

Course preparation BEd (Hons) Primary with QTS programme 2024/25

Congratulations on your offer of a place to study on our BEd (Hons) Primary with QTS programme. The ITE team in the School of Education has put together some pre-course activities designed to get you thinking about primary education and your professional learning and development journey towards Early Career Teacher (formerly NQT) status.

Pre-course activities have been divided into four areas:

Professional behaviours	interview feedback and skills and qualities
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Behaviour management	personal reflection
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Pedagogy	personal reflection
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Curriculum	developing subject and curriculum knowledge
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Professional behaviours

Interview feedback

Reflecting on your experience of the interview process, aim to review and take steps to address any feedback that you received.

- You may find that the following activities will provide you with a structured way to address some aspects of feedback.

Skills and qualities

The first module on the BEd programme is about encouraging you/students to become reflective practitioners. Through your/their reflections you/students will identify aspects for personal and professional development. Listed below are numerous skills and qualities which are essential for those beginning a career in teaching. Choose 2 attributes from the list and write a paragraph on each explaining why you feel confident in these and another 2 which you know are areas which you can work on. Each paragraph should include an example(s) from your experience/practice and a reference to related reading.

Skills and qualities

Patient	Like young people/children
Well organised	Fair
Able to establish discipline	Sense of humour

Persuasive	Sensitive
Assertive	Energetic
Team player	Flexible
Enthusiastic	Able to think on your feet
Creative	Good with time management
Imaginative	Committed to equal opportunities
Reliable	Good at listening
Resilient	Leadership qualities

Behaviour management

Make a list of types of behaviours that the children may demonstrate in your class. Reflect upon how an effective teacher might respond to these behaviours. We will be exploring behaviour management and leadership strategies throughout the programme.

Pedagogy

'I define pedagogy as the practical and observable act of teaching together with the purposes, values, ideas and assumptions, theories and beliefs that inform, shape and seek to justify it.....pedagogy also connects teaching with the wider culture.' Alexander (2020: 47).

Think back to your own education at primary and secondary school.

Try to recall a time when the experience enabled you to learn effectively? What did the teacher say and do? How might this translate into classroom when you are teaching?

Curriculum

Developing subject and curriculum knowledge

A key aspect of being an effective teacher is having excellent subject knowledge for teaching (SKfT) and being prepared to work on areas of subject knowledge which may be less secure. The model below outlines four dimensions which comprise effective SKfT:



Subject knowledge is the student teacher's own subject knowledge per se. This is influenced by one's own education, skills, and experience. Many student teachers have subject specialist degrees but will not be experts in the broad range of subject areas which comprise primary national curriculum subjects.

Curriculum knowledge is what the subject looks like in education and how it is experienced by learners in the context of what we mean by curriculum: the national curriculum; the school's enactment of the national curriculum through its subject curriculum across the age range and key stages. It is useful to identify one's subject knowledge strengths and areas for development in relation to how the subject as it is framed within education.

Pedagogical knowledge: is about ways of teaching the subject as appropriate to the topic content, knowledge, understanding, skills, and concepts. It is the strategies and teaching methods a subject specialist may choose to employ to support pupils to learn the subject area. Overarching approaches and theories of learning may underpin pedagogical choices, but there will be approaches that best suit the subject and context in which it is being taught.

Knowledge of learners and how children learn is about how student teachers acquire an understanding of the needs of the pupils they work with over time and how they plan high-quality teaching to enable all pupils to participate, learn, enjoy and make progress.

Activity 1: demonstrating competency in fundamental English and maths

All student teachers must demonstrate that they are competent in English and maths prior to being recommended for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). All candidates have met the required standard of GCSE in English and maths to be accepted onto the programme. Each candidate has undertaken a written assessment in English as part of the interview and selection process. To support you to identify your own competency in maths, we strongly advise you to complete the free [national numeracy challenge](#) It gives you the opportunity to use and apply mathematical knowledge in real life contexts and you receive a grade and a certificate of completion.

Activity 2: English, maths and science

The following activities have been designed to get you thinking about primary core subjects; Engage with as much as you are motivated and able to do.

Section 1: English course preparation

Task 1: Children's literature

The Primary English team at the University of Hertfordshire are unapologetically enthusiastic advocates of the power of reading!

We would urge you to spend time familiarising yourself with some of your favourite books from your childhood as well as exploring some of the exciting books available to young people today.

All primary school teachers are teachers of English and the greater your knowledge about children's literature, the more you will be able to make recommendations to the children in your class and have a great source of knowledge to draw on for all your lessons.

Research clearly demonstrates that children who are readers are more likely to be able to access the school curriculum and therefore have more successful outcomes overall. More than that, it is the responsibility of every teacher to expose children to the pure joy of getting lost in a book, of discovering wonderful new words, characters and settings and of being provoked to use our imagination and explore our deepest thoughts.

The link below will take you to a wonderful website (which we draw on a lot) called the CLPE – Centre for Primary Literacy. There are many different themed lists and recommendations for you.

Please explore at least 5 each of the following:

Picture books (for all ages)

Non-fiction books

Fiction

Poetry

<https://clpe.org.uk/books/booklists>

We would love for you to share with us a book that you have particularly enjoyed! If you are happy for us and other students to watch, then please post a video of yourself talking about your favourite book in the link here: [BEd Book recordings](#)

Happy Reading!

The Primary English team (Kelly, Kate, Gosia and Libby)

Task 2: English Subject Knowledge Audit

Successful teachers of literacy and English have good knowledge of this curriculum subject, plus a good understanding of how to teach it and also of children's development and progress. There is a current focus on grammar, spelling and systematic synthetic phonics in the English primary curriculum. In order to understand the expectations for primary aged children in English please complete the activity below:

Please read through the 2014 National Curriculum vocabulary, grammar and punctuation glossary and highlight the terminology that you are unsure of or unfamiliar with:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf

Once you have read through the 2014 National Curriculum vocabulary, grammar and punctuation glossary, please reflect on your own knowledge of spelling and grammar. Perhaps note down some specific areas that you wish to explore further. You will be working on your English subject knowledge throughout your time studying with us so you do not have to feel confident with everything now.

Please keep notes from these activities so that you can begin to construct an English subject knowledge action plan when you start on the course. This action plan will be completed with support from the English team.

Section 2: Mathematics course preparation

Task 1: Scavenger Hunt

We believe that mathematical activities should be both interesting and engaging.

We would like you to visit the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Maths (NCETM) website and, look at the article in Issue 34 of their primary magazine entitled '*Digital cameras and mathematics outside the classroom*'. (Direct link below). We would then like you to undertake the mathematical scavenger hunt yourself: Take photos of the ten items and bring them to the first maths session, ready to discuss the activity.

https://www.ncetm.org.uk/media/e43jv0ri/issue_34_primary_magazine.pdf (Page 15)

Task 2: Maths puzzles

We learn mathematics not for its own sake but to solve problems in our everyday lives. We therefore want to plan activities into lessons that will challenge learners to think for themselves and to make decisions. We want children to have fun with maths while broadening and deepening their mathematical understanding.

With this in mind have a go at these puzzles and problems from the NRICH website.

MAGIC Vs <http://nrich.maths.org/6274/note>

BUZZY BEE <http://nrich.maths.org/194/note>

NATIONAL FLAGS <http://nrich.maths.org/7749/note>

Make notes on your own response to the problems and consider the following questions:

- 1) To what extent did you enjoy these activities? Can you say why?
- 2) What different areas of maths were involved in carrying out these activities?
- 3) How do your own experiences of learning maths compare with these types of problem solving activities?

Section 3: Science course preparation

The science team at UH would like to share our passion for science with you. Our aim is to develop your sense of excitement and curiosity about natural phenomena that you will then communicate to your pupils.

Task 1

Please read the article 'Developing talk in the primary science classroom' by Jo Moore in PSEC special edition of Primary Science Journal from the Association of Science Education.

[Developing Talk in the primary science classroom](#)

After you have read the article, reflect on these questions:

1. What new things have you learnt from reading the article?
2. What questions have been raised that need further research?
3. What approaches will you now use when teaching your science lessons?

Task 2

Watch this video from the Natural History Museum which explores the impact of learning in science:

<https://www.nhm.ac.uk/schools/working-with-educators/how-teachers-can-spark-a-passion-for-science.html>

After you have watched the video, reflect on these questions:

1. What are your personal reflections and responses to the video?
2. How can teachers spark a passion for science in children?

Section 4: Preparation for Developing Professional Practice

Statement of achievement for trainees with substantial classroom experience

If you have been employed as a classroom assistant or unqualified teacher, you will already have considerable knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning. This should be reflected in your record of observation/experience in school. The statement of achievement summarises your successes in the classroom.

Who should write it?

It should be written by a class teacher with whom you have worked, a member of the senior management team or the Head. A proforma is provided on the next page.

When should it be written?

It can be done at any time but it would be most appropriate towards the end of the summer term before you start your training course. This ensures that the comments are as up to date as possible.

What do I do with it?

You will need to keep a copy of this in your file to share with your University tutor and school mentor as you start your first school placement. It will enable appropriate targets to be set for your development which take account of your previous experience.

**STATEMENT OF ACHIEVEMENT/REPORT FOR ENTRANTS WITH SUBSTANTIAL PRIOR
EXPERIENCE IN THE PRIMARY CLASSROOM**

Please could you provide a brief report about the entrant's achievements while employed in your school. This information enables the University to take account of relevant previous experience when the first school-based training is undertaken.

Entrant's name	
Role in school (e.g. classroom assistant)	
School	
1. Professional Values and Practice (e.g. relationships with pupils and other adults; contribution to the life of the school etc.)	
2. Knowledge and ability to plan for learning (Please indicate subject areas, whether this was for a whole class or group and whether planning was independent or within a team)	
3. Knowledge and ability to assess pupils' learning	
4. Teaching and class management including behaviour management. (Please indicate whether this is usually with the whole class or groups)	
Signature and position in school.	Date