

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Dubai 2019/2020

Is this an approved programme?

We are pleased to announce that our programmes have been fully approved by the KHDA in Dubai and follow the same content as the UK PGCE programme. The programme is written against the UK and UAE Teaching Standards. The Qualification Assurance Agency (QAA) requires all universities to put their programmes through an approval process. This involves scrutiny by other academics and stakeholders from outside the institution who will only allow a programme to be offered if they are satisfied with the rigour of the academic standards and the organisation to support it. Annually, an external examiners report is written on this programme to monitor its quality and part of that process is to assure the University that the programme is comparable to other similar programmes, that it meets its stated aims and is maintaining quality standards. Our external examiners will be the same as those for the programmes in the UK.

You will be taught by highly experienced and accredited academic staff from the University's department of Teacher Education, which has been consistently rated as Outstanding for its provision by Ofsted. Your taught course will be a mixture of seminars, activity based learning, reflection on practice and web based directed activities. The teaching offered will be informed by current research in pedagogy and will be assessed by assignments for each module

What is the structure of the programme?

The PGCE (Teaching Studies) is a thirty four week full time programme of study commencing in mid-September each year and is available to graduates with appropriate degree qualifications and experience of working/ volunteering with students. Some applicants may already be working as a teaching assistant or in a similar role within a school whilst others will be completing their degree but will have some relevant experience of working with children that they can draw on in the course.

The programme comprises one teaching practice module (split into formative and summative elements), and two taught subject specific masters level modules. Your final assessment will be measured against the teacher's standards. The programmes are currently available in four areas as stated below:

- Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Primary 5-11
- Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Secondary Science 11-16
- Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Secondary Arabic 11-18
- Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Secondary Maths 11-18

The programme is structured around time spent at the University campus undertaking block teaching and reflection days as well as time spent in school gaining valuable teaching experience. You will be based in a link partnership school for two blocks of teaching practice (each approximately 10 weeks long). You will be assigned an experienced mentor from the school who will be there to support your learning. This mentor will be trained by the University and will be in close contact with your University Link tutor who will also visit you in school and undertake a classroom observation(s) during the year. Whilst you are on your teaching placement you will be expected to undertake regular observation of teaching across all year groups, moving toward teaching groups and then full classes. You will also undertake block teaching at the University campus. This will be facilitated learning by the University Tutor comprising lectures, seminars and tutorials based on the subject

specialism of your PGCE programme and broad Education and whole school issues such as Assessment, Planning and behaviour management.

Do I find my own school placement?

The University has established excellent links with some outstanding schools in Dubai and the UAE and will allocate all students a placement within these schools. Careful consideration is taken when selecting schools using specific criteria to ensure that School Leaders and Mentors meet the high standards set by the University. Developing an effective University –School partnership ensures that high expectations and rigour of the programme are maintained.

What qualifications do I need to apply?

To be eligible for the course you will need to hold an honours degree or equivalent. For our Primary course this should normally be a 2:2 degree or above. Your degree can be in any subject. You will also need a GCSE or equivalent in English and Maths at Grade C. For Secondary programmes please view the webpages for particular subject requirements but these will need to be in the chosen subject of study. For those without a first degree studied in the medium of English an IELTS score of 6.5 overall is required.

Do please get in touch with us if you want to discuss whether your qualifications are suitable. We are happy to look at individuals on a case by case basis.

We also require applicants to have some experience of working with children before they commence the course in September. We can support you in achieving this if required.

I want to apply but I am finding it difficult to gain school experience. Can I still apply?

You are welcome to apply if you have some experience of working with children. You should refer to this in your application. If you have a strong application we can still accept you but we would normally make it a condition of that entry that you gain at least a week's experience of working in a school before you commence the course.

Do I get QTS (Qualified Teacher Status)?

The programme is based on the both the UK and UAE standards and follows the English National Curriculum. However the programme tasks and assignments can be applied to any international school context across a range of English language curricular. As far as the requirements of getting QTS in England (Scotland, Wales and both Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic are different) are concerned, the only trainees who get QTS are those who undertake their training in a state school in England and then complete the NQT – Newly Qualified Teacher- year afterwards. Therefore, on our Dubai based programmes, we are unable to offer QTS.

The KHDA has approved the PGCE and by the end of the programme successful trainees will have completed a full portfolio of evidence of meeting the UK and UAE teaching standards. The programme is also recognised by the KHDA as meeting the qualification element of the UAE Teacher License. Please note that students would still be required to undertake the assessments for the Teacher License.

Following the programme, you would be eligible to apply for the accelerated Assessment only route to QTS offered by several teacher training providers in the UK either upon taking up a post in the UK or in some overseas BSO school. No guarantee can be made that this option will remain open but for the moment it is still both popular and available. The Assessment Only Route to QTS is for

experienced teachers, who have been teaching whole classes for a minimum of two years. For entry to the award you will need to have been teaching in at least two schools, normally for at least two years and across one of the following age ranges: 3-11 (primary), 7-14 (middle) or 11-19 (secondary).

The Assessment Only Route to QTS allows you to demonstrate that you already meet all of the Teacher's Standards for QTS. The assessment period is a maximum of 12 weeks.

What is the course fee?

The fee for 2019/20 entry is AED 56,450.

Do I get a bursary?

There is no bursary for these courses but there is a chance to apply for a scholarship. As we have embarked upon our flagship Dubai campus, we are also keen to invest in those students who commit to studying with the University of Birmingham. On receipt of your offer you will be eligible to apply for a scholarship worth 30% of the fees. There is also the possibility of applying for a fully funded scholarship.

Is there anything that I need to do before the programme begins, such as pre-course reading?

We do not expect you to do anything before we open the Virtual Learning Environment to you in August but of course any reading you can do about education or teaching will be of benefit and any involvement you can have with schools in any way will help. You should make sure that you have a computer that is rated for multimedia use (typically with a minimum speed of 1GHz and a minimum memory of 256Mb, but the faster and with the greatest memory, the better).

What is the deadline for applying for the courses?

Applications will remain open for the duration of the year. However, you are advised to apply before the 1st August 2019 in order to complete all pre requirements of the programme and meet all the conditions.