



Bachelor of Education – UNSW Approach to Selection

Following national guidelines, students are selected for initial entry to the UNSW Bachelor of Education dual degrees of Teaching based on academic (e.g., suitability for an undergraduate degree in the specific disciplinary area chosen, and their level of achievement, i.e., ATAR or equivalent, with a minimum ATAR of 80 normally expected). In line with UNSW core values, the overarching aim is to ensure teacher education students have strong disciplinary content knowledge and are highly motivated to become teachers. Consequently, it is a requirement that all BEd students successfully complete a full year (48 UOC) of studies in their specific disciplinary content area (eg. maths, science, economics, arts, etc) before undertaking any discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogic studies (methods) or professional experience placements in schools. At the end of their first semester they must also complete a motivational statement as to why they want to be a teacher, which is scored on a 2-point scale, No– incoherent, irrelevant or inappropriate reasons, Yes - coherent and valid reason. If students score No, they are counselled out of the program.

However, we recognize that academic scores do not necessarily accurately predict performance in teacher education programs and that motivational or personal statements by themselves are inadequate for effectively assessing the non-academic capabilities deemed necessary for teaching. Therefore, the School of Education has adopted a NSW-wide NESA-approved framework for teacher selection that places the emphasis on a continuum of formative and summative assessments for confirming teaching suitability at multiple time points within our program. Before their first supervised professional experience placement all teacher education students in the Bachelor of Education must successfully complete the national Literacy and Numeracy Test for initial teacher education and the Classroom Readiness Questionnaire, a pre-professional experience self-assessment tool that requires students to provide evidence of success across six areas (subject content, inherent requirements, professional language/literacy/numeracy, oral communication, classroom management, commitment to the profession), then their assessments are endorsed (or not) by at least two staff members who teach them. Students also complete a situational judgement test (SJTs) - scenario-based measurement methods designed to assess individuals' judgement in contextualised workplace settings - to evaluate a number of key non-academic capabilities deemed necessary for teaching (e.g., adaptability, empathy). We also undertake extensive evaluation of teacher suitability for their specific teaching areas, including a compulsory microteaching assessment, and on all professional experience placements, including the first semester placement as a teaching assistant, using direct observation, critical assessment tasks, and multiple assessments as well as a teaching performance assessment and a set of inherent requirements used by a range of UNSW teacher education providers. We are continually monitoring and evaluating the relationship between these measures, the performance of our students on professional experience and their graduate outcomes, including levels of self-efficacy. If a particular mechanism/approach to a Program Standard is found to be ineffective, including the motivational statement, we address this through our regular evaluation and improvement processes