

Applying for Teaching Courses

Routes into Teaching

Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) equips you to teach in a primary or secondary school. You need to study teaching or education to attain QTS, this is a UK requirement to enable you to teach in schools. You can also study a PGCE (Post Graduate Certificate in Education), these are studied once you have completed a degree in another subject. Apprenticeships and training programmes such as [Training Programme | Teach First](#) are available for those who have already completed a degree.

Types of Teaching

It is important to research and carefully consider the age group you would like to teach.

- For **Early Years**, the pupils you will be in the classroom with are 3-5 years old.
- If it is **Primary** you are interested in you will be teaching pupils aged 5-11.
- For **Secondary** teaching the pupils will be aged 11-19

Personal Statement Advice

A well-written personal statement will not, in isolation, secure an interview or an offer as it will form part of the overall entry requirement criteria for the course. However, it is likely to form the basis for discussion at interview and will enable admissions tutors to differentiate between students with the same academic profile.

Your personal statement should refer to your **Motivation** for studying the course and your **Other Interests**. However, the main focus needs to be on the critical evaluation of what you have done to learn about teaching through wider reading, work experience and volunteering.

Before you begin writing, a top tip is to list the key skills and attributes of teacher to ensure that you address these in your draft:

- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Initiative, leadership, energy, dedication, resilience, stamina and enthusiasm
- Empathy, patience and respect
- Time management and organisational skills
- Supervisory skills and teamworking abilities
- Imagination, creativity and a sense of humour
- Good judgement and an analytical mind
- A satisfactory health record and criminal record check.

Your Motivation

Your enthusiasm for teaching must 'sing out'; you are not just applying for a course; you are applying for a **vocation** and your passion for education and working with young people must be evident from the start.

Your Career Exploration and Suitability

In addition to academic achievement, universities look for applicants that can demonstrate an understanding of what a career in teaching involves and their suitability for the demands of the profession. Applicants usually draw on relevant work experience, either paid or voluntary to demonstrate this understanding.

There are many virtual opportunities that you can access that give insights into teaching and will support future applications. Look for online courses and virtual work experience opportunities.

[Free Online Teaching Courses for Teacher CPD - FutureLearn](#)
[Current-Virtual-Work-Experience-opportunities_201217.pdf \(staidans.co.uk\)](#)

If you secure 'hands-on' work experience in a school, then you should reflect on this in your personal statement. Any observational experience, plus practical experience in alternative settings which you organised can be equally valuable evidence.

Examples of relevant work experience could include:

- A school or nursery setting
- Working with children in a youth group/centre
- Participating in community volunteering schemes
- Assisting with an extracurricular activity such as a sport drama or music group
- Virtual work experience opportunities that give an insight into teaching

Nb. Ensure you understand the work experience requirement set by each university for their course.

For all types of work experience include examples of:

- An awareness of current issues facing education
- Experience of working with a diverse range of young people
- The demonstration of the core values within education

Remember... more important than the experience itself is the ability to demonstrate an understanding of the relevant skills and attributes required in teaching. **Be selective and analytical** - record your key learning outcomes from each activity. Consider how you can evidence you have the key skills teaching requires. Soft skills are incredibly important. Empathy, communication, ability to work under pressure, accuracy, care and kindness and flexibility are important skills that a teacher needs to demonstrate.

When talking about your A level subjects make sure you reference to particular areas of study that you have found fascinating. This can be even more powerful if made relevant to teaching and linked back to your work experience.

Your Other Interests

Part-time employment, hobbies and involvement in clubs demonstrates wider interests and can be used to further reinforce your communication and empathy skills. **Remember...** quality is more important than quantity.

Essential Reading

[Get Into Teaching \(education.gov.uk\)](#)
[Teaching Subject Guide | Why Study Teaching At Uni? | UCAS](#)
[Education Subject Guide | Why Study Education At Uni? | UCAS](#)
[UCAS Teacher Training - How To Become A Teacher In The UK](#)
[Teacher / Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education](#)
[Teachers' standards: overview \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
[Teacher training – Independent Schools Council](#)

Please contact the Careers Department at careersstaff@staidans.co.uk if you would like individual information, advice and guidance on teaching applications – we are happy to help.

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