Teaching as a career – is it the right career decision for you?

There are several things you can do to help answer this question:

- Think about your reasons for wanting to become a teacher and to look at the skills and experience required, see the profiles on the Prospects website – Primary School Teacher: prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/primary-school-teacher and Secondary School Teacher: prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/secondary-school-teacher.
- Talk to people who are currently teachers about what it is really like to do the job
- Arrange work experience or add variety to the relevant experience that you already have
- Draw up a ‘pros and cons’ list – a realistic understanding of teaching as a career and your motivation to train and do the job will be a key part of the selection process

**Relevant work experience**

Work experience in a school is important for three reasons:

1. To test out if the job is really for you and help your decision-making in terms of the age range and subject you wish to teach
2. To understand the National Curriculum and the demands of being a teacher
3. Relevant work experience is a requirement for teacher training. You will need to provide examples of what you have done and observed in a personal statement and at interview. Some training courses stipulate a certain number of hours of work experience, so check with the courses that interest you.
Twelve top tips for work experience

- Get as much work experience as you can.
- It is never too early to start. For example, at L4, you could arrange a placement for the final 6 weeks of the school summer term, as the Leeds Beckett academic year ends at the end of May.
- Schools in Leeds areas LS3, LS4, LS5, LS6 and LS16 receive a lot of requests for work experience, so consider trying other areas of the city. Your faculty placement office might be able to help you to find experience in a school.
- You could arrange some work experience in your home town/city.
- Sometimes contacting a school to arrange experience is easier if you have some sort of link with it, e.g. you know a teacher there.
- Be wary of getting experience only at the schools you attended as a pupil, as this will not broaden your experience.
- Think about what you can offer to the school rather than just asking for experience and make a professional approach, (e.g. a targeted CV followed up by a ‘phone call if you don’t get any response).
- Include a variety of schools in your work experience, e.g. schools that face challenges (often defined by the number of pupils receiving free school meals or by a poor OFSTED report, a low level of attainment and/or in areas of social deprivation). If you have got experience in a secondary school, it might be useful to add to this with experience of, for example, working with Year 5 and 6 pupils in a primary school. Experience in a special school or Pupil Referral Unit might also be useful. Working or volunteering at an after-school club would add to your experience of working with primary school children.
- If you have experience of working with children and young people outside of the school setting, be prepared in your application and at interview to explain how this is relevant experience for teaching, e.g. if you worked with school-aged children at a summer camp, you might have gained a better understanding of how to motivate a child, how to facilitate group activities, how children and young people learn in different ways etc.
- Volunteering is a great way of adding to your experience. You can search here for volunteering opportunities that might help you to gain relevant work experience - leedsbeckett.ac.uk/enhancing-employability/volunteering/ or see do-it.org.uk/ currently advertising (as an example) for volunteers with Reading Matters readingmatters.org.uk/.
- The National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) runs the School Experience Programme for people interested in applying for teacher training who have at least a 2:2 degree and are interested in teaching secondary maths, physics, chemistry, languages, computing or design and technology: education.gov.uk/get-into-teaching/school-experience?keywords=work+experience. Teach First has an Insight programme for applicants interested in teaching science and technology subjects: graduates.teachfirst.org.uk/recruitment/undergraduate-opportunities/insight.html.
- If you are not eligible for the School Experience Programme, read this article to find out how to arrange your own work experience: https://getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/school-experience/arranging-school-experience-independently
How to train as a teacher

You will probably have heard about training to teach by completing a P.G.C.E. (Postgraduate Certificate of Education), but there are several other ways to train to qualify as a teacher.

The options are:

- University-based, e.g. P.G.C.E.
- Schools-based, e.g. School Direct (salaried and non-salaried), S.C.I.T.T., training via an academy school
- Teach First

For information on the various training options, go to Targetjobs: targetjobs.co.uk/career-sectors/teaching-and-education/330871-how-do-you-train-to-become-a-teacher. This article is written and updated each year by a group of university careers consultants (check the date at the bottom of the page to see if it is the current version).

The different teacher-training routes are also described here on the ‘Get into Teaching’ website. Go to education.gov.uk/get-into-teaching/teacher-training-options.aspx and follow the links to look at the pros and cons of each route.

All applications for ITET (Initial Teacher Education & Training), including those for a P.G.C.E. and School Direct, should be made online through UCAS Teacher Training: ucas.com/how-it-all-works/teacher-training

Teach First has its own separate application system apply.teachfirst.org.uk/Default.aspx. Academy schools may not be included in the UCAS system and might accept direct applications.

Independent schools now have their own separate application system: hmtteachertraining.org.uk/

To check if you have the required **GCSE subjects** and grades, go to: getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/explore-my-options/basic-eligibility

**Making your Application**

- See the UCAS Teacher Training website, ucas.com/how-it-all-works/teacher-training, for help in understanding the application process and completing the online application. This includes a step-by-step guide to completing each section of the form, ucas.com/how-it-all-works/teacher-training/filling-in-your-application.
- To search for both P.G.C.E. and schools-based training programmes, go to: ucas.com/how-it-all-works/teacher-training.
- For 2017 applications, the search opens September 27th and Apply 1 opens for applications on 18th October – **this is earlier than in previous years**
- Talk to your referees and explain that you will be applying for teacher training. Let them know about your relevant experience. For further UCAS information on references, go to: ucas.com/how-it-all-works/teacher-training/filling-in-your-application/references.
- You can begin to draft your **personal statement** before the UCAS system opens for applications. Use these links for advice - ucas.com/ucas/teacher-training/apply-and-track/how-write-ucas-teacher-training-personal-statement and targetpostgrad.com/study-areas/teaching/how-write-your-personal-statement-
teacher-training The ‘Get into Teaching’ website also has an Application Form Assistant: education.gov.uk/get-into-teaching/apply-for-teacher-training/application-form-assistant.

- The Employability team at Leeds Beckett run Applying for Teacher Training workshops (book via My Hub), where you will get further guidance on how to write an effective personal statement. Once you have written a draft of your statement, you can arrange for a careers consultant to give you some feedback on it. Just contact the Employability team to arrange an appointment.

- Research, practise and book to do the Skills Tests - education.gov.uk/get-into-teaching/apply-for-teacher-training/skills-tests. You will need to have passed these before you can take up a place on a training course.

Further Education:

The best source of information about this complicated sector remains the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) advice line and their website: feedvice.org.uk/ Tel: 0300 303 1877 or email feedviceline@etfoundation.co.uk The FE Advice line only covers England but they will always endeavour to assist with any query where possible.

For information on getting into FE teaching, go to: nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/planning/jobprofiles/Pages/furthereducationlecturer.aspx

Further information on FE Teacher Training is available on MyHub at: myhub.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/docs/259/AGCAS-FE-information.pdf
myhub.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/docs/185/001-Teaching-in-FE-general-information.pdf

For subject specialisms such as ESOL, English/Literacy, Mathematics/Numeracy and Disabled Learners, go to: myhub.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/docs/187/FE-teaching-a-subject-specialism-revised-September-2015.pdf

Early Years teaching

For information on getting into Early Years teaching, go to: nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/planning/jobprofiles/Pages/earlyyearsteacher.aspx

MyHub is home to a wealth of careers resources. For a useful summary and links to the main ones, take a look at Careers FAQs: https://myhub.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/students/faqs/detail/198/careers-faqs

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We endeavour to update this factsheet annually. However, if you do find any broken links, please report them to careers@leedsbeckett.ac.uk. The Information Team would also welcome your feedback on this resource. If you have any comments, please send them to the above email address.

To request this leaflet in an alternative format, please contact us.

For further information on the Employability & Job Shop team please go to www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/studenthub/careers

Alternatively you can contact a member of our team on:

0113 812 5995 (City Campus), 0113 812 7335 (Headingley Campus)