offer advice and support you while you’re in University or private accommodation (bristol.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/accommodation).
Contact us

If you have any queries about the programme, please contact:

**PGCE Office**
**Tel** +44 (0) 117 331 4492  
**Email** ed-pgce@bristol.ac.uk

School of Education  
University of Bristol  
35 Berkeley Square  
Bristol, BS8 1JA

If you need all or part of this publication in an alternative format please contact Student Marketing:

**Tel** +44 (0) 117 394 1573  
**Email** choosebristol-pg@bristol.ac.uk

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