

## Professional Graduate Diploma in **SECONDARY** Education (PGDE)

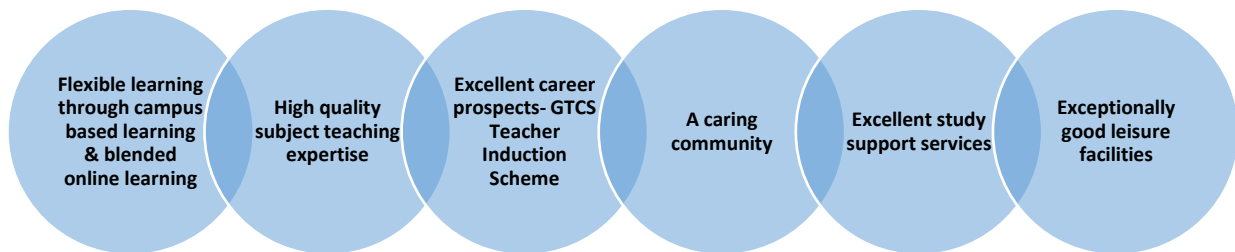
**Information below is for entry in academic year 2024/2025 only**

### PGDE SECONDARY Education- what makes us different?

The PGDE Secondary is a full-time programme offering students a blended model of learning. During campus-based learning, students will be on campus for two consecutive days (Tuesday & Wednesday). **Beyond this, students will engage with online learning at a time and place of their choice.** This structure is designed to offer individuals flexibility, whilst being committed to the requirements of a full time PGDE programme. During school experience placements, students are required to be in school every day, on a full-time basis.

The Careers and Employability Service at the University of Aberdeen has put together an online resource to support those interested in the PGDE. More information can be found [here](#).

### University of Aberdeen, PGDE SECONDARY, student experience



### Who is the PGDE SECONDARY programme for?

The University of Aberdeen has a proven ability in developing innovative approaches to Initial Teacher Education. The programme is aimed at Graduates with relevant subject content in their academic study, who have demonstrated an interest in teaching children through a range of experiences in both formal and informal settings. The Programme is accredited by the General Teaching Council for Scotland.

Students completing the PGDE programme will be awarded the Professional Graduate Diploma in Secondary Education. You will have the opportunity to gain Master's credits, transferable to further postgraduate study, during the programme in addition to the PGDE qualification.

**The PGDE is a one-year, full-time campus based learning and blended online learning programme, incorporating school experience placements.**

Students enter the programme with a wide range of background experiences: some are recent graduates and have chosen teaching as their initial career; others are mature students who have decided to pursue a career change at a later stage.

The table below indicates the subjects currently available (at time of printing)

Subject	Full-time (1 year)
Biology with Science	✓
Business Education	✓
Chemistry with Science	✓
Drama	✓
English	✓
Geography	✓
History	✓
Mandarin	✓

Mathematics	✓
Modern Foreign Languages ##	✓
Modern Studies	✓
Music	✓
Physics with Science	✓
Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies	✓

## French, German, Spanish.

Dual qualifications are possible in Sciences, Social Subjects and Modern Foreign Languages.

## PGDE SECONDARY Education- programme outline

The table below shows the pattern of the courses.

Course	Full-time Route
<i>Learning and Teaching in Schools: Beginning to Teach</i>	<i>Semester 1 – Mid August to mid-December; through campus-based learning, blended online learning and school placement</i>
<i>Learning and Teaching in Schools: The Developing Professional</i>	<i>Semester 2 – Early January to beginning of June; through campus-based learning, blended online learning and school placement</i>
<i>School Experience 1*</i>	<i>10 weeks during semester 1, split into smaller blocks</i>
<i>School Experience 2*</i>	<i>8 weeks during semester 2, split into smaller blocks</i>

\* Dates are subject to change depending on calendar variations and Local Authority school holiday patterns

**The full-time PGDE programme starts on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024. Online registration will be available from approximately 15<sup>th</sup> August 2024.**

**School Experience placement dates are fixed each year, and each block must be undertaken on a full-time basis.**

## Assessment

To complete the programme, you will undertake four academic assessments enabling you to learn about educational theory and policy linked to school experience. Your teaching practice will also be assessed during school experience placements.

## School Experience

School Experience placements are intimated to students by the University, who work in in close partnership with the GTCS and Local Authorities. These will normally take place in two different schools.

Students on the Secondary PGDE programme can undertake placements anywhere in Scotland. **The national guidance is that no student will be required to travel more than 90 minutes, each way, to a school.**

The School Experience placements give students the opportunity to contextualise and make links between the academic course inputs and their developing practice. The placement dates are fixed each year, and each block must be undertaken on a full-time basis.

# Entry Requirements

Successful applicants must, as a minimum, meet the requirements as set by the *Memorandum on Entry Requirements to Courses of Initial Teacher Education in Scotland* produced by the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS), which specifies general entrance requirements for all applicants and subject specific requirements for Secondary applicants. The current version of the Memorandum is dated September 2019 and can be viewed at: [memorandum-on-entry-requirements.pdf \(gtcs.org.uk\)](http://www.gtcs.org.uk/memorandum-on-entry-requirements.pdf)

Applicants to the PGDE should be familiar with using information and communications technology (ICT) in order to realise how it can be used for learning and teaching. Applicants must be competent in the use of Digital Technology.

Applicants will also need to demonstrate appropriate interpersonal skills, attributes and dispositions which will allow them to engage young people, colleagues and partners in effective collaboration.

Top-up courses are allowed; however, graduates will only be allowed a **maximum of 30 credits** and they must be obtained **before** entering the PGDE.

Please read in full the information provided below under Selection Procedures with regard to Qualifications, Personal Statement, and Reference.

For entry to the University of Aberdeen, **all PGDE Secondary applicants** must have by the date term commences, the qualifications as detailed below under **1. Degree**; **2. English** and **3. Maths**.

## 1. Degree

- An **undergraduate** degree validated by a University in the United Kingdom or an **undergraduate** degree of an equivalent standard from a higher education system outside the United Kingdom.
- The **undergraduate** degree should normally contain 80 SCQF credit points relevant to the teaching qualification or qualifications being studied; more information is below under **Content of your Degree**. 40 SCQF of the credit points must have been studied at SCQF level 8 or above. Credit from a Master's degree may be considered, but applicants will need to demonstrate that the qualification held has a direct relevance in terms of credit, to the teaching of the subject for which application is being made.
- Some credit points are acceptable for entry to more than one teaching subject. If a student wants a teaching qualification in more than one subject, appropriate credit points can be counted for entry to both subjects. Detailed information on Education in Scotland can be found at [www.gtcs.org.uk/registration/becoming-a-teacher](http://www.gtcs.org.uk/registration/becoming-a-teacher)

## 2. English at SCQF Level 6 – see text in red on page 4

- SQA or SCE Higher grade award in English at Grade C or above; or
- SCE Higher ESOL\* at Grade C or above; or
- A Level English, Grade D or above; or
- GCSE English Language **AND** English Literature, at Level 4 (previously Grade C) or above **IN BOTH**; or
- O Level English Language **AND** English Literature, Grade C or above or pass **IN BOTH**; or
- Irish Leaving Certificate English at Higher Grade 4 or above or Higher Grade C2 or above; or
- International Baccalaureate English at HL Grade 4 or above; or
- National Course award (Higher Still) in English and Communication at Grade C or above; or
- National Units – Communication (NC) at Higher level and Literature 1 at Higher level \*\*; or
- University of Aberdeen Online English Level 6 at Grade C3 or above, (see below) or
- English of an equivalent academic standard from **outside** the UK.

\*Higher ESOL acceptable for entry to PGDE Secondary only

\*\* Previously known as National Certificate Modules Communication 4 & Literature 1

## 3. Mathematics at SCQF Level 5 – see text in red on page 4

- National 5 Mathematics at Grade C or above; or
- National 5 Applications of Mathematics (previously known as Lifeskills Mathematics) at Grade C or above; or
- Core Maths 4 Pass; or
- GCSE Mathematics at Level 4, or Grade C or above or Pass; or

- O Level Mathematics at Grade C or above or Pass; or
- Irish Leaving Certificate Mathematics at Ordinary Grade 3 or above or Ordinary Grade B or above; or
- International Baccalaureate Maths or Maths Studies at SL Grade 4 or above; or
- National Course Award Intermediate Level 2 Mathematics at Grade C or above; or
- SCE Standard grade (credit level) award in Mathematics at Grade 2 or above; or
- SCE Ordinary grade award in Mathematics at Grade C or above or Pass; or
- Open University Course – MU123 Discovering Mathematics#, Pass; or
- University of Aberdeen Online Maths Level 5 at Grade C3 or above (see below) or
- Mathematics of an equivalent academic standard from **outside** the UK.

# Please note that with regard to OU MU123 – the course generally starts in January each year with exam results issued in the December of the same year.

The following are **not accepted** as a Mathematics qualification at the University of Aberdeen: Standard Grade 3 or below, GCSE Grade D or below, CSE Grade 1, O Level Grade 3.

The University will consult UK ENIC (The UK National Information Centre for global qualifications and skills), formerly known as UK NARIC, to determine whether or not qualifications achieved outside the UK meet the entry requirements detailed above.

Applicants must have English and Maths at the required level(s), or the equivalent, before commencing the PGDE Secondary programme. If applicants do not have their Maths and/or English qualification(s) in place prior to/ at the time of application, they may still be considered for a place and, if a place is offered, it will be on a conditional basis. The condition will need to be met before the programme commences.

Please also note that not meeting these English and Maths requirements may mean that you will not be eligible to apply for certain funding sources, e.g: STEM Bursary Scotland. Please be aware that if you intend to apply for funding that it is your responsibility to ensure that you are eligible to do so.

### **University of Aberdeen Online English and Mathematics**

The University of Aberdeen has launched three online access courses, one in English at SCQF Level 6 and two in Mathematics, one at SCQF Level 6 and one at SCQF Level 5. All three are accepted by the University of Aberdeen for entry to teacher education. Students undertaking the online access course will need to complete the courses by the exit point in the start of July 2023.

We ask for Grade C3 or better for English and Maths so this is Grade A1, A2, A3, A4, A5 or Grade B1, B2, B3 or Grade C1, C2, C3.

Full information on the online provision, including costs, can be found at [www.abdn.ac.uk/study/online/access-courses.php](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/study/online/access-courses.php)

For 2024 entry only, applicants for PGDE Secondary in the subjects Biology, Chemistry, English, Home Economics, Geography, Mathematics, Modern Languages, Music and Physics who do not have Maths and/or English at the time they commence the Programme, will be given free access to ONE of them in order to meet the GTCS requirements **before** their PGDE programme of study starts. To be eligible, the student must confirm that the University of Aberdeen is the institution at which they will commence their PGDE in August 2024.

Students who pay full fees or international fees are not eligible for a free Online Access course, but are allowed to apply and pay for these courses.

### **Previous Initial Teacher Education Study**

The University of Aberdeen requires that applicants who have failed the PGDE Programme, or any programme of Initial Teacher Education at the University of Aberdeen, or elsewhere, or who have withdrawn from a programme whilst making unsatisfactory progress, must wait 3 years before applying for PGDE study at Aberdeen. If reapplying, candidates must provide evidence prior to interview that they have taken action to address previously unsatisfactory performance.

### **Content of your Degree**

The content of your degree must contain specific subject studies which are relevant to the intended teaching qualification. It must also be of appropriate breadth and depth for teaching the subject in Scottish secondary schools. **The information given below is correct as at time of printing; however, please check the GTCS website for details on the minimum entry requirements for specific subjects.**

For all subjects, a minimum of 80 SCQF credit points must be relevant to the teaching subjects or subjects you wish to teach, and at least 50 of the credits must be as part of a degree. The 80 credits should normally be part of an undergraduate degree, but exceptions may apply. 40 of the credit points must have been studied at SCQF Level 8 or above. The degree content should **reflect** the curricular subject requirements.

Top-up courses are allowed; however, graduates will only be allowed a **maximum of 30 credits** and they must be obtained **before** entering the PGDE. A full-time academic year in Scotland normally allows you to take 120 credit points.

The following secondary subjects have specific requirements in addition to those stated above: Business Education; Drama; English; History, Home Economics; Modern Foreign Languages; Modern Studies; Music and Religious Education.

### **Business Education**

You must have an undergraduate degree with at least 80 SCQF credits in the subjects from the following:

- (1) Accounting;
- (2) Economics;
- (3) Business Management

and should be able to demonstrate evidence of study related to relevant Information Technology skills.

### **Drama**

You must have an undergraduate degree with at least 80 SCQF credits in Drama, and must have at least 40 credit points in the practical aspects of Drama such as stage design or directing.

### **English**

You must have an undergraduate degree with at least 80 SCQF credit points in English. At least 40 SCQF credit points must be in literature (this could include English translation) or Scottish literature and a maximum of 20 SCQF credit points in Media Studies.

### **History**

You must have 80 SCQF credit points as part of an undergraduate degree with a maximum of 40 SCQF credit points from Ancient History.

### **Modern Foreign Languages**

Where possible, you should offer more than one language.

(i) For the *first language* offered, you must:

- Have an undergraduate degree with at least 80 SCQF credit points in the language you want to teach
- Have lived for six months in a country where the language is spoken before you commence the PGDE programme
- Prove to the University of Aberdeen that you are competent in speaking the relevant language.

Your academic study must include an element which will allow you to contribute to the wider aspects of programmes of study in schools, such as literature, cultural studies, area studies or languages in work.

While living abroad, you must have fully taken part in the language and culture of the relevant country.

You must normally live in the relevant country in blocks of at least 3 months. Applicants who have spent one of their study years abroad will be considered as having met the residency requirement in the language in question.

Residence requirements must be met before starting the programme and the University of Aberdeen will make sure this is the case before applicants are offered a place on the programme.

(ii) For the *second language* offered, you must fully meet the conditions for the first language and must also: -

- Have an undergraduate degree with at least 80 SCQF credit points in the second language you want to teach
- Have lived for at least three months in a country where the language is spoken before starting the programme
- Prove to the University of Aberdeen that you are competent in speaking the relevant language

Your academic study must include an element which will allow you to contribute to the wider aspects of programmes of study in schools, such as literature, cultural studies, area studies or languages in work.

While living abroad, you must have fully taken part in the language and culture of the relevant country. The period of three months must either be consecutive or in blocks of at least four weeks.

The GTCS will answer any questions about registration and residency requirements for second languages. Please email [pld@gtcs.org.uk](mailto:pld@gtcs.org.uk)

Residence requirements must be met before starting the programme and the University of Aberdeen will make sure this is the case before applicants are offered a place on the programme.

*(iii) Native speakers of a modern foreign language*

Native speakers of a modern foreign language who have finished an undergraduate degree in their own language which meets the entry requirements in paragraph (i) above, may train to teach their native language.

Students who are native speakers of a modern foreign language and have an undergraduate degree in a language other than their native tongue which meets the entry requirements in (i) above, may be eligible to teach that language plus their native language. For example, a French student with an undergraduate degree in German can train to teach German and French.

### **Modern Studies**

You must have an undergraduate degree with at least 80 SCQF credit points from two separate subjects listed below. At least 40 SCQF credit points must be from either Politics or Sociology: -

Criminology	Law
Economics	Politics
Geography	Sociology
History or Economic History	Social Policy
International Relations	

### **Music**

You must have an undergraduate degree with at least 80 SCQF credit points in music which includes studying music over at least three years. You are also expected to: -

- (i) Demonstrate intellectual music skills (some of which should be advanced) across the following:
  - Musical repertoire and musical contexts
  - An understanding of interdisciplinary approaches (e.g. music and the relationship to other disciplines)
  - Analysing, synthesising and interrogating musical materials
- (ii) Demonstrate you are competent in practical musical skills (some of which should be advanced) across the following:
  - Instrumental performance
  - Vocal performance
  - Keyboard performance
- (iii) Have experience of music technology in some format (e.g. use of microphones, experience of recording and producing)

You must meet all the requirements of (i). If you do not meet the requirements of (ii) or (iii) you will have to demonstrate competence through an interview process.

### **Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies**

You must have an undergraduate degree with at least 80 SCQF credit points from two or more of the areas listed below: -

Religious Studies	Philosophy	Theology	Divinity
Sociology of Religion	Anthropology of Religion	Psychology of Religion	

If you wish specifically to teach Religious Education in Catholic schools you must have an undergraduate degree with at least 80 SCQF credit points in: -

Religious Studies

Theology

Divinity

Which may include a maximum of 20 credit points in Philosophy related to religion.

## Career Prospects

Students who successfully complete the PGDE Programme may choose to opt into the GTCS Induction Scheme which provides a guaranteed one-year training place to every eligible \*\* student. Students graduating with a Teaching Qualification from a Scottish Higher Education Institution are placed in a school by the General Teaching Council for Scotland in association with Local Authorities, on a full-time basis for one year. During this time, beginner teachers are required to meet the General Teaching Council for Scotland 'Standard for Full Registration.' Having attained the status of Full Registration, individuals are then eligible to apply for a permanent teaching post. Further information can be obtained from [www.gtcs.org.uk](http://www.gtcs.org.uk)

Information on eligibility criteria and details about the Induction Scheme may be obtained from the Scottish Executive web site or their information leaflet Teacher Induction Scheme; details of both are available on the last page.

\*\* Eligibility will normally be restricted to those students graduating from a Scottish Higher Education Institution with a Teaching Qualification whose training has been publicly funded. This includes students from other parts of the UK and other parts of the EU provided they have been assessed as eligible for Home Fees. This is regardless of how these fees are funded i.e. through SAAS, Local Education Authority, Self-Funded, Northern Ireland Education and Library Boards and so on.

**Students who pay international or full fees are not in publicly funded places and are therefore not eligible to join the Teacher Induction Scheme. An Induction Year post will therefore not be allocated, but students in this position can apply for the flexible probation route.**

## How to Apply to the Full-time Programme

For entry in August 2024, you apply online through UCAS ([www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)). Telephone: 0371 4680468.

You must select the **UCAS Undergraduate route**. **Please do not apply via UCAS Teacher Training to any Scottish institution offering the one-year graduate teaching programme.**

Applicants to UCAS are required and expected to detail full academic history. The information declared to UCAS will be used by the University of Aberdeen to determine whether or not applicants meet, or will meet the minimum entry requirements. Applications with incomplete qualification information or applications that do not demonstrate ability to meet the minimum entry requirements will be rejected.

Applications to Aberdeen, received from UCAS, will be acknowledged by email. In the Aberdeen acknowledgement, applicants will be asked to submit information on degree transcripts. This information is essential to enable the application to progress.

It is worth noting that demand for places can be particularly high for some Secondary subjects.

**The official closing date for applications is 6pm on Wednesday 31 January 2024. This is known as the equal consideration date and guarantees that all applications received by this date will be considered. Applications received after this date will only be considered if vacancies are still advertised.**

Please note that direct applications made to the University of Aberdeen will not be accepted.

Please note that applications for deferred entry to August 2025 will not be accepted.

## Selection Procedures

Qualifications, Personal Statement, Reference

Applicants for the PGDE programme must first demonstrate that they will be able to meet the minimum entry requirements (as previously outlined). The University of Aberdeen would normally expect to see extensive prior experience relevant to teaching in a Secondary school. However, due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic these expectations are revised – see below for details. References for applications to the PGDE should be

Academic or Professional in nature (for example a University Tutor or Employer). Where applicants have gained recent experience in a mainstream school setting, it is recommended that a reference is given from School Staff. The referee should have had contact with the applicant within the past 5 years. References will not be accepted from family, friends or acquaintances.

Meeting the minimum entry requirements does not entitle an applicant to an interview or an offer of admission. The Personal Statement plays a critical role in determining suitability to be invited for interview.

Selected applicants are invited to attend an online interview to gauge suitability for entry to initial teacher education.

#### School Experience Prior to Admission 2024

It has always been highly recommended that anyone applying to a teacher education programme undertakes relevant work experience in schools and childcare settings. This experience is important as it helps applicants learn more about the role they will be undertaking and ensure that teaching is a profession they would like to join.

In light of Covid-19, we appreciate that schools and childcare settings may be closed and/or offering restricted or blended learning options. This means they may not have capacity to host work experience students, making it more difficult for applicants to gain work experience.

We do not want these circumstances to deter good applicants from applying to our teacher education programmes starting in 2024. As a result, for teacher education programmes with admissions in 2024, we will be making the following amendments to enable access:

- School experience will continue to be helpful for developing an applicant's understanding of the profession they are joining, but lack of experience in a setting should not prevent applications.
- If an applicant is successful in securing an offer without relevant experience, they will be encouraged to try to gain this during 2024 before starting their course (if Covid-19 restrictions allow them to do so safely).
- In addition to the above points, applicants should also provide detail in their personal statement of any wider or previous work (voluntary or paid) with children as part of their application. This could include holiday camps, kids' clubs, guides and scouts, visits to schools etc. This information will help contextualise your experiences and reasons for applying to teacher education programmes.

#### Interviews

Not all who apply will be invited for interview. As detailed above, selected applicants are invited to attend an online interview to gauge suitability for entry to initial teacher education.

Following interviews, and based on the number of places available, offers are made via UCAS. Offers will either be unconditional or conditional. All entrants to the PGDE programme must hold the relevant entry requirements prior to starting studies. Places available are set by the Scottish Government, through the Scottish Funding Council and Universities are advised of their allocated places, usually in the February of each year. Under UCAS protocols, those applying by 25 January 2024 should receive a decision by May 2024.

Interviews will take place via Microsoft Teams. If you are invited to interview you will receive further information by email about the interview process.

**Only one interview for the secondary subject applied for will take place. In the event of applicants being unsuccessful after interview for that secondary subject, applicants will need to wait until a new admissions cycle to apply again to be considered. A further application for the same secondary subject, via Late or Extra or Clearing for example, in the same cycle, will not lead to a further interview invite being issued or an offer of admission.**

#### PVG Check

A Protection of Vulnerable Group (PVG) check through Disclosure Scotland will be conducted by the University prior to final acceptance. This is required of all applicants who accept an offer of admission, even those who have been checked previously. For non UK applicants, or UK applicants who have lived outside the UK for any period of time, in accepting an offer of admission, an Enhanced criminal record check through Disclosure Scotland will be conducted and in addition, it will be necessary for the applicant to obtain a criminal record check from the country they are from/lived in.



## Funding for Full-time Students

Applicants accepted onto the programme apply to either the Students Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) or their Local Education Authority for assistance with fees.

Information relating to Tuition Fees will be finalised in the Spring of each year and provided at: [www.abdn.ac.uk/students/finance/tuition-fees.php](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/students/finance/tuition-fees.php) Applicants from England, Wales and Northern Ireland should note that the study bursary offered to postgraduate initial teacher training (ITT) students studying in England, Wales or Northern Ireland does not apply if they accept an offer of a place at a Scottish institution.

## Teaching outwith Scotland

Should you wish to teach outwith Scotland with a teaching qualification gained in Scotland you need to check its acceptability with the Education Authority of the country you wish to teach in; this includes England, Wales, Northern Ireland and European Union countries. The PGDE degree programme at Aberdeen is worth 120 credit points which is equivalent to 60 ECTS.

## For More Information

If you require further information relating to your qualification for the English or Maths requirement, or if your qualification is equivalent to degree level, or if you have non-UK qualifications, the PGDE Secondary Admissions Co-ordinator, Cathy Reid ([c.a.reid@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:c.a.reid@abdn.ac.uk)), can provide guidance.

To find out whether or not your degree contains the necessary credits please email Cathy Reid as above and your enquiry will be sent to the most appropriate subject specialist.

Admissions Office, Directorate of Student Recruitment  
University of Aberdeen  
University Office, Regent Walk, King's College, Aberdeen, AB24 3TX  
Email: [ugadmissions@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:ugadmissions@abdn.ac.uk)  
Web: [www.abdn.ac.uk/study](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/study)

Visit the websites:

[www.teachinscotland.scot](http://www.teachinscotland.scot) [www.teachinscotland.scot/become-a-teacher/secondary](http://www.teachinscotland.scot/become-a-teacher/secondary)  
[www.saas.gov.uk](http://www.saas.gov.uk)  
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