

FAQs in response to the suspension of school placements 18 March 2020

We are awaiting directive from the DfE on a whole range of aspects in connection with Initial Teacher Training. However, what I can say is that the Warwick PGCE course is **not** suspended, it is the placement side that has been temporarily suspended.

Where we are able, we will contribute to the national discussion on the award of QTS and will raise these specific concerns so that they are considered.

1. With regards to non-salaried trainees who are on bursary, will we continue to receive bursary payments?

We are optimistic that the DfE will continue to honour bursary payments.

2. What about those who are salaried? What is the situation?

Salaried trainees are employed by the school, so you will need to follow the guidance of the employer for your contractual obligations (for example, you may be asked to teach online sessions). However, this should not cut across your entitlement to access the PGCE course.

3. What will happen with the remainder of the fees that are due?

Fees will continue to be payable as you are still actively enrolled on the PGCE course.

4. What about students who are on a visa?

We are awaiting a directive from the DfE and the Home Office which will clarify this situation.

5. What if I haven't completed my additional/complementary placement yet?

We are awaiting a directive from the DfE for this but we anticipate that exceptional arrangements will take this scenario into account. Some placements such as the optional mini SEND placement, are additional and therefore not an issue. Complementary placements are normally required as part of the PGCE but we are in uncharted territory, so we await detailed information from the DfE.

6. What if my school offers to pay me to work while my placement is suspended?

You will need to check with Student Finance England or Scholarship provider whether you would be in breach of your bursary or scholarship arrangements if you received remuneration for any school work. Please see [The Initial Teacher Training Bursary Manual \(2019/20\)](#) for information.

If you are not in receipt of a bursary or scholarship there should not be an issue with this as long as the paid employment does not cut across your entitlement to access the PGCE course.

7. Can I volunteer to help the school?

Yes, you can volunteer, as long as this does not cut across your entitlement to access the PGCE course, or go against the advice of Public Health England, in terms of your own health.

8. Can I take up other employment while my placement is suspended?

You may wish to take up other employment as long as it does not cut across your entitlement to access the PGCE course. Please see above if this is a teaching role and you are in receipt of a bursary or scholarship.

9. What if my school provides the opportunity for me to observe/engage with online teaching while my placement is suspended?

This needs to be a local decision between you and the school. Whilst your placement is suspended, the University will not be able to formally assess this though you can use any evidence in your PDP.

10. I have accepted a job offer for September, will I be able to start?

We anticipate that the DfE will make arrangements that enable you to complete the course and take up a teaching role. We will update you as soon as we know more.

11. I am going to interview soon. Should I still go?

Yes, provided the school is open, wants you to attend, and you are well. You should be prepared for it to be done differently to the traditional model.

12. What format will the PGCE take now we can't come onto campus?

We anticipate that the forthcoming sessions will be hosted online for you to access remotely. Your tutors will be in touch regarding the arrangements.

13. What about my assessments?

Your assessment deadlines remain unchanged. For secondary trainees, the poster presentation and viva will take place in June as scheduled. Please use your time wisely to ensure your success in this area of your course. Remember that there is no QTS without PGCE.

14. Who do I contact if I have concerns?

Your personal tutor should be your first point of contact. If they are absent, there will be an out of office message, directing you to an alternative email address. Please do not contact multiple tutors with the same question.

15. What if I become ill?

Please follow Public Health England guidance for treatment of your symptoms.

We will monitor both attendance at virtual teaching sessions and engagement with online materials and expect you to inform us in the usual way if you are unable to attend.

16. I don't have a job yet for September. I'm worried about getting a job in the current situation.

We fully understand your worries. Many students normally attend interviews and obtain their first teaching job in May, June or July. This will probably be the case again this year, given that schools are closed in the coming weeks. We will do everything we can to support you in gaining employment.

17. I have additional caring responsibilities for children due to the closure of schools/ childminder. I will find it difficult to engage with on-line PGCE teaching/ learning.

Please do the best you can in the situation you find yourself in. Most materials can be accessible at the time of your choosing. Please let your tutor know if you are having particular issues and we will do all we can to help.