



Professional Graduate Diploma in Education

PGDE Primary (Full-time)

Frequently Asked Questions

(For entry into academic year 2026/27)

1. How long is the course and how is time divided between campus and placement times?

36 weeks - from the end of August through until the beginning of the following June.
The **2025-26** programme is included below. Please note that this can change each year and will not necessarily match all school holiday dates.

<i>Dates</i>	<i>Programme Weeks</i>
<i>Monday 25th August - Friday 10th October</i>	1 – 7 in UHI (networked learning) Local Induction is Monday 25 th August (On Campus from 9.30 or times to be confirmed)
<i>Monday 13th – Friday 17th October</i>	UHI HOLIDAY
<i>Monday 20th – Friday 25th October</i>	9 in UHI (networked learning)
<i>Monday 27th October – Friday 5th December</i>	10 – 15 Placement in School 1 for 6 weeks [formative]
<i>Monday 8th – Friday 19th December</i>	16 - 17 in UHI (networked learning)
<i>Monday 22nd December – Friday 2nd January 2026</i>	UHI HOLIDAY
<i>Monday 5th March – Friday 16th January</i>	20 – 21 in UHI (networked learning)
<i>Monday 19th January – Friday 6th March</i>	22 – 28 Placement in School 2 for 7 weeks [formative]
<i>Monday 9th – Friday 3rd April</i>	29 – 32 in UHI (networked learning)
<i>Monday 6th – Friday 17th April</i>	UHI HOLIDAY
<i>Monday 20th April – Friday 29th May</i>	35 – 40 Placement in School 3 for 6 weeks [summative]
<i>Monday 1st - Friday 5th June</i>	41 in UHI (networked learning) Programme ends on Friday 5 th June.
<i>Before the end of June</i>	UHI Exam Board and GTCS profiles

2. Can I study by distance learning?

No, you must attend one of the UHI campuses where the programme is offered, with the exception, of the Scottish Borders, where UHI offers this programme in Galashiels in partnership with Scottish Borders Council. Applicants for the Scottish Borders programme should already be settled in the Local Authority area. **(Please note we are not taking applications for the Scottish Borders for year 2026-27).**

The Primary programme is offered at the following UHI campuses: Argyll, Inverness, Moray, North, West and Hebrides, Orkney, Perth, Shetland and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. Not every campus

offers both the English Medium and Gaelic Medium programmes: Moray, North, West and Hebrides, Orkney, Shetland and Scottish Borders offer only English Medium; North, West and Hebrides (Stornoway) and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig offer Gaelic Medium (See also Question 6).

3. Do I need to attend 5 days a week when not on placement?

We use a networked approach to learning; lectures are delivered through MS Teams and are not face-to-face. In the weeks designated as being in UHI, you are expected to attend all scheduled sessions, and to take part in group and individual activities from an agreed UHI Centre. Currently, this involves timetabled collaborative engagement all day on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays. There is flexibility for you to choose where and when you work to complete the online individual learning activities on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, but you will need to be available to take part in an online seminar discussion at a pre-arranged time on one of these days. Gaelic Medium students will also have Gaelic language input during these days.

4. Are there any other attendance requirements?

Yes. You must have a minimum of 80% attendance and registers are kept of all scheduled sessions.

In the placement module of the programme, you must attend for 90 days, to meet the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) requirements for working towards the 2021 Standard for Provisional Registration as a teacher. Placements will be five full days per week in school.

We have one two-night Residential event for students on the PGDE Primary programmes in Week 1 (Induction). All students on the programmes come together in one location. This is an integral part of the core programme and provides a valuable opportunity for the whole UHI cohort to work collaboratively together, face-to-face. The residential aspect is especially useful for building the programme learning community, and students are required to commit to this when accepting their place on the course.

5. Can I apply to several UHI campuses in the same intake?

Yes, you can apply to several UHI campuses. These will count as separate choices on UCAS, however your application to the University of the Highlands and Islands is for the programme and will be considered once. If invited for an interview, you will only be invited to attend once, through one of the campuses to which you have chosen to apply. If successful, you will be offered a place at any one of the UHI campuses listed in your application, at the University's discretion, according to the availability of places across UHI. We therefore recommend that you consider all of your choices carefully before applying.

6. Can I apply to teach through the medium of Gaelic?

Yes, the Primary Gaelic Medium programme is offered in Argyll (Oban), Inverness, North, West and Hebrides (Fort William and Stornoway), Perth and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. You should apply to the PGDE Primary Teaching (Gaelic Medium) using UCAS course code X103.

You need to be fluent in spoken and written Scottish Gaelic at the start of the programme. As part of the programme, you will develop your Gaelic language skills in an educational context. We encourage applicants to write their personal statement in Gaelic. Your school placements will normally be with Gaelic Medium classes, subject to Local Authority availability. You will be placed in classes that will allow you to experience teaching at the different stages of immersion and Curriculum for Excellence. Each week in addition to Gaelic language sessions you will also have a Gaelic seminar which follows the week's theme. All assignments are to be completed in Gaelic.

Additional information for Gaelic-speaking applicants can be found at [PGDE Primary \(Gaelic Medium\) \(uhi.ac.uk\)](https://www.uhi.ac.uk/pgde/primary/gaelic-medium/)

7. Can I apply for both the Full-time and Part-time PGDE programmes?

If you apply to both the full-time and part-time programmes you will be invited to one interview. If successful you will be offered a place on both programmes and you will need to decide which offer to accept.

The part-time programme is not available in Gaelic Medium.

8. I am a secondary teacher. Can I use your course to convert into primary teaching?

No. This is due to the structure of the programme which is designed for applicants new to teaching. We would advise any teachers interested in converting to a different sector to discuss their request with their employing authority in the first instance.

9. How are students selected for places?

Applicants are selected on the basis of the current entry requirements and an **interview**. At interview, you will be expected to demonstrate your openness to learning the skills, dispositions and attributes desirable in a teacher. This includes an ability to reflect on your own skills and the experience you bring to becoming a teacher. The General Teaching Council for Scotland has published The Standard for Provisional Registration [The Standard for Provisional Registration \(gtcs.org.uk\)](https://www.gtcs.org.uk/the-standard-for-provisional-registration/). This includes information on Being a teacher in Scotland, Professional Knowledge and Understanding and Professional Skills and Abilities.

10. Which qualifications do I need?

You must have SCQF level 6 English and Mathematics at SCQF level 5. For a full list of equivalencies please see [666b09a14f8704155a288501 GTCS Memorandum on Entry Requirements to Programmes of ITE in Scotland 2024.pdf \(website-files.com\)](https://www.gtcs.org.uk/media/666b09a14f8704155a288501/GTCS_Memorandum_on_Entry_Requirements_to_Programmes_of_ITE_in_Scotland_2024.pdf) Appendix A

You must also hold an undergraduate degree (preferably with Honours)

The details of your qualifications (including pending qualifications) must be clearly stated on your application form under the Qualifications section. You will be required to provide a copy of your certificates, including full academic transcript of your degree to evidence that your degree covered the main Scottish curriculum topics of the subject that you are applying to teach.

If you are completing these qualifications in the year you apply, it is your responsibility to ensure that you have achieved the required qualification(s) and provided evidence of this to PGDE admissions team 10 working days prior the start of the PGDE programme.

11. Do I need an Honours degree?

An Honours degree at 2:2 or above is preferred, as the teaching on the programme sits across Honours level and Masters' level. We will consider applicants not yet holding Honours who are able to evidence sufficient academic capacity to undertake PGDE study as follows:

- Applicants with a pending Honours degree will need to successfully complete their Honours year at 2:2 or above
- Applicants holding an existing Ordinary degree, who are no longer engaged in study, will need to provide a transcript evidencing an average of at least 60% (UHI Grade B equivalent) in all final year modules studied

- Applicants with a pending Ordinary degree will need to have achieved an average of at least 60% (UHI B Grade equivalent) across all SCQF Level 9 (or equivalent) modules being studied
- Any offer subsequently made would be subject to the relevant condition

12. I have a professional qualification at a degree level. Is this acceptable instead of a degree?

No. Applicants must have an undergraduate degree validated by a higher education institution.

13. What if I have non-UK qualifications?

If you hold non-UK qualifications, you must email us scanned copies of your original English, Mathematics and degree certificates (including a full academic transcript of your degree), along with their certified translation into English (if appropriate), as soon as you have submitted your application on UCAS. We will carry out an equivalency check to find out whether your qualifications are sufficient to meet the entry requirements. Please note that the equivalency check will only be carried out after a programme application has been submitted. If you would like to find out how your qualifications compare against the UK ones prior to making an application, you may wish to contact [UK ENIC \(Ecctis\)](#), the designated national agency for the recognition and comparison of international qualifications. (Please note that this service may incur a fee.)

It is possible to study for the required English and Mathematics qualifications at UHI partner campuses and/or other institutions. Please enquire with the PGDE Admissions team.

14. When will I be asked for evidence of my qualifications?

You will be asked to provide scanned copies of your qualifications as part of the application process. We will ask for your English, Mathematics and degree certificates, and the full academic transcript of your degree which contains details of the module titles, levels, and credits.

If you were not issued with an academic transcript on graduation, you will need to request this from your university. Please note that, depending on the university, this may take a few weeks and, therefore, we advise that you enquire about a transcript well in advance.

15. Can I choose where I do my school placements?

No. Our programme is delivered through collaboration with each partner Local Authority in which the UHI campuses are based. School placements are allocated within 90 minutes' commute of your term-time address within the local authority partnered with the UHI campus at which you are enrolled. If your term-time address is outwith the local authority, for placement allocation you will be considered as living within the local authority and your commuting time to placement will be 90 minutes from within the authority.

You will gain experience in three schools, during three blocks of placement totalling 18 weeks. Occasionally, some mainland placements are allocated within a neighbouring authority area, still within a 90 minutes' commute, and in a local authority area that is in partnership with UHI. The UHI local authority partners are: Argyll and Bute, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Highland, Moray, Orkney Islands, Perth and Kinross, and Shetland Islands Councils.

Scottish Borders applicants will be allocated placements in the Scottish Borders local authority.

(Please note we are not taking applications for the Scottish Borders for year 2026-27).

Please note that we do not reimburse travel expenses for school placements within a 90-minute commute of your term-time address.

16. Can I do a placement in the same school as my children attend?

No. This represents a conflict of interest as you are on placement as a teaching professional.

17. Will I be able to stay in my home Local Authority area for my Induction year?

This is not a decision that UHI can influence.

All students enter the GTCS Teacher Induction Scheme in the same way as other PGDE graduates across Scotland or can opt to follow the Flexible Route to induction.

More information about these two processes is available from the GTCS website:

[Teacher Induction Scheme - The General Teaching Council for Scotland \(gtcs.org.uk\)](https://www.gtcs.org.uk/induction)

Please note that applicants who have been assessed by the University as having the international fee status (please see Section 21) will not be eligible to enter the GTCS Teacher Induction Scheme.

18. Do I need Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme registration?

All successful applicants are required to undergo a PVG check through Disclosure Scotland. Students must hold a successful PVG clearance before they can enrol and start their PGDE course. You will be supported through the PVG process.

Applicants who have lived outside the UK for a period of six or more consecutive months in the past five years will be required to provide a criminal record check from all the relevant country(s). This requirement is in addition to the PVG Scheme application.

Please note that all costs associated with obtaining PVG clearance and any criminal records checks must be met by the applicants.

19. What experience of work with children and young people should I have?

We recommend that all applicants to the programme have some experience with working with children in the 5 – 12 year age range. You should be prepared to talk about these experiences at interview.

20. What if I have a particular support need or underlying health condition?

All UHI PGDE students can access the full range of Student Support Services once they have enrolled. If a Personal Learning Support Plan is generated for you, the Programme Leader will work with the relevant members of the programme team to take forward what is recommended. You will be allocated a Personal Academic Tutor who is your first point of contact for anything which is having an impact on your ability to engage in programme study as expected.

In considering your application to study with us, you should carefully note that the partnership approach embedded in PGDE as both University and school-based (See Questions 8 – 11 and 17) means that we cannot negotiate or guarantee in advance what adjustments will be possible before you are an enrolled student with the University.

21. What about funding?

When considering your application, we will assess your fee status, i.e. the level of tuition fees you will be required to pay if successful in gaining a place on the course. This will be based on the information provided in your application. In some cases, we will ask you to provide additional information and complete a fee assessment form. Your fee status will be indicated in your official offer letter.

Financial support (e.g. tuition fees, loan) for eligible applicants is available via the Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS). Please be aware that if you have been living outside the relevant area in the three years prior to 1 August 2024 your eligibility for funding may be affected. For full eligibility criteria please visit: <https://www.saas.gov.uk/full-time/funding-information-undergraduate>.

Applicants ordinarily resident in the rest of the UK, and applicants assessed as international-fee payers, must ensure that they have funding in place prior to accepting a place on the programme.

All applicants are strongly advised to check the fee status in their offer letter and apply to the relevant funding authority as soon as applications open. Please note that applicants can apply to SAAS irrespective of whether they have been offered a place on the programme.

For further information on tuition fees and funding please go to the [UHI website](#).

Gaelic Students

Gaelic students are encouraged to apply for the Gaelic Education Grant from Bòrd na Gàidhlig. More information here: <https://www.gaidhlig.scot/en/funding/funding-schemes/gaelic-education-grants/>

The Teaching Bursary Scheme now includes Gaelic (medium and subjects) and is open to individuals wishing to undertake a one-year PGDE ITE course in Scotland that leads to the award of registered teacher status in Scotland's hardest-to-fill teaching subjects. More information here: <https://www.teachingbursaryinscotland.co.uk/>

22. How do I apply?

Applications must be made through [UCAS Undergraduate](#).

To apply, please use UHI institution code H49 and the course code for the programme:

- X100 for Primary (English Medium)
- X103 for Primary (Gaelic Medium)

If you are applying to the Gaelic medium pathway, we encourage you to write your personal statement in Gaelic.

The programme will close for all applications by 31st May 2026. The programme does not open in Clearing. Any application deadlines include submission of references. It is your responsibility to ensure that referees are aware of the deadlines and that your application is submitted fully prior to the priority deadline of 14th January 2026.

Please check the UCAS website or contact PGDE Admissions Team for current information.

Questions about applying or an existing application?

Please email the PGDE Admissions Team: pgdeadmissions@uhi.ac.uk