



University  
of Exeter

## PGCE Placements - Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. How are my placement schools chosen?

Many variables are considered, including:

- The placement offers and preferences we have received from schools
- Our knowledge of the quality and nature of the training which schools offer
- The preferred placement area you indicated on application (Secondary) or ITE Hub you applied for (Primary)
- Your specific circumstances and preferences. We aim for a 'best fit' for all trainees, but **it is never possible to accommodate all preferences**. We also have to accommodate trainees who are less flexible in where they can be placed due to mortgage and caring commitments or for health reasons.
- Any relationship with the school. We often avoid sending you to schools where you are 'known', so that you have an objective training experience, and to avoid conflicts of interest
- Contrasting experiences – your placements will offer some form of contrast. There are many factors that can be considered when looking at contrasting experiences including (but not limited to) pupil intake, location, catchment area, size and funding type (including academies, independent schools etc).

### 2. How far will I be expected to travel?

Some trainees choose to move closer to their placement schools. For trainees commuting to their placements, we consider up to an hour each way to be a reasonable commutable distance.

### 3. I haven't got a car. How can I get to my placement schools?

You can access many schools by public transport – a good starting point is [www.traveline.info](http://www.traveline.info). There may also be a number of trainees going to your school or the area of your school so car sharing may be possible. A full list of placements is posted on our website in October so that you can contact others going to your school or area. Schools in more rural areas are used to advising their trainees on transport – and there may be a member of school staff who will be able to offer a lift. You could also choose to move close to your school so you don't have to travel.

### 4. My school is not commutable, how do I arrange accommodation?

We publish a list of accommodation options by region. These vary from letting agency details and short term holiday lets to rooms in teachers' houses and B&B accommodation. The Partnership Office can also speak to your placement school to see if they have any staff members willing to accommodate a trainee.

## 5. When do I contact my placement schools?

We will tell you when and how to contact your first placement school. This will be no earlier than October. Do not attempt to contact any school before then.

## 6. Are my placements confirmed?

No. Many placements will remain unchanged, but schools can and do withdraw placement offers and trainee circumstances can change at any time – most of these changes happen at the start of the autumn term.. We will contact you if your placements change. We will confirm placements in the autumn term – but you should bear in mind that **placements are always subject to change** and we cannot guarantee that you won't be affected.

## 7. I haven't been allocated a placement yet, what should I do?

There is no need to do anything, we are aware that you have not got a placement yet. This is particularly common in Primary, as schools often do not make offers until the Autumn term. You will be contacted by email once your placement/s has been allocated.

## 8. I'd like to change my placement schools. What can I do?

Please bear in mind the answers to question 1. **We will already have tried very hard to accommodate your circumstances and preferences and will not have 'spare' placements that are a better fit.** Many trainees ask to be commutable from Exeter, and this simply is not possible for everyone. Some trainees choose to move after the Autumn term to be near their placement schools, and those going to the same area often help each other out with planning accommodation and transport for the Spring and Summer terms.