

The guidance below was written to support applicants for the PGCE secondary programme who may not be familiar with this kind of application. All the guidance was written by successful candidates utilising TDA funds. Thanks to: Joyti, Mohamed, Isabelle, Nisreen. July 2010

## Application Hints and Tips

1. When applying online, step-by-step instructions are provided to assist you with your application. Follow these instructions carefully and use the help facility and FAQs.
2. Practise online as much and as often as you like as changes can be made to your application at any stage before the completed document is submitted to GTTR. So remember to make a note of your username and password.
3. You can ring **GTTR Helpline** if you have any queries on **0870 1122205**.
4. You may name up to four institutions of your choice for secondary and just two for primary applications. These should be placed in priority order.
5. Don't rush the application. This is your chance to persuade the initial teacher training (ITT) providers to invite you for interview.
6. Check your qualifications (GCSEs, A/AS Levels, Vocational A Levels, Degree etc) match the entry requirements specified for the course/s for which you are applying. If they don't it is unlikely to be worth your effort applying.
7. Once you have met the entry requirements, the personal statement and your reference will be the main factors in the selectors' decision.
8. There is limited space on the GTTR form (47 lines or up to 4000 text characters, including spaces) for your personal statement which you must keep to so you need to make sure you use that space well and select experience from which you can draw examples to demonstrate your relevant skills and enthusiasm for teaching young people and your subject.
9. Make every sentence count and your content needs to be well written, relevant, concise and avoid any tired cliches. **Avoid** - the *I love children/I believe teaching is a good thing* approach - they want to know what you enjoyed from your classroom experience, why you think you would make a good teacher, what you have learned from the experience, tell them about your evidence.
10. Be reflective and analytical regarding past experiences. Let your enthusiasm for teaching and working with children shine through in everything you say.
11. Be exceptionally careful with spelling and grammar. Re-read the next day and ask someone else to check too.
12. You have 20 lines in which to list where you have worked (paid and unpaid), dates, job titles, employers and responsibilities. Use the personal statement to elaborate on how **this work experience** is relevant to teaching.
13. Finally you need to think about who you are going to list as your academic referee. It will be difficult to gain a place without one. Your referee should be someone either from college or school who can comment on your ability to succeed on the course, and is usually one of your teachers or tutors. However if you are currently employed in a school and/or the Head can endorse your effectiveness in the classroom this may be a better referee than a tutor from some years at university.  
**IMPORTANT:** Check the academic reference criteria for the course you wish to apply for before making your choice. Criteria for some courses are particularly strict and must be adhered to.

14. GTTR would expect to see an academic reference if you have been in education in the last 5 years. If you have not been in education for this time, your referee should be someone who is able to talk professionally about your application and potential, such as an employer or training officer. The chosen referee cannot be a family member or friend.
15. The second referee is often not taken up by ITT providers.
16. Most delays with applications are the result of references not being provided. You may need to check and chase your referee yourself. It is always a good idea to ask the referee before you send off an application and if need be to send some details of what you have been doing since that person last worked with you.
17. Once you have completed the application, print out a copy so that you can remind yourself of the content before any interviews.

The part of the form which applicants have most difficulty with, and which is the most important, is the question that usually says:

The online application asks:

*'Describe briefly your reasons for wanting to teach, giving the relevance of your previous education and experience, including teaching, visits to schools and other work with young people.'*

The **3** key things you need to get across on that blank space are:

- **Your personal enthusiasm and motivation to be a teacher**
- **The relevance of your past/current academic study to what you want to teach**
- **And your recent practical experience in school.**

We have provided good and weaker examples of the statements.