

## NQT Quality improvement study

### 5.2 ITT routes into the profession

#### 5.2.1 Routes taken by NQTs.

SLT responses indicate that the full time PGCE is the most common source of NQT applicants for posts in schools overall (Table 15).

**Table 15 Routes taken by NQT applicants for vacancies: SLT member responses**

	Full time PGCE	Part time PGCE	Undergraduate teaching course e.g. BA, BSc	Employment based route e.g. GTP, RTP	Supply work
	%	%	%	%	%
All	7.0	0.9	2.4	3.5	0.6
Most	42.7	1.8	18.9	4.3	1.7
Some	43.2	22.7	53.4	36.4	23.8
A few	5.1	23.3	15.7	33.8	34.5
None	2.0	51.4	9.6	22.1	39.5
<b>Total n</b>	<b>653</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>362</b>

Table 16 (this re-presents data in Table 14 above that reported on response rates) suggests that the sample of NQTs responding to the survey, although much smaller than the sample of SLT members responding, mirrors SLT perceptions about routes into NQT jobs. The highest proportion of NQTs surveyed was from full time PGCEs, followed by undergraduate teaching courses, then by employment-based routes, then part time PGCEs and finally by supply work.

**Table 16 Routes taken by NQTs: NQT responses**

Full time PGCE %	Part time PGCE %	Undergraduate teaching course e.g. BA, BSc %	Employment based route e.g. GTP, RTP %	Supply work %	Total n
57.4	4.8	21.7	12.5	3.7	<b>272</b>

SLT responses indicate clear differences between secondary and primary schools, with Table 17 indicating that, as might be expected, the undergraduate teaching course is a much more common route for NQTs applying to primary schools than to secondary schools. Overall, the part time PGCE seems to be the least likely route for NQT applicants, Table 16 indicating that it is more common for NQTs applying to primary schools than for those applying to secondary schools. The differences between primary and secondary seem smaller for the employment-based routes, with both types of school replying mainly that some applicants are from those routes. However, a much larger proportion of primary than secondary schools have never had NQT applicants from employment-based routes. Whilst applicants from supply work are, along with those from part time PGCEs, least common overall, they seem more common in primary than secondary schools.

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Although the number of respondents from independent schools is small and caution should be exercised in placing too much credence on this information, Table 18 suggests that there is a greater focus in independent schools on full time PGCEs.

**Table 17 Routes taken by NQT applicants for vacancies by type of school: SLT member responses**

	Full time PGCE		Part time PGCE		Undergraduate teaching course e.g. BA, BSc		Employment based route e.g. GTP, RTP		Supply work	
	Pri %	Sec %	Pri %	Sec %	Pri %	Sec %	Pri %	Sec %	Pri %	Sec %
All	5.8	8.6	1.3	0.0	3.1	0.0	3.4	1.9	0.4	0.0
Most	31.3	71.4	2.6	0.0	24.0	1.9	3.4	5.8	2.4	0.0
Some	53.8	18.9	28.3	9.3	59.4	30.5	31.9	44.9	26.8	15.0
A few	6.9	0.5	18.7	35.1	9.9	37.1	30.2	41.7	32.1	41.1
None	2.2	0.5	49.1	55.7	3.6	30.5	31.2	5.8	38.2	43.9
<b>Total n</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>107</b>

**Table 18 Routes taken by NQT applicants for vacancies, by independent and non-independent schools: SLT responses**

		All/Most	Some/A few	None	Total
		%	%	%	n
Non-independent	Full time PGCE	49.0	49.1	1.9	<b>621</b>
	Part time PGCE	2.8	45.4	51.7	<b>317</b>
	Undergraduate teaching course e.g. BA, BSc	21.4	68.7	9.9	<b>476</b>
	Employment based route e.g. GTP, RTP	7.5	70.1	22.4	<b>438</b>
	Supply work	2.3	58.9	38.8	<b>348</b>
Independent	Full time PGCE	66.7	30.0	3.3	<b>30</b>
	Part time PGCE	0.0	57.1	42.9	<b>14</b>
	Undergraduate teaching course e.g. BA, BSc	15.0	80.0	5.0	<b>20</b>
	Employment based route e.g. GTP, RTP	9.1	72.7	18.2	<b>22</b>
	Supply work	0.0	38.5	61.5	<b>13</b>

In Table 19 although the differences are not great, there are indications that schools in the most deprived areas have fewer NQTs from full time PGCEs, more who have taken undergraduate teaching courses, more from employment-based routes and more who have done supply work (and in 5.2.3 below there are indications those having done supply work may not be well regarded by SLTs, so that this may be an indicator of difficulty in recruitment). As Table 20 indicates, care must be exercised in looking at patterns by school ethnicity as the number of responses from schools in any category other than over 75% white are small. However, there seems to be a greater proportion of NQTs in the 'most/all' category in schools with the smallest % of white pupils from full time PGCEs and



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undergraduate teaching courses, a greater proportion from employment-based routes in schools with 25 – 49% white pupils and a greater proportion of those who have done supply work in schools with the smallest % of white pupils.

**Table 19 Routes taken by NQT applicants for vacancies, by eligibility for free school meals: SLT responses**

		Pupils eligible for free schools meals			
		Most deprived	Upper middle	Lower middle	Least deprived
		%	%	%	%
Full time PGCE	All/Most	39.5	53.0	53.6	48.4
	Some/A few	59.2	44.3	43.0	51.6
	None	1.4	2.7	3.3	0.0
Part time PGCE	All/Most	1.7	1.2	3.4	4.1
	Some/A few	40.0	44.0	52.8	41.9
	None	58.3	54.8	43.8	54.1
Undergraduate teaching course e.g. BA, BSc	All/Most	19.4	20.0	21.4	24.1
	Some/A few	75.9	66.7	67.0	65.5
	None	4.6	13.3	11.6	10.3
Employment based route e.g. GTP, RTP	All/Most	7.9	6.4	9.1	6.7
	Some/A few	75.2	70.9	66.4	69.2
	None	16.8	22.7	24.5	24.0
Supply work	All/Most	2.7	4.4	2.1	0.0
	Some/A few	71.6	58.9	54.3	53.8
	None	25.7	36.7	43.6	46.3

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**Table 20 Routes taken by NQT applicants for vacancies, by ethnicity of school: SLT responses**

	White pupils	All/Most	Some/A few	None	Total
	%	%	%	%	n
Full time PGCE	0-24	60.7	39.3	0.0	<b>56</b>
	25-49	44.8	55.2	0.0	<b>29</b>
	50-74	45.0	51.3	3.8	<b>80</b>
	75-100	49.7	48.2	2.1	<b>477</b>
Part time PGCE	0-24	4.2	37.5	58.3	<b>24</b>
	25-49	0.0	46.2	53.8	<b>13</b>
	50-74	0.0	53.8	46.2	<b>39</b>
	75-100	3.2	45.4	51.4	<b>249</b>
Undergraduate teaching course e.g. BA, BSc	0-24	32.3	61.3	6.5	<b>31</b>
	25-49	8.3	75.0	16.7	<b>24</b>
	50-74	20.0	70.8	9.2	<b>65</b>
	75-100	21.7	68.6	9.8	<b>369</b>
Employment based route e.g. GTP, RTP	0-24	7.7	76.9	15.4	<b>39</b>
	25-49	18.2	72.7	9.1	<b>22</b>
	50-74	4.9	78.7	16.4	<b>61</b>
	75-100	7.8	67.7	24.6	<b>334</b>
Supply work	0-24	3.3	73.3	23.3	<b>30</b>
	25-49	6.3	50.0	43.8	<b>16</b>
	50-74	2.4	50.0	47.6	<b>42</b>
	75-100	1.9	58.0	40.1	<b>269</b>

Table 21 suggests some regional differences in the routes taken by NQTs into the teaching profession and this may relate to the ITT providers in those regions. The full time PGCE route seems to be less common in the Midlands, as does the part time PGCE (also less common in London) and does supply work. There are higher rates of 'none' for the employment-based routes in the South and North than in the other two regions.



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**Table 21 Routes taken by NQT applicants for vacancies, by region: SLT responses**

		Region			
		North	Midlands	South	London
Full time PGCE	All/Most	52.7	40.3	56.0	52.4
	Some/A few	46.8	55.0	42.6	46.4
	None	0.4	4.7	1.4	1.2
	<b>Total n</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>84</b>
Part time PGCE	All/Most	4.1	1.1	4.0	0.0
	Some/A few	56.1	31.1	48.0	44.2
	None	39.8	67.8	48.0	55.8
	<b>Total n</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>43</b>
Undergraduate teaching course e.g. BA, BSc	All/Most	24.6	22.1	18.9	12.7
	Some/A few	68.3	68.3	67.9	76.2
	None	7.1	9.7	13.2	11.1
	<b>Total n</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>63</b>
Employment based route e.g. GTP, RTP	All/Most	4.3	11.2	7.8	6.7
	Some/A few	70.3	70.8	66.0	75.0
	None	25.4	18.0	26.2	18.3
	<b>Total n</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>60</b>
Supply work	All/Most	0.8	3.9	1.1	4.2
	Some/A few	68.8	41.2	62.1	60.4
	None	30.4	54.9	36.8	35.4
	<b>Total n</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>48</b>

### 5.2.2 NQTs' history immediately prior to taking their current NQT post

For 91.5% of NQT respondents, their current post is their first teaching job after completing ITT (Table 22). This differs to some extent according to the ITT route taken (Table 23), with the greatest proportion for whom it is the first post coming from employment based routes (note that SLT written comments suggest that often those taking employment based routes remain in the school where they trained) and the greatest proportion for whom it is not the first post being from part time PGCEs.

**Table 22 NQTs for whom this is the first teaching post after completing ITT: NQT responses**

	First teaching post after ITT	
	Total n	%
Yes	247	91.5
No	23	8.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>100.0</b>

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**Table 23 NQTs for whom their current post is the first teaching post after completing ITT, by route taken: NQT responses**

	FT PGCE	PT PGCE	UG Teaching	Emp based
	%	%	%	%
Yes	93.5	69.2	93.1	97.1
No	6.5	30.8	6.9	2.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>34</b>

For the 23 NQTs who had previous teaching jobs, most jobs had been temporary (Table 24) and only 4 (Table 25) had been for over a year. The main reason for leaving (Table 26) was the end of a contract.

**Table 24 Permanent/temporary nature of NQTs' previous teaching jobs: NQT responses**

	Total n	%
Temporary	15	65.2
Permanent	8	34.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 25 Length of stay by NQTs in previous teaching jobs; NQT responses**

	Total n	%
Less than 1 month	1	4.3
1 month	1	4.3
2-6 months	10	43.5
7-12 months	7	30.4
over 12 months	4	17.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 26 Reasons why NQTs left previous teaching jobs: NQT responses**

	No	Yes	Total
	%	%	n
End of contract	52.2	47.8	23
For promotion	91.3	8.7	23
Change of subject or specialism	100.0	0.0	23
Heavy workload	95.7	4.3	23
Type of class taught	95.7	4.3	23
Mismatch between skills and demands of the job	95.7	4.3	23
Issues to do with pupil behaviour	95.7	4.3	23
Other	60.9	39.1	23

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### 5.2.3 Routes preferred by SLT respondents

Table 27 indicates that the full time PGCE is, overall, the route most preferred by SLT members, followed by the undergraduate teaching course. The preferences of primary and secondary SLT members reflect the pattern for the NQT applicants by route, in other words secondary schools prefer the full time PGCE route and primary the undergraduate teaching course. The column in Table 28 indicating proportions who would be deterred by an NQT applicant having taken a certain route adds an emphasis to the preferences. For both primary and secondary schools, the employment-based route is preferred over the part time PGCE and the proportions indicating preference for it are higher than those who actually take NQTs from this route. The highest proportions of respondents who are deterred by a route is where NQTs have done supply work before applying for posts with them. On the face of it this seems surprising since this will have provided work experience, but it may suggest to SLT members questions about their quality if they have been unable to obtain NQT posts.

Although the number of respondents from independent schools was small and caution must be exercised in interpreting the findings, the data suggest that SLT members in independent schools are even stronger in their preferences for PGCEs (full time and part time) than for undergraduate teaching courses and that they are less likely to prefer employment-based routes and those who have done supply work than non-independent schools.

**Table 27 NQT applications, routes preferred by SLT members: SLT responses**

	Full time PGCE	Part time PGCE	Undergraduate teaching course e.g. BA, BSc	Employment based route e.g. GTP, RTP	Supply work
	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly preferred	24.2	2.4	27.9	13.3	1.8
Preferred	44.9	14.5	32.1	29.6	9.6
No preference	29.3	72.6	36.8	47.2	66.8
Deterred	1.5	9.0	2.7	6.9	16.6
Strongly deterred	0.2	1.4	0.5	3.0	5.3
<b>Total n</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>563</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>397</b>

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**Table 28 NQT applicants' routes preferred by SLT members, by type of school: SLT responses**

	Full time PGCE		Part time PGCE		Undergraduate teaching course e.g. BA, BSc		Employment based route e.g. GTP, RTP		Supply work	
	Pri %	Sec %	Pri %	Sec %	Pri %	Sec %	Pri %	Sec %	Pri %	Sec %
Strongly preferred	17.9	37.6	2.4	2.4	34.6	6.3	11.8	16.7	2.2	0.0
Preferred	47.3	42.5	16.1	12.2	35.8	23.4	23.2	43.2	11.5	6.0
No preference	32.4	19.9	68.5	79.7	28.9	60.2	52.6	35.2	66.3	66.7
Deterred	2.2	0.0	11.2	4.9	0.5	8.6	8.7	3.1	15.2	20.5
Strongly deterred	0.2	0.0	1.7	0.8	0.2	1.6	3.7	1.9	4.8	6.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>117</b>

**Table 29 NQT applications, routes preferred by SLT members, by independent and non-independent schools: SLT responses**

		Strongly preferred/ preferred	No preference	Strongly deterred/ deterred	Total
		%	%	%	n
Non-independent	Full time PGCE	68.7	29.6	1.7	<b>621</b>
	Part time PGCE	16.6	72.4	11.1	<b>317</b>
	Undergraduate teaching course e.g. BA, BSc	61.5	35.8	2.8	<b>476</b>
	Employment based route e.g. GTP, RTP	43.9	46.2	10	<b>438</b>
	Supply work	11.9	66.4	21.7	<b>348</b>
Independent	Full time PGCE	83.3	16.7	0	<b>30</b>
	Part time PGCE	26.3	73.7	0	<b>14</b>
	Undergraduate teaching course e.g. BA, BSc	34.8	52.2	13	<b>20</b>
	Employment based route e.g. GTP, RTP	28.6	61.9	9.5	<b>22</b>
	Supply work	0	68.8	31.3	<b>13</b>

Table 1 in Appendix 1 indicates that there are no great differences in the preferences of SLT members for the different routes into the profession between schools in relation to indications of deprivation, although Table 29 above indicates that schools do receive different proportions of applicants from the different routes according to this variable. Table 2 in Appendix 1 indicates that there are few differences between the four regions of England, although SLT respondents in London had stronger preferences for all the categories than the other three regions, with the exception of 'supply work' where they were more likely to be deterred than were respondents in the other regions.





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### **Comments by SLT members: preferences for NQT routes**

The questionnaire included a comments box asking SLTs for reasons for their preferences for the routes NQT applicants have taken. The comments indicated a clear preference for full-time PGCE and undergraduate teaching course routes, as these were seen as 'proper qualifications' and SLT members were familiar with them, contributing to their greater confidence in them. The balance of theory and practice provided by institution-based training was seen as positive. Respondents emphasise the need for this balance and for NQTs to have had a range of practical experiences in different settings.

Many respondents have no preference for the route taken but are more influenced by the individual NQT and their skills/experience/potential: some feel that much further development is needed by NQTs, once in post, regardless of route ('there is still much to be learned once teaching begins'). The quality of the NQT's existing experience (particularly that gained from placement) is important, as is the NQT matching the school ethos and needs and fitting in well with the team. Schools with specialist requirements feel that no route fully meets their needs (e.g. SEN, high BME populations, etc).

Some respondents prefer NQT applicants who have had teaching placements in their school: schools that work closely with training providers tend to prefer NQTs from them and some providers are seen as providing better quality training.

Some concerns were expressed about the quality of overseas trained teachers and their commitment to the job in the long term.

Comments on particular routes are as follows.

### ***Full time PGCE***

Comments indicate why this seems preferred as a route, particularly by secondary schools. SLT respondents seem knowledgeable about PGCE courses and are confident that they work to QTS standards. Some feel the intensity of the PGCE year is good preparation for the NQT year. Some consider that PGCE routes lead to NQTs being better qualified in their subject specialism, in which they already hold a degree, and that their knowledge here is more up-to-date, particularly important in secondary schools. There is a feeling that PGCE candidates are more mature in outlook and more ready for the workplace, and some assume that they will bring industry and life skills that younger people cannot.

More critical comments include that the course too short and that one year is insufficient time to learn teaching skills. Some consider that NQTs are able to deliver lessons but lack understanding of pedagogy and child development. There is also a view that those from a PGCE route may be less committed to teaching, having opted for it after a first degree. It is possible that such comments come from primary SLT members.

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### ***Part-time PGCE***

This route was not really commented on by many respondents, but there were indications of a suspicion that NQTs from this route are not fully committed to teaching.

### ***Undergraduate teaching course***

Many respondents refer to BEd courses rather than to the BA/BSc (the BEd is more common but BA courses are very similar); again SLT respondents are knowledgeable about such courses and confident that they operate to QTS standards. This route is seen as providing more in-depth study of education/ current theory/pedagogy/child development/current practices, all seen as highly important. The courses provide more time to develop skills of self-reflection and encourage adaptability in order to support learning. More time is spent in school/on placement. There is a view that choosing a 3/4 year degree indicates greater commitment to teaching than does the PGCE, which might have been chosen as an 'afterthought'. Primary education needs to cover a broad range of subject areas in addition to all other aspects of the teaching job (planning, differentiation, behaviour management, etc), so that some feel that more than one year training is essential.

### ***GTP/RTP***

Those preferring this option generally like to train teachers in-house rather than take on those trained elsewhere, suggesting that NQTs from these routes may have been trained within the same school and many comments imply this: classroom experience is gained 'on the job'; experience is specific to the specific school environment and NQTs are better prepared for the demands of day-to-day teaching. NQTs without prior experience in schools were perceived as potentially weak.

Many NQTs from this route have past experience as teaching assistants, seen as positive (indicating commitment to the job/school, experience in school). However, some see the 'leap' from classroom assistant to teacher as too great.

However, this route is also seen to result in NQTs lacking breadth of experience of different schools through placements and as variable in the quality of the training provided ('only as good as the teacher they trained with'). Where schools are involved in GTP they can be 'confident of quality', but this is an expensive option for a school because of the input required to provide the training.

### ***Supply***

Where there were positive comments, they suggested that the NQTs appointed had previously been on supply in the school, for example SLT members had been able to see them teach, knew them and they had a chance to prove themselves. Some consider that having experience in many schools helps one's development as a teacher.

However, some feel that those going into supply are not of the same quality as those who initially get full time contracts and there is a suggestion that those who come from supply work may be less committed and may struggle to take on the level of commitment needed in a full time position (see the negative ratings in Table 27 above).