

RE Teaching

Teach RE

Unlock the world of religious education

The right career?



Visit www.teachre.com and www.culham.ac.uk

To discover more, contact:

Dick Powell

Development Officer

Culham Institute

15 Norham Gardens

Oxford OX2 6PY

Email: dick.powell@culham.ac.uk

Tel: **01865 284885**

Making a difference...

RE Teaching

...is about the spiritual, cultural and moral development of pupils and students



"I'm challenged, inspired, enthused and encouraged every time I see students explore their own beliefs."

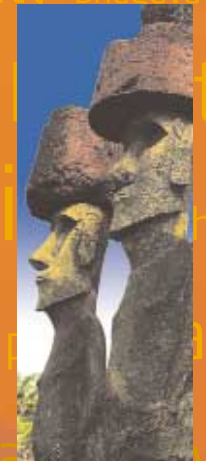
Aruna Gunawardana
RE teacher



"Teaching RE is a privilege as it allows us to talk to pupils about the issues and big questions that really matter to them. It is more than an academic subject as it demands a personal response from the

pupils and can affect the way that they view, and interact with the world and those around them."
Sue Cooke
Head of RE

Making the connection...





Teaching RE is more than just teaching – it also gives pupils the chance to learn and reflect about the religious experiences of people around the world and through time.

It provides a chance to explore ultimate questions and the quest for meaning – such as:

- ◆ Does God exist?
- ◆ Why is there suffering in the world?
- ◆ Is there life after death?
- ◆ What is the meaning of life?
- ◆ How do various religious traditions respond to ultimate questions?

And remember, people who become teachers enjoy working with young people.

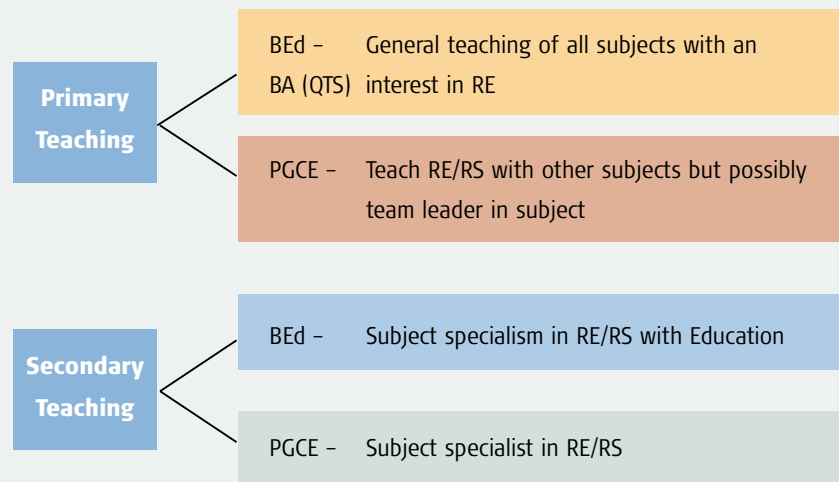


"I believe that it is only RE which lights that 'primitive spark' in our psyche that encourages us to

look beyond the mere appearance of the world. Only RE truly encourages our students and children to consider some of the subtlest but most important mysteries that face us as thinking beings. That is why I teach RE."

Vince Squance, RE teacher and head of year, Ridgeway School, Plymouth

Primary and secondary routes into teaching



There are three main routes into RE teaching:

1. **Postgraduate Route**
2. **Undergraduate Route**
3. **Employment Based Route**

The Postgraduate Route or PGCE

- ◆ You will need to have a degree or equivalent in Theology or Religious Studies. Graduates in other disciplines might be expected to follow a 'booster' or subject support course to get up to speed on subject knowledge. Fuller details are available from the Teacher Training Agency www.canteach.gov.uk
- ◆ All graduates receive a training salary of £6000.
- ◆ To apply you do so to an institution on the Graduate Teacher Training Register www.gtrr.ac.uk

The Undergraduate Route

- ◆ You study for a degree while working towards qualified teacher status.
- ◆ This can be a BA, BSc or BEd. It can be a three or four year course.
- ◆ In the three year course you will spend 24 weeks in schools, in the four year course it is 32 weeks.
- ◆ This is the route often favoured by primary teachers. You apply via UCAS.



Chester PGCE students

The Employment Based Route

- ◆ You can attain Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) while working in a school.
- ◆ You must be a graduate aged 24 or over.
- ◆ It usually lasts one year.
- ◆ You are paid whilst you work and train – usually on the unqualified teacher scale.



Joy Schmack, PGCE RE course leader, Liverpool Hope University

"The PGCE programme has been demanding but rewarding. An inspirational university leader and some great course mates have lifted me beyond the often daunting paperwork to the aim of what is really being done by all involved – continuing to put good RE in schools."

Jo Hopper, Exeter University PGCE student

Wherever you want to go



The map shows how widespread the institutions are, so there will be an institution reasonably close to you if you want.

You also get PGCE course training fees paid and there is a £6000 grant to assist with living costs.

Check the RE Directory for more excellent information on www.theredirectory.org.uk/quals/index/html

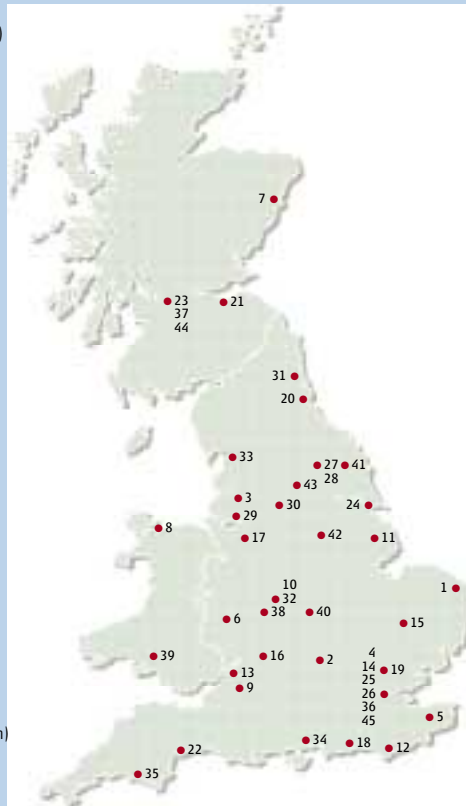
About forty higher education institutions offer postgraduate RE courses.

You can go in for secondary or primary teaching, although there are fewer primary PGCE courses available.

The Graduate Teacher Training Registry (www.gttr.ac.uk) and the Teacher Training Agency (www.canteach.gov.uk) have excellent information about courses on their websites.



- 1 University of East Anglia
- 2 Oxford Brookes University
- 3 Edge Hill College of Education (with Citizenship)
- 4 Roehampton University of Surrey
- 5 Canterbury Christ Church University College
- 7 University of Aberdeen
- 8 University of Wales, Bangor
- 9 Bath Spa University College
- 10 The University of Birmingham
- 11 Bishop Grosseteste College
- 12 University of Brighton
- 13 University of Bristol
- 14 Brunel University
- 15 Cambridge University, Faculty of Education
- 16 University of Gloucestershire
- 17 University College Chester
- 18 University College Chichester
- 20 The University of Durham
- 21 The University of Edinburgh
- 22 University of Exeter
- 23 University of Glasgow
- 24 University of Hull
- 25 University of London, Institute of Education
- 26 University of London, King's College
- 27 University of Leeds
- 28 Leeds, Trinity and All Saints College
- 29 Liverpool Hope University College
- 30 The Manchester Metropolitan University
- 31 The University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne
- 32 Newman College of Higher Education
- 33 St Martin's College, Lancaster
- 34 University of Southampton
- 35 The College of St Mark and St John, Plymouth
- 36 St Mary's College, Twickenham
- 37 University of Strathclyde in Glasgow
- 39 Trinity College Carmarthen
- 40 The University of Warwick
- 41 York St. John
- 42 Sheffield Hallam University
- 43 Bradford College (Primary Humanities Specialism)
- 44 University of Paisley



RE TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

- 6 The Marches Consortium – Leominster (SCITT)
- 19 Chiltern Training Group – Luton (SCITT)
- 38 The Titan Partnership – Birmingham (SCITT)
- 45 Bromley Schools Collegiate (SCITT)

The providers of PGCE RE training

With nearly 40 providers of PGCE courses to choose from you can find a course to suit your needs. You might stay at the university where you did your first degree. You might move closer to home. You might have other reasons for making a choice. But whatever your choices, the standards around the country are consistently high. Here are just some of the providers...



Sam Jordan RE PGCE course tutor, Southampton University

"As a tutor I am training future teachers of Religious Education and I am hoping to inspire them. I want to get them to the point where their choice of career is not just affirmed in their own minds but where their vision of what RE can be like and their sense of vocation expands with imagination, creativity, energy and endless possibilities.

- ◆ Teachers who don't feel that it is abnormal to wake up in the middle of the night with a really good idea for teaching that bottom set of year nines about Gandhi – don't laugh because it has happened!
- ◆ Teachers for whom that 'extra mile' is absolutely essential. More than anything, I am about training teachers who understand the process of the classroom and make it their own. Another set of fine words? Perhaps; but whilst I may not achieve all of them all of the time, I do mean and aspire to every single one of them."

Marion Agombar

PGCE course tutor

"The University of East Anglia Religious Education ITT course is dedicated to producing excellent RE teachers who have:

- ◆ good background knowledge
- ◆ an understanding of religion
- ◆ and can challenge students."



Professor Terence Copley

Exeter University

"The course philosophy is that in RE it is *not* satisfactory to be satisfactory – we want to sparkle! Who wants written on their gravestone 'S/he was a useful teacher of RE!'"



Paul Walsh Newman College of Higher Education, Birmingham

"This course prepares you to teach RE in both Catholic and other LEA secondary schools. You will be encouraged to develop a reflective and critical attitude to planning, teaching and evaluating RE in a variety of schools."

A Post Graduate Certificate in Education develops your classroom competencies enabling you to be a skilful, practical and reflective RE teacher.

- ◆ Two thirds of your training year is spent in schools.
- ◆ You learn classroom management skills.
- ◆ Learn how to control pupils.
- ◆ Learn how to deliver RE concepts and ideas well.

"During the University-based element of the course in the School of Education (Edgbaston campus), trainees explore the interface between the theory and practice of teaching RE through lectures, workshops, seminars, visits and interactive learning experiences. During the school-based element, trainees are helped to develop the skills of classroom practice, including understanding the role and professional obligations and responsibilities of being a teacher."

Quote from the **Birmingham University Website**



David Kirk
PGCE RE student,
Leeds University
"The PGCE itself has provided a wonderful

opportunity for me. The help and support of both the university and teachers within schools have enabled me to apply and convert my degree specialism in Philosophy to the teaching of this challenging, questioning and ultimately exciting subject."



Khadija Begum
Birmingham University PGCE student

"I am very fortunate to be able to teach

themes and topics that get pupils thinking about their beliefs and morals and where they stand on certain issues. Religious Education attracts and appeals to pupils from all ranges of cultures, religions, abilities, ages and gender. Current issues in the news prompts questions in the minds of pupils that need to be brought out in the open and discussed in the safe environment of an RE classroom. Teaching RE is not repetitive, but a constant challenge and stimulant for the thoughts of pupils and teachers alike."

Louise Southgate

Exeter University
"The PGCE is a really exciting course and so relevant to today's world. I absolutely love the subject."



Richard Crossman

Exeter PGCE student

"I've come into my PGCE a bit later

than some. I'm now 29. Since graduating I have done a number of things gaining lots of different experiences - cinema projectionist, lab technician, web designer, guitar maker, and musician. I did my degree at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. At SOAS, I studied World Religions with some of the leaders in their subjects, and alongside students from all over the world. I began my PGCE in RE as I wanted to find a rewarding career that would guarantee me good employment with good prospects, and still leave me with the time and money to travel, and to concentrate on my other interests. I love my subject and so I want to pass on those things I have learnt."



Rachel Hughes

Trinity College,
Carmarthen

"I have learnt so much and changed a lot as a person. I

have a job for September and I'm looking forward to being a 'real' teacher."



Louise Farrer

PGCE student,
Cambridge University

"I have always wanted to be an RE

teacher for as long as I can remember. At the end of the day, I do enjoy working with children and I think that RE has a lot to offer them both intellectually and developmentally. The pupils enjoy thinking creatively about God, religion and philosophy, and it is great to be part of a profession that one can do anywhere and that strives to help children to achieve their potential."



PGCE students training at Liverpool Hope University College

Qualifications for the job

Having a degree in Theology or Religious studies is the traditional route but increasingly there is a trend for graduates in humanities and other disciplines to consider RE teaching as a career. Psychologists, Sociologists, Anthropologists and many other graduates come into RE teaching.



Izhar Ali Khan

Somerville Primary School, Birmingham

"I studied for my BEd degree at West Hill College,

Birmingham University. My main subject was Islamic theology. I came to teach at Somerville Primary School in 1996 after trying various careers. Somerville is a predominantly Asian school. Teaching in a Muslim school for me is no different to working in a white middle class school in Solihull. Every school has its own issues and pressures to deal with. Our school is no different. Instead of pushy parents we have parents who at times are too trusting of teachers. As the majority of our parents are Muslim – they have grown up with the ethos that you respect anyone who teaches you or your children.

I believe that all children irrespective of creed, colour and religion should be taught to respect themselves and be proud of who they are. We should

celebrate differences and similarities amongst children as all four- respect, pride, similarities and differences will help make our children better citizens."



Mo Middleton

Theology graduate and Head of RE, Netherhall School, Cambridge

"Quality RE requires

the students to think about ultimate questions of human existence; to reflect on what is of value for a fulfilled life; to learn about other cultures and religious traditions fostering understanding and tolerance; to hone learning skills in the context of the abstract; to explore the breadth of human experience. If education were simply the acquisition of facts one might question the position of RE in the curriculum but education is about the development of the individual and the building of society and in this RE plays an exciting and essential role."



It is important to be up to speed with the content matter of RE, so some institutions provide short subject support or 'booster' courses which you can follow prior to taking up a PGCE RE place. Check these out on www.teachre.com



Helen Bromley

RE teacher

"I read Social Anthropology at Cambridge University which

might seem an unusual choice of degree for RE teaching. But RE teaching is the perfect subject for someone with a degree in the social sciences. It involves similar styles of thinking and satisfies an interest in people and their behaviour.

I went to Cambridge from Huntingdon Comprehensive in York and considered a number of careers. I chose not to follow my peers into the city as I kept coming back to the idea of teaching. I felt this would prove to be a more fulfilling and stimulating job – and I wanted to give something back.

I have been constantly challenged in the teaching of RE, but I have now specialised in teaching Philosophy of Religion at A level. For me, RE has proved to be the right choice both in terms of academic stimulation and job satisfaction."



Teaching & learning: school and beyond...



Mark Royle, Head of RE, Beths Grammar School, Kent

You get to know a school and learn about the implications of education and your role in the process.

A newly-qualified RE teacher has a school mentor whose job it is to help you.

Jim Robinson, Head of RE at Wallingford School

"A mentor's main job at all key stages is to help you gain the confidence and expertise to teach in a typical classroom."

Right: Jim Robinson

There will be regular feedback sessions with the most common areas of focus being classroom management, timing and pace of lessons and use of classroom resources, including the use of ICT.

Arnold Browne

The Dean, Trinity College, Cambridge

"The breadth of their subject and the range of disciplines they use equip RE students for many fields of endeavour."

Liz Eaton, RE coordinator - Chalfont St. Peter C of E School, Bucks

"When planning RE lessons I try to include many different teaching and learning styles. Art, drama and music are particularly powerful as they can



help children to understand why people use symbols and sounds to express their ideas and religious beliefs. Children enjoy discussing pictures - describing shapes, colours and textures. Music can be a very emotional experience and children can respond to the feelings it gives them. Role play and story telling can bring events and ideas to life.

One particular approach that has proved popular with the children in my class is visualisation. I ask the children to take a journey to a 'special place' or listen to music and imagine a story to go with it. It's a good technique for relaxation and for bringing a class together. It makes what we are discussing in the lesson more special. It also helps the children to develop their imagination. RE can be a fascinating subject to teach."

Mark Royle

Head of RE, Beths Grammar School, Kent

"RE gives me the opportunity to use art, drama, critical thinking, debate and ICT skills. We create interactive CDs and the schools technology specialist status has allowed me to have an interactive whiteboard installed in my teaching room. The subject is academically rigorous but incredibly enjoyable."



Your experience as an RE teacher means you will apply your theoretical knowledge and skills in planning in order to help pupils learn in the classroom and beyond.

Sharing...

Teaching RE gives you the opportunity to share with your students the most exciting yet demanding of subjects on the curriculum. It is a subject that explores ultimate questions and issues, the spiritual dimension of humankind and the place of humans in the scheme of things. Some tall order!



Kevin Norwood, RE teacher, Hemel Hempstead School

"I enjoy teaching RE because of the variety of lessons. We have played Bingo, as an example, to show the dangers of gambling and its links to Qur'anic law. I teach all ages from Year 7 to Year 13, and although the pressure of fitting in all the exam work is hard, the 6th form lessons give me the opportunity to carry on studying Philosophy in which I did my degree."



Exploring...

Developing the skill to teach your pupils to ask the right questions takes time. However, exploring with them the pathways of spiritual questions that have fascinated humans for centuries begins in lesson 1.



Samreena Kamran

Head of RE, Somerville Primary School, Birmingham

"I started teaching at Somerville Primary School in Small Heath, Birmingham in September 1993 and am still here. Somerville is a 3 form entry school and there are approximately 700 children on roll. The majority of these children are Muslim.

At present I am the curriculum manager for Religious Education. RE at Somerville is taught as a discrete subject As a Muslim teacher working in a predominantly Muslim school the children see you as a positive role model as do the parents and community.

I always advocate the need for more Muslim teachers for RE because we have so much to offer in terms of our knowledge of our religion and identity."



...like Emma Bolitho

Head of RE, Wootton Bassett School

"RE allows my students to see how religions can eradicate prejudice and discrimination. I hope my pupils learn tolerance towards others and respect for their opinions.

I feel privileged to be teaching RE. It is the one subject that brings out spirituality and the ability to question ourselves. Teaching RE allows me to be creative and individual in my teaching style, and to be sensitive yet humorous in the same lesson. RE is a great challenge and seeks to provide knowledge, understanding and reflection of the issues concerning the increasingly multicultural society in which we live. It seeks answers – but doesn't always get them – to ultimate questions – where do we come from; where are we going?"

Rosemary Peacocke Former HMI – Early years

"To see the world through the eyes of a young child is the only way to enhance spiritual development. Everything is new, exciting and mysterious!"

Paul Cornish

Head of RE, South Dartmoor Community College, Devon

RE teachers have the responsibility of delivering one of the most important subjects on the school curriculum. At no other time in the school day do young people get the opportunity to have their beliefs and opinions listened to and valued the way they are in the RE classroom."



Or Maheson Balsundarum

"RE teaching is for people from all backgrounds, all religions, and all ages. You might decide to come into RE teaching in order to help stimulate young people to think about the really important questions that other areas of the curriculum don't address. Or you might consider being able to ask the right questions is more important than knowing the answers.

To be able to pass on my enthusiasm and joy for the subject, I thought I would come into RE teaching. It's hard work. It's certainly a challenge. But it's fun and it's the right thing to do."

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The world of RE support: advisers and resources

The world of RE is an exciting and supportive place to be. It has a great number of people who provide ideas, resources, courses and support for all the RE teachers who are in the classroom.



Jo Fageant

RE Adviser

"The job of a religious education

consultant is stimulating, challenging, rewarding and very varied. I am involved with SACREs and this affords me the privilege of working with members of a wide range of faith communities and others with an interest in RE. The national networks in RE mean I meet and work alongside people who are acknowledged experts in the field of RE and, as a consequence, continue my own learning and growth."



Lat Blaylock

"PCFRE is the subject teacher association for all who teach RE, and exists to promote

and enable excellence in the subject. Through courses, resources, lobbying and consultancy, with clients such as BBC, DFES, QCA, dozens of LEAs and the Inter Faith Network we represent teachers' needs and meet them as

well. From foundation stage to A level and from Anglicanism to Zoroaster we try to help make RE better. We encourage all who teach RE to join us."



Karenza

Passmore

Resource Officer

"The North East Religious Learning Resources Centre

has over 36,000 resources supporting Religious Education and Learning. These range from the practical to the academic and cover a variety of media including: books, artefacts, ICT, videos and posters amongst others. Every aspect of school Religious Education is covered from Nursery to A level and beyond for both pupils and teachers/support staff. The Resources Centre has excellent, mutually beneficial relationships with those it serves (including interfaith communities, 13 LEA's and three Dioceses!) so RE teachers can take advantage of our expertise!"



Dilwyn Hunt

RE Adviser

"Despite expensive counselling and professional care I've been unable to free myself of my thirty-year addiction to RE.

In RE I could see a universe of awesome ideas, dazzling argument and the thoughts of the wise. Here was a real attempt to find what was true and what was right. In this cave of treasures RE offers a real challenge. RE remains a fabulously awesome Aladdin's cave."

Dave Francis *RE Consultant*

"I worked as a teacher of RE for fourteen years, and joined Somerset Advisory service in 1994 as adviser for RE, PSE and Collective Worship. As an Ofsted and section 23 trained inspector I now work as an independent educational consultant, focussing on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including RE, PSHE and citizenship education."

Jane Brooke *RE Adviser, Chester*

"My work involves a great deal of pre and post inspection support in RE to schools. I also lead RE training courses for all key stage phases. I work with RE departments who need support, and I

give support to recently appointed heads of RE. An important issue is to promote new initiatives in RE in the LEA, and also help new RE coordinators to plan RE across the school and work with the Early Years team to produce RE material for Early Years. An important aspect of my work is advising the Standing Advisory Council for RE in the LEA especially in the writing of the agreed syllabus and monitoring of Ofsted reports in RE."



Joy Schmack and students - Liverpool Hope University College

Sarah Williams, RE teacher, Falmouth Community School, Cornwall



Going beyond...



Joe Jenkins

Author

"I wrote my first book in 1987 with the introduction of GCSE. It was an

attempt to explore issues like the arms trade, racism and environmental degradation. *Contemporary Moral Issues* is now into its fourth reprint. I taught at a number of comprehensive schools finding endless opportunities to be creative in exploring questions of meaning. Being an RE teacher prepared me to take on other tasks. In the 1990s I was appointed Director of a World Music project bringing musicians from around the world into schools."



Andrew Wright

Senior Lecturer in Religious and Theological Education, King's College, London;

Director, Centre for Theology, Religion and Culture

"Previous to my work in Higher Education, I was Head of RE in three contrasting secondary schools: C of E, joint Anglican – Roman Catholic, and state comprehensive schools. I currently oversee the doctoral programme in Religious Education at King's College in

London. My research interests include critical approaches to religious education, spirituality and education, dealing with questions of religious truth in the classroom, and the development of religious literacy. Books written by me include: *Religious Education in the Secondary School*, *Spiritual Pedagogy*, *Discerning the Spirit*, *Spirituality and Education*, *Learning to Teach Religious Education in the Secondary School* (edited with Ann-Marie Brandom). Amongst other things, I am the Chair of the Association of University Lecturers in Religion and Education."



Trevor Cooling

University of Gloucestershire

"I am BA course leader for the Open Theological College

based at the University of Gloucestershire. Formerly I was Director of the Stapleford Centre and course leader for a range of distance learning courses for RE teachers validated by the University of Nottingham. I have published widely in RE and I have a particular interest in curriculum development in RE."



Will Ord

Professional Officer for Association for Citizenship Teaching (ACT)

"I was a Head of

RE before I became a writer, the Professional Officer for ACT, education consultant, and I have continued my work on the SAPERE committee (the 'Philosophy for Children' charity in the UK) for the last 6 years. I have co-authored 7 books on RE, Citizenship and Thinking Skills; THEMES IN RE (Book 3 for Year 9) was written with Joe Jenkins in 2002 (Heinemann), and combines RE, Citizenship and the Thinking Skills approach to teaching and learning. I strongly advocate the importance of teaching children to create and follow their own questions in communal settings to improve thinking skills, behaviour, values education, and exam results."

Denise Cush

Senior Tutor in Theological and Religious Studies, Bath Spa University College

"Studying and teaching religions means touching upon a whole host of other disciplines such as philosophy, ethics, psychology, ethnography, sociology, history, literary criticism, languages, art

history and criticism, music, geography, environmental studies and more."



Wendy Dossett

University of Wales

"I am a lecturer in Religious Studies at the University of Wales, Lampeter,

and an A level RS examiner for the WJEC. I was formerly a tutor on the PGCE Secondary RE course at Trinity College, Carmarthen. My primary research interest is in Japanese Pure Land Buddhism. I am also interested in the ways in which Buddhism is presented in the secondary school. I am the tutor for a module in Religious Education which includes the opportunity for students to spend the equivalent of a week shadowing an RE teacher, as well as encouraging reflection on the place of RE on the curriculum, teaching methodologies and other RE related issues. This module is offered in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at Lampeter."