For the School Direct PGCE in Art and Design, Maths, English, Modern Foreign Languages, Business Studies, Biology, Chemistry and Physics the award is a Secondary PGCE in subject. All other subjects will be awarded PGCE Secondary.

Course overview
The School Direct training programme (Secondary PGCE) is a full-time one year postgraduate programme of initial teacher training for graduates who want to qualify to teach through a school led programme based in a school or consortium of schools. You will be based in your training school whilst being enrolled as a student at the University studying for a Secondary Postgraduate Certificate in Education. The School Direct Secondary PGCE prepares you for teaching in any secondary setting. You will have an individualised programme along with a taught course that mirrors the campus-based PGCE. You will have the support of a visiting tutor and a school-based teacher mentor. The programme will help you to reach your full potential and enabling you to embark confidently on your NQT year and beyond. Trainees will teach in more than one secondary setting.

We offer training in two age phases:
1. Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 (age range 11-16 years)
2. Key Stage 4 and Post 16 (age range 14-19 years)

The programme is structured to allow you to develop the skills required by teachers to teach the subject that you are training in and to develop specific expertise for making a distinctive contribution to practice in your setting. It also enables you to have a clear understanding of learning theories and child development and how this impacts on pupil learning and informs your own development as a teacher.

The School Direct programme is an intensive course which should not be undertaken lightly. It requires a good deal of physical and emotional resilience to complete successfully.

“I think the way that we are experiencing teaching prior to and alongside training works really well because it allows us to visualise how techniques and advice might work with a group of children we are actually teaching. It also means anything we learn will be tried that same week.”

School Direct student
Why study the course

- Excellent tuition and support - the teaching quality and excellent provision in the School of Education have been consistently recognised by trainees, partner schools, employing schools and Ofsted.
- Programme of study designed to produce first class teachers - newly validated content ensures currency in today’s education climate.
- Widening participation - we challenge stereotypes and seek to break down barriers to entering and continuing in the profession.
- High levels of student satisfaction - excellent retention and employment rates.

Course content

The course includes modules on developing professional practice and subject studies, preparing you to meet the needs of individual learners by developing your awareness of behaviour, assessment, learning and diversity, including special educational needs and learners with English as an additional language. The programme will give you opportunities to successfully meet the Teachers’ Standards (2012). Integrated into the programme are opportunities to critically analyse, engage in and reflect on educational issues, research and initiatives. At the end of the programme, successful trainees will be awarded a secondary PGCE and recommended to the National College of Teaching and Leadership for Qualified Teacher Status, giving trainees an internationally recognised teaching qualification. The PGCE is offered at master’s level and the 60 Level 7 credits can be accredited towards a master’s degree, via our Continuing Professional Development programme.

Application and interview

This programme is directed towards high quality graduates. Applicants need to apply directly to a lead school through UCAS Teacher Training.

To ensure teaching is the right career for you and to enable you to gain insight into current practice, you will need to have completed at least 5 days consecutive, recent work experience relevant to the intended age range for training in a state school prior to application. This can be on a voluntary, observational basis. Many applicants will have much more school experience than this, but all applicants will be expected to draw on their experience at interview. Where applicants for secondary places are applying to schools they have attended themselves as a pupil the one week experience must be gained in a contrasting secondary school setting. During this time, you will need to complete identified school-based tasks that will help you to focus on the role of the teacher in children’s learning. In your personal statement, you need to clearly state the time spent in school and reflect on this experience. While in school, you will also need to gain feedback from the class teacher or head teacher about your potential to teach. The form detailing these tasks is available from go.herts.ac.uk/schooldirect and must be brought to interview.

Interviews are organised by the lead schools and have a certified representative for the university present. At interview applicants will also need to show some knowledge of the school curriculum as well as the Teachers’ Standards. Our trainees are independent learners, resourceful, communicate well and display resilience. We assess candidates for these qualities at interview.

Professional skills test

Prior to taking up a teacher training course you must pass the Professional Skills Tests in literacy and numeracy. For further information see: sta.education.gov.uk

Additional support

- Learning Resources Centre open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Designated university tutor to visit you in your school setting each half term.
- Designated school mentor to monitor progress and set targets.
- Access to one of the UK’s most sophisticated on-line learning environments, StudyNet.
- A Student Centre that provides advice on issues such as finance, University regulations, legal matters, counselling, careers guidance and accommodation.
- An International Student Centre.
- A Faculty Disabilities Officer.
- Student representatives on programme committees and a Students’ Union.

Contacts us:
Secondary Admissions:
Lynn Chapman  l.s.chapman@herts.ac.uk

UCAS code:
Look on go.herts.ac.uk/schooldirect to see which lead schools we are working with and their unique UCAS codes.

Course length:
Full time, 1 year

Entry requirements:

- An honours degree (2.1 or above preferred; 2.2 accepted with other relevant experience or higher qualification) or equivalent. For secondary trainees at least 50% must be in the teaching subject.
- GCSE Grade C or above in English and mathematics and science.
- GCSE equivalency tests are not accepted.
- Professional skills tests in literacy and numeracy.

Start date:
September

End date:
June

Website address:
go.herts.ac.uk/schooldirect

Career prospects

At the end of the programme successful trainees are recommended for Qualified Teacher Status and are ready to start their teaching career. There is an expectation that the employing school, or consortium of schools, continue to employ you once you have qualified.

The School of Education has an excellent record of employment for trainees on their initial teacher training programmes, and those who actively seek a teaching post at the end of their programme are successful in joining the profession. There are further opportunities to continue your studies with a Master’s degree.

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