

Teaching and Classroom Support

Do you want a rewarding and stimulating job where no two days are the same? Or would you like to see personal development in people and make a difference to their lives? If so, then you should definitely consider teaching or classroom support as a career.

There's no doubt that teaching can be an exhausting vocation at times. But, even if your students don't seem to want to learn, you can rest assured that your enthusiasm for a subject can sow the seeds which can grow throughout a student's life!

The latest figures from 2024 report that there were 51,594 school based teachers in Scotland, compared to 52,221 in 2023. Around 95% of Scottish schools are state schools, run by the 32 Scottish local authorities. ¹

What areas can I work in?

There are many areas that you can work in the education sector: primary school teaching, secondary school teaching, learning support teaching and classroom support, private tutoring or teaching, and college or university lecturing.

To see the routes to getting into each of these sectors, take a look at our [Career Pathway](#).

What kind of companies can I work for?

Possible employers include:

- local authority-run pre-schools, primary and secondary schools
- independent schools or academies
- commercial language schools
- young offenders' institutions
- charities
- colleges and universities.

What's the job market like?

According to the Scottish government, in 2024 there were 598 less teachers working in Scottish schools compared to 2023. The pupil to teacher ratio (PTR) in schools has increased from 13.2% to 13.3% in 2024. ¹

Demand continues for some subjects including STEM subjects and modern languages. For example the target intake for maths students in 2024 was 250 but only 75 was achieved. The target for Chemistry students was 159 but only 54 was achieved. ²

In Scotland's colleges, employment figures have decreased slightly: as of 1st October 2024 there were 13,092 staff working in colleges (49% teaching staff and 51% support staff), 68% of whom worked full time. ³

In Scottish universities, the total number of academic staff for the 2023/24 session was 27,830, an increase of

1,085 from the previous year. ⁴

There is work for teachers of English as a Foreign Language in Scotland, as well as elsewhere in the UK and abroad, as more people want to learn to speak English.

Facts and figures

In Scotland in 2024 there were:

- 2,575 early learning and childcare centres, 1,978 publicly funded primary schools and 360 publicly funded secondary schools ¹
- 107 Additional Support for Learning (ASL) schools for children who need extra learning or behavioural support ¹
- 24,468 primary teachers, 24,988 secondary teachers, and 2,138 teaching in Additional Support for Learning (ASL) schools ¹
- 679 teachers working in early learning and childcare centres ¹
- in the primary sector, 89% of teachers were female. ¹

For Scottish FE institutions in 2022/23:

- there were 25 colleges across 15 regions in Scotland with around 218,145 students ³
- 8,790 students progressed onto university (51% onto year 2 or 3) ³
- 19% of 18-19 year-olds attended full time ³
- colleges delivered around 20% of all higher education in Scotland. ³

At Scottish HE institutions in 2023/24:

- the top three areas of study in Scotland, based on enrolment numbers were: subjects allied to medicine (27,605); business and management (20,270); and social sciences (16,235) ⁵
- the three institutions with the highest number of Scottish students enrolling for a first degree were: the University of Edinburgh (25,475); the University of Glasgow (21,370); and Glasgow Caledonian University (13,915). ⁶

Want to find out more?

You can find out more information about becoming a teacher at the Scottish government [Teach in Scotland](#) website.

Sources

¹ [Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland 2024](#), Scottish Government (December 2024)

² [Teacher Workforce Planning Advisory Group](#), Scottish Government (April 2025)

³ [Colleges Scotland Key Facts 2025](#)

⁴ [Who's working in HE?, HESA](#) (January 2025)

⁵ [What do HE students study?, HESA](#) (April 2025)

⁶ [What do HE students study?, HESA](#) (April 2025)