

ID4001 –Information for those offered places

ID4001 is a “different” module. It can be a great learning experience for students, and students on the module can make significant differences to the education of young people. We are pleased to have had many students successfully through the module. We are pleased to hear students recommending the module to others.

Application and Selection

Applications in the form of a CV and covering letter were invited from relevant University Schools part way through semester two. Applicants were invited to an interview. Each application was evaluated through the application documents, the interview, and the record of the student. Selectors are looking for students who already have sufficiently good communication skills and science understanding. This is in order for students to stand a good chance of success in the module and to be able to improve on that knowledge and skill. Selectors are looking for students who have given some thought to what is involved in this module, and who have appropriate attitudes to learning and to communication. No selection is permitted on the basis of gender, race, religion, etc. After the initial selection process, candidates must successfully pass through the PVG checks.

Each University School has a limit on the number of students that they can place, so it may be that not all suitable applicants can get the offer of a place. Offered places may initially be dependent on the University School securing a placement for the student. Those students who accept an offer of a place are required to commit to seeing the module through.

Expectations

Please note that this is an unusual module in various ways. If this worries you unduly, we suggest that you do not accept a place on the module. We note a few such things below.

Students are placed in schools in St Andrews and as far away as for example Dundee and Buckhaven. Reasonable travel expenses are reimbursed mid-semester and at the end of the semester. Those on placements further from St Andrews will inevitably have longer travelling times than those placed in St Andrews. This may be regarded as “unfair”, but is also unavoidable.

It is inevitable with placements that experiences of students will vary between locations. Mentor teachers, students, and staff should be aware of what is expected from the module, but within that there is still the opportunity for things being a bit different in different places. If these differences get larger than is thought to be reasonable, it is up to the student to raise this with their departmental representative and to discuss with their mentor teacher.

Students agree with their mentor teachers times when they should be in the classroom. In order to find times that work it may be necessary to miss some lectures in St Andrews.

When students accept a place on the module they are expected to do so agreeing that they will not later withdraw from the module. Their input to the module is important not just to them, but to the school teacher and school pupils who are to be involved in their placement.

Education is not always as “black and white” as some science subjects. Students should be prepared to read, hear, and evaluate a range of opinions and research outcomes on various aspects of learning and teaching.

We provide a module calendar in the module handbook. Students are expected to take note of the activities and deadlines in there, and act on these without the need for further notification.

The module handbook we accept is a substantial read, but it contains relevant information that is important for our students, and which they are expected to read and digest.

With the agreement of the Dean we have the assessed talk near the start of revision week.

Students are expected to communicate well with their mentor and other teachers, and with module representative in their academic school (departmental rep). As part of taking care of their own learning they are expected to be pro-active in raising items for discussion or consideration.

Members of the module team will endeavour to put in place the “arrangements” agreed by Student Services for students with disabilities. We have had numerous students with disabilities succeed on this module in the past.

This module has as one of its aims the development of students’ communication skills. As such, the final report has as part of its marking scheme the quality of the English used in the report. Students with dyslexia and some other conditions are advised to be proactive in seeking any necessary support from Student Services, CEED, or their departmental representative with regard to communicating clearly in written English. They may wish to consult the University policy on proof reading of work submitted for assessment.

Students are advised to check setting on Facebook etc. accounts. It is likely to be inadvisable to allow pupils and teachers access to all the posts on your pages. Students are advised to check the University policy on Child and Adult Protection regarding access to personal details and communications on social media.

As part of the code of conduct for the module students must agree to follow various rules associated with child protection, equal opportunities, and health and safety. While all may be regarded as “common sense”, they are important. The rules are stated in the module handbook.

Comments from previous students

This module has given me invaluable experience in science communication. It not only gave me an insight into teaching various age groups but also how to go about communicating ideas to them in a relevant way. As I was mostly teaching just one class I was able to build up a relationship with the pupils in said class and I hope that I may have inspired some of them to carry on studying physics at higher levels and made them realise that physics isn't boring but can also be extremely useful and fun.

I think that this is an excellent scheme both for students like myself, for the experience it gives us in teaching, communication and interpersonal skills; and for the pupils in the schools, as it gave them someone to relate to that wasn't a teacher and was nearer their age so that they could find out what university was like.

This module has developed my confidence and my communication skills. This makes it easier for me to consider different career paths and I now believe I have the skills to go into a career where communication plays a large role.

I enjoyed this module. It was a nice change from the standard academic module and a really good opportunity to do something practical and get involved in the local community outside of the university. Many students live in a university bubble for four years while they are here and it is fun and rewarding to do something in the real world.

I think this module has a unique draw for students, being an interdisciplinary module it allows many Schools to introduce their students to the idea of teaching and still give them credit for this. I also think that the module allows students to better understand their own core knowledge of science.

I certainly think it's entirely appropriate that the module is advertised as something in which the student's initiative and organisation is a key factor. ...This provides a very big leap in commitment ... I think the 'sacrifices' such as long distance and missing the occasional lecture are more than justified by the means, but this is coming from someone for whom the module was highly appealing from the start.