

## The OU ITE Partnership Salaried PGCE (Employment-based scheme)

Thank you for your interest in the Open University Partnership's new Employment based route into teaching.

This short summary is aimed at Headteachers and designated Initial Teacher Education or Professional Learning leads in mainstream Primary or Secondary State schools in Wales. This is an initial summary of the programme to help you decide whether your school may wish to participate in the Salaried PGCE programme.

As one of two 'alternative routes' this two-year Salaried PGCE programme replaces previous employment-based schemes in Wales and has been developed by the Partnership with the key aims of:

- Adopting distance and blended learning opportunities to enhance access to the PGCE qualification across all parts of Wales, including rural locations
- Through enhancing access, to diversify the entrants to the teaching profession
- To support recruitment and retention of teachers within shortage subject areas across Wales

Our programme is designed to suit the needs of twenty-first century adult learners. We encourage students to take up a rich and active part of school life as a full-time employee of the school (as an unqualified teacher) whilst simultaneously providing a carefully graduated and scaffolded approach to the development of the student teacher, progressing from an extended period of familiarisation and consolidation in the first year, through to autonomous practice in the second year.

### ***Who is this programme aimed at?***

This programme is mostly aimed at those who currently work (or have experience of working) in an environment with children and young people. This may include target groups such as teaching or learning support assistants, laboratory technicians, school librarians, or participation and youth officers.

This programme is a route for professional development for those with previous experience of supporting children and young people, to progress their own careers and gain recognition through the PGCE qualification which also leads to QTS. Through careful progression, individuals are encouraged to develop their skills from supporting learning to leading the learning in a classroom. By adopting a flexible approach which allows for a combined experience of usual school duties, protected study time for online distance and blended learning, and dedicated PGCE practice learning periods, employer schools and the Partnership can work together to support staff members to become teachers.

### ***How does the Programme Work?***

You can choose to support an existing member of staff to become a fully qualified teacher or you may be interested in being matched to a PGCE student who is not currently based at your school.

Applicants in secondary shortage subjects without an endorsing employer school may still apply to be considered for the salaried programme and the Partnership will endeavour to match eligible and suitable secondary applicants to an appropriate employer school where available.

The programme adopts crafted use of blended learning techniques, incorporating online module study and online evening seminars (taught by OU Curriculum Tutors), alongside the face-to-face support of mentors and school staff. The programme provides a learning experience which is tailored to employment-based student teachers' own development needs and circumstances, allowing study and school experience (which comprises both dedicated PGCE practice learning periods, and the usual or allocated learning support work of the employee) to be completed at the same time, in a way which fits flexibly within the school structure and their wider school role.

The Salaried Programme is currently available for those who wish to qualify as a Primary teacher or a Secondary teacher in the areas of Science, Maths, Welsh and English.

### ***What are the benefits of supporting a Salaried student in your school?***

There are many benefits to becoming a partner Employer school. You can:

- Be a Partner in a new unique and innovative PGCE programme
- Collaborate with a select network of partnership schools
- Gain public recognition of your systematic and sustained contribution to ITE
- Enable further professional development opportunities for your staff
- Benefit from the work of closely-matched, high calibre student teachers
- 'Grow your own' and nurture the development of your staff

### ***Is there any financial support available to students and the school to support us in participating?***

Yes! One of the major benefits of this programme is that it supports those aspiring teachers to 'earn and learn' offering an appealing way to become a teacher. All students on the Salaried PGCE have the costs of their study paid by a training grant from Welsh Government (paid directly to the Open University) so there is no cost of study to the student or the school. The OU ITE Partnership also offers a financial contribution (£900 over two years per student) to Employer Schools to support participation in the Partnership and for undertaking mentoring, as well as additional incentives for those schools who are also lead strategic partners.

### **Priority and Shortage Areas**

- **Science**
- **English**
- **Maths**
- **Welsh**

For those who are seeking to develop their careers within our identified Secondary shortage and priority subject areas, Welsh Government pay a salary contribution of 50% per year (at point 1 of the unqualified teachers' pay scale). Welsh medium schools receive a salary contribution of 55%\*. This is administered through the partnership.

\*For further information see: <https://gov.wales/salaried-postgraduate-certificate-education-pgce-policy-and-priorities-statement>

### ***How does this fit in with the current role of the student?***

Salaried students are supported by placement within an employer school, who commit to supporting the student-teacher for the two-year duration of the programme. The student is a full-time employee of the school and is employed as an unqualified teacher during that time. They must also register under the Learning Support category with the Education Workforce Council prior to commencement of the programme. They may already have usual employment duties or if newly appointed to the school as part of the programme, will need to have appropriate duties allocated to them. Duties should be related to supporting the teaching and learning of pupils within the school but should not require the student teacher to assume the responsibility of a qualified teacher. Students' timetables will be decided at the outset of the placement through discussion between the employer school, the regional consortia and the student and reviewed periodically. On commencement of the course, the split between their existing role and the study/practice learning builds progressively. By year 2 they will have autonomy in the classroom and be able to teach up to 50% - 70% of a full timetable.

### ***Does the student have to undertake experience in another school?***

Yes. In line with the accreditation criteria set by the Education Workforce Council, all student teachers need to undertake experience in more than one school. This will take place in June and July of year one, and normally takes place in one of our Lead Partner Schools. The student undertakes the equivalent of 3 days per week in the Lead Partner School, which may be taken as a block, or on a weekly basis. Where the employer school does not meet associate or Lead Partner School criteria, then the amount of time spent in the Lead Partner School should increase to a minimum of 4 days per week.

### ***What responsibilities would we have as an Employer school?***

As an employer school you would need to:

- Work closely with the Curriculum Tutor to design a practice learning and placement timetable for the student teacher.
- Choose effective mentors to support your student teacher.
- Provide protected time for mentoring and student study.
- Work closely with a Practice Tutor from a Lead Partner School.
- Support the student to attend a statutory second school experience.
- Observe your student teacher regularly to provide formative and summative feedback to support the student's development and assessment.
- Work with the OU ITE Partnership closely to develop and enhance the programme.
- Support your school staff to engage in Professional Learning to support their roles as teacher-educators.

### ***What are the criteria to become an Employer school?***

The full criteria and application form to be involved in the partnership can be found on our [School Partnership page](#).

To become an Employer school, schools must demonstrate they are:

- Able to provide the student teacher with access to effective learning and teaching experiences that enable the student teacher to achieve QTS (supported by school improvement/Estyn evidence).
- Committed to working with Lead Partner schools and the Partnership to meet the terms and conditions of the dedicated practice learning periods. This will include working with the practice tutor to support the work of the school-based mentor/school coordinator and the development of a whole school approach to ITE.
- Committed to making provision for the new curriculum for Wales, teaching and learning. This will include supporting students through distance learning and work-based practice in an alternative setting, as well as supporting enhancement and enrichment opportunities for the student teacher to be able to demonstrate all descriptors of QTS.
- Able to identify, select, support and provide an experienced mentor and school co-ordinator to support the student teacher through their dedicated practice learning periods.
- Committed to providing a collaborative environment to enable the student teacher to work with others. This includes enabling the student to undertake a meaningful (mandatory) second school placement in line with the current requirements.

**ALL SCHOOLS WHO WISH TO SUPPORT A STUDENT TEACHER MUST APPLY FOR PARTNERSHIP STATUS – SEE DETAILS BELOW.**

In order for a student teacher to commence the Salaried PGCE programme in a school, there are two important parts to the application process:

- The school must apply to become an Employer School via the online application form and provide an endorsement letter for the student using the template provided – please see our [Schools Partnership page](#).
- An individual application to the OU must be made by the prospective student teacher via the online application form on our website [www.openuniversity.co.uk/wales-pgce](http://www.openuniversity.co.uk/wales-pgce)

***How do we find out more or get involved?***

You can contact the Partnership for an informal conversation or to request further detailed information about the programme at [Wales-PGCE@open.ac.uk](mailto:Wales-PGCE@open.ac.uk)