



POSTGRADUATE TEACHER EDUCATION

Scotland

Applying for Primary and Secondary Initial Teacher Education programmes

The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) handles applications for all Undergraduate and Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) Primary and Secondary programmes.

To apply for an ITE programme at a Scottish university you must apply online on their website at [Train to teach in Scotland and Wales | Teacher Training | UCAS](#)

UCAS allow applications to be submitted from **mid-September** in the year preceding the start of your course, but you can begin filling in your application online usually from June.

You are allowed up to a maximum of 5 choices with no restriction to your choices in either university or primary or secondary teaching (or subjects).

Universities are obliged to look at all applications that are received to UCAS by the January deadline with equal consideration.

Thereafter, universities can consider applications at their discretion. Due to the popularity of the majority of ITE programmes it is likely that many will not be able to consider any applications after this date. This is particularly relevant for applications to Primary Teaching and to Secondary subjects such as Physical Education, History and Modern Studies.

However, for several PGDE Secondary subjects, Universities may have places on the course right up to the start in August so they will accept applications after the January deadline. Check with the University you wish to apply to.

Once you have submitted your application to UCAS Undergraduate, Universities will consider your application. If you are successful at the initial UCAS application stage, you will be called for an interview.



Things to think about for your application...

Work experience

In addition to academic qualifications, you should demonstrate a genuine interest in working with and educating children and young people of the age you wish to teach. You will need good experience of working with children and young people, preferably in a school environment as this is one of the key criteria for the Primary PGDE and several the Secondary PGDE courses. Other relevant experience, such as Brownie or Cub leadership, after-school clubs, sports coaching, music tuition, student tutoring, sessional work in community education and youth organisations, mentoring schemes and working as a classroom assistant will also be useful.

Use your personal statement to expand on how this work experience is relevant to teaching and what you have learned from taking part in it.

Relevant Qualifications

It is important to make sure that you mention you have the relevant qualifications needed for the PGDE courses you are applying for i.e. Degree, English and Maths qualifications. It might be the case that you are still working towards some of them at this stage of the application, so please note on your UCAS application whether these are obtained or in progress.

Refer to the university course webpages for acceptable alternatives. Please note that some universities may not be able to consider an application if this information is missed off, especially for the most popular and over-subscribed subjects.

Personal statement

The personal statement is your chance to provide evidence of why you want to teach, what school experience you have (and what you have learned from it) and why you are ideally suited to a career in Teaching. Providers will be interested in the range of skills you would bring, for example, practical experience, managing people, working with or leading a team, and communication skills.

Below is a rough guide on what you should include in your personal statement and is by no means an exhaustive list. For more specific guidance, contact your chosen training provider(s).



1. Why are you applying? Explain why you want to be a teacher and why you think you are suited to the teaching profession. Be specific about why you have chosen your particular primary/secondary subject area.

2. Relevant work experience with children and reflection on this: Provide details of the amount of classroom experience you have had and where this has taken place -schools, dates, amount etc. Talk a little about what you did and where and say what skills and knowledge you have gained from this. Also include any other work experience you have done with children, e.g., Brownies, Scouts, nursery, after school clubs etc.

3. Understanding of the role of a teacher: Explain what you understand about the role of a teacher. You might use examples of your experience to reinforce this section but be careful not to identify anyone by name.

4. Knowledge of the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence: Elaborate on your knowledge of the education system in Scotland and of the Curriculum for Excellence.

5. Transferable skills and outside interests: Give an indication of your work/life balance by including any long-term hobbies or interests you have; e.g. playing a musical instrument, drama, sports, Duke of Edinburgh award or any voluntary work you do. Explain how this might be useful in your teaching.

6. Degree suitability: Briefly explain why the content of your university studies makes you a suitable candidate. For secondary courses, you should clearly indicate the aspects of your degree that meet the specific entry requirements. For primary courses, you should identify the aspects of your degree that cover the range of subject areas relevant to the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence.

Referees

You need to provide one referee, so ask them well in advance for their permission and make sure they understand your choices, motivations, and the application process. Your application can't be processed until the reference has been received, so you may need to follow up on progress.

If you have been in a school, then it is a good idea to ask the Head Teacher or teacher you have been working with as they can comment on what you have been doing and how you have contributed to the work of the class. If not, then you could ask someone who has observed you working with children / young people. Please note that your referee cannot be a family member.



Although a reference from a school will provide a clearer picture of what you have to offer it is not essential and, especially for recent graduates, an academic reference may be the most appropriate.

Tips for completing the application form

Competition for places on popular training programmes is fierce, so take time over your application, particularly the personal statement. Present the information in a clear and easy to read style and check for spelling and grammatical errors. You need to convince the Selector that this is something you have considered carefully that you have a clear idea of what is involved and that you really do want to become a teacher.

For further details on how universities operate their application procedure you should refer to their individual websites. Information for this leaflet was taken from: <https://www.ucas.com/sites/default/files/ucas-utt-scottish-personal-statement-guidance.pdf>

Further useful resources:

Teach in Scotland Website from the Scottish Government which outlines useful information on becoming a teacher in Scotland: [Choose a new career path in teaching | Teach In Scotland](#)

Information from the General Teaching Council of Scotland on becoming a teacher: [Becoming a teacher - The General Teaching Council for Scotland \(gtcs.org.uk\)](http://gtcs.org.uk)

PGDE courses at the University of Strathclyde: [PGDE | University of Strathclyde](#)