



Job Description

Teacher of Modern Studies

George Watson's College wishes to appoint a full time, permanent teacher of Modern Studies to start in August 2026. The vacancy represents an opportunity for an outstanding practitioner to make a high-profile contribution to the success of one of Scotland's leading schools. The post would be suitable for a probationary teacher.

THE SCHOOL

George Watson's College is one of the country's best co-educational independent day schools. Despite its size, everyone remarks that it has a small school 'feel': the close-knit and friendly relationships amongst all its constituents are a hallmark of the School. Its motto – *ex corde caritas* (Love from the Heart) – is central to its values as it seeks to sustain what is described as 'The Watson's Family'.

This tangible sense of togetherness is significantly enhanced by everyone being on one purpose-built site, which is located in the attractive residential district of Morningside, to the South West of the centre of Edinburgh. Edinburgh itself is the second strongest city economy in the UK, outside of London, with the highest percentage of graduates and professionally qualified adults in the UK and over 25% of school age children attending fee-paying schools. Watson's is proud of its independent status and, whilst remaining true to its Scottish roots, seeks to sustain and develop an international perspective. The curriculum is adapting to the innovations inherent in Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence and the Scottish National Qualifications.

The School welcomes a wide range of academic ability, and has very high academic standards, with 90% of pupils going on to Higher Education and a large proportion of pupils achieving outstanding success. Watson's also has excellent facilities and offers a huge range of courses as well as extra-curricular activities. In addition, it has particular strengths in Sport, Music, Drama, Outdoor Education, Technology and in Support for Learning. The School is very well resourced with a campus-wide IT network.

The Principal, Lisa Kerr, took up post in 2024. Leadership of the Senior School is delegated to Louise Clarke, Head of the Senior School, and the Senior School Leadership Team.

The Senior School

The leadership of the Senior School is delegated by the Principal to the Head of Senior School who works closely with a team of Deputy and Assistant Headteachers and Principal Teachers. The leadership model enables Principal Teachers to shape the character of their department within an overall ambition for the

Senior School and George Watson's College as a whole. Principal Teachers are encouraged to play a role in the development and implementation of practice in all aspects of the Senior School, especially in improving curriculum design, pupil support and learning and teaching.

Our work with pupils and amongst ourselves is characterised by good relationships which, in turn, creates the context for better learning. We aim to be an inclusive school and to find ways to recognise and celebrate our diversity. We have achieved Gold Status as a Rights Respecting School and we have been awarded Gold Level by LGBT+ Youth Scotland.

Approximately two-thirds of pupils in the Senior School have progressed there from the Junior School. On arrival, they have a carefully worked out induction programme which includes a residential experience together in the first term.

In First and Second Year, a diverse and stimulating timetable balances challenging academic progression with a variety of learning experiences, including in two foreign languages. Pupils study many of their subjects in their form classes but are set in English and Mathematics. This enables them to progress at a pace that provides the appropriate level of challenge and provides them with an opportunity to mix with the rest of their year group.

From Second Year, pupils discuss their personal targets and study options with teachers, through to their key certificate examinations, and we ensure that they choose subjects and levels that match their abilities and aspirations.

At Watson's we are proud of the exceptionally broad range of certificate courses we offer. Available at various levels of certification within the national qualifications framework, our extensive provision includes subjects across the spectrum of arts, sciences and social sciences, with a notably wide selection of languages, including Mandarin Chinese.

It is important that we prepare pupils for the increased independence they will require after school. A programme of study skills encourages independent thought and enquiry. Throughout their time at Watson's, pupils make confident use of our outstanding IT facilities and our Library.

The Department

The department is exceptionally well-resourced, with Promethean interactive screens in all classrooms. We frequently utilise IT in the classroom, with pupils bringing their own secure devices. To this end, all of our resources are accessed by the pupils via Microsoft SharePoint and Teams.

Modern Studies is taught to all pupils in S1 and S2, then through S3-S6 as a course option. In S1, all pupils learn about Political Representation and participate in a whole year group Mock Election, in addition to learning about Inequality in Society and, in S2, they learn about Terrorism and The Media. The S1/S2 Curriculum has a strong focus on literacy, with the intention of developing these skills across the four main Social Science subjects and in tandem with English. SQA courses are followed at National

5, Higher and Advanced Higher level. In S4, we study the USA as our World Power and, at Higher level, we study China. Our Advanced Higher classes study Law and Order. In addition the department also runs Higher Politics for S6 pupils.

To support the delivery of the curriculum, there are a wide variety of activities that take place throughout the year and the department is keen to ensure that our learners explore the subject beyond the classroom and the formal curriculum. We host an impressive calendar of speakers and academic events, with pupils given numerous opportunities to explore the subject through competitions and visits to external organisations. These include trips to the Scottish Parliament, relevant debates, academic conferences, prisons and our own AH Conference, which we have run for several years. The department also runs a successful trip to China. The school has an excellent PPE society, works closely with a partner Food Bank and participates in the annual Mock Court Programme: members of the department are involved in all of these activities and our pupils are encouraged to get involved in them too. We recognise the importance and benefits of cross-curricular links and want to ensure that learning is not compartmentalised.

The department secures robust pupil numbers and achieves excellent results each year, with. The department is committed to making the teaching and learning of Modern Studies as challenging, rewarding and interesting as possible, across all levels.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The person appointed will:

- be a trained and qualified graduate teacher of Modern Studies, registered or eligible for registration with the General Teaching Council of Scotland;
- be an academically rigorous, dynamic creative and flexible teacher in developing new ideas and resources, as well as adapting to curriculum changes;
- be a team player with a drive for learning and teaching, who is keen to explore innovative and stimulating ways to use their passion and expertise to positively encourage the next generation;
- strengthen the existing strong team ethos in the department.

JOB SPECIFICATION

Line Management

A Teacher of Modern Studies is accountable directly to the Principal Teacher of Modern Studies and Politics.

General Responsibilities

A full time Teacher of Modern Studies is currently expected to teach up to 45 out of 60 periods of teaching over a ten day timetable cycle.

The person appointed will be responsible for teaching classes in the School using their skill, experience and best endeavours.

All members of the Senior School staff contribute to the health and well-being of our pupils. Under the direction of a Year Head, most teachers undertake the first level guidance role of Form Tutor for a mixed Form class of around 20 pupils.

A contribution to the wider life of the School - known as enrichment - is an expectation of all staff.

They will abide by the Code of Conduct for Staff at George Watson's College.

Specific Responsibilities

The person appointed will:

- maintain the Standard for Full GTCS registration. They will be required to undertake relevant CPD, be observed and write up all activities in the GTCS Profile
- work effectively as a member of the department to facilitate outstanding teaching and learning and ensure pupils are properly prepared for examinations
- set high expectations for all pupils, to deepen their knowledge and understanding to maximize achievement
- prepare and provide activities that are appropriate to each year group and suitable for learners' needs
- be confident of their ability to work and respond to the needs of pupils and inspire the next generation of adults
- develop new resources and course materials, as directed by and/or in collaboration with the other staff in the department
- assess, record and report on work of pupils as required by the School, ensuring that assessments are punctual, meaningful and informative
- contribute to the extra-curricular life of the School
- attend parent evenings and communicate with parents whenever necessary and contribute effectively and positively to the corporate life and welfare of the School
- act as a Form Tutor and/or S6 Tutor as required, carrying out the administrative, pastoral and advisory responsibilities of these roles.

Additional Responsibilities

The Teacher of Modern Studies should also be willing to undertake such other responsibilities as the Head of Senior School and Head of Department may from time to time reasonably require.

REMUNERATION

Teaching staff at George Watson's College are paid a competitive salary. The salary is pensionable under the Scottish Teachers' Superannuation Scheme.

DISCLOSURE SCOTLAND - PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS SCHEME

All staff must be prepared to undergo screening to confirm their suitability to work with children and young people.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT / PROFESSIONAL REVIEW

All staff are required to participate in appropriate programmes of continuing professional development and undergo professional review as set out in the School's policy.

APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply, please include a letter of application of not more than 800 words giving us more information about you and why you would like the role, addressed to Mrs Louise Clarke, Head of Senior School

Any specific questions relating to the advertised post can be put directly to Mr Colin Miller, Head of Department by emailing c.miller@gwc.org.uk

Candidates called for interview will be asked to teach a lesson as part of the selection process.

If you require more information about the School, please visit our school website.

Closing date: 11:59pm on Wednesday 10 June 2026

Interviews are scheduled for Thursday 18 and/or Friday 19 June 2026