



NQT Quality improvement study

NQT Quality Improvement Study for the Training and Development Agency for Schools

Summary of the literature review conducted for Part 1 of the study, December 2007 - February 2008

Source of this summary

The literature review that this item summarises can be accessed from this web site, as can the full report of Part 1 of the study.

Summary

Publications suggest that **for teachers in general:**

- too few graduates are entering or staying in teaching;
- this is affecting secondary more than primary schools and certain subject areas more than others (e.g. physics, chemistry, maths);
- it is exacerbated by the anticipated retirement of many current teachers in the next 15-20 years;
- the pattern is subject to regional variation in intensity and focus (e.g. demand for teachers in the East and South East; issues are more intense in London).

There are similar concerns in many other countries. Approaches to deal with them have common features, they: emphasise teacher quality rather than quantity; focus on teacher development, performance and school needs; are more flexible in teacher training; give schools more responsibility for personnel management. UK policy initiatives reflect these features, e.g.: new initial teacher training (ITT) routes; fast track promotion schemes.

Publications indicate the following **in relation to NQTs.**

- Career choices
Commonly, reasons for choosing teaching are altruistic and relate to intrinsic features of the job; reasons for not choosing it relate to pay, stress, management and pupil behaviour.
- ITT and the quality of NQTs.
ITT courses may be too short to equip teachers for the classroom and there are gaps in provision, e.g. NQTs have issues in dealing with parents and handling difficult classroom behaviour. Trends are towards PGCEs rather than undergraduate courses and to school (employment) based ITT. Opinion is divided on the benefits of the latter.
In one study most NQTs had worked in supply after ITT, seen as positive for schools and NQTs. Subject knowledge may be a weakness in NQTs.
- The recruitment of NQTs
There are regional variations; in some areas NQTs find it difficult to find jobs and in others there is a growing demand for teachers. Geographical location of posts is important for NQTs, with difficulties in securing jobs relating to vacancy availability in desired locations (exacerbating difficulties for mature NQTs). The number of temporary contracts is increasing, because of budgetary constraints, with secondary NQTs more likely to secure an



NQT Quality improvement study

initial permanent post than primary. Disadvantaged schools are more likely to have difficulties in recruiting NQTs. Teachers tend to gravitate towards the type of school they attended (mainly related to socio-economic factors). NQTs often obtain posts in schools where they have been on placement.

- The retention of NQTs
Problems in retaining teachers affect secondary schools more than primary schools. More advantaged schools have better retention of teachers. Often teachers do not leave teaching permanently but move in and out of it. Some teachers move from the state to the private sector. Common reasons for leaving the profession are workload and pupil discipline, with financial issues (salary, housing costs etc) more problematic in London than other areas. The perceived status of teachers, the subjects they teach and their schools impact on retention. More teachers are leaving because they are on short term contracts.
- The induction of NQTs
There may be a relationship between induction experiences and intention to stay in teaching. One study found that 88% of NQTs had a formal induction programme but there are concerns about the variable quality of induction (e.g. issues include time allowance, expertise of mentors, being valued). NQTs may be afraid to speak negatively about their induction, especially if on temporary contracts. NQTs would welcome more support in addition to their induction, e.g. from ITT providers. The Career Entry Development Profile (CEDP) is not always used effectively and may not provide a positive basis for future CPD.

October 2008