

In **April 2022**, 151 students were studying on the first year of The Open University Partnership in Wales PGCE Programme.

Students were invited to complete an online survey and volunteer to be interviewed about their experiences of studying either the part-time or salaried PGCE. The following is a summary of the full report's findings.

**41** PGCE students responded to the online survey 

**21** Training on the salaried route 

**20** Training on the part-time route 

**32** Training to teach primary 

**9** Training to teach secondary 

**9** PGCE students interviewed 

### Household circumstances

Immediately before starting the PGCE

 **17 out of 35** survey respondents (49%) reported earning a household income **below £26,000**.

 **24 out of 41** survey respondents (59%) have **children in their household**.

### Employment and work experience

 **39 out of 41 (95%)** were employed immediately before the PGCE

 **35 out of 39 (90%)** were working 16-38 hours/week

 **30 out of 39 (77%)** were employed in education

*I liked the idea that it was over a **longer period of time** as I could gain more experience, and **the financial aspect** of the salaried route was important. I wanted to continue my education but I didn't want any more student loans.  
(Primary, salaried student)*

### The Open University Partnership in Wales PGCE Programme as a route into teaching

The main reason for selecting the OU Partnership PGCE instead of a one year full-time PGCE;

 **Need to earn an income**  
(21 out of 34, 62%)

Six out of 41 respondents (15%) had previously applied to a full-time PGCE course.

Other reasons for selecting the OU Partnership PGCE include:

- Existing family and childcare commitments
- Desire to stay in current job role
- Needed to gain work experience first
- Wanted to continue with other commitments along with studying
- Prefer work-based learning



**Many student teachers** (36 out of 41, 88%) have work experience from non-educational settings:

**Catering and hospitality**

Other sectors include: Dentistry, Human resources, Legal services, National Health Service, Social care, Media, Design, Software development, Retail, Fitness instruction, Customer services, Financial services, Public sector, Performing arts, Charity sector, University lecturing, Property management, Therapy.

## The Open University Partnership in Wales PGCE Programme

*I wanted to **stay in the job** and so being able to train and still work appealed to me – I was happy in the workplace.  
(Secondary, salaried student)*

*I would not be training to teach without being able to do this **part-time course**.  
(Secondary, part-time student)*

## What features of the PGCE Programme are helping you to succeed?

Some students reported more than one feature, the main elements mentioned were:



The **flexibility of online study/ studying at own pace** (14 out of 41 respondents)



**Informative and accessible online materials** (10 out of 41 respondents)

## Other key features reported as providing support:

Curriculum Tutor

Online lectures and seminars

Mentor

Practice Tutor

Practice Learning Activities

*I have found the **flexibility** in studying the modules particularly helpful. I have used the **study module planner** to create a checklist for the modules which has enabled me to better plan my study time.  
(Primary, part-time student)*

*I'm grateful for the **salaried aspect**, this means I have more **time to reflect** on my own teaching and that of others than if I was on a one year PGCE. (Primary, part-time student)*



The student teachers interviewed commented on the extensive workload they felt the programme involved. Yet, they welcomed the high-quality support they received.

## Widening access into the teaching profession

Why do you want to teach?



**23 out of 40** survey respondents (58%) are motivated to teach by wanting to **make a difference** and inspire children.



**15 out of 40** respondents (38%) are motivated by wanting to progress their career in education/ fulfil an **ambition** in education by completing the PGCE.



**7 out of 40** respondents (18%) are motivated by their **passion** for teaching in general and/or for their subject.

Student teachers also felt that **offering flexibility and financial support** is critical to the future success of widening access to the PGCE and the teaching profession.

**The Open University Partnership in Wales PGCE Programme continues to have a positive impact on diversifying the future teaching workforce.**

The programme continues to attract a diverse student cohort with more people in the older age groups, who bring with them many years of work experience and life skills from both educational and non-educational settings.

*I'm excited with the path I've chosen, but nervous for the future, as it's not easy juggling it all, but I **wanted a career** and my current job wasn't giving me that.  
(Primary, part-time student)*