

Teacher Supply and Initial Teacher Education

(By 2020) ...Initial teacher education is predicated on strong subject knowledge right from the lower end of primary education and teachers entering the profession have a deep knowledge of the subjects they teach. Higher education institutions work in partnership with schools to ensure that pedagogical practice and skill is anchored in strong theoretical knowledge. Right from the point of entry into the profession, teachers both use and create evidence.

Extract from ASCL's *Blueprint for a Self-Improving System*

First principles

- 1 Teaching is a profession. As such, it is rooted in a body of knowledge and is evidence-informed. Initial teacher education (ITE)¹ should therefore be grounded in strong subject and pedagogical knowledge, developing the quality of instruction, classroom management and climate and professional behaviours.
- 2 Calculation through agreed modelling of numbers of teachers needed in each sector and region and the promotion of the status and value of teaching as a profession is a key role for government. However, the profession also has a responsibility to be taking action to support the supply of high quality teachers through school-led initial teacher education.
- 3 Groups of schools in the form of hard governance arrangements like multi-academy trusts (MATs), but also in soft partnership like teaching school alliances, have greater capacity to take on these system roles.

Analysis of the current system

Teacher supply

- 4 Recent evidence arising from a range of sources² showed that HE filled 90 per cent of allocated places in 2014, School Direct overall filled only 61 per cent of allocated places with the training route (fee based) recruiting 57 per cent of its target compared with 71 per cent for salaried route (Table 1, SFR 48/2014). School-centred initial teacher training provisers (SCITTS) filled 79 per cent of their places. In the past three years, overall recruitment numbers when matched

1 Throughout this paper the term Initial Teacher Education (ITE) is used in preference to ITT as a position statement in itself. Our view is that ITE describes a deeper theoretical understanding of pedagogy and subject knowledge. It is informed by a set of values and draws on evidence based research to inform our understanding of what makes effective teaching and learning in the classroom. While it is essential to develop a range of skills in classroom teaching, the practice of teaching is underpinned by secure pedagogical and subject knowledge.

2 UCAS statistical data release <https://www.ucas.com/corporate/data-and-analysis/ucas-teacher-training-statistical-releases> DfE report, 27 November 2014 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/initial-teacher-training-trainee-number-census-2014-to-2015>.

against the predicted level of need for trainees from the DfE's³ teacher supply model (TSM), was 99 per cent in 2012-13; 95 per cent in 2013-14 and 92 per cent in 2014-15. That works out to be a shortfall of 5,860 trainee teachers across three years. The shortfall is larger in some subjects than others indicating that the forthcoming supply of trainee (beginner) teachers is a matter for serious concern.

- 5 The census for 2014-15 showed that just 83 per cent of secondary places have been filled – this is the overall lowest level of teacher recruitment since 2008.⁴
- 6 Sir Michael Wilshaw, in his Ofsted annual report (November 2014), said: “There are serious implications for future NQT recruitment given such significant under recruitment of beginner teachers for the academic year 2015-16.”

Perfect storm: the impact of higher tuition fees, the economy and demographics

- 7 At the January 2015 UCAS status report, allocation for postgraduate teacher training handled through UCAS were down 18 per cent in comparison with the same point in 2014. This may be a consequence of the smaller cohort of graduates in the first year of the higher tuition fees and the overall dip in university applications.
- 8 At the same time, from 2016 through to 2022, there is a steady decline in the population of 21 year olds. This means the pool of graduates is likely to fall in absolute terms, meaning fewer teacher trainees.
- 9 This coincides directly with an economic upturn which means that there are more vacancies in the jobs market generally, and more graduate level job vacancies than there has been since 2008. This means that all employers are finding it more difficult to recruit – it is a ‘buyers’ market’ from the point of view of graduate job seekers.
- 10 The numbers of 11 year olds is rising, with the ‘bulge’ in primary-aged children moving into the secondary sector, which means more teachers will be needed.
- 11 This means there is a perfect storm brewing. It is not the fault of initial teacher training reforms; however a strong policy response will be needed to tackle this.

The Teacher Supply Model (TSM)


- 12 The TSM makes assumptions to estimate the number of new teachers required in the future and how many training places are required to meet this need. The outcomes from the TSM are used to allocate initial teacher training places to providers and to help meet the demand for the number of newly qualified teachers.
- 13 The TSM does not provide an accurate projection of teacher supply in large part because it fails to analyse by geographical region.

Routes into teaching and the application process

- 14 An unwieldy, over-complicated UCAS application process could in itself be a disincentive to potential candidates.

3 <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2014-11-06/213690/>

4 The figure of 83 per cent assumes that percentage of recruitment into specific subjects is capped at 100 per cent.



15 The plethora of routes into teaching has caused confusion for applicants, school staff, school leaders and university departments. Confusion about routes into teaching can be a disincentive to potential teachers as well as to school leaders. To help address this ASCL has produced a simple 'Routes into Teaching' guide.⁵

16 There are primarily two routes into teaching:

- Through higher education institutions – the 'PGCE route'
- School-led routes, which can also result in a PGCE.

17 Both routes lead to the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

School-led routes into teaching

18 School-led teacher training courses generally last a year and all lead to qualified teacher status (QTS). Many school-led courses result in a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) and/or master's-level credits on successful completion.

19 At this point in time, there is a range of school-led routes into teaching of which the first three are most common:

- **School Direct** – salaried and unsalaried routes.
- **School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT)** – it should be noted that many SCITT providers also run School Direct courses.
- **Teach First** – an education charity that runs a two-year course for outstanding graduates. The programme runs in schools in low-income communities.
- **Troops to Teachers programme** – for ex-service personnel.
- **Researchers in Schools** – a route for academics who have completed (or are finishing) a doctorate

20 It should be noted that the government expects teaching schools and teaching school alliances to lead the development of school-led initial teacher training through School Direct or by gaining accreditation as a SCITT provider.

21 However, it is important to note that schools do not have to be a teaching school or indeed in a teaching school alliance to offer School Direct training, although they are normally expected to be good or outstanding.

The management and allocation of places

22 The management of training places from The National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) to schools and universities is inefficient and unresponsive to schools' needs. The School Direct programme is variable at best. Many schools are frustrated by the organisation and management of School Direct itself. Places are not evenly spread across the country and do not take account of local demand.

23 The diversification of provision has meant that several universities have had to reduce or close their programmes. In November 2014 a report into the impact of ITE reforms on English higher education institutions stated that between 2012 and the academic year 2014-15 there has been a 23 per cent reduction in university ITE departments. The impact of this is to reduce the capacity of higher education.

The Carter Review

- 24 In his review of initial teacher training (The Carter Review)⁶, Sir Andrew Carter makes clear that whilst no one single route into teaching is any better than another, partnerships between schools and universities is crucial. Neither schools nor universities can educate teachers alone - his recommendations emphasise the importance of working together. His findings identified significant gaps in a range of provision such as subject knowledge development, subject specific pedagogy, behaviour management, assessment and preparation for teaching students with special educational needs and disabilities.
- 25 Carter's recommendations include the development of a revised ITE curriculum, in which all schools and universities would develop a curriculum programme in partnership.

Teacher supply and ITE in a self-improving system – policy proposals

For government

26 **Continue to develop the teaching schools network and expand the number and autonomy of SCITTs**

Teaching schools and SCITTs have established school-led training programmes. SCITTs have led school-based ITE for several years. They have a successful track-record not only in educating beginner teachers but also in retaining them. Schools could join their local teaching school alliance or SCITT, using a portion of the teacher fees to pay for the release of mentors who have achieved the profession defined standards.

27 **Support the strategic coordination of teaching schools and SCITTs**

In addition to the current programme of teaching school alliances, leadership of the SCITT sector should be developed at national level in order to oversee the development of a pipeline of teaching schools and SCITTs, coordinate these nationally and stimulate teaching schools and SCITTs in areas of the country where recruitment is most difficult.


28 **Protect providers in areas of the country where recruitment is most difficult**

With the current drop in applications, providers that cannot fill enough places to make ends meet and cover their costs might pull out. Consider possible safety net arrangements for providers faced with a shortage of applicants but serving parts of the country where their disappearance would cause real supply problems.

29 **Construct a recruitment and retention offer for teachers in areas where there is difficulty in recruitment**

High-performing MATs should be funded to recruit good and outstanding teachers and middle leaders on flexible contracts which enable deployment to schools in sub-regions or local areas where there is strong evidence of difficulty in recruiting and/or retaining good teachers and middle leaders. This could include a 'disruption payment' as a financial incentive for teachers on these contracts and pay accommodation expenses.

6 Sir Andrew Carter's report on the review of initial teacher training was published on 19 January 2015 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/carter-review-of-initial-teacher-training>.



30 Commit to pay off the annual repayment of student loans for as many years as eligible teachers remain in teaching in state schools

This incentive could be costed and targeted on the most severe shortage areas/subjects. It would be a successor to the 'golden handshake' acting as an incentive to teach.

31 Review and modify the TSM and the allocation of ITE places

The TSM needs to be able to take account of regional variation in supply and demand, ensuring sufficiency of teachers needed in each sector, subject and region.

For government and the profession

32 Support a profession-led campaign to attract people into teaching

The imminent teacher shortage and its impact is of such concern that a commitment from government to work in partnership with associated agencies to address the issue is necessary. The Teaching Schools Council might be appointed to lead this.

33 Implement the recommendations in the Carter Review

A core curriculum for ITE should be developed including strong foundation in subject knowledge and subject specific pedagogy, behaviour management, assessment and preparation for teaching students with special educational needs and disabilities. Provide training for subject mentors with agreed standards.

For the profession

34 Restore a secure focus on pedagogical and subject knowledge in ITE

There is an opportunity for schools and higher education to work together to ensure that teachers entering the profession have a strong foundation in pedagogical and subject knowledge. In the best examples of partnership work this is already the case. Some school-led providers are working effectively with universities, some have employed university education lecturers to develop the research element of pedagogical theory and schools are themselves becoming better at delivering these elements. However, there is inconsistent practice across the country and this is an area for further development.

35 Develop a professional learning ladder, of which ITE is the first rung, led and quality-assured by the profession

This is a good time to review the criteria that might make an effective professional learning institution. Quality assurance of effective professional learning is currently in the spotlight: proposals set out in the consultation on a College of Teaching refer to a set of standards for senior leaders responsible for CPD/professional learning and Sir Andrew Carter's report recommends the development of Mentor Standards. Now is the time to make the connections between the importance of ITE as a first rung on the professional learning ladder for teachers and teaching school/SCITTs' abilities to put in place effective standards for high quality professional learning for all teachers.