

## Primary 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 because of changes to school holiday dates.

Weeks 1 – 5	College
Weeks 6 – 7	First placement (SCHOOL 1)
Week 8	College
Week 9	UHI October Holiday
Week 10	College
Weeks 11 – 16	Second placement
Weeks 17 – 18	College
Weeks 19 – 20	UHI Christmas Holiday
Weeks 21 – 24	College
Weeks 25 – 29	Third placement (SCHOOL 2)
Weeks 30 – 32	College
Weeks 33 – 34	UHI Easter Holiday
Week 35	College
Weeks 36 – 41	Fourth Placement (SCHOOL 3)
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.

The primary programme is offered in Argyll College (Oban), Inverness College, Lews Castle College, Moray College, North Highland College (Thurso), Orkney College, Perth 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?

We use a blended approach to learning. In the weeks you are in college, you are expected to attend all presentations, and to take part in group and individual activities. Currently, this means being in college all day Monday, Thursday morning and all day Friday. You can choose where you work to complete the individual learning activities on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, but will need to be available to take part in an online webinar discussion

at a pre-arranged time on one of these days. The timetable for Thursday afternoons varies from week to week in each college block.

**4. Are there any other attendance requirements?**

Yes. You must have 80% attendance 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 are two residential events for students on PGDE Primary Teaching, one in week 1 of the programme and one just before Easter. All students on the programme will come together in one location. These are an integral part of the core programme and provide valuable opportunities 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 these on accepting their place on the course.

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

Yes, you can apply to several UHI colleges. These will count as separate choices on UCAS, however your application to the UHI will be considered in its entirety. If invited for a selection event, you will only be invited to attend once. This will be at one of the colleges to which you have chosen to apply. If successful, you will be offered a place at any one of the UHI colleges listed in your application, at the University's discretion, according to the availability of places across the UHI.

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

Yes, the Gaelic-medium programme is offered in Argyll College (Oban), Inverness College, Lews Castle College and Perth College. You should apply to the PGDE Primary Teaching (Gaelic Medium) using UCAS course code X103.

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.

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.

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

**7. I am a secondary teacher, can I use your course to convert into primary 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 and subsequent Teacher Induction Scheme places are allocated via a national GTCS system within the Local Authority, partnered with the UHI college at which you are enrolled. A term-time address within commuting distance of the college and schools within that 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, 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.

Applicants for Perth College UHI should note that we are unable to provide school placements in Angus, Clackmannanshire, Dundee, Fife and Stirling Council areas.

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. How are students selected for places?

Applicants are initially selected on the basis of meeting the current qualification entry requirements, and on the value given in their personal statement to experience and understanding of the role of a Primary Teacher, and of primary-aged pupils as learners within a curriculum-based context.

Selected applicants are invited to attend an event in person at one of the UHI colleges they have applied to. This is usually the one closest to their current address. The selection event includes collaborative, written and individual activities. Applicants to the Gaelic medium programme will participate in a selection event along with English-medium applicants, in English. Following this, they will take part in a one-to-one conversation with a Gaelic speaker to demonstrate their fluency in the Gaelic language.

The University makes offers of places on the programme after selection events have taken place across UHI.

## 11. 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 (please see Section 10 for further details).

The details of your qualifications must be clearly stated on your application form under the *Qualifications* section.

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 to 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

**12. 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 holding an existing Ordinary degree, who are no longer engaged in study, will need to provide a transcript evidencing an average of B Grades (or equivalent percentages) in all of the final year modules studied.
- Applicants with a pending degree will need to successfully complete their Honours year at 2:2, or achieve an average of B grades (or equivalent percentages) across all SCQF Level 9 (or equivalent) modules being studied. Any offer subsequently made would be subject to this condition.

**13. 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.

#### **14. What if I have non-UK qualifications?**

If you hold non-UK qualifications, you must email us scanned copies of your original degree, English and Mathematics certificates, 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.

#### **15. Do I need to bring evidence of my qualifications to the selection event?**

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 programme.

#### **16. 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.

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

It is essential that you have recent experience of working or volunteering with children between the ages of 5 and 12 years in a Primary school context or related setting.

We do not specify the amount of experience required. We expect you to reflect in your personal statement what you learned from your experience and the ways in which it has confirmed your wish, and your suitability, to become a Primary Teacher. During the selection process, you will be expected to demonstrate a depth of understanding about the role of a Primary Teacher in schools and their communities.

We recommend that you consider this carefully and make sure that you cover the above areas in your personal statement, as unsuccessful applicants will not be allowed to submit an amended personal statement.

#### **18. 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](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.

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

#### **19. 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.

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 15<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

#### ***Questions about applying or an existing application?***

Contact PGDE Admissions Team:

Email: [pgdeadmissions@uhi.ac.uk](mailto:pgdeadmissions@uhi.ac.uk)

Tel: 01463 273480