

Introductory information for PGCE Social Science

Welcome to the PGCE Social Science course at the University of Leicester. This information has been created to help you to prepare thoroughly for the beginning of the course. The aim of this course is to provide an informative, supportive, and inclusive environment for each individual to develop into a confident, reflective and highly knowledgeable teaching professional, capable of making a full contribution to life of a UK secondary school. The aim is also to offer a challenging, yet engaging programme of study that will provide academic rigour and foundations for further study at master's level and beyond. If you have any questions please contact Kerry Onyejekwe – Social Science Lead on ko98@leicester.ac.uk

***Important message about Travel.** Placement offers in central Leicester have been limited so far for the new academic year. However, we have had some wonderful offers in great schools in and around Leicestershire and Northamptonshire. The PGCE Partnership team and I are working hard to secure more offers and confirm school placements for you. Some of you may have longer travel times than others, especially if you are using public transport. Please let us know @ pgcepartnership@leicester.ac.uk and ko98@leicester.ac.uk if your travel circumstances have changed since you initially accepted your place. Where possible try and secure access to a car if you are a driver as this will reduce your travel time. Consider where you are going to live and prioritise being close to travel hubs i.e. the bus station or the train station if you do not drive. You're A and B schools will be balanced out in terms of travel. Please contact us if you have any concerns or questions. Remember for two thirds of your time in placement you will be coming back to University every Friday.

The course provides you with opportunities to develop your expertise in line with our curriculum. We have adopted the concepts of Knowing, Doing and Becoming (Craig, 2018) as a way to articulate the complex process of integrating theory and practice. Our curriculum is explained further in the main PGCE Handbook which you will have access to at the beginning of the course. The aims of the Secondary curriculum underpin all that we do in the University and in Partnership with the schools that you will teach in. The ITTECF Framework ([Initial teacher training and early career framework - GOV.UK](#)) is integral to our curriculum which goes above and beyond to support your development. The ultimate criteria for passing the PGCE course are the Teacher's Standards ([Teachers' standards - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)) and these are communicated through the ITTECF which makes up the foundations of our ambitious curriculum.

So that you feel prepared when you start the course there are some tasks that I would like you to engage in;

TASK 1. Subject Knowledge Audit - Developing your subject knowledge is key to area E) Curriculum and the ITTECF priority area 3 Subject and Curriculum

A subject audit has been included in your pack. This is a summary of the subject areas included in many GCSE and A level specifications for Sociology and Psychology. The subject audit will help you to chart the progress of your subject knowledge throughout the course.

Please complete the Pre-PGCE column as soon as possible so that you can identify your particular subject knowledge needs before beginning the course. The options range from C for confident knowledge and N for no knowledge in this area. There is also a space for you to comment on where your knowledge comes from e.g. a degree module, from studying A level Psychology or observing a KS4 Sociology lesson during some voluntary work experience. This will be discussed at your first tutorial session with me and it can be updated as you progress throughout the course.

TASK 2. Subject Knowledge and Pedagogy task – Developing your subject knowledge is key to area E) Curriculum and the ITTECF priority area 3 Subject and Curriculum

Your subject knowledge audit should help you to identify some areas of your subject that you are unfamiliar with or less confident about. Many of you have already begun researching areas of your subject knowledge or have been asked to do this as a condition of your acceptance on to the course. Becoming an effective teacher however is not just about having excellent subject knowledge. Consider what level of knowledge would be needed for different year groups. As you research your subject it would be useful for you to collect relevant resources and consider how you could use both knowledge and resources to teach effective lessons and activities.

I would like you to **create one mini resource**. Your resource can be one power point page, one brief activity (on a word document), a brief audio visual clip, an image, a news item, one script explaining a key term/concept, even a physical item. This is a mini task and is designed to get you thinking about how you might use a resource and how you might explain it to students in school. It can be in relation to Sociology, Psychology, Criminology or Health & Social Care. Think like a grown up 'show and tell'. Have this ready for your first week in University.

PLEASE NOTE: The development of relevant subject knowledge is your responsibility as limited time can be spent on this during the PGCE course itself.

TASK 3: Reading – do what you have time for (no mandatory tasks but all reading will help you)

Research the national curriculum, exam boards, specifications and exam papers.

AQA – GCSE and A level Sociology, Psychology (www.aqa.org.uk)

OCR – GCSE and A level Sociology, Cambridge Nationals/Technical in Health & Social Care (www.ocr.org.uk)

EDEXCEL –GCSE and A level Psychology, BTEC Health & Social Care

(<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/home.html>)

WJEC – GCSE and A level Sociology, Psychology, Level 3 Criminology (<http://www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/>)

Books on teaching Sociology and Psychology are limited. However, read critically and we will discuss issues in our university sessions. There is no requirement to buy these books as chapters are available online and they can be accessed in the University Library when the course starts (you may already have access if you are a university of Leicester student). The generic course text is Younie et al. (2026) which you can access in the library. The PGCE Social Science will refer to various texts but the Gajic and McGinty (2022) text is the main one and the Jones (2017) for Sociology. Again there is no need to purchase them but they will stand you in good stead during the early years of your career if you do.

Cline, P. and Hobbiss, M. (2025) *How to teach psychology: an evidence-informed approach*. Woodbridge: John Catt Educational

Gajic, D. and McGinty, J. (2022) *Learning to teach psychology in the secondary school: a companion to school experience*. London: Routledge.

Jones, A. (2017) *Teaching sociology successfully: a practical guide to planning and delivering outstanding lessons*. London: Routledge.

Younie, S., Hidson, E., Lawrence, J. and Booth, N. (2026) *Learning to teach in the secondary school: a companion to school experience*. 10th edn. London: Routledge.

Other useful resources

Organisations Chartered College of Teaching Home – chartered.college The Association for the Teaching of Psychology http://theatp.org/ https://www.bps.org.uk/member-networks/division-academics-researchers-and-teachers-psychology (BPS Division of Academics, Researchers, and Teachers in Psychology). British Sociological Association https://www.britsoc.co.uk/groups/special-interest-groups/teaching-group/ British Sociological Association Special Interest Groups https://www.britsoc.co.uk/groups/special-interest-groups/early-career-forum/teaching-resources/	There are a range of text books available for 11-18 year old Social Science students including AQA, OCR, WJEC, Pearson's, GDP Text books, Work books and Revision guides which will help you to understand the knowledge you need at the level of the students. Websites and Podcasts GCSE Psychology Revision Resources 9-1 Learndojo.org How to Revise for GCSE Psychology Quizlet GCSE and A Level Audio Study and Revision Guides Audiopi MASSOLIT – Short video lectures from the world's best academics for school teachers and students around the world.
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Free short Courses and Introductions

[Investigating psychology | OpenLearn - Open University](#)

[Critically exploring psychology | OpenLearn - Open University](#)

[Social construction and social constructionism | OpenLearn - Open University](#)

[MASSOLIT Search - Sociological theory](#)

Please be ready to discuss what you have been doing with your tutor and your peers in the first weeks of the course.

I am really looking forward to working with you. Although we will not have a subject session until the Friday of the first week but I will be there on the first day in Percy Gee 202 to greet you.

Best wishes
Kerry Onyejekwe

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