



University Intake Targets for Initial Teacher Education 2026–27



University Intake Targets for Initial Teacher Education 2026-27

Issue Date: 13 February 2026

Reference: SFC/AN/03/2026

Summary: Announcement of university intake targets for the controlled subject of Initial Teacher Education for AY 2026-27.

FAO: Principals of Scotland's universities, and the general public.

Further Information: **CONTACT:** Funding

DIRECTORATE: Investment & Research

TEL: 0131 313 6500

EMAIL: funding@sfc.ac.uk

Table of Contents

University Intake Targets for Initial Teacher Education in AY 2026–27	3
Purpose	3
Summary of intake targets for AY 2026–27	3
Priority Secondary subjects and consolidation policy	3
Gaelic education	4
Teachers in Catholic schools	4
Diversity in the teaching profession	4
Funded student places	4
Further information	5

University Intake Targets for Initial Teacher Education in AY 2026–27

Purpose

- I am writing to announce the university intake targets to the controlled subject of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) for Academic Year (AY) 2026–27.

Summary of intake targets for AY 2026–27

- The table below summarises the sector level ITE intake targets for AY 2026–27, which are reduced from AY 2025–26. The details of the intakes, including individual university targets, are set out in [Annex B](#).

Academic Year	Primary Undergraduate (& Combined)	Primary PGDE	Secondary Undergraduate (& Combined)	Secondary PGDE	Total
2025–26	777	784	336	2,000	3,897
2026–27	762	720	336	2,000	3,818

- In setting the intake targets for AY 2026–27, SFC has taken account of a letter of guidance received from the Scottish Government on 27 January 2026. A copy of this letter is attached as [Annex A](#). In line with this guidance, and following university discussions, the overall number of student teacher intake places on ITE programmes for AY 2026–27 is being reduced by 79 (2.0%) from AY 2025–26. The reduction of 79 relates to Primary intakes.

Priority Secondary subjects and consolidation policy

- Universities have historically found it challenging to achieve target intakes in some subjects. The Scottish Government and SFC remain open to continued work with universities to develop alternative routes into subjects which have traditionally been difficult to recruit to, in response to the changing patterns of student demand for flexible learning routes.
- However, we recognise that challenges are likely to remain with recruitment to some subjects. It is therefore vital that universities continue to be proactive in the promotion of teaching as a career choice for students, both in their own institutions and in other universities that do not offer teaching provision.
- Table 2 in [Annex B](#) sets a subject specific intake target for each individual university. Working with the Scottish Government and the Teacher Workforce Planning Advisory

Group, SFC will continue to monitor recruitment to these subjects to assess if the sector is achieving the subject targets. We will also continue discussion with the Scottish Government and universities on the approach to the recovery of funds for any over and under-enrolment in individual subjects.

Gaelic education

7. The supply of teachers able to teach in the Gaelic medium continues to be a priority for Scottish Ministers. The university targets set out in Table 1 in [Annex B](#) include intakes specifically for Gaelic provision (summarised in [Annex C](#) and denoted with a **G**).
8. In addition to the above, universities are free to recruit as many student teachers of Gaelic as possible without being penalised. However, SFC is aware of the difficulties universities face in meeting intake targets specifically for Gaelic medium provision through the PGDE routes.
9. To tackle this, we expect universities to promote this provision on a part-time basis, as well as a full-time basis, and to consider the introduction of further avenues to increase the numbers of Gaelic medium teachers in both the Primary and Secondary sectors, where possible.
10. Universities are asked to note the priorities relating to teacher education contained within the National Gaelic Language Plan and the Gaelic Education Guidance, as referenced in the Scottish Government's guidance to SFC. In addition, universities are asked to contribute to the teacher education work stream of the Faster Rate of Progress initiative for Gaelic.

Teachers in Catholic schools

11. Universities are asked to note the Scottish Government's advice on training teachers for Catholic schools, as set out in their guidance in [Annex A](#). In particular, Catholic PGDE students at the Universities of Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Strathclyde, West of Scotland, and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, should be made aware of the Catholic Teachers Certificate that is available to them – delivered by the University of Glasgow – to enable them to teach Religious Education in Catholic schools, subject to Church approval.

Diversity in the teaching profession

12. To support the Scottish Government in developing an education workforce that is representative of Scotland's increasingly diverse population, universities are asked to embed a proactive approach in terms of race equality.

Funded student places

13. SFC will provide further information with regards to associated funded places for ITE in

our final university funding allocations for AY 2026-27, scheduled to be published at the end of May 2026.

Further information

14. Please contact Funding, email: funding@sfc.ac.uk.

Helen Cross
Director, Investment & Research