

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

**Please see the ‘Interview Days – general instructions for candidates’ document for details on the structure of the morning part of the interview day.**

Information about the PGCE Secondary Science:

Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Biology with Psychology courses

The university teaching term starts in late September or early October. You will spend most of the autumn term based on the St. Luke’s campus where you will follow an intensive course which has included the following elements in the 2019/2020 academic year:

* A course of both classroom and practical pedagogy sessions in your own science specialism that will introduce you a variety of teaching strategies and issues to do with the teaching of science at Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and A-level.
* Complementary practical pedagogy courses in your non-specialist science subjects.
* A series of short lectures covering research informed issues in science teaching such as why teach science, misconceptions, questioning, dialogic education, modelling, health and safety, differentiation and assessment in science.
* An Education and Professional Studies programme that covers topics relevant to all secondary teaching such as learning, assessment, pupil welfare, behaviour, adapting teaching to needs and contexts, becoming a teacher and research-inspired teaching.
* Guest speakers sharing ideas about their science teaching and resources that can help your teaching.
* Explaining science sessions where you complete peer teaching across Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 5, in which you will begin to develop your teaching skills with other PGCE science trainees.
* An optional short First Aid course offering certification (a small charge is made for attendance at this course).

During the second half of the autumn term, you will visit your first placement school for two weeks, during which time the school will organise induction activities to introduce you to its staff, systems and procedures. You will also begin to start working with your science classes. A member of the science staff will be your Principal School-based Tutor (PST), responsible for your work in the science department and you will also be assigned to a Mentor (not a science teacher) who will take an overview of your professional progression as a teacher.

From January, you will spend almost all your time in school. Your first placement will last until just before the end of the spring term, when you will transfer to your second placement school. Again, a programme of induction activities will be arranged to familiarise you with a new and different school context. You will return to your second school after the Easter break to complete your training. During your school-based work, you will come back to the university on five occasions for seminar days – three in the spring term and two in the summer term. These seminar days are an opportunity for university tutors to support your work in schools with further theoretical input and also give you the opportunity to reflect on and share good practice with other science trainees. The seminar days are a valuable and important part of the PGCE course.

## Information about the Interview and Selection Process for

## Applicants for PGCE Programmes in Secondary Science:

## Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Biology with Psychology

In advance of the interview you should read the PGCE science specific information on the previous pages and review the information provided about the PGCE Secondary science courses which can be found on the Graduate School of Education website:

<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/teachertraining/secondary/science/>

You should also read the science specific PGCE study guide from the current academic year which is available from <https://www.exeter.ac.uk/teachertraining/apply/howtoapply/pgceinterviews/>.

As part of the interview process you will be asked to give a 2 minute presentation. For this you will need to present a visual aid in your own subject to the group explaining how it might be used in teaching.

**Science Written Task**

For the written task you will be asked to focus on an area of science appropriate to your chosen subject specialism as detailed in the table below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Science specialism | Area of science that planning task will focus on |
| **Biology** | **Inheritance, variation and evolution** |
| **Chemistry** | **Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter** |
| **Physics** | **Electricity** |
| **Biology with Psychology** | **Social influence** |

To prepare for this task we recommend that you look at the National Curriculum for Science (see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-science-programmes-of-study>) **and** at the GCSE specifications for your specialist subject (e.g. at the AQA site <http://www.aqa.org.uk/>). Further details of the task requirements will be provided on the day of the interview. You can make notes which you can bring with you on the day. If you do bring notes, you must ensure your name is on each page and you hand them in with your completed task.

The qualities we are looking for, and which the selection procedure is designed to explore, are:

* a passion for teaching science in an engaging way to young people.
* good subject knowledge, especially in your specialist science subject.
* enthusiasm for all aspects of science.
* professional commitment and suitability for teaching - this could be demonstrated through gaining experience in a school setting, working with young people and/or showing awareness of current educational issues.
* ability to communicate clearly and confidently using good spoken and written English.
* ability to think creatively and to reflect critically on experience and on new ideas.
* evidence of leadership skills or the capacity to develop these skills.
* evidence of empathy with young people and a desire to make a significant difference in young people’s lives.
* good interpersonal skills.