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 www.ucas.com, undergraduate study http://www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/undergraduate.

- 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 15 January 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 15 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 of the age you wish to teach. You will need good experience of working with children, preferably in a Scottish school environment. This is one of the key criteria for Primary. 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.

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 from Scottish training providers on what you should include in your Personal Statement. It 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 eg ‘1 hour per week for a full school year (Approximately 40 hours total) undertaken in 2017.’ 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. **Reflection on work with children:** Comment and reflect on what you learned during your school work experience in relation to the skills, attributes and the understanding that you have gained from this experience.

4. **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.

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

6. **Transferrable 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.

7. **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 ask someone who has observed you working with children / young people. This will provide a clearer picture of what you have to offer rather than an Academic reference which might only focus on study skills, attitude to study and grades etc.

**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:  