Introduction
These notes introduce the application process and provide general guidance on how to apply, how applications are considered and what documents you will need to provide. Before you start to complete an application form, please read these notes fully.

The application form can be completed either in English or in Welsh. Please complete all details fully.

If you have further questions on how to apply/how to complete the application form, please contact Wales-PGCE@open.ac.uk

How to apply
The main PGCE programme starts in October each year and the University will normally open for applications in the preceding October. Please see our website for closing dates.

The first step is to check the entry criteria on our website and ensure you are eligible to apply. This means that as you submit your application you will either fully meet the criteria for an honours degree and relevant GCSE qualifications, or you will be in the final year of your degree or resitting GCSEs or undertaking equivalency tests to meet the GCSE criteria.

If you do not meet the UK honours degree requirement (or equivalent) you will need to cease your application. You can apply to study towards an undergraduate degree with the Open University or another provider. For further information see www.open.ac.uk and our guide to teaching as a career: https://help.open.ac.uk/becoming-a-teacher. Further advice and guidance on the route into teaching is available from the OU.

You must present clear reasons in your supporting statement for wishing to enter the teaching profession and for secondary candidates, your experience and passion for your chosen subject. You should also outline the personal qualities you think you’ll bring to teaching.

In addition to ensuring that your application form meets the entry requirements and personal qualities expected, you are also required to demonstrate the ability to communicate clearly and accurately in written standard English or Welsh.

There are two routes available in this PGCE programme, the Salaried route and the Part time route. Please ensure you have read the relevant guidance to understand the differences between the two routes. If you are still unsure, please contact the PGCE Wales team for advice at Wales-PGCE@open.ac.uk

There will be a limited number of places available on the PGCE programme, therefore the earlier you apply will be to your advantage.

The programme is a continuous two-year commitment (22 months), with a summer break between year 1 and year 2 of study. Please ensure you are clear on your availability for the full period before you apply.
SECTION 1 – Application Type

Salaried Route – supporting Employer School
To be eligible for the Salaried Route, you must be employed in an Employer School by the time you start to study the PGCE. Your school must apply and be accepted as a partner school at the same time as you make your application. You must also include an endorsement letter from your headteacher. This is written confirmation that a school is happy to participate in the programme and pay part (or all) of your salary, dependent upon which phase or specialism. A template for this is available on our website and must be used and submitted with your application.

For secondary shortage subjects only, you can apply to the salaried route without an endorsing school and we can potentially match you to a state school who are seeking a secondary salaried student. The secondary school will then interview candidates we have put forward using their own employment procedures and decide whether to offer the student a contract of employment (we cannot guarantee you employment). Employment would be expected to start in September.

Part-time Route – Associate School
For applications to the Part time route, the OU Partnership will find you the Associate Schools where you will complete your school placements.

Placement schools – both routes
A partner school is one that has applied to join the programme and has meet the strict criteria to enter into the partnership. In all cases where the OU Partnership finds the schools, will endeavour to place you as closely as possible to your chosen location or your home, however this cannot be guaranteed. Please be as specific as you can in your application form about areas you would be able to travel to and if you don’t have access to a car, please specify this.

Use of the Welsh Language and teaching experience in a Welsh medium school
It is an aim of the programme to encourage more teachers in Wales to train and to teach in the Welsh medium and within Welsh medium schools. If you have any interest and capability in this area, please let us know in your application form and we can explore with you further. This is not a required commitment at this stage of application and your interests can be discussed further at interview, if you are offered one.

If you want to complete any aspect of the course through the medium of Welsh, you must at least complete your supporting statement in Welsh, or preferably use the Welsh language application form to complete the entire application in Welsh. All applicants for the PGCE Secondary Welsh course must complete their application in Welsh and be taught through the medium of Welsh. To enable us to plan placements, you should also indicate whether you wish to complete your practice learning placements in a Welsh-medium school.
SECTION 2 – Personal details
Address- we can only hold one address for you for all correspondence, so please make clear which address we should use. To apply for the salaried route you must have a home address in Wales or England (all school placements must take place in a state school in Wales). If you’re applying for the part-time route you must have a home address in Wales.

If possible, please provide a mobile number for us to contact you.

SECTION 3 – Qualifications

Entry requirements
You must meet the requisite qualification entry requirements* in summary,

- A full honours degree from a UK University. For Secondary applicants, it is expected that the content of your degree will contain a significant proportion of the subject in which you wish to train to teach or be closely related to the subject. The exception for this is Welsh, whereby you can apply with any degree, providing you are a fluent Welsh speaker.
- GCSE Grade B in English or Welsh first Language and Maths
- GCSE Grade C in Science for teaching Primary

* For Primary Part-Time Applicants: Please note that due to extremely high demand for places, entry to our part-time programme is limited to applicants who possess a 2:2 or above at degree level, and who require a maximum of 1 GCSE equivalency test at point of application.

GCSE Equivalencies
If you do not currently meet the GCSE (or equivalent) requirements, you can either re-sit your GCSEs to gain the required grade or if you already have a grade C in English and / or Maths or a D in Science, you may be able to take an equivalence test. We are not able to accept equivalence tests to upgrade from a grade D or below in English or Maths or an E grade in Science, you will need to re-sit full GCSEs. If you are re-sitting your GCSEs, please indicate this on the application form.

Students who require a GCSE equivalency test will be required to achieve the necessary pass grade before or during the PGCE programme or will have to withdraw from the course.

You can take an equivalency test via a testing company such as www.equivalencytesting.com. This may take 1-2 months to arrange and you will be charged a fee.

We will also accept equivalency tests managed through other Higher Education institutions. However, you will need to ask the HEI to email the results of the equivalency tests to us directly at Wales-PGCE@open.ac.uk

You may alternatively already hold a qualification of equivalency to GCSEs. Please contact Wales-PGCE@open.ac.uk for advice on the qualifications we can accept as equivalent.
Overseas Qualifications

The UK National Information Centre for the recognition and evaluation of international qualifications and skills (UK ENIC – previously known as NARIC) provides guidance on whether an overseas qualification is comparable in standard to a given UK qualification. They can supply a Statement of Comparability to show whether your qualifications meet the requirements for admission. Please obtain a ENIC certificate to ensure you meet the requirements before applying. See the link for ENIC here: [https://www.enic.org.uk/](https://www.enic.org.uk/)

If English is not one of your native languages and you wish to study a PGCE in the UK, you must be able to demonstrate a high level of English language ability. You will need to achieve an International English Language Testing Systems (IELTS) score of 7+ in each section of the test.

Degree details

For Secondary applicants, it is expected that the content of your degree will contain a significant proportion of the subject in which you wish to train to teach or be closely related to the subject. There is flexibility in some subjects, whilst other degrees may require very relevant subject knowledge. **Where your degree title does NOT directly match** the curriculum subject you want to teach, please provide details of how your degree, prior work experience and previous learning is significantly relevant to the subject and send a full transcript of your degree with your documentation.

If your degree does not meet the normal subject requirements for secondary teaching, it may be possible in certain circumstances to take into consideration work experience directly relevant to the subject you want to teach. Alternatively, if you do not possess the relevant subject knowledge, you may consider taking a subject knowledge enhancement (SKE) module via the OU (English, Science, Maths) or another provider.

SECTION 4 - Your employment history

**Your experience of working in educational contexts**

It is important for your application that you can set out your experience of working in educational contexts (ages 3-18). This may be in either a voluntary or a paid capacity. It could be in a formal school/college setting or an informal setting such as a volunteer group, youth group, scouts, guides etc. Give as much detail as possible to explain your role and responsibilities and be clear on the length of time your experience(s) lasted. Start with the most recent.

**Your experience of working in other contexts**

Here outline any other work experience you have had, either paid or unpaid in any other sector. Start with the most recent.

**Referees**

Your first referee should be someone who knows you in a professional capacity. Your second referee should also ideally be someone who knows you in a professional capacity but could be a personal referee if required. We would normally contact these referees prior to interview, unless you specifically request us not to.
SECTION 5 – Further details and supporting statement

Personal Statement
In your personal statement, aim to write approximately 600-900 words. Give as much relevant and specific detail to support your application as possible. You should aim to include the following:

- Why you want to teach and for secondary, why you want to teach the subject you have chosen.
- Any teaching experience you have and evidence your highlights.
- How your background and degree has prepared and influenced you to become a teacher.
- How you are up for the rewards and challenges of teaching.
- Where you have developed skills relevant to teaching such as leadership, customer service, communication and planning.
- The unique life experience that you can bring to teaching.
- If you have any specialist training such as safeguarding or coaching.

SECTION 6 – Equal Opportunities Monitoring

Health conditions, Disability and Ethnicity
Here outline as much information as relevant regarding health and disability. You must confirm that you meet the requirements of the Welsh Government’s Education Health Standards.

Ethnicity information is given voluntarily and is requested in order that we can ensure our programme attracts a wide diversity of applicants and that we can monitor fair procedures throughout.

SECTION 7 - Declaration
You must complete all tick boxes which apply and by signing the application electronically (or typing your name if you have no electronic signature) you are confirming all the content in the completed application form.

Documentation that you will need to provide with your application
You will need to provide copies of your original certificates of:

- Your GCSE qualifications in English/Welsh first language and Maths and Science (if applying for the Primary PGCE)
- Your A/AS-level qualifications if applying for the Secondary routes or if using them as equivalencies for GCSEs
- Any qualifications or test results that you are using as equivalencies for GCSEs
- Any ENIC statements of comparability if your qualifications are from abroad and copies of original qualification certificates.
- An IELTS test certificate if English is not your native language.
- Your honours degree certificate
- Your degree transcript for Secondary only
• Your passport or driving licence
• Any certificates relating to a change in name (for example marriage certificate)
• An endorsement letter from your Employer school (Salaried route)

You may send scanned or photographs of your documentation but please ensure that the images are large enough to read i.e. not thumbnails.

If you have lost any of these certificates, you should get replacements or a certified statement of results as soon as possible; as this can take up to 6 weeks or more. Failure to present proof of qualifications could prevent you from being registered on the course if we do receive them in time.

**If invited to an online interview you will be required to show photo identification such as your passport or driving licence on screen**

**How applications are considered**
The application process will take some time to complete. It involves assessing your qualifications, your work experience and your personal qualities and arranging an interview. Delays may occur if we need to check details with you, so please respond promptly should we contact you. Not doing so could jeopardise the progress of your application in time.

**Places will be awarded according to how well applicants meet the following criteria:**

- Class of honours degree* (with preference given to applicants with at least an upper second degree (2.1) with degree level study in the subject specialism (Secondary)
- Relevance of degree content to chosen subject specialism (Secondary) above the minimum level
- Evidence of knowledge and experience of schools
- English/Welsh first language and Maths Above the minimum Grade or equivalent qualification.
- For salaried students, a signed letter of endorsement from your employer school and acceptance as a partner school.

*For Primary Part-Time Applicants: Please note that due to extremely high demand for places, entry to our part-time programme is limited to applicants who possess a 2:2 or above at degree level, and who require a maximum of 1 GCSE equivalency test at point of application.*

All applications will be treated in confidence and any personal information you provide will be treated as confidential. Only those individuals required to see this information will do so. However, please be aware that the OU will need to share your application form with the Regional Consortia and with Partner schools.

The decision of the academic staff who consider applications is final.
**Being offered a place on the course**

After the interview, we will contact you within 30 days to let you know if you have been successful. We may make you a conditional offer. This means there are certain things that must happen before we can register you on the course. Examples can include:

- Completion of equivalency tests
- Full qualification and document check
- Availability of placements in your area
- Completion of a DBS check
- Checking references

We will send you a registration pack to complete with details of how to apply for a student loan on the part time route.

**Applying for a DBS**

Once you have secured a successful interview outcome, you will need to apply for a DBS to undertake this PGCE at two different schools. This will be managed through the DBS service via our application company and we will send you a link. You will pay for this application.

If you are already registered with the DBS update service, you do not need to apply for a new DBS. However, you will need to send us a copy of your current DBS certificate and give us written permission to check the update service. If you have not signed up to the update service you will need to obtain a new DBS regardless of whether you have a DBS with your current employer.