

RE-Connect

Bangor University is to contribute towards increasing the number of teachers available to teach Religious Education and improve the teaching materials available to both teachers and students.

Religious Education has undergone numerous changes in recent years, with teachers having to plan for and teach an ever-changing syllabus at Key Stage 3, GCSE and A level, while recruitment of new graduates as subject teachers is failing to keep up with demand.

The RE-connect project at the University's School of History, Philosophy, and Social Sciences will collate and develop new teaching materials for use by both teachers and students, run regular revision workshops for A level students and encourage more current university students to become subject teachers.

Professor Lucy Huskinson, who is leading the work explains:

“We need to ensure that we have sufficient current and new teachers who feel confident in delivering the new curricula being introduced for RE in secondary schools in England and Wales, to meet a growing interest in the subject among pupils.

“We want to resolve two problems that have been identified, the lack of confidence and expertise reported by current secondary school teachers, who feel ill-equipped to teach the recently revised A-level curriculum; and the significant decrease in numbers of subject students in the UK who are considering a career in teaching religious studies and philosophy in higher education.

“We look forward to working with a number of schools across North Wales and the North West of England, to tease-out the relationship between subjects taught in philosophy and religion programmes at school and university levels, and the perception of their use in the wider world of work. We will then be making recommendations for how the subjects are taught on a national scale.”

In a move to encourage more student to consider teaching as a career the project will also encourage current students to consider a career as RE teachers, by providing them with opportunities to experience RE teaching for themselves, by taking part in supported activities.