



PGCE Placements - Frequently Asked Questions

1. How are my placement schools chosen?

Many variables are considered, including:

- The placement offers we have received from schools
- Our knowledge of the quality and nature of the training which schools offer
- The preferred placement area you indicate following acceptance
- Your specific circumstances and preferences. We aim for a 'best fit' for all trainees, but **it is never possible to accommodate all preferences**. We prioritise locating trainees who are less flexible in where they can be placed due to caring commitments or for health reasons where adjustments are recommended. We consider individual circumstances such as trainees who are classed as 'Success for All trainees'
- Any relationship with the school. We often avoid sending you to schools where you are 'known', so that you have an objective training experience, and to avoid conflicts of interest
- Breadth of experiences – your placements will offer different experiences. There are many factors that can be considered including (but not limited to) pupil intake, location, catchment area, size and funding type (including academies, independent schools etc).
- The time of application. We inform schools of placement allocations in July so trainees applying after 1st June are considered late applicants and will need to be more flexible about location. Some subjects will have allocated all their placements earlier than this, especially in our most popular areas such as anywhere commutable from Exeter.

2. How far will I be expected to travel?

Some trainees choose to move closer to their placement schools. Most trainees will be expected to spend time commuting to their placements. Trainees were asked to consider which of the placement regions they would like to be placed in, trainees requesting to be near Exeter are generally placed within East and South Devon, which is a large area, but they could be placed in nearby regions.

3. I haven't got a car. How can I get to my placement schools?

You can access many schools by public transport – a good starting point is Google Maps. There may also be other trainees going to your school or the area of your school so car sharing is encouraged. A full list of placements is posted on our virtual learning environment in October so that you can contact others going to your school or area. Schools in more rural areas are used to advising their trainees on transport – and there may be a member of school staff who will be able to offer a lift. You could also choose to move close to your school so you don't have to travel.

4. My school is not commutable, how do I arrange accommodation?

We publish a guide to with accommodation information for PGCE trainees. This includes information on student accommodation, letting agencies and B&B accommodation links.

5. When do I contact my placement schools?

We will tell you when and how to contact your first placement school. This will be no earlier than October. Do not attempt to contact any school before then.

6. When are my placements confirmed?

Many placements will remain unchanged from the initial allocations in August, but schools can and do withdraw or change placement offers and trainee circumstances can change at any time – most of these changes happen at the start of the autumn term. We will contact you if your placements change. We will confirm placements in the autumn term close to the start date – but you should bear in mind that **placements are always subject to change** and we cannot guarantee that you won't be affected.

7. I haven't been allocated a placement yet, what should I do?

There is no need to do anything, we are aware that you have not got a placement yet. This is particularly common in Primary, as schools often do not make offers until the Autumn term once their classes are set. It is also common for late applicants as placements have already been allocated. You will be contacted by email once your placement/s has been allocated.

8. I'd like to change my placement schools. What can I do?

Please bear in mind the answers to the questions above. **We will already have tried very hard to accommodate your circumstances and preferences and will not have 'spare' placements that are a better fit.** Many trainees ask to be commutable from Exeter, and this simply is not possible for everyone. Some trainees choose to move after the Autumn term to be near their placement schools, and those going to the same area often help each other out with planning accommodation and transport for the Spring and Summer terms.

9. Will I still get my preference if I apply late?

Provisional placements are sent into schools in late July and to trainees in early August. For trainees applying after 1st June you will be considered a late applicant. We are unlikely to change placements already allocated so late applicants should be prepared to be placed anywhere in the partnership area.