



The National Association of
School-Based Teacher Trainers



17 April 2018

Rt. Hon Damien Hinds MP
Secretary of State for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BT

Dear Secretary of State,

We are writing on behalf of the organisations with an interest in the recruitment, training and professional development of teachers to share our concern about teacher shortages and make some constructive suggestions.

We welcome the measures already taken to address the supply crisis, particularly: the removal of caps on most recruitment to ITT programmes; the relaxation of skills test requirements; efforts to reduce teacher workload; the continued payment of ITT bursaries; and the introduction of some retention incentives. We also think that the proposals outlined in the 'Strengthening QTS' proposals have great potential, provided they are properly funded and that the emphasis is on supporting teachers through CPD rather than on adding additional barriers to people to becoming qualified. For our part, we are active in collecting intelligence on recruitment from our respective communities and sharing that, alongside possible remedies, with our colleagues at DfE. We are also in the process of developing new materials for marketing teaching as a profession, which we envisage will complement the 'Get into Teaching' campaign.

There are a number of reasons for the supply crisis. Some are demographic, with pupil numbers forecast to increase at the same time as the number of people in the age group that typically enter the profession is in decline. Others are economic, with increased competition from employers for a decreasing pool of graduates. Negative perceptions about the status of teaching as a career, the cost of training, concerns about workload and doubts about teaching's status as a profession are also having an impact.

We suggest the following measures to add to those already being taken:

- **Funding:** We are now in the second year of graduates completing three year degree programmes having accumulated annual tuition fee debts of £9,000, as well as significant maintenance loans. With a relatively small number of exceptions, even those trainees receiving bursaries will be expected to accumulate more debt to become qualified or, at the very least, forgo the opportunity to embark on alternative salaried careers. We have received

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reports of people being dissuaded from entering the profession, or being counselled by parents and others from doing so, for this very reason. Consideration should be given to waiving tuition fees for all those on postgraduate ITE programmes. Funds used for bursaries could be used to directly fund ITT, as could the resulting administrative savings and the money currently loaned to trainee teachers that may never be paid back.

- Enhance the status of teaching by: giving all teachers, especially those at the beginning of their careers, an entitlement to (and expectation to utilise) CPD, and taking steps towards teaching becoming an all Master's qualified profession; and subsidise membership of professional bodies and subject associations for teachers early in their career to ensure they have access to professional learning. These measures would help with both recruitment and retention.
- Simplifying the way in which the different routes into teaching are described. These can appear unnecessarily confusing. There are, in effect, just three main qualification routes: undergraduate; postgraduate; and employment-based. Attempts to explain the difference between the various sub-categories (many of which overlap) that fall under each of these headings has only served to over-complicate what could be described in relatively straightforward terms. An example of how this could be done is attached as an annex to this letter.
- Improve the application process. UCAS systems often appear cumbersome and can be slow at responding to changing needs. For example, we have been pressing for years for scope to share applications amongst different providers within the same ITE partnerships, and yet such an apparently straightforward idea is only now being seriously considered by UCAS and DfE.
- Replace skills tests with on-course assessments of literacy and numeracy skills. This would release £15 million for investment in CPD, fee-waivers and other measures, speed up the recruitment process and remove a barrier to the profession. It would not entail any kind of 'dumbing-down' as the robustness of on-course assessments could be checked by Ofsted as part of ITE inspections.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues with you in more detail.

Yours sincerely,



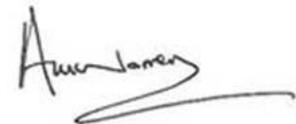
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James Noble-Rogers
Executive Director
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Dame Alison Peacock
Chief Executive
Chartered College



Andrew Warren
Chair
Teaching Schools Council

Annex

Routes into teaching

The number of different ways to become a qualified teacher can at first glance appear very confusing. Estimates about the number of routes into the profession vary, with some people identifying as many as 40 different options. The reality, however, is much more straightforward and is not nearly as complicated as can at first appear.

There are in effect three main routes into teaching:

- **Undergraduate**, for people without a degree but who do have qualifications equivalent to A Level and GCSE grade C/level 4 equivalents in maths and English (and, for primary, science). Most undergraduate programmes last for three or four years and lead to a degree in education. Most are for people who want to teach in primary schools, although there are also a small number of courses for secondary school teachers in some subjects. Students on undergraduate courses receive the same level of student support and loan entitlements as those on other degree courses.
- **Postgraduate fee-paying**. These are for people who already have a degree as well as meet the GCSE requirements. The courses generally last for one year and are available for those wanting to train as primary school teachers or teachers of a specific subject in secondary schools. The courses are delivered and led by either School Centred Initial Teacher Training providers – SCITTs – who often work in partnership with a university – or by universities working in partnerships with schools. They can also be delivered through the government’s School Direct (fee-paying) route, which involves individual schools working with a SCITT or university partner. Most courses lead to an academic qualification as well as to QTS, usually a Master’s level Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). Students on secondary postgraduate fee paying routes may qualify for a bursary, depending on the subject they are training to teach and the level (1st, 2:1, etc.) of their first degree. Students on postgraduate courses are also eligible to apply for student loan support on the same basis as undergraduate students.
- **Employment based routes** for people with a degree and who receive a salary while training. These are also delivered by schools working in partnership with SCITTs or universities through either the School Direct (salaried) route or through the new QTS apprenticeships. Some of these courses also lead to an academic qualification such as a PGCE. Another employment based route is Teach First, which recruits top graduates who receive a short intensive programme of training followed by further training while working in a school. These are also delivered in partnership with universities and lead to a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE).

There are a number of sub-categories under each of these headings which you might want to investigate. But before you investigate you will find it helpful to decide which of the above suits you best. Whichever option you choose you will have to pass government skills tests in numeracy and literacy before you can begin your training. You will also have to undergo a DBS criminal records check.

Detailed information about the different ways to become a teacher can be found at: https://getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/?gclid=EAlalQobChMlp9mH77Gv2qIVF2YbCh3xxqK-EAAYASAAEgIdMPD_BwE. You can also call Freephone 0800 389 2500 to discuss your options. More information on financial support for student and trainee teachers can be found at: <https://getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/funding-and-salary>