

SECONDARY TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME



Tomorrow's Teachers



The Institute of Ismaili Studies



Leading education
and social research
Institute of Education
University of London

WELCOME

IIS Director's Message



The Institute of Ismaili Studies (IIS) was established in 1977 to promote scholarship and learning on Islam and a better understanding of its relationship with other faiths. Within this tradition of promoting knowledge and learning, the IIS looks forward to extending its

partnership with the Institute of Education at the University of London. This involves a pioneering, collaborative programme for producing teachers who will make the interdisciplinary Secondary Curriculum (developed by the IIS) accessible to young people globally.

The collaboration is designed to address the training of teachers within a framework that links their Muslim heritage to the intellectual methods and best practices available in the academic environment. The Institute of Education, like the IIS, has a global reach and with over 100 years of experience it also has the expertise and qualifications necessary to facilitate this collaborative effort. The partnership which has been established has the potential to become a model for addressing some of the most urgent issues currently facing education institutions in the world.

Dr Farhad Daftary

Director, The Institute of Ismaili Studies



IOE Director's Message



The Institute of Education (IOE), located at the heart of London is one of the world's leading centres for education research and development. Our collaboration with The Institute of Ismaili Studies builds on more than 20 years of successful joint provision of teacher development programmes. The IOE also works with other agencies of the Aga

Khan Development Network, particularly the Aga Khan University and the Aga Khan Foundation. The relationship between us is extensive and productive.

In devising the STEP programme – uniquely linking the Master of Teaching and Master of Arts in Education course of study — our two institutions brought together complementary experience and expertise as well as a shared commitment to rigorous scholarship and to scholarship that has practical application.

The STEP programme is intended to make a distinctive contribute to the preparation of prospective teachers. It draws together deep scholarship about the richness and diversity of the Muslim world and a profound understanding of pedagogic practices. We hope that it will contribute – both globally and nationally – to educating children about the heritages that are part of our world today. We are delighted and privileged to be playing a part in this important development.

Professor Chris Husbands
Director, Institute of Education



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The Institute of Ismaili Studies

Since 1977, The Institute of Ismaili Studies has grown to become an academic centre for the Ismaili Muslim community's interest in its own history and in its relationship with the larger world of Islamic scholarship and contemporary thought. Its mission is to promote scholarly investigation of Muslim cultures and societies, both of the past and of the present, and a better understanding of their relationship with other societies and faiths.

With an international reach, the IIS has also become a central point of reference for scholars in the field of Ismaili Studies. To date, the IIS has produced 50 books and 40 translations, mostly on Ismaili and Shi'i subjects.

The IIS is increasingly being recognised internationally for its programmes and research that encourage perspectives that are not confined to the theological and religious heritage of Islam, but which seek to explore the relationship of religious ideas to broader dimensions of society and culture. Over the years, the IIS has collaborated with several institutions of learning such as McGill University, The School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), Cambridge University, The University of Jordan as well as the Institute of Education, University of London.



The IIS draws on its own faculty, as well as eminent contemporary scholars who regularly participate in its research, publication and teaching activities.

Teaching and learning are important facets of the the IIS' work. To this end, the IIS has developed the Ta'lim curriculum for Ismaili Muslim students at the pre-school, primary and secondary levels. An international programme, Ta'lim aims to educate young Ismailis in the heritage, history and culture of Muslim peoples.

The IIS also offers a thriving Graduate Programme in Islamic Studies and Humanities which attracts students from world-wide Ismaili communities. The programme aims to engender a analytical yet sympathetic examination of issues that contemporary Muslims face, and is committed to the reality of the diversity of Muslim societies.

Institute of Education, University of London

Founded in 1902, the Institute of Education, University of London is a world class centre of excellence for research, teacher training, higher degrees and consultancy in education and education-related areas of social science. Its staff of pre-eminent scholars and talented students from all walks of life make up an intellectually rich and diverse learning community.

The Institute of Education is a graduate college of the University of London. Initially established to deliver high quality training for school teachers, it has, over the years, expanded its activities and now offers courses leading to higher degrees in all areas of education and related aspects of the social sciences and professional practice.

Today, the IOE hosts lectures on educational issues by the leaders of the main UK political parties and by education ministers from around the world. In doing so, it provides students with a forum for lively debates involving leading figures in the world of education.



The IOE has long been recognised as a leading centre of educational enquiry. The scale and quality of this research attracts large numbers of students from all over the world keen to work with scholars at the forefront of education. International links are also fostered through active participation in European Union-sponsored programmes and through collaborative projects with overseas and other institutions. The Secondary Teacher Education Programme is one such collaboration.

The IIS Secondary Curriculum



The Secondary Curriculum, being developed by The Institute of Ismaili Studies, adopts an approach to the study of Islam based on humanistic, civilisational and normative perspectives. It seeks to acquaint secondary students with the diverse and dynamic interplay of Islamic expressions – religious, social, cultural and material – that manifest themselves in Muslim societies of the past and present day.

It strives to achieve this aim by seeking to integrate seamlessly the religious content with the social sciences and the humanities. Religion is not viewed as a detached and compartmentalized phenomenon in history and society, but rather in terms of its multifaceted connections with various dimensions of human experience. At the same time, it encourages students to analyze their own contemporary situations and to reflect on the social and ethical challenges of an increasingly plural world. To achieve its aims, the curriculum applies pedagogical approaches consonant with its philosophical framework. It calls for a profile of teachers with a broad set of proficiencies – a profile that is not narrowly specialist but reflects an acquaintance with a range of contexts.

These pedagogical approaches invite the active engagement of teachers and students with the content of the curriculum so as to engender thought and reflection on contemporary issues faced by Ismaili Muslims, other Muslim communities, and societies in general.



"The professors bring so much knowledge and insight into our lectures and seminars. They take the time to understand where their students are in their learning journey and help us grow from there, inviting questions and explorations. Their creativity in delivery makes them inspirational teachers".

Naileen Jessa,
Cohort 3, Canada

"My overall experience with the STEP programme has been fantastic. Not only did I get a chance to interact, build relationships and work with people from different disciplines, contexts and culture, but most importantly, STEP gave me the opportunity to discover myself. I have grown intellectually, socially and emotionally".

Karima Merchant,
Cohort 2, Pakistan



"Teaching in various areas of Toronto has allowed the STEP programme to be a transformative endeavour within the community. It is wonderful to see students making cross-curricular links between RE content and their secular subjects, as well as using their acquired skills of critical thinking and reflective practice in their secular environment. It is especially inspiring to find students in the libraries in their own time seeking out further knowledge on our Ismaili history and literature".

Shezeleen Kanji,
Cohort 2, Canada

Secondary Teacher Education Programme

STEP is the Secondary Teacher Education Programme with the aim to train, sustain and provide the appropriate resource base for teachers who will teach The Institute of Ismaili Studies' Secondary Curriculum to Ismaili students worldwide. The Master's level teacher preparation aspect of the STEP is being undertaken through a pioneering collaboration between the Institute of Education and The Institute of Ismaili Studies in London. The programme extends over two academic years and currently culminates in two postgraduate awards: a Master of Teaching (MTeach) and a Master of Arts in Education (Muslim Societies and Civilisations).

What are the key outcomes of the programme?

The currently concurrent MTeach and MA Education programme provides focused professional development for individuals wishing to teach at Ismaili religious education centres (RECs) at the secondary level, using an innovative humanistic, civilisational and normative approach. The educational outcomes of the programme emphasize pedagogical decision-making based on multiple sources of instructional materials, broad subject-matter knowledge, the IIS secondary curriculum framework and content and field-based training. Through coursework and practicum experiences, participants foster and develop an analytical stance towards research and scholarship in teaching and learning, and have the opportunity to reflect on their role in the process of education.

In addition to traditional essays, course participants will produce portfolios, reflective journals and evidence-based studies as they develop an increasingly complex understanding and appreciation of their young students - perceiving them as adolescents, thinking about them as active learners in learning environments, and examining the religious education and community systems that support their learning.

What is the role of professional practice in the programme?

Participants bring to the course a range of perspectives on teaching and learning from the diverse educational contexts in which they operate. The sharing of these perspectives and the analysis of professional practice with peers is central to the development of a deeper understanding of subject knowledge and of the way adolescents learn. Theoretical and professional readings support and challenge participants' understanding of how they teach, inviting alternative perspectives and possibilities for change.

Practicum experience

The STEP vision recognizes that through well-transitioned teaching placements, course participants will learn just as their young students will: by studying, doing, and reflecting; by collaborating with other professionals; observing their adolescent students' work and environment; and by sharing their observations. During the programme, course participants will be exposed to practical experiences in an array of classroom environments: Ismaili religious education centres (RECs) in London and their own home countries, as well as in secular school settings.

What are the key features of the Master of Teaching (MTeach) and Master of Arts in Education (Muslim Societies and Civilisations) programme?

The Master of Teaching (MTeach) and Master of Arts in Education (Muslim Societies and Civilisations) leads to two postgraduate degrees. The programme is designed for Ismaili teachers at different stages of their careers who wish to enhance their professional learning by integrating a humanistic, civilisational and normative approach to the study of Islam in their teaching practice – primarily within the Ismaili religious education system worldwide.

The MTeach provides intellectually-challenging and sustained practice-based, face-to-face and virtual learning opportunities led by experienced Institute of Education tutors. It uses participants' practice and teaching experience as the basis for informed critical reflection around a common vision of accomplished teaching practice; teachers' practice in their own classrooms is the basis of all assessed coursework.

The MA Education is structured around a sequence of core modules designed to develop the knowledge and understanding of the Ismaili heritage within the broader dimensions of Islam and its civilisations. It emphasizes a teaching and learning stance that prepares participants to understand and respond analytically to relevant scholarship and research, in order to facilitate an understanding of the philosophical and pedagogical frameworks and content of The Institute of Ismaili Studies' Secondary Curriculum.

How does the programme develop careers in education?

One of the primary objectives of the STEP is to develop and sustain a cadre of Ismaili teachers who are acquainted with the richness of the IIS Secondary Curriculum's content and who have exposure to the social sciences and the humanities in order to do justice to the civilisational thrust reflected in the curriculum.

STEP graduates will work within the Ismaili Tariqah and Religious Education Boards/Committees (ITREB/Cs) in their home countries serving as secondary level teachers. In the longer term, the programme within the Aga Khan network of Institutions.

Teaching at secular schools in one's home country is another possible longer-term outcome of the STEP. The MTeach and MA Education programme will have provided participants with relevant subject-matter knowledge, awareness of curriculum design and development and pedagogical proficiencies to teach social studies, humanities and religious education courses within secular secondary schools. However, it should be emphasised that the programme does not currently provide professional certification, and graduates not accorded state-recognised professional teaching status may need further qualifications to work in the secular systems in their home countries, regions or states. Regional ITREB-STEP Teams will be able to provide further guidance.

What are the fees?

The STEP is a fully-funded scholarship programme. Successful applicants receive a living allowance (stipend) for their stay in London. All programme-related fees and travel costs are covered.

Benefits of the MTeach and Education

If educators are to work closely and effectively with a wide range of young students and their families, develop standards-based approaches to religious education, curriculum and assessment, and participate in shaping religious education and school practices, they must be prepared to engage these responsibilities from a deeper base of knowledge.

The two-year programme is designed to help participants gradually develop a knowledge base of professional teaching practices, modes of enquiry, core subject-matter, and the skills and attributes of reflective practitioners. Guided through these competencies and through opportunities for critical reflection on practice, participants will also be in a position to seek teacher certification once they return to their own regions.

What's in it for experienced teachers?

For experienced teachers who have been working professionally, there are diverse benefits. The programme provides teachers with a unique and exciting pathway to further their learning in the field of education. In addition to the classroom focus of the MTeach, there is a dimension of leading learning outside the classroom. This reflects and responds to the increasing number of leadership-focused roles, towards which many experienced teachers find themselves moving. Indeed, experienced teachers have the chance to re-engage with issues that will help them improve their knowledge of pupil learning and progress while contributing to the overall development and re-vitalization of religious education and school systems. The MA Education complements the MTeach's focus on evidence-based practice by offering experienced teachers opportunities to engage in a forum for the discussion and study of Islam and Ismaili heritage that draws uniquely upon the disciplines of the humanities and social sciences.

What's in it for non-certified teachers?

For those who are new to the teaching profession, the programme builds on previous undergraduate knowledge and experience gained working with young students as a

volunteer educator in community or religious education settings. Experience as a tutor, counsellor, trainer or mentor supported by a common vision of becoming agents of change in education systems serves as the basis for studies in subject-matter pedagogy, curriculum, assessment and leadership. Non-certified teachers in the programme will discover that working closely with experienced faculty, tutors of the IOE and the IIS, and classmates who bring practical teaching experience can be highly stimulating and supportive. (Note that the STEP does not award professional teaching certificates. Non-certified teachers wishing to pursue future careers as secular teachers must make themselves aware of the prerequisites to obtain qualified teacher status in the jurisdictions where they would like to practice eventually).

What's in it for community stakeholders?

The programme supports and re-vitalises existing religious education systems through capacity-building by focusing on teachers' practice and leadership, and an examination of a wider understanding of their young learners, classrooms, communities and extended learning environments.

At a time when recruitment and retention of excellent teachers are key issues influencing young students' access to religious education, the possibility of award-bearing professional learning is a real incentive for relevant community stakeholders within religious education settings to support the teachers practically and professionally.



Programme

Master of Teaching (MTeach) modules

The MTeach is structured using online tasks as well as face-to-face meetings, using various forms of assessment. Participants will be expected to test their experiences and knowledge against those of their colleagues, in relation to conceptual and theoretical frameworks advanced by background reading.

Important note

At the time of going to press, the Master of Teaching element of the STEP is subject to development arising out of an exciting process of continuous curriculum review. A number of changes are underway to make the programme better fit the contexts of Ismaili RE teachers, the needs of the ITREBs and students' learning needs. It is important for applicants to note, therefore, that the descriptions of the modules that follow are indicative and subject to change.

Understanding Teaching in Ismaili RE Contexts

The STEP faculty are currently developing this new bespoke module for STEP, tentatively titled 'Understanding Teaching in Ismaili Religious Education Context'. Based on the ideas and philosophy of existing MTeach modules, this course will be designed for the particular context in which STEP teachers will be working.

Leading Learning in Ismaili RE Contexts

The STEP faculty are currently developing this new bespoke module for STEP, tentatively titled 'Leading Learning in Ismaili Religious Education Contexts'. Based on the ideas and philosophy of existing MTeach modules, this course will be designed for the particular context in which STEP teachers will be working.



Research and Professional Practice

The Research and Professional Practice module encourages participants to analyse and critique published research and equips participants with the skills needed to carry out their own enquiry work. The focus of the module is an examination of what it means to be 'research literate' and leads into practice-based enquiry. This is the production of a report or dissertation which focuses on teaching and learning in educational settings.

Option Module

If participants choose to write a report, they must complete the MTeach with an option module which can be selected from a wide range offered by the IOE.

Report/Dissertation

The Report is a small-scale research-based enquiry that investigates an area of benefit to the educational settings in which the participants are working and provides them with an opportunity to focus on their own subject area. A longer piece than the Report, the Dissertation allows participants to conduct an enquiry in greater depth. If participants opt to write a dissertation, they do not need to complete an option module.

NB: Information about the programme of study is provided for illustrative purposes and is subject to change.

MA Education (Muslim Societies and Civilisations) modules

Important note

Information about the programme of study is provided for illustrative purposes and is subject to change.

CORE MODULES:

Muslim History and Secondary Education

This module introduces participants to the IIS Secondary Curriculum framework, its overarching rationale and philosophy, and its pedagogical underpinnings. It examines the central characteristic of the IIS Secondary Curriculum, namely, the interweaving of humanistic, civilisational and normative approaches. This characteristic is explored through a broad introduction to the historical aspects of Islamic civilisations, their pluralistic composition, their interactions with diverse societies across time and geography, as well as their achievements in the sciences, arts and culture, including the establishment of institutions of learning and education.

Revelation, Hermeneutics, Pluralism and Practice

This module examines core aspects of religious traditions: revelation, hermeneutics, the inherent pluralism that results and its expression in community practice. The module studies the question of what constitutes 'Islam' for the diverse Muslim traditions that compose the Muslim world. The module will prepare course participants to facilitate this examination through the study of selected facets of the Qur'an and expressions of faith and practice in Muslim communities and through the application of tools of enquiry and analysis that will equip them to develop informed perspectives on these subjects.

OPTION MODULES FOR YEAR I

Literature of Muslim Societies and Civilisations

Students may choose between various option modules, including the following:

The literature of Muslim societies and civilisations has traditionally been categorized by language. Hence one studies Arabic literature, Persian literature, etc. However, this module begins with the recognition of a shared literary culture among the various linguistic contexts within Muslim societies and civilisations. This shared culture is



evidenced by similarity of genres, topoi, and intertextual references within diverse linguistic contexts. This module examines such shared *genres as devotional literature*, mystical poetry, individual prayers, epics, courtly literature, belles-lettres, prose, biography, autobiography, and social critique. The module will also explore, where appropriate, elements of literary culture which are unique to linguistic contexts. Through this examination, participants will develop an appreciation for the role that literary culture has played in forming cultural memory.

Modernity and Muslim Societies

This module continues the examination of Muslim societies and civilisations from the perspective of the humanities, in particular the historical narrative into the present, which began in the core module Religious Education and the Humanities in Secondary Education. Participants will examine the Safavid, Ottoman, and Mogul dynasties of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and continue on to selected aspects of the contemporary Muslim present. A key aspect of this module is an exploration of the notions of “modern”, “modernity” and “modernism”. Through discussions of various episodes, personalities, and movements from the late eighteenth century to the present, the module will survey a period of rapid political, economic, social, and intellectual change that continues to this day. In so doing, the module aims to provide participants with contemporary subject matter that will be relevant to their classroom teaching.

OPTION MODULES FOR YEAR 2

Cultural Encounters, Material Culture and Narratives

Cultural education is an essential aspect of the secondary curricula of contemporary pluralistic societies. This module seeks to engage participants in the examination of how cultural products are socially constituted during “cultural encounters”, and then to examine selected case studies of such encounters during critical periods of Muslim history (including the contemporary period) in diverse Muslim societies.



Traditions of Enquiry

All major world civilisations engage in the pursuit of knowledge - so as to understand the world around them - and to utilize this knowledge for practical purposes, whether to improve the world, or to attain personal fulfillment. This module examines Islamic civilisations' rich heritage of philosophical enquiry, the sociological and philosophical foundations of law, and the pursuit of the natural sciences and humanities. The module adopts an analytical stance towards this heritage and requires an evaluation of the contemporary relevance of these inherited intellectual traditions; the module explores the praxis of the ethics of faith with particular attention to issues of inequity and social injustice in society, as indeed among the nations of the world, with the aim of utilizing these issues to engage and develop moral reasoning in adolescent learners.

Report

The Report, based on empirical study, will provide evidence of participants' research of specific topics of interest, under the guidance and supervision of IOE and IIS teaching staff.

Professional Studies

The Professional Studies module gives teachers an opportunity to enquire into their teaching practice in order to develop their teaching and reflection skills within the classroom. During the module, students undertake a programme of professional studies and supervision; teach in Ismaili Muslim Religious Education Classrooms in the United Kingdom or Europe. During the course of their experience, students are asked to compile a portfolio of evidence for assessment which shows how they are working within a range of professional relationships with pupils, colleagues, parents and possibly the wider community. The final portfolio will include clear evidence of professional progression, integrated with a critical commentary underpinned by a demonstrated engagement with appropriate literature.



IIS Library

In its relatively short history, the IIS Library has grown into a leading centre and repository for rare and significant resources illustrative of the pluralism of Ismaili thought and tradition. The IIS Library's collection comprises nearly 30,000 items. Its general collection of printed materials consists of reference works, books, periodicals, journal articles and theses on various aspects of Islamic history, theology, philosophy, law and literature, with a focus on Shi'i works and esoteric traditions.

Besides this core collection in Islamic studies, the Library has a specialised holding of Ismaili printed materials comprising nearly 1,000 volumes of texts and monographs, over 700 articles and off-prints, as well as a small collection of Ismaili journals.

The manuscript collection of the Institute's Library consists of nearly 1,500 volumes. Besides a small nucleus of manuscripts that contain the text of the Holy Qur'an, the scope of the collection encompasses a variety of subjects including jurisprudence, theology, philosophy, logic, grammar, medicine, astronomy and alchemy, as well as poetical and biographical works.

IOE Library

The Newsam Library houses the largest collection of materials on education in the United Kingdom. The Reference collection provides reference works, indexes to journal articles, legal guidance, statistics of education in the UK and recent official government publications. The library subscribes to a wide range of journals on education published both in the UK and many other countries. An increasing number are available in electronic format.

The Other Subjects collection contains material on education-related topics such as philosophy, psychology, sociology and linguistics. The Archives house historical papers from organisations and individuals involved in education. Most Special Collections are discrete historical collections bequeathed to the Library. The library also holds theses and dissertations by IOE students.

IT Facilities and Support

The IOE provides facilities for students including Mac and PC-based general computing facilities, including standard software and email applications, networked file storage and Internet access. In addition, STEP participants will have access to computing facilities within the IIS.

Student Services

STEP participants are registered as students of the Institute of Education, University of London and may therefore access all of the student resources of the Institute of Education and the University of London.

These include:

- Student welfare
- International student support
- Disabilities support
- Counselling service

The Institute of Ismaili Studies also offers student support services to complement those available through the IOE.

Entry Requirements and Application Procedure

Details of entry requirements can be found on the IIS website and in the Notes of Guidance section of the application pack. Potential applicants can obtain an application pack from their national STEP Team or by emailing step@iis.ac.uk



CONTACT US

For further information or an application pack please contact:

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