

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)
Universities Council for Education of Teachers (UCET)
The Standing Conference of Principals (SCOP)
Universities UK (UUK)

Joint statement - PGCE qualification title

1. The PGCE is a well established and internationally recognised qualification undertaken by graduates to prepare them for a career in teaching. Over time, a number of PGCE models have been developed to meet the different needs of learners and the profession. However, the essential characteristics of the PGCE have remained constant - an HE programme providing both professional training leading to QTS and a course of academic study leading to an academic qualification.
2. The qualification acronym 'PGCE' has traditionally been understood to stand for 'Post-Graduate Certificate in Education'. However, the academic level of PGCE courses does vary. Some institutions run PGCE courses which aim for the academic equivalent of the final year of an undergraduate honours degree, with QTS. Other courses, however, are pitched beyond Honours level, incorporate subject or specialist work in greater detail, and include consideration of research methods. Such courses may form a progression route within a framework which ultimately leads to a Masters degree.
3. In line with the principles underpinning the Framework for HE Qualifications (FHEQ) (QAA, 2001), the full qualification title for 'PGCE' courses should represent accurately the expected level of achievement, and should be aligned with the most appropriate qualification descriptor. It will be a matter for HEIs to determine the appropriate level of their qualifications and to assign the appropriate title, in line with the following guidance:
 - Professional Graduate Certificate in Education for those PGCE qualifications which are pitched at Honours level, and align with the FHEQ qualification descriptor at H (honours Level)
 - Postgraduate Certificate in Education titles for those PGCE qualifications which are pitched beyond Honours level and align with the FHEQ qualification descriptor at M (masters) level.
4. Institutions should continue to ensure that the level of their qualification(s) is clear and transparent to all applicants, students and other stakeholders. References to the level and full title of the PGCE should be made in course publications, admissions materials, programme specifications, transcripts and certificates. Institutions will be expected to identify clearly the level and associated nomenclature of their PGCE programmes, and their subsequent awards, from 1st September 2006.