

PGCE Science: Physics

The PGCE Science: Physics one-year course is structured to develop a deep understanding of the pedagogy and didactics of Physics, grounded in practical competence in classrooms.

You will be challenged to develop informed and justified decisions about how you approach your teaching, in order to enable you to continue to develop over your career. You will be expected to develop these insights, although in less depth, across all facets of the sciences.

Entry requirements

All applicants to the Secondary PGCE course must hold a degree or equivalent qualification in the area they wish to teach. In addition to this you will be required to have a grade C in GCSE Mathematics and English, or equivalent. DfES require us to check original certificates; you therefore cannot start a PGCE course unless you already hold these qualifications.

Your honours degree should have significant physics content. If this is not the case then you might consider an enhancement course before starting at Birmingham. You will also need to demonstrate a breadth of commitment to sciences, to enable competence across the entire curriculum for 11–14 year old children.

Course content

The course is 36 weeks long of which 24 weeks are spent on placement in a partnership school. There are five phases: Preparation (university and some school-based activities); School Placement 1 (seven week placement in school); Development (university and one week in your second school); School Placement 2 (12 week block placement and some university days); Completion (two further weeks in second school and two weeks in university).

Activity is central to learning how to teach physics and science as you need to learn how to act for yourself. This activity will include a good deal of exemplification of teaching, personal practice

and collaborative hard thinking. Through this you will become better at planning lessons, assessing the success of your lessons and managing children within those lessons.

You will also find out what children find hard about certain topics, how to vary your approach to minimise these difficulties, and so develop a range of teaching strategies, deploying many different technologies. As an essential part of this you will find yourself coming to grips with the national requirements and strategies, as well as engaging in the pleasure of doing some physics.

Assessment

All students have to complete six modules, five of which require a written assignment. In addition all students complete two teaching placements and have to pass the TDA Standards for the Award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

Progression

As postgraduate programmes, PGCE courses at this university are assessed at Masters level. On successful completion of the PGCE course you will be awarded 120 credits. For those students who successfully complete their induction year there is an opportunity to transfer credits to the MEd course which is awarded on completion of a 60 credit dissertation. (Transfer is subject to a satisfactory reference from your PGCE tutor and induction tutor).

Successful trainees will be sought after as teachers as the Birmingham course is held in high regard, with many training schools employing former trainees. Many achieve significant positions of responsibility after only a few years.



When to apply

Applications, via the GTTR www.gtr.ac.uk can be made from 1 October for the following September start. There is one intake per year.

You can apply throughout the year although if there are concerns about the quality of your candidature then an early application gives more time for remediation.

Learn more

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This leaflet was written several months in advance of the start of the academic year. It is intended to provide prospective students with a general picture of the programmes and courses offered by the School. Please note that not all programmes or all courses are offered every year. Also, because our research is constantly exploring new areas and directions of study some courses may be dropped and new ones offered in their place.