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**The Apple Teachers
guide to securing your
first teaching post!**

1.0 Introduction

Apple Teachers Ltd is a recruitment consultancy for teachers that specialises in finding permanent teaching positions for newly qualified teachers. As well as years of recruitment experience, we are qualified teachers and are recognised by The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and as well as having Recruitment and Employment Confederation status.

We have exclusivity with many schools and have strong working relationships with Headteachers in the state and independent sectors at both secondary and primary level. All the schools that we work with will offer excellent support to NQTs and will help you through your Induction Year.

We offer free guidance with the application and interview process in order to help you to secure your first teaching position and can support you as your career develops by providing you with teaching opportunities which involve additional responsibility such as Head of Department posts.

We hope that you will find this guide really useful and have tried to cut out any waffle in order to make it as practical as possible. We have also consulted several Headteachers and have included some tips from them.

If you have any feedback for us (good or bad) we'd love to hear it so please don't hesitate to contact us via one of the methods below;

www.appleteachers.com
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1.1 Different Job Search Methods

Apple Teachers Ltd

Obviously we think the best way of finding your first teaching job is to sign up with us, which you can do by visiting our website www.appleteachers.com, emailing us at helendoubler@appleteachers.com or calling us on **07867654459**.

We will send you an application form to complete which should be returned to us via email. We then conduct an informal telephone interview with you and send your details directly to the Headteacher of the school you are applying to. As the Headteachers we work with trust us, we have an extremely high success rate with over 90% of those we recommend being invited to attend an interview at the school!

There are, of course other recruitment consultancies out there, but just be careful that the post you are applying for is a permanent one rather than supply as you ideally want a role where you will be supported through your induction year.

Times Educational Supplement (TES)

The newspaper version comes out every Friday, however the best way to search for jobs in the TES is via TES online www.tes.co.uk. You can sign up to receive job alerts for the area or role that you are looking for and they often have articles offering good advice for teachers.

Locally

Many schools, particularly in the Primary Sector advertise locally in newspapers and via the radio. You can of course call or visit a school and see whether you can arrange to meet with the Headteacher to discuss any potential opportunities.

Speculative Applications

Have a look at the websites of the schools in the areas you want to work. Usually teaching vacancies are displayed on the school's website. However, even if they don't have a vacancy in your particular subject, it can often be worth sending your CV to the Head along with a covering letter, as they will keep your details and will often contact you directly if a vacancy does arise.

NQT Pool / Brokerage Scheme

Many County Councils run schemes whereby NQTs complete one application form which gets distributed to all local Headteachers that have a potential vacancy in that subject. Some County Councils run schemes for Primary, Secondary and Special Education whereas others will just focus on one or two of these areas. Visit the website of the County Council in the areas you would consider working for more information.

1.2 The do’s and don’ts of CVs, application forms and covering letters

- ✓ Do keep your CV concise and ensure it is no more than two pages.
- ✓ Do ensure that all sections are clearly laid out and use tables to hold data such as education details.
- ✓ Do put your education and work experience in chronological order with the most recent first.
- ✓ Do try and make it relevant to the position you are applying for
- ✓ Please spell check and proof read your CV!
- ✓ Do ensure that you have a professional email address.
- ✓ Read the instructions on completing application forms carefully, do they want it to be hand written or typed and do they want a particular font?
- ✓ Only handwrite an application form if the school have asked you to, otherwise always complete it on the PC.
- ✓ Do ensure that you have accounted for every part of your history with no gaps. Often application forms have an extra sheet for any additional information you need to include.
- ✗ Don’t lie, or even exaggerate the truth!
- ✗ Don’t include your life history in your CV – it should be a summary of your education and work experience.
- ✓ Try to keep letters of application to one page in length – maximum one and a half sides. Always type covering letters unless otherwise instructed.
- ✓ Ensure you address your covering letter to the Headteacher (unless otherwise stated).
- ✓ Use the information from the advert, job description or person specification to help you to write your covering letter. Then you will

- be able to say how you have the required competencies / experience.
- ✓ Make sure you show that you have researched the school you are applying to.
 - ✗ Don’t exaggerate claims, for example if the exam grades of a class you have been teaching rose slightly, don’t say that they improved dramatically as the Heads can always check!
 - ✗ Don’t send out generic covering letters just changing the name of the school. Heads can tell and they really hate this!
 - ✓ Spelling, grammar and punctuation are really important so please check these and get someone else to proof read. Heads will not employ people who can’t get this right!
 - ✓ Ensure you start and end the letter appropriately. When you address it to a Headteacher, always use Yours sincerely to end (and remember sincerely does NOT have a capital 's'!)

1.3 Constructing your CV

(No need to write CV at the top!)

Name

Address

Tel / Mob

Email (Ensure it is appropriate – not hunkychenry@hotmail.com)

DOB (optional)

Personal Summary

This should be a concise snapshot of you. If it helps, use the person specification of the job you are applying for to help you. Make it relevant to the role, no longer than four lines and don't be too modest!

Employment History

Ensure you list these in chronological order with the most recent first and ensure you include your teaching experience. This information should be laid out as follows (use a table format if it helps) and any gaps in employment or education should be accounted for:

Dates of Employment	Organisation	Role
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Education

In chronological order with the most recent first and no gaps (table format can be good here too).

Dates	Awarding Institution	Qualifications & Grades obtained
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Depending on the jobs you have had, you may need to add detail on your job role. It is fine to include this here as long as it is concise and relevant.

Achievements

Again, keep it relevant! Examples could be obtaining your Duke of Edinburgh Awards / becoming a level 3 basketball coach or a qualified First Aider etc.

Interests

Headteachers don't really want to know about your socialising habits. Include anything significant here ideally that you can also offer the school, such as sports you play or interests in Art etc. Don't say you have represented England at Basketball if you haven't as you may be roped in to taking the senior basketball squad!

Referees

For teaching positions you will need two referees and you should always check with them first! One should be your mentor at your placement school and the other should be your personal tutor from your School Direct /Bed or PGCE course. Include their title and full name, their position, the address of the university, work contact number and work email address.

1.4 Guidance notes for Letters of Application

Ensure that it is properly addressed, that the layout is appropriate and that you get the name of the Headteacher correct.

State clearly the position that you are applying for and how you heard about the vacancy.

Use the information from the job advert or person specification to identify the key skills, qualities and experience the school is looking for. Then state how you have these skills / qualities. For example; Ability to relate to young people, confidence, experience of organising educational visits.

In your letter you should attempt to say how you have these skills and qualities and even if you haven't organised a visit, state how you have used your organisational abilities in other areas.

Show that you have done your research on the school by including information that is relevant to them. For example; I am keen to work in a school with Maths and Computing status because.... Or Having looked at the recent Ofsted report on your school, I feel that I could contribute to the already excellent extra-curricular timetable that you offer your students...

Ensure that your letter gives the reader a good but realistic impression of you and if you have anything extra you can offer the school you should include this too (as long as it is relevant) For example if you have a football coaching qualification, say that you would be willing to assist with the extra-curricular football activities which shows you are able to contribute to the wider life of the school.

Make sure that anything you say in your letter of application can be backed up on your CV or application form and in your interview.

Try to keep the covering letter to 1 page in length, spell check it and make sure that you have time to read through it carefully before sending it in. "A previous career in public relations is something quite different to public relations"

Always ensure that you type out a covering letter, unless you are asked to hand write it.

LIAM SMITH

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Personal Statement

I am a leader in education with a motivational and versatile management style who believes in recognising the strengths of others, enabling them to give their best and encouraging them to develop. I am accountable and feel that it is important to lead by example and that my high standards are shared by the team I work with.

Teaching Experience

2007 – Present, Royal Grammar School, High Wycombe

Director of Sport & PE

- Responsibility for the provision of Sport and PE at RGS
- Leading a team of 6 PE specialists, 2 overseas gap students, 20 non specialist games staff and external coaches
- Responsible for the performance management of the Sport & PE team
- Chairing the Departmental Heads' Teaching and Learning forum
- Responsible for completing the department SEF in line with the School's SEF
- Ensuring the highest standards of teaching and learning in core and examination PE at GCSE and A Level
- Planning and leading Sports tours

2003 – 2007 – Dr Challoner's Grammar School, Amersham

Head of Physical Education

- Leading a team of 6 PE specialists and 1 gap student
- Responsible for the performance management of the PE team
- Responsible for teaching and learning and the development of the PE curriculum
- Responsible for completing the department SEF in line with the School's SEF
- Member of the Teaching and Learning Improvement Team (Whole School)

1999-2003 - John Colet School, Wendover

Teacher of Physical Education & Key Stage 3 Co-ordinator

- PE teacher responsible for GCSE and A Level
- Key Stage Coordinator with responsibility for pastoral care and discipline across Key Stage 3
- Involved with Key Stage 3 to 4 transition
- Visiting Yr 6 students in their respective schools to ensure a smooth transition to Yr 7

1997- 1999 - Chesham Park Community College, Chesham

Teacher of Physical Education

- Responsible for Boys' PE

Education

1996-1997	De Montfort University Bedford	Post Graduate Certificate of Education Secondary Physical Education
1993-1996	University of Bedfordshire	BSc (Hons) Sport and Fitness Science (2:2)
1991-1993	Coleg Glan Hafren Cardiff	A Level Physical Education A, Biology B Sociology B
1985- 1991	Llanishen High School Cardiff	9 GCSE's grades A-C (including Maths & English)

Additional Training

2010 – 2011	Leadership Pathways –National College of School Leadership Child Protection, Safeguarding – Royal Grammar School
2007 – 2008	Management and Leadership Development Programme - Bucks Education & Business Partnership RFU Level 3 Coaching Award
2002	ASA Teachers Life Guard Qualification RFU towards Level 3 Coaching Award
2000	RFU Adult Level 2 Coaching Award BTF Trampoline Coaching Award YMCA KS4 Fitness Room National Qualification RFU Referee's Award RFU Intermediate coaching Award
1997	Qualified Minibus Driver BAGA Gymnastics Award ASA Swimming Teacher Award

Achievements

Coaching

2007 -10	- London Wasps School of Rugby – Lead age group coach
2003-07	- Buckinghamshire U16's – Lead Coach
2003-07	- Regional U16's Selector

References

Mr R James Headteacher The Royal Grammar School Amersham Road High Wycombe Buckinghamshire 01494 528959 rj@rgshw.co.uk	Mr M Foster Deputy Headteacher Dr Challoner's Grammar School Chesham Road Amersham Buckinghamshire 01494 787500 mf@dcgs.co.uk
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1.5 Helpful terms / phrases for your covering letter

- I have utilised the latest technology to boost....
- Effective communicator at all levels
- I have evaluated areas where could be improved
- Problem solving / resolution examples
- Effective classroom practitioner, having been graded as ‘Outstanding’ in my previous lesson observation
- Sound interpersonal skills and able to communicate at a variety of levels
- My contribution to improving student tracking in the department by introducing led to overall improved levels of attainment
- Able to remain calm in pressurised situations
- Effective prioritisation skills and able to manage my time well
- Am fully aware of the guidelines around safeguarding
- Able to work independently and as part of a team
- Enjoy creating innovative and interactive lessons, for example...
- Believe in open and honest communication and the sharing of best practice
- Am looking to work in a mutually supportive environment where ideas are valued

1.6 Examples of a job description and person specification for a Leadership role;

Job Description

Accountabilities

- Fulfil the role of Designated Senior Person and take responsibility for all matters of child protection
- Set high expectations and secure high standards of behaviour, learning and attendance whole school
- Lead on the school's attendance policy and ensure high levels of attendance whole school
- Consistently and relentlessly implement the school's behaviour policy ensuring high and consistent standards of behaviour
- Create, implement, monitor and evaluate a

- Behaviour and Pastoral Development Plan which contributes positively to the achievement of the School Development
- Ensure the mechanisms to support good behaviour run smoothly and effectively
 - Lead on ensuring there is an accessible and cohesive provision of intervention clubs / drop-ins at every key stage

The successful candidate will demonstrate

- Drive and ambition: a relentless approach to improving standards
- Excellent interpersonal, communication and motivational skills
- The ability to support, challenge and hold others accountable
- High level of presence and impact
- Integrity
- Strong pedagogy and a commitment to continuous improvement
- A student-centred approach and high expectations for young people's outcomes
- The ability to use data to effect positive change
- The proven ability to bring about sustained improvement

1.7 Person Specification

Degree
Qualified Teacher Status
Higher degree/diploma or further professional qualifications
Evidence of systematic, recent & relevant professional development
Proven track record of outstanding teaching
Team leadership experience
Evidence of leading school-wide initiatives
Significant experience of working with staff to improve teaching and learning
Leadership of professional development
Experienced in monitoring & evaluating teaching and learning
Keen to develop own career
Ambitious to move to headship in due course

Able to prioritise & work flexibly, to tight deadlines Initiative, including an ability to anticipate and pre-empt events
Energy, optimism and motivation in the face of pressure and setbacks
Empathy with, & keenness to contribute to, the aims of the school
A liking for young people
Able to motivate staff and students
Caring & sympathetic; firm and fair
Excellent personal organisation & time management
Sense of humour and perspective

1.8 Job interviews – What to expect

The majority of interviews take the following format:

- Welcome by the Headteacher
- Tour of the school – this can be done by a member of staff or a student (they will also be asked to give feedback on you)
- You will normally be asked to teach a lesson
- You may be asked to mark a piece of work
- You may have an interview with the school council members (students)
- Interview with the Head / Deputy / Assistant Head, Head of department, possibly a school Governor or even the local vicar!
- You may have time with the members of the department, often over lunch or at break time
- Usually the position is offered once the interview process has been completed, or you may be contacted later on that evening at home

1.9 The Do's of interviews....

Research

Do your research on the school – ensure you have looked at the school's website as you may be asked what you thought of it.

Most schools would be happy for you to have a look around prior to attending an interview. This really helps if you don't know the school very well before applying and it is useful to do a 'dummy

run' to check out journey time and routes. Also ensure that you have seen a copy of the school's Ofsted report.

Appearance

Dress smartly – it is essential to wear a suit or something professional looking as Headteachers really don't like it if their potential employees haven't made an effort with their appearance. If you are interviewing for a PE post, take your teaching clothes with you, but make sure you arrive in a suit.

Preparation – Failing to prepare is preparing to fail! Ensure that you have fully prepared for your lesson. Feel free to contact the school in advance to find out about the class you will be teaching or which resources will be available to you. Many schools will offer to photocopy for you on the morning of your interview, but don't do this as it makes you look disorganised! You should arrive with a copy of your lesson plan for each person observing you and any resources you have prepared all photocopied. Remember to have back up if you intend to use ICT in your lesson.

Re-read your CV or application form and take a copy with you. You may also be asked to take some lesson plans from lessons you have taught previously. You may be asked to discuss these at interview.

Think about supplying stickers for the students to write their names on so that you can refer to them by name throughout your lesson. If you are using ICT in your lesson (which most schools would expect), ensure you have back-up material just incase it goes wrong

Interview technique

Don't be afraid of asking for clarification on a question if you are unsure, Headteachers would much rather you did this than muddle through without fully understanding the question.

Ensure you have good eye contact with the panel throughout your interview. Usually different panel members will ask different questions, so reply to the person who has asked you the question.

Be positive and enthusiastic throughout.

Give concise, honest answers and don't waffle.

Remember, your interviewers will want you to do well and they're not there to catch you out.

Think of some questions to ask such as how the school supports new teachers through the Induction year etc.

This may also be the time to discuss salary. You could ask whether the school takes previous experience into account when deciding what salary level to start you on. If you don't feel comfortable asking at this point that's fine, but it is worth discussing it if you are offered the post.

Prepare for questions on:

- Assessment for learning – your experience of it and how you use assessment effectively
- SEN and Gifted and Talented students – Your experience of both and how you cater for both within your teaching
- What you have found out / think of the school
- Why you would like to work at that particular school
- Examples of when you have been extremely pleased with a lesson
- Examples of when your lesson has not been satisfactory and why / what you did to improve it
- Strategies for behaviour management
- Examples of times where you have contributed to a school generally (extra-curricular involvement / taking assemblies etc)
- And obviously why you have decided to get into teaching

1.10 The Don'ts of interviews

- ✘ Don't arrive late – leave yourself plenty of time and allow for heavy traffic. If you are stuck somewhere just contact the school and let them know.
- ✘ Don't worry about being nervous, it's only natural!
- ✘ Don't try to cram too much into your lesson. They will want to see how you relate to the students and that you are confident in your subject. Think about supplying stickers for the students to write their names on so that you

can refer to them by name throughout your lesson.

- ✘ If you are using ICT in your lesson (which most schools would expect), don't try and use programmes you are not familiar with. Just keep it simple and ensure you have back-up material just in case it goes wrong
- ✘ If you are offered a post and verbally accept it, you should not then turn around a few days later and then reject the offer. If you're offered the job but are not sure about whether to accept or not, ask for some time to think about it. Most Headteachers will give 24 hours before wanting a decision.

1.11 Five top interview tips from local Headteachers

- At interview, candidates really should be smart and look their best! They shouldn't slouch in their chair and they should avoid over-talking and not letting the interviewers get a word in edgeways!
- In job applications it is very unwise to leave any clue that the candidate has merely photocopied previous applications to other schools and only changed the name of the school. For example, candidates sometimes fail to change all of the names of the school! The application should be tailored to the unique job description and not be a generic application.
- Candidates should also make sure they complete their employment history with no gaps; otherwise there may be a suspicion that they are trying to hide something.
- Spelling errors, especially 'grammar school' instead of grammar. Lack of relevance e.g worked behind student bar, is also awful.
- Biggest thing they don't prepare for in interview is the one where they are asked what they got wrong or didn't go well and what they learned from it. They always struggle not to talk themselves up and cannot show how they have grown and developed – it's not designed to trip them up!

Good Luck!!