



**WEST LONDON TEACHER TRAINING ALLIANCE**  
2026-27 Cohort

*in partnership with*



St Mary's  
University  
Twickenham  
London

**COURSE  
CODE  
2XVC**

## **UNSALARIED BIOLOGY PGCE(M)+QTS**

**Provider 2BV**

West London Teacher Training Alliance (Secondary)

*This programme is available at*

- ◆ Drayton Manor High School, W7
- ◆ Fulham Cross Girls' School, SW6
- ◆ Fulham Cross Academy, SW6
- ◆ Gumley House School TW7
- ◆ Hammersmith Academy, W6
- ◆ Sacred Heart High School, W6
- ◆ St Benedict's School, W5
- ◆ St Mark's Catholic School, TW3
- ◆ St Richard Reynolds Catholic College, TW1
- ◆ West London Free School, W6

### **APPLICATION LINK**

Instructions on how to apply, with a link to the application form, are included in Section 9. It is important that you read this short document thoroughly before you apply.

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# 1 About this course

## 1.1 Qualification

This Biology course **2XVC** leads to PGCE (M) QTS. Click here for [further clarity on the significance of different teacher training qualifications](#).

## 1.2 Special Features

- West London Teacher Training Alliance (WLTTA) in partnership with St Mary's University, Twickenham.
- WLTTA allows you to **select your main host school at application**, a school where you aspire to work. Later, if there is a teaching vacancy and they want to retain you, you can be employed for the following year **without the post being advertised**. By becoming a WLTTA trainee, all our other schools could employ you this way and we operate a pool.
- Full time staff on hand to support you. We make prompt shortlisting decisions and will liaise with you quickly if we need additional information.

Our aim is to produce exceptional teachers who could remain in alliance schools to continue their careers, taking advantage of further professional development, including the accredited Early Career induction programme.

## 1.3 The Training

Most schools need you to be able to teach at least one of the three sciences to A-Level, and to be willing and able to teach all three Sciences at Key Stage 3 and ideally to GCSE. We can help you learn to do so.

While much of your training takes place in your host school, you will enrol at the university and will:

- attend all the same university sessions with those who have applied through the university; and
- have full access to university facilities and mentors.



*St Mary's University Twickenham*

As a guide: [Typical timetable](#)

The university-based theoretical learning covers all aspects of the Initial Teacher Training and Early Career Framework, giving you a strong grounding in theories of pedagogy which you then put into practice and reflect upon in authentic classroom settings in your placement schools.

You will also receive subject specific sessions at university which will help to contextualise the more generic pedagogical material.

Assessment is a combination of

- university academic assignments leading to the award of your PGCE and
- formal observations in school which will be judged against the Teachers' Standards in order for you to achieve QTS (Qualified Teacher Status).

At school, through an initial programme of observations, you will become familiar with the workings of the school and department (pupil groups, pastoral systems, staffing, curriculum, resources, facilities, methods of teaching, lesson planning, and assessment).

You will be treated like a member of teaching staff and with your school mentors, you will feel supported as you become ready to teach. Our mentors are excellent experienced teachers who undertake rigorous training to develop their mentoring skills.

Throughout your time in both schools, your university tutor visits you to monitor your progress and to discuss your development with you and your school mentors. Being in school provides you with the opportunity to develop your teaching expertise and relationships with young people through lessons and extracurricular enrichment.

All WLTTA trainees benefit from having a subject specific university-based mentor as well as a subject specific school-based mentor. Each school has a Professional Co-ordinating Mentor who oversees the delivery of professional studies within your school setting and the WLTTA Secondary Lead provides an additional layer of support.

You will receive an hour and a half of formal feedback and mentoring in school from your school-based mentor each week, as well as more informal feedback from the classroom teachers of the classes that you gradually take responsibility for.

As a trainee Biology teacher, you will have the opportunity to teach across KS3/4 covering key areas of Biology/Chemistry/Physics. You will also have the opportunity to support KS5. KS3 topics include elements and chemical reactions, cell biology, nutrition and digestion, atoms, energy and forces. Year 7 to 10 teaching will include aspects of nutrition and digestion, atoms, elements and chemical reactions, energy and forces.

## 2 How school placements work

### 2.1 Choosing your main host school

At application, with WLTTA, we want you to select your main host school as somewhere you aspire to work.

The schools seeking trainees on this particular course are listed below.

- Drayton Manor High School, W7
- Fulham Cross Academy, SW6
- Fulham Cross Girls' School, SW6
- Gumley House School TW7
- Hammersmith Academy, W6
- Sacred Heart High School, W6
- St Benedict's Catholic School, W5
- St Mark's Catholic School, TW3
- St Richard Reynolds Catholic College, TW1
- West London Free School, W6

The characters and location of our schools are varied. To help you decide, please refer to our [WLTTA Secondary School Summary Descriptions](#) and our [Map of WLTTA Schools](#)

Once you have submitted your application for this course on DfE Apply, please email Pippa Currey [pcurrey@sacredh.lbhf.sch.uk](mailto:pcurrey@sacredh.lbhf.sch.uk) with your three preferred choices of school offering

the course in order of preference. We will then forward directly to the school/s for shortlisting.

We then later arrange your second placement at another contrasting WLTTA school to provide greater depth to your training experience.

If you want to see when you would be at the university; when at your main host school; and when the contrasting school, see our typical timetable linked above. (1.3)

You can always contact us to ask how many applications (if any) are being considered by different schools at the point that you are about to apply.

## **2.2 Our Detailed Website and Live Presentation and Q&A**

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We recommend that you visit our website <https://www.wlta.org.uk/> to properly see all our vacancies; for example we have another separate Biology unsalaried course at a SEN school. You can download the course information document for any of our courses; and see a video about us, with previous trainees being interviewed.

If you want to, you can also sign up there to join our fortnightly 'live' Zoom presentation about getting into teaching and it includes an opportunity for Q&A. The presentation explains the different routes into teaching and their separate benefits; how the money works; tips about using the 'Find Postgraduate Teacher Training' portal; applications; offers; school experience etc. No pressure, you don't have to attend this at all. It's just there for anyone who is trying to understand it all better. We get excellent feedback on this session year after year.

[WLTTA online Information and Q&A session](#)

# **3 Entry requirements**

## **3.1 Academic Requirements**

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You will need a scientific honours degree (2.2 or above) in Biology or a closely related subject. We may consider alternatively well-qualified mature candidates or those whose studies indicate some breadth of scientific knowledge as a basis for further study both before and during the course.

We normally also expect two Sciences at A-Level standard (or the equivalent). This can really help because at KS3, schools teach general science before children then specialise for GCSEs and A-Levels in KS4 and KS5.

You will also need GCSE Grade C/4 in English Language and Mathematics, or the equivalent.

Where appropriate, please read our important guidance on [Overseas Qualifications](#) and if necessary about [GCSE Equivalency tests](#).

## **3.2 Personal Qualities**

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We seek trainees with a passion to engage and inspire students to a love of learning, who are:

- committed to championing their students;
- passionate about their subject and its place in the curriculum;
- open to learning about children's physical/social/emotional/cognitive needs and how these can affect behaviour;

- in good health with the ability to cope with stress. Teaching is incredibly rewarding, but it also requires an element of resilience and a sense of humour;
- professional and committed to equal opportunities;
- able to communicate well in written/spoken English, with at least basic computer skills and a commitment to developing these.

### 3.3 Other requirements

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We are looking for energetic and committed applicants with excellent subject knowledge in science.

A realistic understanding of the role of a teacher and an awareness of some current issues facing the profession is also important. We have some advice relating to school experience on our website: [WLTTA School Experience tab](#)

Offers are conditional on satisfactory outcome of a DBS check (approx. £60) and an occupational health check (approx. £20) both administered through the university after an offer is accepted.

## 4 Fees & financial support

### 4.1 Fees

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2026-27: The tuition fee for this course is £9,535 for home students, payable to St Mary's University, Twickenham. Fees for international students for 2025-26 were £17,950 but the fees for 2026-27 will be confirmed by the university in October 2026.

### 4.2 Bursaries

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DfE bursaried subjects for 2026, together with the amounts and eligibility, are expected to be published from **early Oct 2025** on the DfE's 'Get into Teaching' website tab: [Funding & Support](#). These DfE Bursaries for 2026-27 will also then be listed on the bursary tab on the secondary courses page of our WLTTA website.

### 4.3 Student loans

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You may also be eligible for a student loan while you study but you will have to apply for that. You can take out a student loan even if you already have an undergraduate loan.

Loans for tuition fees are not means tested (whereas loans for maintenance are means tested) but you should confirm all this using the same 'Funding your training' tab above.

### 4.4 Other financial support

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While not provided directly by WLTTA, please be aware that as a full-time student you would be eligible for cheaper travel in London using a student oyster card and, many boroughs offer a reduction on your council tax payment.

## 5 About the training provider

### 5.1 The West London Teacher Training Alliance (WLTTA)

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The West London Teacher Training Alliance represents a large group of 50+ schools (nurseries, primaries, special needs, secondaries, sixth forms; faith and non-faith, maintained schools, independent schools and free schools) – who are all seeking to mentor and build a relationship with a trainee who aspires to work in their school.

Our schools are in Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, Westminster, Richmond, Twickenham, Ealing, Hounslow, Hillingdon and Brent. The WLTTA office is based at Sacred Heart High School, in Hammersmith.

We have formal partnership arrangements with two universities.

- St Mary's University, Twickenham
- University of Roehampton

## 5.2 Our approach to trainee recruitment

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We are one of the very few providers who want you choose the school where you train, ideally a school where you aspire to work, when you apply. We pride ourselves in the support that we provide potential applicants and in the speed of our shortlisting. We have a detailed website (<https://www.wlta.org.uk/>) and the WLTTA office is staffed full time with teacher-training recruitment experts to talk to on the phone.

If you perform well at interview but fail to secure a place at your preferred school, we operate an internal referral system rather than rejecting you (see the interview section below).

We place significant emphasis on getting a good fit between trainee and school because we are all keenly focussed on recruitment for qualified teachers in our alliance schools the following year.

## 5.3 The Accrediting Body

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St Mary's University, Twickenham accredits this WLTTA course and in 2024 the St Mary's Institute of Education was once again rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted.

In *The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2024* the university was ranked in the Top 10 for Student Experience and in the Top 5 for Teaching Quality. The Thames-side setting of the campus is stunning and the university has a long and distinguished history combined with a very modern outlook.

The university is now London's second largest teacher training course provider across primary and secondary; course tutors at St Mary's are all skilful teachers themselves, with many years of experience in schools and higher education. Our WLTTA schools have been working with St Mary's for many years and have established excellent relationships with the university.

# 6 Interviews

Our schools seek trainees who aspire to work for them. We enable you to select your preferred host school at application and later through a referral process. We provide information about the schools, to help you choose.

## 6.1 Stage 1: University Interview

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Once shortlisted, we arrange for you to be invited to a university interview. This will usually be online but if you particularly wish to visit the university, do mention this to them when they contact you about the interview.

You will be asked to upload ID documents and relevant certificates/transcripts if available. We can still make an offer subject to later verification of qualifications.

The university may ask you to prepare a brief presentation on a particular topic and to complete a subject audit questionnaire. This will help them to establish the breadth of your subject knowledge, which they will discuss with you. 'Subject Knowledge Enhancement' courses are sometimes included as an offer condition.

## 6.2 Stage 2: School Interview

The in-person school interview (including time in a classroom) follows 3-4 days later and may lead to an offer. As well as a panel interview, it will include time in a classroom, a tour of the school and short English and maths tests.

## 6.3 Internal Referrals

If you do not receive an offer from Stage 2 but have demonstrated potential, you can then choose another school and we would recommend your shortlisting. The university interview would not be repeated.

We hope to fit good candidates with schools that they are happy with and where they can secure an offer. In this way we believe we are maximising the opportunity for a successful year for both trainee and school; in turn this increases the chances of the trainee's future employment within the school or the alliance.

# 7 Training with a disability

WLTTA and all our partner universities are committed to supporting students with disabilities. Please contact us as early as possible in your application process so that your needs are met and support can be arranged.

You can also find support and information from the university accrediting this course. St Mary's University offer advice and support to their students who have requirements as a result of a disability, specific learning difficulty (e.g. dyslexia), medical condition or temporary disability, such as injury. St Mary's Dyslexia and Disability Co-ordinator (DDC) works closely with the other members of the Student Services team, supporting students in their time at university assisting them to be proactive in their studies as an independent learner. <http://www.smuc.ac.uk/student-support/dyslexia-and-disability/>

# 8 Contact details

The WLTTA office team administers all WLTTA teacher training recruitment and training. If you need further help, you can find all our contact details here with information about our availability during school holidays: [One-to-one advice for candidates](#)

Office phone: **0208 748 7600** (Pippa Currey x290)

Email: [pcurrey@sacredh.lbhf.sch.uk](mailto:pcurrey@sacredh.lbhf.sch.uk)

Our website: <https://www.wlta.org.uk/>

# 9 How to apply

All applications for teacher training courses are made through the DfE portal: [Apply for teacher training](#).

The following link provides a useful overview of the application system and explains how you apply for a particular school:

[How to apply](#)