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| **UniLogo** | **GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION RECRUITMENT & ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE FOR SCHOOL DIRECT ITE PROGRAMMES** |

The Graduate School of Education has clear and consistently applied selection procedures for recruiting to its School Direct Initial Teacher Education programmes.

It is absolutely necessary that all applicants experience a fair, transparent process which is consistent across Lead schools. We encourage applicants to attend all of their interviews, and do not put pressure on them to accept offers immediately. This has the double benefit of (a) ensuring that we comply with DfE requirements and (b) proving popular with applicants who appreciate the fact that we respect their autonomy.

1. All applications are screened initially by the University of Exeter Admissions department to check:

* Basic entry requirements (degree, GCSE/equivalence, references)
* Eligibility of international qualifications
* Declaration of a Disability

Any issues arising from this screening (e.g. overseas qualifications which may not be equivalent, fee status queries, lack of Maths GCSE etc.) are highlighted to the School Direct Programme Director and the lead school.

**Troubleshooting:**

If you notice that an applicant was born overseas or has had overseas residence, please flag this to the university admissions team asap to alert us to the need to conduct a **fee query.** We will check this, but early flagging may help us to get on to it quickly.

1. School Direct lead schools then check the applications in line with the guidance provided by the Graduate School of Education (GSE) website on the minimum requirements for University of Exeter ITE programmes and decide to invite to interview or reject the applicants on the basis of this guidance. Any deviations from the University of Exeter subject-specific minimum requirements must be discussed and agreed with the School Direct Programme Director.

**Troubleshooting:**

You should have all of the information you need to reliably decide whether to offer a place when you interview an applicant. **Please do not invite applicants to interview until this is in place**. Delaying an interview for a short time so that you can be confident in knowing (a) what conditions an offer might have (SKE, GCSE Maths etc) and (b) what fees the applicant will need to pay, is far preferable to inviting an applicant and then not being able discuss the conditions an offer might have, or telling them one thing at interview and changing it afterwards.

Please note that we cannot require applicants to have spent time recently within a school setting.

1. School Direct lead schools update the DfE Apply system themselves with who they want to invite to interview and who they want to reject. If rejecting an applicant before interview, lead schools update the university with the reasons for rejection using the Reasons for Rejection Record (e.g. inadequate prior qualifications/ subject knowledge; documents or reference not provided). Please note that lack of recent experience in school may not be a reason for rejection (DfE requirement). Lead Schools inform the Partnership Office of their set dates for interviewing and update them regularly of any changes to interview dates throughout the year. Lead schools are free to ask for a member of university staff to attend to support the decision-making process, and the Programme Director will arrange this where possible. A random sample of spot check visits may be made during the year by the School Direct Programme Director or their representative for quality assurance purposes.

**Troubleshooting:**

It is important that we can robustly explain why we reject applicants. Please try to avoid rejection 'by default' when RBD deadlines elapse. If you are awaiting trainee documentation and they do not provide it in time, you can select 'failure to provide documents' as a reason for rejection the day before the RBD deadline.

1. School Direct lead schools manage the process for inviting applicants to interview including providing further information about the specific course they have applied to join, the School Direct route being offered and clear details of any requirements (presentation; written work etc) for the interview process. For all fee-paying route applicants, the lead school also needs to request that each applicant brings photographic ID with them to the interview for visual identification purposes.
2. At face to face interviews, lead schools need to ensure that they verify each applicant’s identity by taking copies of the photographic ID provided and sending it to the University Admissions team along with the interview paperwork. If the applicant does not provide appropriate photographic ID at interview or if the interview is taking place online, the DBS Admissions team will get in touch with the applicant (if they are successful) to request they complete a visual identity form. This will need to be signed by a third party who can verify their identification – the criteria for who this signatory can be will be the same as for getting a new passport application photo verified.
3. The interview format for School Direct routes is at the discretion of the individual lead schools. However, a list of suggested questions will be supplied to the lead schools by the School Direct Programme Director at the beginning of each recruitment cycle. The interview and related tasks must cover the characteristics assessed on the interview record.
4. The interview process reviews subject knowledge, prior experience and key characteristics, both to assess applicants’ potential to meet all the standards for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), and to identify further training needs. A standard University of Exeter School Direct Review, Interview and Decision Record (based on the Core ITE Interview Record) should be completed by the lead school for each interviewee. Where appropriate, reasons for rejection should be clearly identified using the standard ITE Reasons for Rejection form. A subject knowledge development target must be discussed at interview and recorded on the interview record form returned to the university. If a Primary applicant does not have Maths or English GCSE at grade B but a school believes them to be suitable for the programme, a Support Plan document must also be completed and returned with the paperwork.

**Troubleshooting:**

If you would like an applicant to undertake an SKE this will be reviewed by the university and made a condition of their offer. Note that the SKE must be approved by the University rather than by the lead school. Careful consideration of the length of SKE should be given and only the minimum length of SKE needed to address the subject knowledge gaps should be offered.

Once SKE courses start, if an approval request email comes through from an SKE provider to a contact at the lead school, it should be forwarded to the university admissions team. Only the university should approve extensions to SKEs.

For all applicants, please make sure that the target box on the interview record is completed and that this includes a subject knowledge development target. This target starts the process of subject knowledge development which continues across the training year and beyond, and helps to warm the trainees up for the start of the course. There is a study skills support guide available on the Lead Schools web page which you might also use as a pre-course target for trainees with 2:2 degrees.

1. A signed copy of the interview paperwork including the photographic ID, where applicable, should be scanned to the University of Exeter Admissions department ([pgceadmissions@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:pgceadmissions@exeter.ac.uk)) within 48 hours of the completion of the interview, and no later than 38 days into the 40 working day deadline for submitting offer decisions. All interview records leading to an offer of a place will then be read and signed by the School Direct Programme Director (or their representative) to confirm the offer. Note: if paperwork is received after this deadline it may not be possible to process it in time which will cause the applicant to be rejected by default by the DfE Apply system.

**Troubleshooting:**

For face to face interviews: please ensure that you complete the document checklist, take copies of photographic ID, scan original certificates or documents, and return these to the university admissions team. Without these, we have to ask the applicants to send the documents directly to us despite the fact that they already provided them at interview, which causes irritated applicants and looks disorganised.

1. Successful applicants are made a conditional offer on the DfE Apply system by the University of Exeter Admissions Office. This offer will be subject to providing evidence of meeting the academic and non-academic conditions listed in the offer. These conditions will include the applicant having an enhanced DBS disclosure which is deemed satisfactory by the University, the applicant being assessed as fit to teach or fit to teach with reasonable adjustment, provision of originals of their degree certificate and GCSE English, Maths and where appropriate Science certificates (or equivalent) and where appropriate, evidence of further subject knowledge enhancement. (Note for School Direct salaried route applicants, the DBS disclosure and fitness to teach assessment should be assessed by the lead/employing school and confirmation of a satisfactory outcome for both processes should be provided by the lead school to the University).
2. Following a conditional offer of a place, the University of Exeter Admissions Office initiates the DBS disclosure application process (for School Direct fee-paying route applicants only); initiates the medical check of Health and Physical Capacity to Teach process (again, for fee-paying route applicants only) and requests evidence of the applicants’ qualifications, (originals not copies) where not already seen by the lead school, to check their authenticity.
3. Once all conditions (academic and non-academic) have been met, an unconditional offer is made by the University of Exeter Admissions Office and during the month leading up to the start of the programme all unconditional applicants are able to register on-line. Those who remain conditional on the first day of the programme are able to provisionally register, subject to them providing evidence of their outstanding conditions by a specified date (normally the end of October) and signing a document stating that they understand the implications of not providing this evidence i.e. that anyone not providing this outstanding evidence will have their provisional registration withdrawn and will not be able to continue with the course.
4. 12. Lead schools must keep the university informed of any issues following offers - e.g. withdrawals, requests to change courses, problems with SKEs. This is to avoid applicants being contacted with questions or information which is no longer relevant to them and to ensure that arrangements for registration are smooth.
5. Lead schools are encouraged to continue to recruit into the summer break where needed. However, schools must also consider whether they have adequate time to organise placements for trainees who may be starting the course at short notice, and whether those applicants have adequate time to prepare for the course (e.g. completing subject knowledge targets, organising preliminary experience if you require them to).

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