Applying for education courses.
A *guide to the experience required.*
Experience requirement guidelines.
How to create a strong application.

Our education studies and teacher education team has worked extensively in many different educational settings – including primary and secondary schools, further and adult education. If you choose to study with us, you will be able to take advantage from our skills, expertise and resources.

Our education courses offer a choice of modules so you can specialise in areas that interest you most. We ensure our teaching is relevant to you and the way you learn. Our methods are creative and dynamic, and we design courses that offer support in a friendly and collaborative environment. Our excellent facilities help you perfect your skills and bring your knowledge to life.

We offer teacher training courses for professionals working with children and young people and are one of the largest providers of teacher education in the country. Our teacher training includes PGCE and Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) courses and spans primary and early years education, secondary education, and post-16 education and training.

Most of our education courses require some first-hand experience of the relevant subject area. This experience helps you demonstrate an insight into your chosen profession and a commitment to the role. It also helps ensure that you have chosen the right course.

This document outlines the experience we expect you to have and the best places to gain it. You may find that some of the experience needed is the same for each course.

We advise you to include detailed information about this experience on your application form, and be ready to discuss it at interview.

For further details on entry requirements, please visit www.shu.ac.uk/prospectus

For the Teaching Agency’s application tips, please visit www.education.gov.uk/get-into-teaching/apply-for-teacher-training/application-tips.aspx
Previous contents:
Pre-entry skills tests

If you’re thinking of applying for an Initial Teacher Training (ITT) programme leading to QTS which starts after 1 July 2013, you must prove that you have passed the Teaching Agency skills tests in numeracy and literacy before you can take up any offer of a place on the course.

If you apply for a course which requires this, we will inform you of the requirement as soon as an application reaches us. If you’ve been invited to an interview for the course, we encourage you to take and pass the tests before the interview date, if possible. We will ask you to bring a print out of your results to your interview. If you’ve not passed the tests by the time of your interview, you can only be given a conditional offer and will be given a deadline by which the tests must be passed in order for us to confirm your offer. We’ll send you more information if you are invited to attend an interview.

For more information and links to practice tests, visit www.shu.ac.uk/ad/teach/qts-skills-tests.html
Undergraduate

BA (Hons) in Teaching and Learning Early Years (top up)

Experience Needed
You will need to have been working in a school or appropriate setting for at least 3 years in order to gain your foundation degree. The BA (Hons) in Teaching and Learning Early Years (top up) provides you with an opportunity to ‘top up’ your degree and to gain Qualified Teacher Status. We expect you to be working with children in the foundation stage or Key Stage 1. Your previous experience should be clearly detailed in your application and at interview.

Duration
You will need to be working in a school, preferably employed as a teaching assistant or similar for the duration of the course. This should be for at least 20 hours per week. In some circumstances, you may be considered for this course if you are working as a voluntary teaching assistant.

Appropriate experience settings
• UK state primary school
• Early years setting which teaches the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum
• in some circumstances, you may be considered for this course if you are employed in a special school setting

Further advice
• dates and locations of your experience and current employment should be clearly marked on your application
• your setting will need to provide you with a mentor who has QTS
• you need to submit a letter of endorsement from your setting and a signed copy of the partnership agreement. this can be obtained from s.a.coates@shu.ac.uk
• you are expected to complete a declaration of criminal convictions and health check form which are sent to you if you are invited to interview
• it is recommended that you spend time working in both foundation stage and key stage 1 settings
• additional relevant experience of working with children – such as teaching abroad, sports coaching or time spent as a play worker – should be included in your personal statement
BA (Hons) in Teaching and Learning Primary Education (top up)

Experience Needed
You will need to have been working in a school or appropriate setting for at least 3 years in order to gain your foundation degree. The BA (Hons) in Teaching and Learning Primary Education (top up) provides you with an opportunity to 'top up' your degree and to gain Qualified Teacher Status. We expect you to be working with children in Key Stage 1 or 2. Your previous experience should be clearly detailed in your application and at interview.

Duration
You will need to be working in a school, preferably employed as a teaching assistant or similar for the duration of the course. This should be for at least 20 hours per week. In some circumstances, you may be considered for this course if you are working as a voluntary teaching assistant.

Appropriate experience settings
• UK state primary school
• In some circumstances, you may be considered for this course if you are employed in a Special School setting

Further advice
• dates and locations of your experience and current employment should be clearly marked on your application
• your setting will need to provide you with a mentor who has QTS
• you need to submit a letter of endorsement from your setting and a signed copy of the Partnership Agreement. This can be obtained from s.a.coates@shu.ac.uk
• you are expected to complete a declaration of criminal convictions and health check form which are sent to you if you are invited to interview
• it is recommended that you spend time working in both Key Stage 1 and 2 settings
• additional relevant experience of working with children – such as teaching abroad, sports coaching or time spent as a play worker – should be included in your personal statement
BA (Hons) Early Years Education with QTS

Experience needed
We expect you to have spent some time working with children in the foundation stage or Key Stage 1. It is vital that you have some knowledge of primary or early years education so you can appreciate the commitment and resilience required to become an effective teacher. You need to draw upon this experience in your application and at interview.

Duration
You need to complete a minimum of 10 days in the relevant setting. This must be gained within the 12 months before you submit your application.

Appropriate experience settings
- UK state primary school
- Early years setting which teaches the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum

Further advice
- Dates and locations of your experience should be clearly marked on your application
- Your supervisor in the setting – such as the head teacher or head of nursery – needs to complete a reference form describing your ability to work effectively with children and indicating your potential to become a successful teacher. A copy of the form can be found at the end of this document.
- You are expected to complete a declaration of criminal convictions and health check form which are sent to you if you are invited to interview.
- It is recommended that you spend time working in both a foundation stage and Key Stage 1 setting.
- Additional relevant experience of working with children – such as teaching abroad, sports coaching or time spent as a playworker – should be included in your personal statement.
BA (Hons) Primary Education with QTS

Experience needed
We expect you to have spent some time working with children in Key Stage 1 or 2. It is vital that you have some knowledge of primary education so you can appreciate the commitment and resilience required to become an effective teacher. You need to draw upon this experience in your application and at interview.

Duration
You need to complete a minimum of 10 days in the relevant setting. This must be gained within the 12 months before you submit your application.

Appropriate experience settings
• UK state primary school

Further advice
• dates and locations of your experience should be clearly marked on your application

• your supervisor in the setting – such as the head teacher – needs to complete a reference form describing your ability to work effectively with children and indicating your potential to become a successful teacher. A copy of the form can be found at the end of this document.

• you are expected to complete a declaration of criminal convictions and health check form which are sent to you if you are invited to interview

• it would be advantageous to have experience in different schools so you can draw upon the different approaches they take

• additional relevant experience of working with children – such as teaching abroad, sports coaching or time spent as a playworker – should be included in your personal statement
BSc (Hons) Mathematics with Education and QTS (three year)

Experience needed
We strongly recommend that you have spent some time in a secondary school focusing on teaching and learning in mathematics. This ensures that you are familiar with the contemporary approaches of teaching mathematics within the UK, and that you can make an informed decision about the course.

Duration
You will strongly support your application by gaining a minimum of five days experience observing and/or supporting mathematics lessons in a non-selective state secondary school. We take this experience into account when deciding whether to invite you to interview.

Appropriate experience settings
• UK non-selective state secondary school (years 7–11) including experience within the mathematics department

Further advice
• dates and locations of your work experience should be clearly marked on your application. It will help strengthen your application if you also share your reflections on the experience
• it would be advantageous to have experience in different schools so you can draw upon the different approaches they take
• work experience across different academic years will further strengthen your application
BSc (Hons) Science with Education and QTS (two year and three year)

Experience needed
We expect you to have spent some time in a secondary school focusing on teaching and learning in science. This ensures you are familiar with contemporary approaches to teaching science within the UK. It is vital that you have some knowledge of secondary education so you can appreciate the commitment and resilience required to become an effective teacher. You need to draw upon your experiences in your application and at interview.

Duration
You should try to gain a minimum of five days experience. We want you to make an informed decision about the course, and this experience will help. We take this experience into account when deciding whether to invite you to interview.

Appropriate experience settings
• UK state secondary school (years 7-11) – preferably within the science department

Further advice
• dates and locations of your experience should be clearly marked on your application. It will help strengthen your application if you also share your reflections on the experience
• work experience within your own school – such as helping in a class with lower achieving students – adds to your days of experience
• it would be advantageous to have experience in different schools so you can draw upon the different approaches they take
• work experience across different academic years will strengthen your application
BSc (Hons) Design and Technology with Education and QTS (two year and three year)

Experience needed
We expect you to have spent some time in a secondary school focusing on teaching and learning in design and technology. If you are applying direct from A levels, evidence of supporting or working with younger students within your school, college or local community would help demonstrate your enthusiasm. This ensures that you are familiar with the contemporary approaches of teaching design and technology within the UK, and that you are making an informed decision about the course.

Duration
You should try to gain at least two or three days in design and technology departments. We take this experience into account when deciding whether to invite you to interview.

Appropriate experience settings
• UK state secondary school (years 7-11) – preferably within design and technology department

Further advice
• dates and location of your work experience should be clearly marked on your application. It will help strengthen your application if you also share your reflections on the experience.
• work experience within your own school – such as helping in a lower academic class – adds to your days of experience
• work experience across different academic years will strengthen your application
Undergraduate Applicant experience requirements

BA (Hons) Early Childhood Education and Care (0–5) with EYTS

Experience needed
We expect you to have spent some time working with children in the Early Years Foundation Stage for children from birth to five. It is vital that you have some knowledge of early years education and care so you can appreciate the commitment and resilience required to become an effective early years teacher. You need to draw upon this experience in your application and at interview.

Duration
You need to complete a minimum of 10 days in the relevant setting. This must be gained within the 12 months before you submit your application.

Appropriate experience settings
• UK nursery/infant/primary school class which teaches the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum
• an early years setting which teaches the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, such as a private nursery, children’s centre or pre-school

Further advice
• Dates and locations of your experience should be clearly marked on your application.

• Your supervisor in the setting – such as the manager, head teacher or head of nursery – needs to complete a reference form describing your ability to work effectively with children and indicating your potential to become a successful early years teacher. A copy of the form can be found at the end of this document.

• You are expected to complete a declaration of criminal convictions and health check form which are sent to you if you are invited to interview.

• We recommend that you spend time working with children across the 0–5 age range.

• Additional relevant experience of working with children – such as teaching abroad, sports coaching or time spent as a playworker – should be included in your personal statement.
BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies

Experience needed
As this course focuses on 0–7 year old children, it is important that you have gained some experience with this age range to give you an idea of what a career in this area consists of.

Duration
You need to gain 75 hours work experience – equivalent to two weeks of full-time hours. This will demonstrate that you have made a valid and informed decision about this area of study.

Appropriate experience settings
• voluntary/community groups
• nursery/infant schools
• primary schools
• childminding

Further advice
• remember that you may be able to draw upon experience gained on previous courses. This may be especially relevant if you have completed a BTEC or CACHE course
• having your own children or babysitting does not contribute to the 75 hours of work experience required
BA (Hons) Childhood Studies

Experience needed
You will need to gain experience with the appropriate age group. However, as this course spans the 0–18 age range, there is a variety of work experience that you can undertake. Your application will be strengthened if the experience is across different age ranges.

Duration
You need to gain 75 hours work experience – equivalent to two weeks of full-time hours. This will demonstrate that you have made a valid and informed decision about this area of study.

Appropriate experience settings
• voluntary/community groups
• nursery/infant schools
• parent and toddler groups
• childminding
• primary schools
• secondary schools
• youth projects e.g. buddy ing projects
• youth centres
• after school clubs
• voluntary and community based projects

Further advice
• remember that you may be able to draw upon experience gained on previous courses. This may be especially relevant if you have completed a BTEC or CACHE course
• having your own children or babysitting does not contribute to the 75 hours of work experience required
BA (Hons) Education Studies

Helpful experience
As this course focuses on all aspects of learning – ranging from primary and secondary to higher education and life long learning – any experience within education is useful.

The course involves placement work within different educational setting. As such, if you are already undertaking work experience within the field, it will strengthen your application and demonstrate your enthusiasm.

Duration
There is no specific requirement in terms of the amount of experience you need. However, it will strengthen your application if you demonstrate your commitment to the course and draw on your work experience within your personal statement.

Appropriate experience settings
• primary schools
• secondary schools
• buddy schemes
• youth groups
BSc (Hons) Education Studies with Psychology and Counselling

Helpful experience
It is useful to have experience within the field so you
• get a feel for what the course could lead onto when you graduate
• gain an insight into what being a proactive listener entails and what skills are needed to support another person
• understand school policies and the environment you may research in your final year of study

Duration
There is no specific requirement in terms of the amount of experience you need. However, it will strengthen your application if you demonstrate your commitment to the course and draw on your work experience in your personal statement.

Appropriate experience settings
• primary schools
• secondary schools
• buddy schemes
• youth groups
School Direct

We will be delivering School Direct in primary education and a number of secondary subjects.

The experience needed to apply for either a School Direct Primary or School Direct Secondary will be the same as listed on the PGCE Primary Education and PGCE Secondary Education pages. The only difference is that you need to apply through the application system on the Teaching Agency website at

https://dataprovision.education.gov.uk/schooldirect/ui/landing

What is School Direct?

School Direct is an exciting new route into teaching and allows you to choose the school, or partnership of schools, that you will be trained in – and this will be further supported by training from Sheffield Hallam University. The intention is that you will be employed to teach in the school or another school in the partnership upon successful completion of the PGCE.

How will this differ to an already existing PGCE route at Sheffield Hallam University?

The main difference is that you will choose and apply to a school or partnership of schools to carry out your training with them. If you are successful in your School Direct application to a school or school partnership, then all your school-based learning will take place with either that school or other schools in that partnership. On an existing PGCE route you will still complete school-based learning, but these schools will be selected for you by the University, which could be any of our 400 schools in our excellent placement network.

On School Direct, the school or partnership of schools that you have applied to will be much more involved in your selection, recruitment and professional development, as there is the expectation that you will be employed by them once qualified.

School Direct leads to QTS and you will be awarded a PGCE from Sheffield Hallam University.

For more information visit the School Direct page www.shu.ac.uk/ad/teach/schooldirect.html
Experience needed
You will be working in an Early Years Foundation Stage setting or class, or about to take up a post. If you are about to take up a post, you will need to have spent some time working with children in this key stage so that you can appreciate the commitment and resilience required to become an effective teacher. You need to draw upon your employment or work experience in your application and at interview.

Duration
You need to complete a minimum of 15 days in the relevant setting if waiting to take up a post. This must be gained within the two years before you submit your application.

Appropriate employment and experience settings
• UK nursery/infant/primary school class which teaches the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum
• an early years setting which teaches the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, such as a private nursery, pre-school or children’s centre

Further advice
• You are expected to include details of your employment and, if waiting to take up a post, relevant work experience on your application form.
• Experience in a leadership role – such as room leader, SENCO or manager – should be included in your application.
• Your employer or manager in the setting – such as the head teacher or nursery manager – needs to complete a reference form describing your ability to work effectively with children and indicating your potential to become a successful teacher.
• You are expected to complete a declaration of criminal conviction and health check form, which are sent to you if you are invited to interview.
• We recommend that you gain experience in working with children across the age range
• Additional relevant experience of working with children – such as teaching abroad, sports coaching or time spent as a play worker – should be included in your application.
PGCE Early Years Education

You need to apply for all PGCE courses through the Graduate Teacher Training Registry (GTTR). For more information, visit the GTTR website at www.gttr.ac.uk

Experience needed

We expect you to have spent some time working with children in the foundation stage or Key Stage 1. It is vital that you have some knowledge of primary or early years education so you can appreciate the commitment and resilience required to become an effective teacher. You need to draw upon this experience in your application and at interview.

Duration

You need to complete a minimum of 15 days in the relevant setting. This must be gained within the two years before you submit your application. Five days of your work experience must be completed in a consecutive block so you appreciate the demands on teachers over a full working week.

Appropriate experience settings

• UK primary school
• early years setting which teaches the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum

Further advice

• you are expected to include details of your work experience on your application form
• your supervisor in the setting – such as the head teacher or head of nursery – needs to complete a reference form describing your ability to work effectively with children and indicating your potential to become a successful teacher. A copy of the form can be found at the end of this document.
• you are expected to complete a declaration of criminal convictions and health check form, which are sent to you if you are invited to interview
• we recommend that you spend time working in both a foundation stage and Key Stage 1 setting
• additional relevant experience of working with children – such as teaching abroad, sports coaching or time spent as a play worker – should be included in your application
PGCE Primary Education

You need to apply for all PGCE courses through the Graduate Teacher Training Registry (GTTR). For more information, visit the GTTR website at www.gttr.ac.uk

Experience needed
We expect you to have spent some time working with children in Key Stage 1 or 2. It is vital that you have some knowledge of primary education so that you can appreciate the commitment and resilience required to become an effective teacher. You need to draw upon this experience in your application and at interview.

Duration
You need to complete a minimum of 15 days in the relevant setting. This must be gained within the two years before you submit your application. Five days of your work experience must be completed in a consecutive block so you appreciate the demands on teachers over a full working week.

Appropriate experience settings
• UK state primary school

Further advice
• you are expected to include details of your work experience on your application form
• your supervisor in the setting – such as the head teacher – needs to complete a reference form describing your ability to work effectively with children and indicating your potential to become a successful teacher. A copy of the form can be found at the end of this document.
• you are expected to complete a declaration of criminal convictions and health check form, which are sent to you if you are invited to interview
• we recommend that you spend time working in both a Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 setting
• additional relevant experience of working with children – such as teaching abroad, sports coaching or time spent as a play worker – should be included in your application
PGCE Secondary Education

You need to apply for all PGCE courses through the Graduate Teacher Training Registry (GTTR). For more information, visit the GTTR website at www.gttr.ac.uk

Please visit www.shu.ac.uk/prospectus for a full list of subjects offered at PGCE Secondary level.

Experience needed
To demonstrate your interest in your chosen subject area, we expect you to have completed work experience within that subject department. This will strengthen your application and is something you can reflect upon when writing your application.

Duration
It is advisable to complete five days work experience.

Appropriate experience settings
• state secondary school – preferably within chosen subject department

Further advice
• dates and locations should be clearly marked on your application. It will help strengthen your application if you also share your reflections on the experience.
• you need a degree in an area relevant to the subject you wish to teach
• if you are interested in teaching English, PE, RE or Citizenship, we advise you to submit your application by the end of December
PGCE/Cert Ed Post-16 and Further Education

You need to apply for full-time PGCE courses through the Graduate Teacher Training Registry (GTTR). For more information, visit the GTTR website at www.gttr.ac.uk

For all part-time and Cert Ed courses please apply directly to the University using the form at www.shu.ac.uk/study/form

Please visit www.shu.ac.uk/prospectus for a full list of courses offered in the post-16 and further education area.

Experience needed

To demonstrate your interest in your chosen subject area, we expect you to have knowledge and understanding of how your subject is taught in the post-16/further education context. This could be gained through direct experience of a post-16 or further education setting (including 14–19), for example work experience, volunteering, observation, shadowing, or similar. This will strengthen your application and is something you can reflect upon when writing your application. Transferable skills from professional roles working with this age range will also be considered.

Duration

The duration of the experience needs to be sufficient for you to know this is the age range and context you wish to work within, and to demonstrate awareness of how your subject is taught in this sector of education. We will assess each application individually.

Appropriate experience settings

• school sixth form, sixth form college, further education college – preferably within chosen subject department. Wider sector training settings can also be relevant (workplace, hospitals, prisons, community organisations, uniformed services).

Further advice

• dates and locations of experience should be clearly marked on your application. It will help strengthen your application if you also share your reflections on the experience.

• for our PGCE route, you need a degree in an area relevant to the subject you wish to teach.

For our Cert Ed route, you need a level three qualification in your professional/vocational area plus at least three years’ experience.
Interview advice (QTS courses only)

There is an interview process for all QTS courses. If you are shortlisted for interview, you will receive an invitation directly from us.

At this stage we assess your

• ability to communicate clearly, both orally and on paper
• ability to work effectively as part of a group
• knowledge of the area of education you are interested in
• interest in, and commitment to, a career in teaching
• ability to work effectively with children in an educational setting (for Primary Education courses you will need to bring the reference from the educational setting you attended)

The structure may vary depending on the course you have applied for. On average, interviews last two and a half hours and may include

• presentation
• group exercise
• one-to-one interview
• written, numeracy and computing competence assessment

Topics for the presentation and group exercise are not released until the day, with the exception of PGCE Secondary English who will provide an article prior to the interview, and PGCE Science who will send details of the presentation task with the invitation letter.

You will also be asked to reflect further on the experience you have gained prior to completing your application. As such, we advise you to prepare your thoughts on this in preparation for the interview day.
# Reference form (primary and early years only)

**Sheffield Hallam University**

This form should be returned to the person requesting the reference so they can bring it to their interview. If you would prefer to submit this directly to the University, please send it to The Admissions Office, Sheffield Hallam University, Howard Street, Sheffield S1 1WB

REFERENCE FOR ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

who has applied for the BA (Hons) in Early Years/Primary Education with QTS/PGCE Early Years/Primary Education with QTS (delete as appropriate) at Sheffield Hallam University

1. Please record the dates of his/her experience in your school/setting

   **Name of school/setting** ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

   **Dates of candidate's experience** ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

2. Please comment on his/her potential to meet the standards for QTS in terms of the following attributes

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the roles and responsibilities of a class teacher and the everyday demands placed on teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ability to listen, talk and respond appropriately to children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ability to work with other adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiasm for and interest in their proposed career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilience, reliability, flexibility and evidence that they can use their initiative and be proactive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any further comments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I fully support the application from …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Signed ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Name ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………… Position …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Tel …………………………………………………………………………………… Email ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………… Date ………………………………
# Reference form
## BA(Hons) in Early Childhood Education and Care (0-5) with EYTS

**Sheffield Hallam University**

REFERENCE FOR ______________________________________________________________________________________________________

1. Please record the dates of his/her experience in your school/setting

Name of school/setting __________________________________________________________________________________________________

Dates of candidate’s experience __________________________________________________________________________________________________

2. Please comment on his/her potential to meet the Early Years Teachers’ Standards in terms of the following attributes
   understanding the roles and responsibilities of an Early Years Foundation Stage teacher or lead practitioner and the everyday demands placed on teachers or lead practitioners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Comment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ability to listen, talk and respond appropriately to children</td>
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<td>The ability to work with other adults</td>
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<td>Enthusiasm for, and interest in their proposed career</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reliability, flexibility, resilience and evidence that they can use their initiative and be proactive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any further comments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I fully support __________________________________________________________________________________________________________ application

Signed ________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Name __________________________________________________________________________________________ Position __________________________________________________________________________

Contact details __________________________________________________________________________________________________________ Date ____________