

Programme Specification

Award and title:	Postgraduate Certificate in Education Studies (PGCE Studies) Primary Postgraduate Certificate in Education Studies (PGCE Studies) Secondary
<i>School:</i>	School of Education, Languages and Psychology
<i>Subject area:</i>	Initial Teacher Education (ITE)
<i>Entry from academic year:</i>	2026-27
<i>in the month(s) of</i>	September
<i>Awarding institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Teaching institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Delivery location:</i>	York St John University
<i>Programme/s accredited by:</i>	NA
<i>Exit awards:</i>	Graduate Certificate in Education Studies (Level 6) (GCert) Primary Graduate Certificate in Education Studies (Level 6) (GCert) Secondary
<i>Please note that the PGCE Studies (Level 7) programme and Graduate Certificate in Education Studies (Level 6) do not carry an award for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).</i>	
<i>These are academic awards only.</i>	
<i>UCAS code / APPLY / other:</i>	TBC
<i>Joint Honours combinations:</i>	NA
<i>QAA subject benchmark statement(s):</i>	QAA Education Studies (2019)/ Master's degree characteristics statement (2020)
<i>Mode/s of study:</i>	Full time for 1 academic year
<i>Language of study:</i>	English
<i>Paired with Foundation Year</i>	No
<i>Study abroad opportunities:</i>	No
<i>Opt-in YSJU Placement Year opportunity:</i>	No
<i>Excluding a year-long placement/professional experience, are there placement/field trip/work experience(s) totalling 20 days or more?</i>	No – the placement opportunities for students on this programme are covered by the school partner responsible for QTS.

Introduction and special features

York St John University's heritage is anchored in teacher training and education. York St John University established in 1841, developed 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.

This PGCE Studies programme will provide the academic qualification of Postgraduate Certificate in Education Studies (PGCE Studies) and will carry 60 credits at Master's level. This programme will complement, but is distinct from, the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) which will be recommended by the school provider we are working in partnership with for this bespoke programme.

This PGCE Studies programme is committed to developing education that is current and relevant and that provides excellent opportunities for student teachers to develop their knowledge and understanding of their subject and wider educational issues. Essentially this PGCE Studies programme will provide academic and theoretical underpinnings to complement the school based QTS programme to ensure you are equipped to be outstanding teachers and leaders with both a strong subject and wider professional identity.

All students enrolled on the PGCE Studies programme will also be enrolled on the QTS programme with our school partner and will be school based. You will be released from school to undertake this blended academic programme that will include a combination of face-face academic input, online sessions and supported independent study.

Partnership is at the heart of our PGCE programmes. We have a proven track record of working collaboratively with school partners in the development of PGCE programmes and these reflect our wider ITE vision. The YSJU ITE partnership is driven by a strong belief that teaching is a challenging, complex, intellectual and ethical endeavour. The wider partnership recognises the civic duty involved in developing teachers to fulfil a fundamental need in society for our children and young people to have access to high quality education. The profession requires teachers who are committed to the education of children and young people to ensure they acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to develop and achieve their ambitions and improve their life chances. We believe that the lives can be transformed through education. Hence, it is crucial that student teachers receive high quality initial teacher education that is underpinned by quality research and evidence. This PGCE Studies programme leads to an academic award whilst the ITE programme that your school provides leads to the recommendation for QTS. We work in partnership with your school provider to ensure you benefit from a coherent and well sequenced experience. The partnership is committed to developing student teachers who are:

- competent and confident professionals who learn that intellectual endeavour, criticality, and personal reflection are key to developing outstanding teaching practice.
- epistemic agents who act as independent thinkers, searching and critiquing a wide range of theories and research that can underpin, challenge or illuminate their practice.
- able to engage in enquiry-rich practice and are intellectually curious about their work in order to be innovative, creative and receptive to new ideas.
- responsible professionals who embody high standards of professional ethics, acting with integrity and recognising the social responsibilities of education to create a more social just world.

Overall, we currently have over 500 student teachers within ITE, across all of our teacher training and education programmes and work across the region with over 450 primary and secondary schools in 20 local authorities. YSJU is the largest provider of ITE in the region with subject specialist staff for all curriculum areas across the primary and secondary offer, ensuring that you have the very best teachers leading your sessions and supporting your professional development.

We have a highly experienced team of staff who work alongside colleagues in partnership schools to ensure our programmes are current and reflect the latest evidence and research.

What you will gain

Grounded in contemporary research about teaching and learning in schools, you will undertake a current and relevant programme that is designed to provide the theoretical underpinning to your professional practice. You will develop a range of academic and theoretical knowledge and understanding related to learning, teaching and assessment, using existing research and policy to further develop your understanding, which will support your developing professional practice. The programme reflects current guidance on ITE.

You will develop a critical, reflective outlook on teaching and learning, educational policy and initiatives which you will then be able to apply in the contexts of school placement and academic assignments, supporting you to become a classroom ready professional with a high potential for employability in local and national schools.

You are essentially inhabiting two roles, one as a student teacher with your school provider undertaking your QTS programme, and another as a student of YSJU undertaking an academic award at Master's level – the two roles are complementary with each supporting the other. Whilst this differs from a traditional PGCE programme where a single provider offers the integrated QTS and PGCE academic award, it does require you to develop and maintain professional relationships with staff at your school provider and YSJU as well as hone organisational skills, further supporting and developing your wider professional practice and preparing you for the complex role of a teacher.

Distinctive 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. YSJU will work closely with your school provider to ensure you benefit from high quality learning experiences, capitalising on staff expertise from YSJ to complement your programme at your school provider and securing the integration between theory and practice.

Distinctive features of the PGCE Studies programme:

- Six days of face-to-face academic input (some days at YSJ and some in school) which will focus on the Masters element and PGCE assignments, supported by our virtual learning environment (Moodle) and supplemented by independent study.
- Opportunities to work in cross-phase groups to develop a wider understanding of different phases of education. Hence for some sessions you will be grouped together as primary or secondary based students and at other times you will be in phase specific groups. Content of the curriculum undertaken with your school provider and YSJ programme may at times overlap but are explored differently and will offer alternative perspectives.
- Online sessions to complement face-to-face input. Whilst the timetabled module hours will be face to face there will be enrichment opportunities that will be online and these might be synchronous or asynchronous depending on the activity.
- 2 x 30 credit Master's level modules: Understanding Learning and Teaching and The Developing Professional.
- All students on the PGCE Studies programme will be undertaking the same academic assignments as those on the YSJ integrated PGCE primary and secondary programmes (those that include PGCE and QTS) and as such you will be able to join these wider PGCE cohorts for any additional sessions offered for assignment support.
- You will benefit from academic support from experienced ITE staff such as academic tutorials, including subject specific support.
- As a student on the PGCE Studies programme you will also have full access to the university library services and wider support services.

Upon successful completion of the programme you will gain the Postgraduate Certificate in Education Studies (PGCE Studies) academic award and potentially have 60 Master's Level credits that can be used towards the full Master's in Education programme.

Admissions criteria

You must have successfully enrolled on the ITE programme with your school provider, meeting all the minimum entry requirements stipulated by the DfE ([ITT Criteria 2024](#)). Your school provider will confirm this in order for you to be enrolled on the PGCE Studies programme.

Programme aim(s)

The key aim of the PGCE Studies programme is to provide a high quality current and relevant programme of education that equips you with the professional knowledge and understanding to complement the QTS programme you are undertaking with your school provider.

The programme aims to:

- Provide theoretical underpinning to support the development of professional practice.

- Promote the intellectual and professional development of student teachers through critical engagement with current research and policy in teaching and wider education.
- Provide opportunity to critically read and analyse literature and research and support students to articulate informed opinions and arguments about education.
- Develop the ability to critically reflect on practice and situate this in a broader policy context.
- Develop expertise in educational research.
- Enable student teachers to become skilled, creative, reflective and transformative professionals equipped to take responsibility for the progress of all children and young people and demonstrate a commitment to continual professional development.

Programme learning outcomes

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

Upon successful completion of the programme students will be able to:

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 Interpret, compare and apply knowledge and understanding of pedagogy to critically evaluate learning and teaching in order to meet the needs of children/young people.
- 7.4 Evaluate and select appropriate research of educational enquiry to investigate an issue drawn from professional practice.
- 7.5 Critically investigate how research informs policy and reflect on how this influences practice.

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 Compare and apply knowledge and understanding of pedagogy to evaluate learning and teaching in order to meet the needs of children/young people.
- 6.4 Select appropriate research of educational enquiry to investigate an issue drawn from professional practice.
- 6.5 Investigate how research informs policy and reflect on how this influences practice.

Programme structure

Code	Level	Semester	Title	Credits	Module status	
					Compulsory (C) or optional (O)	non-compensable (NC) or compensable (X)
PGC7018M PGC6021M	7	1&2	PGCE Studies: Understanding Learning and Teaching	30	C	NC
PGC7019M PGC6022M	7	1&2	PGCE Studies: The Developing Professional	30	C	NC

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the table above as non-compensable. A non-compensable module is one that must be passed at the relevant level (with a mark of 50 in order to progress).

Learning, teaching and assessment

The PGCE Studies programme leads to an academic award that provides the theoretical underpinnings to your developing professional practice to support developing you as a well-informed, reflective and critical teacher, ready to be responsible for teaching and learning as an Early Career Teacher in primary or secondary schools.

The programme is carefully designed to complement the programme you will undertake for QTS with your school provider. As indicated above the content of the curriculum undertaken with your school provider and YSJU programme may at times overlap but are explored differently and will offer alternative perspectives.

You will be expected to critically engage with all elements of the programme and develop as a reflective practitioner, to enable you to evaluate and adapt practice to meet the needs of diverse learners in the school classroom.

A range of learning, teaching and assessment strategies are used on the PGCE Studies 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 education.

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

- Whole cohort teaching
- Workshops with a focus on dialogue, discussion, debate
- Literature-based research activities, through for example web-based resources and the virtual learning environment (VLE)
- Individual research
- School based research
- Individual tutorials for academic and subject specific support

The programme is underpinned by two Master's level modules that reflect current education research and practice with one assessment per module. Successful completion of these will give you 60 credits towards a full Master's degree. You will have opportunities to develop critical reflection on educational theory and practice, policy and contemporary issues with your school experience (gained on your QTS programme) enabling you to apply theory to practice to support development of pedagogy. In addition, you will have teaching and learning opportunities that support your development as a researcher.

The PGCE Studies programme is full time, starting in September and ending in June/July, and requires you to be released from your school based QTS programme for timetabled academic sessions.

Formative feedback will be integral to the PGCE Studies programme to support written assessment. An example of this includes the formative feedback on a set piece of writing given during induction to assess levels of support that might be needed for Master's level work.

Inclusion is at the heart of our programme design and we strive to create an inclusive and environment where all student teachers can achieve success. Our student-centred approach, authentic assessment strategies and careful consideration of workload – particularly important given you are undertaking the PGCE Studies award with YSJU and QTS programme with a school provider – will ensure students are able to take ownership of their learning and become engineers of their own progress.

Overall, the PGCE Studies programme takes a rigorous and robust approach to teaching, learning and assessment ensuring that learning opportunities are developed to support you in meeting all programme learning outcomes.

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-compensable. Please note that all modules in the PGCE Studies programme are compulsory for progression.

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

- Student teachers who fail one or more academic module at first attempt are permitted to re-sit at level 7. Level 7 modules must be passed in order to gain the PGCE Studies award.
- Student teachers who do not meet level 7 criteria after re-sit will have their work assessed through Level 6 criteria. If the modules are passed at Level 6 students will gain the Graduate Certificate in Education Studies (Level 6).
- Student teachers who achieve the PGCE Studies award will be able to access the MA Education at YSJU with 60 M Level credits (subject to successful application to the MA programme).

Late result modules

NA

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](#)

Date written / revised: January 2024

Programme originally approved: 21 March 2024