

Programme Specification

Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Primary

<i>School:</i>	Education, Language and Psychology
<i>Subject area:</i>	Initial Teacher Training
<i>Entry from academic year:</i>	2023-24
<i>in the month(s) of:</i>	September
<i>Awarding institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Teaching institution:</i>	York St John University ITE Partnership
<i>Delivery location:</i>	York St John University and Partnership Schools
<i>Programme/s accredited by:</i>	Teaching Regulation Agency (QTS award) Ofsted (quality assurance)
<i>Exit awards:</i>	Graduate Certificate Education Studies (GCert) (Level 6) Professional Graduate Certificate Education Primary (ProfGCE) (Level 6) Postgraduate Certificate in Education Studies (PGCert) (Level 7) <i>Please note that only the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) and Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (ProfGCE) carry a recommendation for the award of QTS</i>
<i>UCAS code / GTTR / other:</i>	See appendix 1
<i>Joint Honours combinations:</i>	Not applicable
<i>QAA subject benchmark statement(s):</i>	QAA subject benchmark statement - Education Studies Other: DfE Teacher Standards 2012 Ofsted framework for the inspection of ITT
<i>Mode/s of study:</i>	Postgraduate periods of study for full-time Non-standard period of study as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Part-time for 2 years
<i>Language of study:</i>	English
<i>Paired with foundation year</i>	No
<i>Study abroad opportunities:</i>	No
<i>Placement year opportunity:</i>	No

Introduction and special features

York St John University's heritage is anchored in teacher training and education. York St John was established in 1841, developing into a teacher training college and later a university and has a successful history of educating and training outstanding student teachers. We have a strong record of contributing to our local and national teaching community. We strive for our graduates to become transformative professionals as they enter the teaching profession and many of our graduates are now mentoring current student teachers within our partnership schools and are in leadership positions.

Our PGCE Primary programme is committed to developing education and training that is current and relevant and that provides excellent opportunities for student teachers to develop their knowledge and understanding of the primary curriculum and wider educational issues. This will ensure you will be equipped to be an outstanding teacher and leader with both a strong curriculum and wider professional identity.

The PGCE Primary programme is underpinned by a strong vision for teacher education and values that reflect those of both the University and School of Education, Language and Psychology, as follows:

- Engendering a culture of solidarity and trust
- Supporting intellectual curiosity and intellectual generosity
- Respecting difference and diversity and challenging prejudice
- Working with integrity towards equality, inclusion and social justice
- Fostering communities of human flourishing and personal improvement
- Developing vibrant partnerships built on mutual respect, care and collegiality
- Enabling autonomy and independence of thought in contexts of change and uncertainty

Course summary

Our PGCE Primary programme combines educational theory and practice in developing you as a well-informed, reflective and critical teacher, ready to be responsible for teaching and learning as a newly qualified teacher.

The programme has a blend of:

- University and school based academic sessions and training
- A professional and a curriculum studies module both underpinned by current research
- Critical reflection on educational theory and practice, policy and contemporary issues
- School based application of theory into practice to support development of pedagogy
- Teaching and learning opportunities that support your development as a researcher

There are currently two routes for the PGCE Primary programme; a university centred route and a school centred route. Both routes are full time and involve at least 120 days in school starting in September and ending in June/July. On successful completion of the course, you will be recommended to the Teaching Regulation Agency for the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

Both routes are academic and integrate theory with practice. You will study two Masters' level modules which include for example, theories of learning, pupil development, curriculum studies relating to the primary curriculum and the wider professional role of the teacher. Each module has 30 credits; if you successfully complete the PGCE programme you will therefore have 60 credits that could potentially be used towards a full Master's level degree (subject to a successful application to the Master's degree). In addition, you will complete 3 school experience modules.

Partnership is at the heart of the PGCE Primary programme. The combination of experienced university, school based and other external colleagues working in partnership, makes a powerful and inspiring teaching team across a range of learning settings, providing quality experiences for you on the PGCE Primary programme. This will enable you to develop your professional practice and provide you with excellent opportunities to engage with professional issues related to both the primary curriculum and wider education. You are supported throughout the programme to further develop curriculum knowledge and your understanding of current educational policy and initiatives. The provision of education and training for both university and school-centred routes is integrated to ensure that your developing professional practice is underpinned by knowledge and understanding of educational theory and current local, national and international research.

The difference between the university and school centred routes is in the organisation of the programme. If you are on the school centred route you will be based in school for the majority of the year, whilst also attending academic sessions and additional training opportunities which will take place in either school or university, as agreed by the partnership. If you are on the university centred route you are based in the university. You will have academic sessions at the university with the majority of time being spent on school placements with a range of partnership training opportunities.

The education and training programme ensures that you fulfil the requirements of the current teachers' standards for the award of Qualified Teacher Status. The programme encourages you to engage critically

with educational issues to enable you to develop as reflective practitioners, so that you are able to evaluate and adapt your practice to meet the diverse needs of pupils in primary schools. This is done through a range of learning, teaching and assessment strategies that will model effective learning and teaching practice and also equip you with the skills that are essential for your continuing development as a newly qualified teacher.

What you will gain

Grounded in contemporary research about teaching and learning in schools, you will undertake a current and relevant programme that is underpinned by both theory and professional practice. You will develop a range of knowledge, understanding and skills in:

- Planning, teaching and assessment of learning for young children in either the 3-7 or 7-11 age range
- Managing and organising teaching and learning to promote inclusion for young children from a range of backgrounds and with a range of individual needs
- Ensuring children are safe and healthy
- Promoting good progress in learning for all children
- Appropriate subject knowledge to support teaching and learning
- Using existing research and conducting your own research in schools

You will gain practical experience in a range of school experience placements, with structured opportunities to learn from experienced teachers and other professionals. You will develop a critical, reflective outlook on teaching and learning, educational policy and initiatives which you will apply in the contexts of school placement and academic assignments. You will develop as a researcher. You will gain the awards of PGCE and Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), making you a classroom ready professional with a high potential for employability in local and national schools.

Special features of the programme

At the heart of the programme is a commitment to developing strong partnerships and collaborative working practices, underpinned by shared values and a mission to develop outstanding school teachers and leaders in our communities and beyond. This ensures you benefit from high quality learning experiences capitalising on staff expertise from YSJ and partnership schools. This secures the integration of theory and practice and also provides a multitude of enhancement and enrichment opportunities.

A special feature of the primary programme is the strong provision of enrichment activities that supports your knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and pedagogy, as well as your knowledge and understanding of wider educational issues. Experiential placements are specifically designed to integrate with the taught modules so that you can widen your experience and develop a deeper pedagogical knowledge. You will observe children and young people in settings such as playgroups, nurseries and crèches and primary and secondary schools. There is also an opportunity for an enrichment placement in an international setting.

All PGCE Primary student teachers will undertake a small-scale research project, as part of the professional module, to further develop your knowledge, understanding and skills in a specific area of interest to yourself, that you will be able to study in greater depth. The opportunity to research an area of interest to the individual has proved to be beneficial not only in developing research pedagogy but also in supporting student teachers in interview situations where they have been able to use their research to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of a specific educational issue. This experience will also support you in developing research skills that you will be able to utilise when employed, especially given the current climate where school-based research activity is used as a strategy to support school improvement. A key part of this assessment is to present your research findings at the PGCE conference. Feedback from current and past students has suggested they prefer this mode of assessment, which also provides opportunities for the sharing of research and practice with peers.

Admissions criteria

You must meet the University's general entry criteria for [postgraduate](#) study.

In addition, you must meet the following entry requirements stipulated by the DfE (ITT Criteria 2018) for all programmes leading to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS):

- GCSE in English (or YSJU approved equivalent) at grade C/4
- GCSE in Mathematics (or YSJU approved equivalent) at grade C/4
- GCSE in Science (or YSJU approved equivalent) at grade C/4
- A first degree of a United Kingdom Higher Education institution or equivalent
- A pass in both the professional literacy and numeracy skills tests

In addition, applicants must satisfy the institution that:

- They have the intellectual and academic capability needed to meet the required teachers' standards, that they possess the appropriate qualities and characteristics, attitudes and values expected of a teacher
- That they can read effectively and are able to communicate clearly and accurately in Standard English
- That they meet the requirements for physical and mental capacity for teaching

All candidates will be expected to:

- Take part in a rigorous selection process designed to assess their suitability to teach
- Obtain a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) enhanced disclosure check and/or any other appropriate background check
- Obtain a satisfactory medical report

Whilst school experience is no longer an essential criterion for entry onto the PGCE programme, it has proven highly effective in supporting candidates with the application and interview process, as candidates are able to reflect on their experiences and demonstrate their emerging/developing knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning in a primary school. Furthermore, having some school experience has proven to support preparation for the programme as students already have a foundation they can build on. School experience is considered important in that it gives you an understanding of the role of a teacher and professional environment which you aim to become a part of.

If your first language is not English, you need to take an IELTS test or an equivalent qualification accepted by the University (see <https://www.yorks.ac.uk/international/how-to-apply/english-language-requirements/>).

If you do not have traditional qualifications, you may be eligible for entry on the basis of [Recognition of prior learning \(RPL\)](#). We also consider applications for entry with advanced standing.

Programme aim(s)

The key aim of the PGCE Primary programme is to deliver a high quality current and relevant programme of training that equips you with the professional knowledge, understanding, skills and attributes that you need to become outstanding teachers and leaders in our local and national primary schools.

Working in partnership with schools, the programme aims to:

- Develop high academic and professional standards for new teachers entering the profession underpinned by the development of 'principle-based' values
- Provide a high-quality experience of Initial Teacher Education within the partnership that fosters retention and a commitment to on-going professional development
- Integrate theory and practice throughout the programme to support professional learning, subject knowledge and pedagogy
- Promote the intellectual and professional development of student teachers through engagement with current research and policy in teaching and wider education
- Develop student teachers as independent researchers who are able to critically engage and influence their professional community
- Enable student teachers to become skilled, creative, reflective and transformative professionals equipped to take responsibility for the progress of all children and young people
- Provide an enriched curriculum that enables students to meet the statutory requirements of the Teachers' Standards whilst providing opportunities to set these within a wider educational context

Programme learning outcomes

The Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) programme is a Master's level programme, made up of two Level 7 modules and 3 school experience modules. If you fail to meet the learning outcomes for Level 7 you are able to be reassessed at Level 6 to achieve a Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (ProfGCE).

Upon successful completion of the programme students will be able to meet the following learning outcomes by communicating effectively using appropriate academic conventions:

Level 7

- 7.1 Investigate and demonstrate critical awareness of their own values and educational philosophy and identify influences which may impact on effective learning and teaching
- 7.2 Reflect on the synthesis of theory and practice to create learning opportunities which enhance children and young people's learning
- 7.3 Evaluate and select appropriate research processes and methodologies of educational enquiry to investigate an issue drawn from professional practice
- 7.4 Design a piece of independent research that explores an educational issue, generating and critically analysing data to create new understanding that informs professional learning and future practice
- 7.5 Interpret, compare and apply knowledge and understanding of pedagogy to plan, assess and critically evaluate learning and teaching in order to meet the needs of children/young people

Level 6

- 6.1 Demonstrate critical awareness of their own values and educational philosophy and identify influences which may impact on effective learning and teaching
- 6.2 Analyse theory and practice in relation to children's and young people's development and learning
- 6.3 Select with justification appropriate research processes and methodologies of educational enquiry to investigate an issue drawn from professional practice
- 6.4 Design a piece of independent research that informs professional learning and future practice
- 6.5 Compare and apply knowledge and understanding of pedagogy to plan, assess and evaluate learning and teaching in order to meet the needs of children/young people
- 6.6 Demonstrate the standards and competencies required for QTS consistently over a sustained period, showing evidence of having responded effectively to support provided by partnership settings and the university including fulfilling documentation requirements

Programme structure

Code	Level	Term	Title	Credits	Module status	
					compulsory or optional to take C or O	non-compensatable or compensatable NC or X
PGC7001M PGC6001M <i>University centred</i>	7	1, 2 & 3	Learning and Teaching in the Primary Curriculum (Primary)	30	C	NC
PGC7002M PGC6002M <i>University centred</i>	7	1, 2 & 3	The Developing Professional (Primary)	30	C	NC
PGC7003M PGC6003M <i>School direct*</i>	7	1, 2 & 3	Learning and Teaching in the Primary Curriculum	30	C	NC
PGC7004M PGC6004M <i>School direct*</i>	7	1, 2 & 3	The Developing Professional (Primary)	30	C	NC
PGC6009P <i>All routes</i>	6	1	School Experience 1 (Pass/Fail)	0	C	NC
PGC6010P <i>All routes</i>	6	2	School Experience 2 (Pass/Fail)	0	C	NC
PGC6011P <i>All routes</i>	6	2 & 3	School Experience 3 (Pass/Fail)	0	C	NC

* refer to appendix 2 for Leading Learning Forward Alliance (St Hughes School) structure

School placements

There are three school experience placements as can be seen in the table above and details of these are outlined below for each route. Please note that you are responsible for transport costs to and from placement schools and for some fieldtrips.

University-centred route

The first assessed placement (SE1) takes place in a primary school in the autumn term and you will continue in this school in the spring term for the second placement (SE2). You will then be in a different school for your final placement (SE3).

All school placements are organised by a dedicated partnership officer, who liaises closely with the programme team and partnership schools. Whilst on school placement mentors and tutors continue to offer support tailored to individual needs. Link tutors (who will normally be university-based programme tutors) ensure that schools are supported appropriately and that procedures are followed consistently. This further supports the quality assurance processes.

School-centred route

For the school-centred PGCE route student teachers will be linked to a 'base' school and obtain experience in at least one other school throughout the programme. School experience on the school-centred route will be within Alliance/partnership schools and will constitute the majority of the training programme. All school placements are organised by the appropriate Teaching School Alliance, who liaise closely with their partnership schools.

The first assessment of school experience is in the autumn term (SE1). The second placement (SE2) is in a different school in the spring term and final placement (SE3) take place in the summer term back at your base school.

Both PGCE routes

In addition to the three school placements indicated above, that are assessed, there will be other short school experiences to support your understanding of issues related to transition and progression. These are not assessed.

The University will be involved in quality assuring school experience, employing the same processes and procedures for both PGCE routes. As part of the quality assurance processes you will have link tutor visits from University staff including moderated appraisals undertaken with mentors. The link tutor ensures that school judgements are consistent across the partnership and acts to support school-based staff in effective mentoring. This ensures compliance with Ofsted and ITT criteria requirements across all programmes offered by York St John; this is crucial as Ofsted inspections are of the ITE partnership.

The programme is structured in phases (Introductory, Developmental and Consolidation) and within each phase, you are expected to reflect upon your learning and make effective links with curriculum and pedagogy through relating theory to practice.

Learning, teaching and assessment

The programme team has established efficient and effective systems and processes that ensure you are provided with quality experiences, supporting them to achieve strong outcomes, including employment. Leadership and management of the programme is outstanding (Ofsted 2017).

A range of learning, teaching and assessment strategies are used on the PGCE Primary programme to ensure that you are supported to develop a strong sense of personal and professional identity as subject teachers and are nurtured so you can develop your own philosophy and values about primary education.

The following strategies will provide opportunities for professional development through critical enquiry:

- Whole cohort teaching
- Workshops with a focus on dialogue, discussion, debate
- Group seminars following 'flipped learning' opportunities
- Literature-based research activities, through for example web-based resources and the virtual learning environment (VLE)
- Individual research
- School based tasks
- School based research
- Individual tutorials for academic support

Using these approaches you will develop as reflective and critical practitioners through investigating key issues and dilemmas inherent in teaching. You will be expected to work with a high degree of independence but also to work collaboratively with, and learn from, both peers and experienced practitioners. There is an expectation that you will be able to integrate and synthesise theory, practice and key skills in order to evaluate critically your exploration of teaching and education. This will develop greater levels of applied research skills, creativity, innovation, critical thinking and independent judgement.

Tutors and school-based mentors are available to guide and facilitate you and you are encouraged to undertake research-based activities to deepen your understanding of primary practice and related subject knowledge. This has proven to be an effective approach in learning how to become a teacher to promote reflection on practice and learning.

In line with national recommendations for reducing workload for student teachers we have reduced the number of summative assessments you are expected to complete. You will have one assignment for each module to complete (with one module assignment having 2 components) and both module assignments are intended to integrate theory and practice as follows:

- A written assignment – this provides the opportunity for you to focus on theories of learning and relate this to teaching, learning and assessment in primary schools

- A research project – this provides the opportunity to further develop your knowledge, understanding and skills in a specific area of interest to you to support depth of learning and promote development as a researcher as well as a teacher

Formative assessment is an integral part of each module so that you receive informal feedback on your academic work and development of critical thinking. This may be facilitated by module tutors as well as through peer assessment where appropriate. Formative assessment includes the following:

- Self-review and self-assessment tasks
- Subject knowledge audits
- Micro teaching opportunities
- Individual/group presentations

You will be required to engage with and make extensive use of the VLE. There will be references and resources made available to support independent study, discussion boards and forums to share good practice.

Feedback is sought regularly from you, including through mid-module evaluations, to support improvement in teaching, learning and assessment.

In addition to academic assessment the school experiences are also assessed. You are required to pass each school experience before you progress to the next school experience. There are three assessed school experiences (SE1, SE2, and SE3) and for each placement there will be formal written reports by school mentors. These would normally report on and grade each of the Teachers Standards and indicate an overall grade for the placement based on your progress at that point¹. Targets for your future practice will also be set following each school experience placement. It is expected that your practice on each school experience will reflect the learning from the academic/theoretical elements of the programme. In addition to the formal reports there will be on-going feedback during your school experience. Lesson appraisals will be conducted with written reports and in the regular mentor meetings there will be discussion on your progress with formative targets set to support you. There will also be informal observations, advice, support and feedback on a more day-to-day basis.

In each cohort of student teachers there may be significant differences in academic ability and ability demonstrated during school experiences. Whilst you may have a common input in terms of taught sessions there is scope within the programme and wider university to offer further support. Your individual needs are identified at interview stage and the induction programme, including a day in the summer to develop academic writing which is intended to support your preparation for the programme to ensure you are able to make the best possible start. You are supported during the programme with target setting related to individual areas for development. These targets are discussed and adapted during the programme to meet your needs as you progress through the year. You will also be able to access specific support in relation to your learning needs via a range of experienced school staff and tutors as well as through university student services.

¹ However, for SE1 some changes have been made to support you in the light of the current pandemic. During SE1 this year you will be assessed against your *engagement* with the teaching standards, as opposed to you having to *meet* the teaching standards. This has been agreed across the partnership and by external examiners to mitigate against any disruption caused to this school experience due to the pandemic. For SE2 and SE3 you will be assessed as normal and you will be required to meet the teaching standards.

Progression and graduation requirements

The University's [general regulations for](#) postgraduate awards apply to this programme.

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the Programme Structure section as non-compensatable.

In addition, the following programme-specific regulations apply in respect of progression and graduation:

- Student teachers who fail one or more modules may be permitted to re-sit at level 7. Only one re-sit will be permitted. Level 7 modules must be passed in order to gain the PGCE.
- Student teachers who do not meet level 7 criteria will have their work assessed through level 6 criteria. If the modules are passed at level 6 students will gain the ProfGCE.
- Student teachers awarded the PGCE or the Postgraduate Certificate in Education Studies will be able to access the Education MA at YSJU with 60 M Level credits (subject to successful application to the MA programme). YSJU offer other subject specific MA's that will also provide progression routes following the PGCE.

Criteria for Distinction can be found in the regulations.

All placements must be successfully completed. If you do fail a school experience placement, you will only be given one opportunity to re-sit at the discretion of a Standards Review panel. The panel will only allow a re-sit for school experience placements where it judges there is a likelihood that you will succeed and that a suitable placement can be secured. You will not have more than one re-sit opportunity for a school experience placement.

If you withdraw yourself from a school experience placement without approval, the placement will be deemed to be a 'fail' and no re-sit opportunity will be offered. If you withdraw yourself from a school experience placement with prior approval of the university, the placement will be deemed to be a 'fail' but a re-sit opportunity may be offered. There is no guarantee of a re-sit for any school placement.

A school experience placement will be terminated early if your performance is judged by the Mentor, Link Tutor and/or School Experience Director to be detrimental to the learning, wellbeing and/or health and safety of pupils, you or school staff and/or the effective running of the school. Subject to confirmation by the Standards Review panel, the placement will be deemed to be a 'fail' if it is terminated early. Again, there is no guarantee of a re-sit for any school placement.

If you pass all three assessed school experience placements and assessed academic work for each module at Level 7, you will achieve the PGCE with QTS. If you pass all three school experience placements but fail to meet Level 7 learning outcomes for the academic assignments you will be awarded the ProfGCE with QTS (Professional Graduate Certificate in Education), provided you have met the learning outcomes at Level 6.

If you fail your final school experience and are not able to re-sit this (either because you are not allowed a re-sit or do not want to do one) and hence do not achieve QTS, but have passed the academic modules you can be awarded either a Postgraduate Certification in Education Studies (PGCert) (Level 7) or Graduate Certificate in Education Studies (GCert) (Level 6).

All possible awards are indicated in the table below:

Award	Successful completion required of the following:
Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Primary with QTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Experience 1 (SE1) • School Experience 2 (SE2) • School Experience 3 (SE3) • Academic assignments for both modules at Level 7 (Masters)
Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (ProfGCE) Primary with QTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Experience 1 (SE1) • School Experience 2 (SE2) • School Experience 3 (SE3) • Academic assignments for both modules at Level 6
Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) in Education Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Experience 1 (SE1) • School Experience 2 (SE2) • Academic assignments for both module at Level 7 (Masters)
Graduate Certificate (GCert) in Education Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Experience 1 (SE1) • School Experience 2 (SE2) • Academic assignments for each module at Level 6

Please note that we do not offer a QTS only route

Internal and external reference points

This programme specification was formulated with reference to:

- [University mission and values](#)
- [University 2026 Strategy](#)
- [QAA subject benchmark statements](#)
- [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications](#)
- [DfE Teachers Standards \(2012\)](#)
- [DfE ITT Criteria](#)
- [Framework of core content for ITT](#)

Appendix 1

PGCE Primary UCAS Teacher Training Codes

X121	PGCE Lower Primary
X171	PGCE Upper Primary
2HBH	PGCE School Direct Primary EE Unsalariied
2HR8	PGCE School Direct Primary PL Salaried
2HR7	PGCE School Direct Primary PL Unsalariied
2S58	PGCE School Direct Primary PP Salaried
25QJ	PGCE School Direct Primary PP Unsalariied
29F3	PGCE School Direct Primary RW Unsalariied
2BZY	PGCE School Direct Primary SG Unsalariied
27F5	PGCE School Direct Primary SH Unsalariied

Appendix 2

Please note that student teachers who are with the Leading Learning Forward Alliance (St Hughes School) follow the two university centred modules rather than the two school direct modules due to the nature of the partnership agreement with that alliance.

Date written / revised: 04/06/19

Programme originally approved: 04/06/19