



University of
Reading

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED TRAINING TO TEACH?

If you are thinking of applying to become a teacher, we have put together the following helpful tips for you, to help you plan and prepare for an interview on our primary and secondary postgraduate Initial Teacher Education programmes.

BEFORE APPLYING

#Tip 1 Spend some time in a primary or secondary school setting if you can. Observe behaviour management strategies and how the school is inclusive of all – what do you notice? Do you see examples of things that work well or less well? If yes, what are they and why are they working, or not?

#Tip 2 Do your research, about the course and our university – we love to know why you would like to study with us specifically.

#Tip 3 Consider why you want to teach and be ready to share your motivation.

#Tip 4 Consider what the role of a teacher involves. You can also think about values; what your values are and what sort of teacher you want to be, what you'd want your pupils to pick up and learn from you, and how? What could you bring to the role?

Think carefully about the age range you are interested in. Think about your own qualities and what will make you a great teacher. What would you bring into the school where you work (e.g. your hobbies, qualifications, interests, or personal qualities)?

PREPARING FOR YOUR INTERVIEW

#Tip 5 Read up about the expectations in the National Curriculum, Core Content Framework and Teaching Standards*. Don't worry – you won't be tested on these, but it is good to have a look and see what aspects you feel will be easy for you and which you may feel less confident about – essentially what interests you, particularly if you are applying for a specialism.

*You can find links to these key documents below.

#Tip 6 Reflect on what experiences you have had in your own education and then think about what you have learned about teaching as a result. Teaching is a profession that requires constant reflection, and as teachers are making so many decisions, a lot of learning comes through doing it. At your interview show us that you can think and reflect.

#Tip 7 Look at / research how behaviour is managed in schools and the role of rewards in teaching and learning.

#Tip 8 Read the email with interview preparation instructions very carefully and take care over your presentation if you are asked to make one. If you have any doubts, don't hesitate to ask. It is not a failing to ask questions. However, if you do need to ask, try to do it several days before the interview – you don't want to look like you only thought about it the night before.

#Tip 9 Research. Talking is easier if you are informed enough to have content to say. Research or think about things such as what makes a good teacher and what difficulties teachers face, but also things like safeguarding and inclusion.

#Tip 10 Have an idea about the ongoings of education in the news, media coverage and any significant changes happening in the sector related to teaching.

AT YOUR INTERVIEW

#Tip 11 If you are asked to take part in a group task or presentation, think about what will make you stand out. This might mean thinking about links across different subjects in the curriculum and what strengths you might have to offer.

Talk and contribute – this is really what we are looking for (including when doing the group activities). It's ok to express opinions, ask questions and challenge others; those are not unacceptable behaviours here. We're not looking for 'correct' or perfectly formed opinions, merely the ability to discuss your thoughts and get a useful conversation going or to achieve a good idea.

If you don't know what to say, start with a phrase like *'I've never been sure if x is the case, but'* or a question such as *'What do you all think about x? I find it hard to know what's best but...'*

#Tip 12 Be friendly, positive, and enthusiastic. Teaching is a profession built on relationships. This means that smiling, active listening, positive body language will all make a big impression.

#Tip 13 Identify specific examples when you have worked, or volunteered, with children, and what it was that you did that made a difference to them. Be ready to talk about specific examples – it doesn't matter if these examples aren't from school!

#Tip 14 As teaching is a profession, do come to your interview wearing smart clothing. This doesn't have to be a suit, but avoid wearing jeans and trainers, for example. Essentially, come dressed for a formal interview.

Finally, remember the interviewers are not trying to catch you out! They are trying to work out if you would be successful on the course, so they genuinely want to hear about you and why you think teaching is the right job for you.

We are looking for future teachers who have a desire to learn and are curious about how to be an effective, high-quality, and inclusive teacher – if you think that's you then we would love to hear from you!

USEFUL LINKS

The National Curriculum:

www.gov.uk/national-curriculum

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2

The Teachers' Standards for Qualified Teacher Status:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards

Teachers' Standards (Early Years):

www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-teachers-standards

Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Core Content Framework:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/initial-teacher-training-itt-core-content-framework