



My starting point as a new science teacher

This is the first science assignment and it requires you to describe your ideas and thoughts on science, and the teaching and learning of science, before you begin the PGCE course. It will provide a good basis for the work that you will be covering during the rest of the year.

The aim of this assignment is to enable you to identify and develop your own views and values about the teaching and learning of science. You will have experienced science education over a number of years and will have been influenced by your experiences and by your teachers. You will have developed a philosophy about good science education from the perspective of a learner, but you may not have had the opportunity to articulate this before. As you learn to be a science teacher you will develop and modify these early beliefs and your emerging philosophy will inform your practice as an effective science teacher.

The task

Work to the title 'My starting point as a new science teacher' and aim to write about 2000 words, although there is no rigid word limit for this assignment. **You do not need to do any extra reading in preparation for this assignment; it is your own implicit views that are important.** Write in continuous prose about your personal philosophy. We suggest you include the following five general areas and use the prompts as a guide. However, you are encouraged to include any other relevant ideas too.

Myself

Describe your own science background. What was your own experience of learning science at school and in higher education? How were you taught science? How did this influence you? What do you feel about science and why do you think you feel like this? Have your feelings changed over time?

Science

What is science? What is the purpose of science? What separates science from other disciplines? What do scientists do? How does science progress? Should all pupils have to learn science?

Teaching

Why do we teach science? What does good science teaching involve? What are the challenges of teaching science?

Learning

How do pupils learn science? What does effective learning involve? Do pupils learn science in the same ways as they learn other subjects? Why do some people find science a difficult subject?

Reflection

Write a brief conclusion about the writing of this assignment. How did you feel about being asked to do it? Why do you think you were asked to do it? How did you set about your writing? Was it easy or difficult and why? Have you learned anything from doing it?

Assessment criteria

You will be given feedback from your tutor on:

- The range and depth of the views expressed
- The presentation and structure of the assignment
- The technical accuracy and clarity of your writing

Submission date: Email an electronic version using the file 'surname_first name_starting point assignment 2023' (for example Hancock_Joanne_starting point assignment 2023) to Joanne Hancock (joanne.hancock@nottingham.ac.uk) before **9am on Monday 11 September 2023**.

You may also find it useful to bring a hard copy with you during the first week of the course (further details will be given nearer the time).