

**MFL: Getting ready for the PGCE**

Congratulations on securing a place on the PGCE Secondary MFL Course here at the University of Exeter – well done and welcome! We wish you every success as you prepare to embark upon an exciting and exhilarating PGCE year.

**Preparation for the first term of the PGCE Secondary MFL Course**   
As you will no doubt have gathered at your interview, this course is busy, interactive, participatory, but also a lot of fun! The first weeks at University are very intensive in order to prepare you well for School-Based Work (SBW) in the following weeks and terms. You will gain far more from this input in the autumn term, if you arrive ready to hit the ground running. The following pre-course tasks are designed to help you to make that autumn start easier, so put in as much effort as you can with the time you have available, which will of course vary according to your personal circumstances.

You will need to focus on four key areas (A to D) as you prepare for the start of the course:

1. Completing the **Subject Knowledge Audit pre-course tasks** set out on pages 3 – 6 will help you to become familiar with the structure and content of the National Curriculum for MFL and to identify the aspects of subject knowledge that you will need to develop at Key Stages 3 and 4 and at post-16 level. Please begin to address those aspects of grammar and other subject knowledge that you are not familiar with **before** beginning the course. In addition to the audits of subject knowledge in **both** of your target languages please complete the **Audit of ICT Competence** and endeavour to address any gaps before the course starts.
2. Creating a ‘**Subject Knowledge and Understanding Development Record’** using a strategy that you feel comfortable with (e.g. summary notes, revision lists, concept maps, completing tasks set in the texts, answering revision questions), will help you feel more confident in your first *and second* languages. This will form an important part of your Individual Development Portfolio (IDP) that you will build up over the course of the PGCE and will inform discussions about the issues it raises with respect to covering all your subject knowledge needs. Use GCSE and A-level MFL textbooks or other appropriate sources of information to help you develop your understanding and knowledge. Once you have completed the self-audit tasks, construct a plan to begin the process of addressing your subject knowledge needs. The following format is suggested:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area/Topic  for development | Learning  Resources | Learning Strategy | Target date | Date achieved |
| *The perfect tense in French* | *Duo Lingo app* | *daily reminder and assessment exercise* | *Be realistic!* |  |

1. **Getting organised**

The PGCE Secondary MFL Course, like teaching itself, involves admin work and it would be wise to get yourself well organised before the autumn term starts (especially if you know that organisation is not your strong point!). There is little time in the first weeks of the autumn term to sort yourself out. You will need a large diary or teacher planner and perhaps a collection of files or folders with dividers, if you prefer to work this way. You will also need a computer with MS Office, good Wi-Fi, and space for all your electronic filing!

1. **Professional Subject association membership.**

Whilst not compulsory, you might find it useful to become a student member of the Association for Language Learning (ALL) as soon as you register. Visit: <http://www.all-languages.org.uk/join/become-a-member/student/>

**Additional information for non-native speakers of English or for those of you educated abroad**

Please see the additional 3 documents included to help you get to grips with the education system in the UK:

* History of Education in England Part 1
* History of Education in England Part 2
* Eurydice explanation of the English education system

**MFL subject knowledge pre-course tasks**

**The National Curriculum (2013) for MFL at Key Stages 3 (and 4)**

You will need to become familiar with the structure and content of the National Curriculum for MFL. Please carry out the following 5 tasks, which are designed to help you understand how the curriculum is organised and to identify aspects of subject knowledge that you will need to develop. In order to carry out these tasks you will need to go to the National Curriculum website (see link below).

**Task 1: Familiarise yourself with the MFL KS2 and 3 Programmes of Study (National Curriculum) here:**<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-languages-progammes-of-study/national-curriculum-in-england-languages-progammes-of-study>

**Task 2: National Curriculum (NC) Subject Knowledge Audit at Key Stage 3**

For now, examine the NC in detail and consider your own competence in both your target languages. Reflect on the implications of this for your own development prior to the course and include any action in your Subject Knowledge and Understanding Development Record.

**Task 3: National Curriculum subject knowledge audit at Key Stage 4**

Please read the attached French, Spanish and German GCSE Subject Content (Department for Education, 2023). This document is to be used, for now, as **a grammar reference only** (although you may want to read the whole document) so head for the grammar requirements sections in the Appendices, for both your languages.

Alternatively, go to the AQA website below to find **specifications** for GCSE in **both** your target languages (you will need to search the language first, then specification, then content/grammar). In particular, familiarise yourself with the grammar requirements for these two languages and begin working on any gaps. Record your progress and learning strategies used in your Subject Knowledge and Understanding Development Record. NB: GCSE specifications are changing for 2024/25 and we will examine these changes during the course. Feel free to have a look though!

AQA home page <http://www.aqa.org.uk/> and, for example, for French: <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/languages/gcse/french-8658/subject-content>

**Print** **or file** the content of each section and then **rate your competence** in each of the topic areas by writing a number (0 = no competence/ knowledge up to 3 for very competent/very secure knowledge) next to each of the items**.** Reflect on the implications of this for your own development prior to the course and include any action in your Subject Knowledge and Understanding Development Record.

Task 4: Subject knowledge audit at AS and A2 level

Please go to the AQA website to find specifications for AS and A2 in your main specialist subject. AQA home page <http://www.aqa.org.uk/> (Go to Qualifications → A Level → Language → Specification as before).

Focus particularly on the grammar and specialist topic content of these courses and then **rate your knowledge and understanding** of each of the topics by writing a number (0 = no knowledge up to 3 for very secure knowledge) next to each of the statements. Begin to work on plugging some of the gaps. It is better to work on a few to gain detailed knowledge, which you need to teach the topic rather than gather more superficial knowledge of a greater number of topics. Record your progress in your Subject Knowledge and Understanding Development Record.

**Task 5: Self-assessment of competence in ICT**

Grade yourself on each of the categories in the table. 1 =poor, 2 = adequate, 3 = very secure)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **COMPETENCE WITH ICT** | |
| **1 General ICT Use** |  |
| * ‘*cut and paste*’ text and graphics between programs |  |
| * use a digital camera and view the images on a computer |  |
| * use a scanner and save the images on a computer |  |
| * use a video camera and recorder |  |
| * use a projector to display the computer screen |  |
| * use an interactive whiteboard |  |
| **2 Connecting & Maintaining a Desktop Computer** |  |
| * connect a basic computer system *e.g. processor, monitor, keyboard, mouse, scanner, printer* and load related software |  |
| * "troubleshoot' basic problems in a systematic way *e.g. checking loose connections* and cope with routine maintenance *e.g. replacing consumables* |  |
| * undertake routine procedures *e.g. avoiding viruses, using passwords* |  |
| **3 Using E-mail** |  |
| * send, receive, save, delete, forward, file and print e-mail messages |  |
| * send and receive and file ‘attachments’ |  |
| * use address books and distribution lists |  |
| **4 Finding information** |  |
| * use a web browser to follow hyperlinks, view, download, save and print pages and create bookmarks |  |
| **5 Word-processing (with graphics & desk top publishing features) e.g. WORD** |  |
| * add headers/footers, use spell & grammar checks and word counts and insert symbols not on keyboard |  |
| * format text e.g. using styles and edit a document using time saving functions e.g. find & replace |  |
| * set up a template for standard letters or reporting purposes |  |
| * incorporate tables, charts and graphics e.g. clip art and photos into a document |  |
| * use a graphics package to modify digital images and add them to a document |  |
| **6 Using a Database** |  |
| * enter information into a database and add fields and records |  |
| * search a database using keywords or criteria, sort records and print out results |  |
| **7 Using a Spreadsheet e.g. Excel** |  |
| * enter information into a pre-designed spreadsheet and create charts |  |
| * set up a spreadsheet, insert and delete rows/columns, enter simple formulae, apply suitable formats to data |  |
| * create and use a template for record keeping or reporting |  |
| **8 Presentation and interactive software and online teaching platforms** |  |
| * create simple linked pages that combine text and pictures |  |
| * create presentations that incorporate text, graphics, animation and, where appropriate, sound |  |
| * use web-based learning tools (i.e. Padlet, Showbie, Kahoot, Google Classroom, Teams, Zoom) |  |
|  | |

We will review this self-assessment during the Autumn Term.

**MFL Reflection Task Autumn 2024**

**Please complete the following MFL task: ‘*MFL teaching and learning: my reflections*.’ You should write between 500 and 1000 words, and the text should be word-processed. NB: there are two additional questions specifically for trainees who are non-native speakers of English, or who were educated abroad. The deadline for submission of this assignment as an email attachment will be the first day on campus in September.**

This exercise helps you become aware of your personal starting points and to reflect and map changes in your thinking whilst on the PGCE.

Complete the following sentences in as many ways as you wish, in order to make explicit to yourself what **you** think is important about learning languages in school (this matters!):

* In primary school, I think teachers in MFL should.......
* In primary school, I think pupils in MFL should.......
* With 11–16-year-olds, I think teachers in MFL should.......
* With 11–16-year-olds, I think pupils in MFL should.......
* At post-16 level, I think teachers in MFL should.......
* At post-16 level, I think pupils in MFL should.......
* Additional question for non-native speakers of English and for those of you who were educated abroad: While training to teach MFL in England, you are going to need to ‘sign up’ to the ‘English way’ of doing things. What does this mean to you? How will you reconcile this with your own views of what makes a good MFL lesson?

**Pre-course Reading**

You might want to get ahead with your reading. My suggestion would be to start by taking a look at the latest [Language Trends Survey](https://www.britishcouncil.org/research-insight/language-trends-england-2023#:~:text=Headline%20findings%20from%20this%20year's,English%20is%20an%20additional%20language). It includes useful information as well as some interesting references.   
  
If you would like to start thinking about the debates that are relevant to MFL, then this is an interesting book. **NB: it is available as an e-book from the University Library, once you have registered, so no need to buy just yet.**

* Driscoll, P, Macaro, M, and Swarbrick, A Eds. (2014) *Debates in Modern Languages Education* Routledge

**So, to sum up….**

The MFL specific tasks require you to:

* reflect on your personal starting points before you start the course
* audit your MFL subject knowledge in both target languages and your competence in using ICT, then begin to develop self-selected aspects of your MFL subject knowledge
* do some pre-course reading

**KEY ACTION POINTS** - use this list to check that you have done all you need to do before the course starts.

* Carry out the 5 MFL specific tasks and the MFL mini-reflection task **‘*MFL teaching and learning: my reflections*’**
* Carry out the Fundamental Skills Audits (see [offer holder website](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/study/teachertraining/offerholders/pre-courseinformationandtasks/secondarypre-coursetasks/))
* On the first day of term, please bring with you the products of the MFL specific tasks and your completed Fundamental Skills Audits.

If you want more information about the PGCE Secondary MFL Course or have a query about any aspect of the pre-course requirements, then please get in touch. My details are below. We look forward to meeting you again in September and to working with you!

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