

IOP Institute of Physics

School Experience Programme (SEP)

Information for participants

How does the School Experience Programme work?

If you need help finding a school to visit to get school experience we can put you in touch with a local school. To request help you need to complete the online form at www.iop.org/sep. We will endeavour to send you the contact details of a school in your locality within five working days. The onus is on you to contact the school to arrange a visit. The school will be informed that you will be in touch. Sometimes a school may not be able to accommodate you at a specific time, if this is the case you can either wait until they are available or we can give you the details of another school to contact.

What type of school will I visit?

We have a range of schools on our SEP database including schools that teach A level physics, state-maintained and independent schools. Due to demand we will not be able to match you with a specific school and will simply look for the closest school in proximity to the postcode you provide.

I need more than one day of school experience, can you still help?

We can only help you arrange one school visit due to the number of SEP schools available. You may be able to negotiate further days with the school directly. If not, don't forget to register for The National College for Teaching and Leadership's (formerly the Teaching Agency) SEP where you can arrange visits of a longer duration.

What can I expect?

Typical school visits will include opportunities to talk to different teachers and see a range of lessons and age groups being taught. Each SEP participant will have varying levels of experience so it's impossible to set a specific programme that will be suitable for everyone. If you have any specific requests you should arrange these directly with the school. If for instance you have some experience in observing lower year groups and would like more time with older students, ask if this can be accommodated. Or if you are interested in training to teach physics with maths then you could ask whether it would be ok to also observe a maths lesson. Please note that your experience will be purely observational, you will not be permitted to take an active role in the classroom.

Do I need to obtain a Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) check?

Guidance from the Department for Education ('[Keeping children safe in Education](#)' March 2015) states that a volunteer in this capacity is not in 'regulated' activity and is therefore not required to undergo a DBS check. However, schools still may request a DBS check to satisfy their own school policy requirements.

Do I need to prepare anything before my visit?

Unless you have specific things that you want to get out of our visit, just take a notebook and ensure that throughout the day you take notes. This will help you to reflect on your visit in your teacher training application and interview.

Remember, you will be entering a professional work place so your professionalism is required at all times. Please follow a suitably smart dress code and ensure you are well presented. Any piercings should be removed, tattoos concealed and bright hair dye avoided. SEP can be a great way to make contacts and could even lead to future employment opportunities so ensure you present yourself in the best possible light.

After your school placement

Schools do not receive any payment for supporting SEP and we completely rely on their goodwill and generosity. Please show your gratitude and appreciation by sending an email or letter of thanks to your host teacher once you have completed your visit.

Following your visit please spare us some time to complete our short survey that will be emailed to you. This will really help us to ensure we are offering the best SEP possible. If you have any feedback or comments before receiving our survey you can email teach@iop.org.

Good Luck!

If you do proceed with a teacher training application remember to apply for an IOP Teacher Training Scholarship (if eligible) and check out what else we can do to help you whilst you're training to teach www.iop.org/teach