

**UNIVERSITY OF EXETER**

**GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

# PRIMARY PGCE – GENERAL INFORMATION

The University of Exeter has an excellent record in Teacher Training, or Initial Teacher Education (ITE). October 2014 marked 160 years of ITE at St Luke’s, the campus where the Graduate School of Education is based. In our latest Ofsted inspection, the PGCE programme was graded as ‘outstanding’ in every category. **Training is delivered within a strong school-university partnership, informed by Government policy and up-to-date research in primary education.** The Primary PGCE course has developed effective working relationships with some 150 schools across the South West region. Your school-based work (teaching practice) will be based in two of these schools.

The Primary PGCE year starts in September. **Before you join the university, you will spend two weeks of preliminary experience in school: one week in a primary and one week in a secondary school.** These should be schools of your choice, preferably maintained (state-funded) schools convenient to the area in which you live. They do not have to be members of the Exeter ITE Partnership. It is your responsibility to contact the two schools and you should arrange to visit them in the autumn term, before the start of the university term. Schools usually co-operate fully with requests for observation visits once you have had a place confirmed on the PGCE course. We provide a small number of tasks to be completed during your preliminary experience weeks so that you can make the best use of your time in the two schools.

**You will spend most of the autumn term following the University taught course** where you will follow an intensive course including the following modules:

* Primary Curriculum Studies module
* Primary Pathway or Teaching and Learning module
* Educational and Professional Studies module

**During the second half of 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 have the opportunity to observe teaching and undertake some short episodes of teaching during these two weeks as part of your ‘Beginning Practice’ phase of training. You will be assigned to a Mentor and Principle School- Based Tutor who will take an overview of your professional development as a teacher and support you through the placement.

**From January, you will spend almost all your time in school. You will spend the spring term in your first placement school and in the summer term in your second placement school.** A programme of induction activities will be arranged to familiarise you with new and different school contexts. **During your school-based work, you will connect back with the University on several occasions for seminar days.** 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 trainees, as well as re-establishing social contacts and activities. The Seminar Days are a valuable and important part of the PGCE course.

Our partnerships with schools provide exceptional opportunities for School Based Work and **all of our partner schools have specially trained mentors who will assist you in learning to teach**. These colleagues are essential to your development as a teacher and will help you to develop both classroom skills and reflective and evaluative strategies. Together with schools, we will provide you with opportunities, training and support. Our schools are situated throughout the South West region, from Penzance in the far west to Poole and Bournemouth in the east and across Devon and Somerset.

**Every effort is made to take into consideration the personal circumstances and preferences of trainees when allocating their placements.** Trainees generally live in and around Exeter for the autumn term, and then move to the area their placements will be in. **If you already live in the area, and especially if you have family commitments such as children at school, we will do our best to arrange school placements for you that are as convenient as possible.** However, our flexibility in this respect is very limited. We cannot guarantee that your school placements will be close to where you live so it is essential that you do not enter into an annual accommodation contract if you are moving into the Exeter area to start the PGCE. Most trainees wait until the autumn term to arrange their accommodation for their school-based work when they have met other trainees going to the same school or area. To help with this, once you start the course, you will have access to a list of short-term accommodation throughout the region. Although not vetted by the University, the details in this list have been passed to us by schools, private individuals and former trainees and have been helpful in the past in assisting trainees and groups of trainees find accommodation for the spring/summer terms.

**The Exeter Model of ITE is progressive and developmental, supported at all stages by University and school tutors.** When you start work in school, you will at first observe lessons and perhaps participate in a teaching support role, depending on the activities included in each lesson. You will soon start to teach discrete parts of lessons, known as ‘episodes’, (for example, introducing a poem to the class). You will be responsible for the planning and delivery of these episodes after discussion and with the support of your Principle School Tutor (PST). **Gradually, as your confidence in class builds, you will teach longer episodes, working towards taking whole lessons when you and your PST agree that it is appropriate for you and the pupils you teach.** Your ‘contact time’ with classes in school is arranged so that you can prepare thoroughly for all episodes and lessons that you teach, and also have time for detailed critical reflection on your teaching performance, and how this is related to your pupils’ learning. In addition, there will be set tasks and two Masters level University assignments to complete.

You will be encouraged to reflect on your progress and set your own targets for development during your training. Your progress will be formally discussed with you on a weekly basis by your PST. You will also meet with your Mentor (a teacher from a different department who takes an overview of your progress) in a ‘supervisory conference’ three times per term to review your progress and to set targets for your further professional development as a teacher. Contact with the university is maintained during your time in school by visits from a university visiting tutor (UVT) who will supervise your school-based work. Normally your UVT visits you twice: once in the spring term and once in the summer term. Extra visits may be arranged if necessary to support your training. Your schools will provide progress reports at the end of each ‘phase’ of training within the Exeter Model of Teacher Education. During final placement, your placement school will provide a summative, school-based work assessment that contributes to the university recommendation for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) at the end of the course. The university will make this recommendation to the Department for Education when you have obtained a satisfactory final progress report on your school-based work, as well as achieving a pass mark or better for your two university assignments (submitted beginning of January and end of April). These assignments are assessed at level 7 (masters). Successful completion of the Primary PGCE programme means that you will be awarded a Post Graduate Certificate in Education with 60 masters’ level credits. These credits can enable you to progress smoothly onto the part time MA in Education programme at the University of Exeter following your PGCE year.

**The campus at St Luke’s provides a very pleasant backdrop with a distinctive collegiate atmosphere** **for the University element of your training**. A range of facilities are available, including an extensive educational library where there is a large school-based work (teaching practice) section which contains materials directly relevant to school age children. There is also an extensive electronic library to enable you to study while on school-based work. The campus offers study spaces, computer facilities, a sports hall with swimming pool, and a campus café. Additional facilities are available on the Streatham campus, a short bus ride away across the city. The St Luke’s campus is shared with the School of Sport and Health Science and the University of Exeter Medical School.

Car parking on the campus is restricted and Exeter City Council will not allow extension of parking areas on environmental grounds. Most of the available space is regulated by official permits, for which a charge is made, and availability of car parking permits for students/trainees is severely limited. **Whilst on the PGCE course, you are advised to make travel arrangements that do not involve bringing a car into the city.** A park-and-ride scheme is operated from car parks situated on some of the city approach roads and we strongly encourage you to make use of such schemes if you travel in from outlying areas. The bus station is conveniently situated for the St Luke’s campus, being about five minutes walk away along the Heavitree Road. There is provision on the St Luke’s campus to securely lock bikes under shelter.

**If you have any queries or concerns about the PGCE Primary course at Exeter, please bring them with you to interview**, where you will be given a chance to raise any questions about the course content and organisation or the facilities available.

**We hope you are successful in your application**.

