

Secondary Teaching (English and Gaelic Medium) PGDE

Frequently Asked Questions

(For entry into academic year 2019/20)

1. How long is the course and how do these split into college and placement times?

37 weeks - from the end of August through until the beginning of the following June.

The 2018–19 programme is below. Please note that this changes slightly each year and will not necessarily match all school holiday dates.

Weeks 1 – 5	College (Inverness residential during week 1)
Weeks 6 – 7	School 1 Placement
Week 8	College
Week 9	UHI Holiday
Week 10	College
Weeks 11 – 16	School 1 Placement
Weeks 17 – 18	College
Weeks 19 – 20	UHI Christmas Holiday
Weeks 21 – 24	College
Weeks 25 – 29	School 2 Placement
Weeks 30 – 32	College
Weeks 33 – 34	UHI Easter Holiday
Week 35	College
Weeks 36– 41	School 3 Placement
Week 42	College

2. Can I do it by distance learning?

No, you must attend one of the UHI colleges 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.

The secondary programme is offered in Argyll College (Oban), Inverness College, Lews Castle College, Moray College, Orkney College and Shetland College. The programme is sometimes available in Lochgilphead (Argyll College) and Benbecula (Lews Castle College). This decision is made annually and is dependent on the number of applicants in those areas.

3. When I'm in college do I need to attend 5 days a week?

In the weeks you are in college, you are expected to attend all presentations and take part in group and individual activities. Currently, cross-programme presentations and group sessions run in college on Mondays and Thursdays. There is a video-conference (VC) session on Fridays and subject-specific VC sessions throughout the week that you can attend either in college or from your chosen location. Online individual learning

activities are included on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, along with an online webinar discussion at a pre-arranged time on one of these days.

You are strongly advised to spend time improving your practical and subject-specific knowledge prior to each placement.

4. Are there any other attendance requirements?

Yes. You must have 80% attendance in the college weeks preceding each placement, and registers are kept of all classes in college. In the placement module of the programme you must attend for 90 of the 95 days in order to meet the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) requirements for the Standard for Provisional Registration as a teacher. Placements will be five full days per week in school.

There is a three-day residential induction event in Inverness for students on the PGDE Secondary Teaching during week 1 of the programme. This is an integral part of the core programme and provides valuable opportunities for the PGDE Secondary 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 on accepting their place on the course.

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

No, you should only apply to the college at which you wish to study.

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

Yes, the Gaelic-medium programme is offered in Argyll College (Oban), Inverness College and Lews Castle College. You should apply to the PGDE Secondary Teaching (Gaelic Medium) using UCAS course code X130. Indicate in your supporting statement the secondary subject that you wish to teach.

You have 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.

Wherever possible, you will be placed in a school where you will have the opportunity to teach your subject through the medium of Gaelic. This will be dependent on availability within the Local Authority.

Additional information for Gaelic-speaking applicants can be found at <https://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/courses/pgde-secondary-teaching-gaelic-medium/>.

7. I am a primary teacher, can I use your course to convert into secondary teaching?

No. The UHI PGDE programmes are not open to applications from qualified teachers wishing to convert from primary to secondary or secondary to primary teaching. 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.

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

No. Our programme is delivered through collaboration with each partner Local Authority in which the colleges are based. School placements are allocated within 90 minutes' commute of your term-time address via a national GTCS system within the local authority

partnered with the UHI college at which you are enrolled. A term-time address in the local authority area is therefore essential.

You will gain experience in at least two schools, during four blocks of placement totalling 19 weeks. Occasionally, placements are allocated within a neighbouring authority area, still within a 90 minutes' commute, usually only in a few of the mainland colleges, where local placement places are also needed by student teachers from other universities. However, this will only occur when that local authority 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.

Please note that we do not reimburse travel expenses for school placements.

9. 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.

10. Will I be able to stay in the Local Authority area for my probationary year?

The majority of our graduates are offered a probationary year in the local authority area they complete the programme in. Our partner authorities make the decision about their requirement for probationers in each subject area during the PGDE programme year. The Programme Leader shares this information with students as it becomes available.

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: <http://www.in2teaching.org.uk/teacher-induction-scheme/what-is-the-teacher-induction-scheme.aspx>.

11. How are students selected for places?

Applicants are selected on the basis of the current entry requirements and an interview.

Please note that in some circumstances where the relevant local authority has limited school placements available in your subject, we may offer you a place at another UHI college where placements are available.

12. Which qualifications do I need?

You are required to hold passes at grade C or above in **both** Higher English (SCQF Level 6) and National 5 Mathematics (SCQF Level 5), or an accepted equivalent (please see below), **and** an undergraduate degree (preferably with honours) which meets the subject-specific requirements detailed below.

The details of your 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 will have achieved the required qualification(s) and provided evidence of this to PGDE admissions team 10 working days prior the August start of the PGDE programme.

❖ *Accepted UK and Republic of Ireland equivalents for English and Mathematics*

English

- Higher English (C or above)
- National Units Communication (Higher level) **and** Literature 1 (Higher level)
- A level English (D or above), or GCSE English Language (C or above) **and** GCSE English Literature (C or above), or O Level English Language (C or above) **and** O Level English Literature (C or above)
- Irish Leaving Certificate, English, Higher Level, Grade B3 (H3 from 2017)
- Pass in Online Access Course in English (SCQF Level 6), University of Aberdeen

Mathematics

- National 5 Mathematics (C or above)
- National 5 Lifeskills Mathematics or National 5 Applications of Mathematics (C or above)
- Intermediate level 2 Mathematics (C or above)
- Standard Grade Mathematics (Grade 1 or 2)
- O Grade Mathematics (B or above), or O Grade Mathematics (C or above) **and** O Grade Arithmetic (B or above)
- GCSE Mathematics (C or above), or O Level Mathematics (C or above)
- Irish Leaving Certificate, Mathematics, Ordinary Level, Grade C/C3 (O4 from 2017)
- Pass in Online Access Course in Mathematics (SCQF Level 5 or 6), University of Aberdeen

❖ *Subject-specific requirements for the subjects being offered by UHI*

Business Education (*course code: X3BS*)

Applicants must have a degree that contains 80 SCQF credit points relevant to the business education curriculum in Scottish schools. 40 of the credit points must have been studied at SCQF level 8 or above.

UHI has a responsibility to make sure that candidates have an appropriate knowledge of information technology and will look for advanced skills from within a degree, HN units or ECDL. This should contain knowledge of spreadsheets, databases, presentation and word processing platforms/applications.

Chemistry with Science (*course code: X3CS*)

Applicants must have a degree that contains 80 SCQF credit points relevant to the chemistry curriculum in Scottish schools. 40 of the credit points must have been studied at SCQF level 8 or above.

Computing Studies (*course code: X3CO*)

Applicants must have a degree with at least 80 SCQF credit points which has 40 SCQF credit points at SCQF Level 8 or above from at least two of: computer systems, software development, databases or information systems.

The other 40 credits are required in any computing area relevant to the computing curriculum in Scottish schools.

English (*course code: X3EG*)

Applicants must have a degree with at least 80 SCQF credit points in English, of which at least 40 SCQF credit points must be in English literature or Scottish literature. 40 of these credits must have been studied at SCQF Level 8 or above.

Gaelic (*course code: TBC*)

Applicants must have a degree that contains 80 SCQF credit points in Gaelic or in Celtic (but they must have specialised in Scottish Gaelic). 40 of these credits must have been studied at SCQF Level 8 or above.

Applicants have to prove to the university that they are fluent in spoken Gaelic.

Home Economics (*course code: X3HO*)

Applicants must have a degree with 80 SCQF subject-relevant credit points including 40 SCQF credit points at SCQF Level 8 or above from at least two of: consumer studies, food studies, food or textile technology, nutrition.

The other 40 credits are needed in any home-economics area relevant to the home-economics curriculum in Scottish schools: family studies, food sciences, health, hospitality, textile studies.

Mathematics (*course code: X3MA*)

Applicants must have a degree that contains 80 SCQF credit points relevant to the mathematics curriculum in Scottish schools. 40 of the credit points must have been studied at SCQF level 8 or above.

Physics with Science (*course code: X3PS*)

Applicants must have a degree that contains 80 SCQF credit points relevant to the physics curriculum in Scottish schools. 40 of the credit points must have been studied at SCQF level 8 or above.

Technological Education (*course code: X3TC*)

Applicants must have a degree that contains 80 SCQF credit points relevant to the technological-education curriculum in Scottish schools. 40 of the credit points must have been studied at SCQF level 8 or above.

A minimum of 20 credits should come from list A and a minimum of 40 credits should come from list B:

- List A: technological subjects, such as mechanical, electrical or electronic engineering/sciences, mechatronics, architecture, construction technology, building services
- List B: design and graphics-related subjects, such as computer-aided design, graphic design, computer-aided design manufacture, industrial design, product design

13. Can I study for qualification in more than one subject?

Yes, the following subjects are available for dual qualification – Chemistry with Physics, Computing with Business Education or Mathematics, Physics with Mathematics, Gaelic with any subject.

If you would like to be considered for one of these combinations then apply for, what you consider to be, your main subject and include in your personal statement that you are interested in teaching the second subject also.

14. 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.

15. What if I have non-UK qualifications?

If you hold non-UK qualifications, you must email us scanned copies of your original English and Mathematics certificates and a full academic transcript of your degree(s), 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 course 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 NARIC](#), 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 colleges and/or other institutions. Please enquire with the PGDE admissions team.

16. Do I need to bring evidence of my qualifications to the interview?

Yes, you must bring the originals of your degree certificate and certificates for English and Mathematics. If any of these are still pending at the time, you must provide us with a scanned copy of the certificates as soon as you have received them, and 10 working days prior to the start of the course.

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

We would recommend that all applicants to the programme organise work experience in a secondary school, to gain an understanding of how their skills can be transferred to the secondary classroom.

18. Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme registration

All successful applicants are required to undergo a PVG check through Disclosure Scotland. Successful applicants will be contacted in the course of May-June with further information. Enrolment onto the programme is subject to successful PVG clearance.

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(-ies). 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 about funding?

When considering your application, we will make an assessment of your fee status, i.e. the level of tuition fees you will be required to pay if successful in gaining a place in 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 ordinarily resident in Scotland or EU is normally available via the Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS). For full eligibility criteria please visit:

http://www.saas.gov.uk/forms_and_guides/index.htm.

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.

Please be aware that if you have been living outside of the EEA area in the three years prior to 1 August 2019 your eligibility for funding may be affected. For further information please check [SAAS residency criteria](#). All applicants are therefore strongly advised to check their fee status and apply for funding to SAAS as soon as applications open (usually in April). Applicants can apply to SAAS irrespective of whether they have been offered a place on the programme.

£20,000 bursary may also be available for some STEM subjects. For up-to-date information on subjects and eligibility criteria please go to STEM Bursary Scotland website: <https://stembursaryscotland.co.uk/>.

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

20. 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 relevant subject.

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 15th January 2019. Depending on recruitment numbers, applications for some subjects may remain open after this date. Please check UCAS website or contact PGDE Admissions Team for current information.

Questions about applying or an existing application?

Contact PGDE Admissions Team:

Email: pgdeadmissions@uhi.ac.uk

Tel: 01463 273480