2. Quality and Performance

Qualitative data derived from case study interviews suggests that perceived 'quality' of performance in second-year teachers broadly constitutes the following factors: the ability of second year teachers to take on more responsibilities in their school; their ability to understand procedures and policies and thus be less likely to require support; the ability to develop better relationships with parents, pupils and colleagues; and to be more able to manage classroom misbehaviour. Taken together these factors, expressed largely through the notion of enhanced confidence in the role of teacher, enable a smooth progression from ITT to fully established teacher status and becoming valued members of the school community by the second year of their teaching career. The following analysis looks at these factors thematically, grouped together as factors affecting: the development of confidence in the role; the taking on of additional school-wide responsibilities and relationships with colleagues; and variations that can be attributed to the legacy of the ITT route taken by our second year teachers.

2.1 Confidence

2.1.1 Primary

Unsurprisingly, most of the primary SLs that we interviewed believed that second year teachers were more confident in their dealings with both the class and other situations (highlighted by 11 SL respondents). No SL interviewees reported a negative view nor did any make specific reference to the ITT route in relation to confidence, however three SLs noted that variations in the level of confidence depended on the individual. Noticeably, two of these SL interviewees declined to offer positive comments on the improved confidence of the second year teacher(s) in question.

Mentors also noted that improved confidence in teaching and in relationships with other staff and parents was general among second year teachers (four of the seven mentors interviewed). However, among mentors it was more likely than among SLs that improved confidence was believed to be route dependent and/or reflected the individual's character. For example, one mentor reported of the second year teacher

> "He is one of those people [who] when you see him, you think he should be a teacher".

In other aspects of our analysis SLs and mentors make specific links between ITT routes and individual characteristics; in this case the second year teacher had come through the PGCE route. One mentor struck a discordant note, reporting that the second year teacher in question had failed to develop confidence because of conflicting advice from more experienced teachers (in relation to a class with behaviour issues).

Second year teachers themselves were almost unanimous in specifically mentioning raised confidence and/or a more relaxed experience as second year teachers (15 out of 18 interviewees). Confidence was expressed in relation to a wider range of factors, with the most commonly cited being: dealing with parents; time management and planning; the taking on of additional responsibilities (though one interviewee noted that this had diminished confidence); behaviour management; and relations with other staff (see Table 2.1 for more information).

One interviewee summed up the overall effect of being more confident in the second year of teaching:

> "Things just make sense. Things just become naturally easier. You have more subtle approach to behaviour management and things like that. You don't realise you have that because you have helped build them up, and so you become more comfortable."

The picture was not all positive, however. As noted, one interviewee reported that having to take on responsibility for personal and social health education (PSHE) without the anticipated support from a more experienced colleague had led to problems with parents in relation to sexual relationship education issues and has thus negatively affected the second year teacher's confidence. This is echoed by case study respondents in the Becoming a Teachers report, where two of 16 interviewees reported the need for more training in their new role (Tracey et al, 2008: 65). Another interviewee had found confidence diminished (in relation to the NQT year) because of the more difficult behavioural issues presented by an older year group this time round. Three primary second year teachers also mentioned that their increased confidence had been offset to some extent by the loss of protected Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time from which they had benefitted as NQTs. This echoes the findings of the Becoming a Teacher's second year report, with one respondent arguing that the transition from NQT to teacher needs formal on-going support and that ideally such support should be career-long (Tracey et al, 2008: 25).

2.1.2 Secondary

As with primary second year teachers, enhanced confidence in teaching performance is a key indicator of quality identified by interviewees based in secondary schools. Among SL interviewees, six out of 19 specifically mentioned enhanced confidence as a feature of second year teachers in their school. For one interviewee, confidence was not only enhanced generally but in specific relation to second year teachers developing their learning and teaching styles; another noted that second year teachers were more pro-active and more likely to take the initiative, and less likely to need guidance. Seen holistically, confidence is enhanced by a variety of factors neatly summarised by one interviewee:

> "They are more responsive to pupil needs, because they have learnt how to get to know students better. They are more flexible, partly because they are less anxious about making decisions and more confident about working relationships. They are better at liaison because they already know some parents, are more familiar with the pattern of the school year and have begun to build up an understanding of expected pupil development through a year. They have become more confident within the classroom, have grown in authority and become more willing to speak out about things and more ready to offer opinions than in their NQT year."

Independent SL interviewees note that less preparation time is required and reflection is more apparent among this group. SL members in special schools are particularly aware of enhanced confidence which is manifested in independence, assertiveness and flexibility.

Mentors were generally very positive about the transition from NQT to second year teacher on their confidence levels, and this could be manifested in several ways, for example: lesson planning; behaviour management; thinking strategically about whole-school issues; integrating with colleagues; better relationships with parents; and becoming more aware of the 'whole child'. One mentor noted that the overall standard of second year teacher performance was better than in the past. This was borne out by the fact that nine of the 15 mentors chose to highlight enhanced confidence among their charges. One believed this was noticeable where an NQT had stayed with the school into the second year of teaching and the significant increase in self confidence from this new status and experience is manifested in a greater preparedness to contribute more fully with

colleagues, become more adaptable and be more prepared to take on new initiatives. There were similar comments from three mentors in the independent sector. Special schools are typified by large teams of adults in any given classroom, so classroom management skills (i.e. management of support staff) have to be well developed by the second year of teaching.

Second year teachers in secondary schools themselves unanimously expressed their development in terms of enhanced confidence in their own abilities as teachers or in relationship to various aspects of the job, such as: liaison with parents; relationships with other staff in school; issues relating to the curriculum and assessment; and time management (see Table 2.1 for more information). Enhanced confidence in relation to working with other staff, time management and in relation to pupil behaviour were also highlighted as examples of the transition to second year teaching by case study interviewees in the Becoming a Teacher report (Tracey et al., 2008: 34). Many of our second year teachers made similar links between experience and familiarity with the school: For one, everything feels easier, the year has gone by quickly, the job is more enjoyable, and [the second year teacher] knows the pupils better; for another it is all about "not being new anymore" and feeling "permanent"; for another it's about no longer taking bad behaviour as a "personal affront".

Time management is one key area (cited by seven interviewees) where experience has led to a better appreciation of priorities, as expressed by one art teacher:

> "With experience, I have learned to prioritise what needs to be done at different times in the year, for example, at the moment it is more important that I mark GCSE coursework than focusing on other things that can wait and be done then… Also, with art, it is not like you can take work [home] with you. I have to do it at school so I have to organise my time quite well otherwise I will be here till seven o'clock every day. I don't want to be a teacher who's in at seven in the morning and does not leave until seven at night I would burn myself out by doing that… I don't think that is necessary".

There were negatives associated with the transition from the NQT year to the second year of teaching however, and for three interviewees the main one was time management (due to the increased workload following the loss of protected time). This was also mentioned by one of three second year teacher interviewees in the independent sector. The relatively few other negative comments were related to managing classroom behaviour and awareness of school policies and procedures (cited by the same second year teacher), and assessment issues and fear of using the support mechanisms in the school (both cited by one second year teacher).

2.1.3 Confidence factors variation: primary and secondary teachers

While both groups reported that they had become more confident in their dealings with parents, in time and behaviour management, in relationships with other staff and in taking on additional school-wide responsibilities, comparison illustrates the different contexts and priorities in each sector. For example, the taking on of additional school-wide responsibilities has enhanced the confidence for a third of our primary-based second year teachers, but only a fifth of those in secondary schools (where rapid promotions are less common). Conversely, those in secondary schools are more likely to feel more confident about curriculum and assessment issues than primary colleagues, more likely to report a better understanding of school policies and procedures and more likely to highlight support from the school. This may suggest that second year teachers in secondary schools are being allowed to develop into their roles as class teachers rather than being asked to take on additional responsibilities at this stage. A third of our second year teachers based in primary schools also highlight their enhanced confidence in relation to

the management of support staff, something that was not raised by any of our secondary-based teachers, where support staff are less common. The latest Social Trends report notes that as a proportion of the whole school workforce non-teaching staff constitute 40% of those working in the nursery and primary sectors (combined), a quarter of those working in state secondary schools and outnumber teachers almost two-to-one in Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units (Office for National Statistics, 2009). It is interesting to note that although primary interviewees were clearly more likely to have school-wide responsibilities they were less likely than those in secondary schools to report feeling more confident about relationships with other staff (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 Confidence factors: primary and secondary

Confidence Factor	Primary (N=18)	Secondary (N=20)
Liaising with parents	7	9
Time management and planning	7	7
Relations with other staff	4	8
Taking on school-wide responsibilities	6	4
Management of support staff	6	0
Behaviour management	5	5
School policies and procedures	3	5
Curriculum and assessment	3	8
Support from the school	0	4
Personal	2	0
Longer term strategic thinking	0	2

Note: interviewees often cited more than one factor

2.2 School-wide responsibilities and relationships with other staff

2.2.1 Primary

The ability of those in second year of teaching in primary schools to integrate with other staff and become fully functioning members of the school, as well as effective classroom teachers, is seen as important by both SLs and mentors. Some of the main issues affecting confidence among primary-based second year teachers are intertwined with the taking on of school-wide responsibilities and in developing good working relationships with other staff. According to recent DCSF research, 68% of primary second year teachers surveyed had taken on the role of subject co-ordinator (compared with 24% of those in secondary schools, Tracey et al., 2008)

Seven SL interviewees made specific reference to positive aspects of second year teachers relationships with their colleagues: three in relation to having a good understanding of school policies and procedures; two in relation to the taking on of school-wide responsibilities; one each on second year teacher's awareness of new initiatives; Teaching Assistants; and appreciation of the 'bigger picture' (defined as a broader understanding of the role of a teacher). The very few negative comments mostly related to individual factors (such as a second year teacher with a 'sharp personality' which had affected relationship with colleagues) and one interviewee who worried about second year teachers taking on additional responsibility too soon.

Among mentors interviewed there was less emphasis on wider school responsibilities (one of seven mentioned this in relation to a specific second year teacher) and more on relationships with teaching assistants in the classroom (mentioned by three interviewees). One noted how a second year teacher had created a very good team environment among the TAs; another noted that generally NQTs and second year teachers are unprepared by their ITT for dealing with TAs.

Six of the interviewed second year teachers made positive comments about their developing relationships as part of the whole school. These comments are in the context of taking on a school-wide responsibility for two interviewees, while for another taking on such responsibilities is a signal that the beginning teacher has achieved the appropriate skills and the right level of understanding of school policies. Two interviewees specifically mentioned working well with (and even helping to develop) Teaching Assistants in their classrooms. Becoming integrated as a full member of staff is a theme that was mentioned by several interviewees: one reflected the feeling that second year teachers are now equal (unlike NQTs), in contrast with another who feared 'always being seen as the NQT in the school'. Development is certainly expected and anticipated by the school for one interviewee:

> "As an NQT, if you are doing things for the first time, people will offer help but if you do it for the second time like writing a report, it is generally assumed that you know what you are doing… So, you should not be scared to ask because you don't know and you will never know everything."

2.2.2 Secondary

The taking on of school-wide responsibilities by second year teachers in secondary schools is closely related to enhanced confidence, something noted by five SL interviewees, as is better integration with colleagues, noted by six interviewees. One interviewee noted that this had manifested itself by the formation of a second year teacher self-support group. Another interviewee, however, found that a few second year teachers continue the bad habits picked up during the NQT year and some second year teachers are slow to move on from a focus on planning and developing an awareness of school-wide issues. A minority of interviewees specifically highlighted an awareness of school policies and procedures as a positive aspect of second year teacher quality and performance, though none were critical.

Among mentors who were interviewed the taking on of additional school-wide responsibilities was generally seen as a marker of quality (by six of the 15 mentors interviewed). However, one of these mentors did question the policy of loading on extra responsibility in teachers' second year in school, believing that the second year of teaching should be:

> "Just basically to increase their skills and knowledge and develop as a teacher, not really to take on additional responsibility in their second year; still a massive learning curve, always is…. [the second year of teaching] is actually the first year when they can relax a bit and be a teacher without all the pressures of people watching over you all the time. In the second year that's where I think they should be, just be developing themselves as a teacher" (Mentor).

The taking on of school-wide responsibilities was also a factor in the integration of second year teachers into the school workforce, highlighted as a key characteristic of the development of high quality/performing second year teachers by six interviewed mentors. For one interviewee this integration comes in stages, initially seen in taking on a faculty- or subject-group role where second year teachers can 'shine' in a more restricted environment, while for another such integration can be encouraged by school-wide social

activities, a good induction process followed up by an 'open door' policy of ongoing support. Two mentors also noted better awareness of school policies and procedures as an indicator of wider awareness and better integration.

Second year teachers themselves noted the importance of developing relationships with other members of staff (eight interviewees mentioned this positively) and of taking on school-wide responsibilities, cited by four. Taking on additional responsibilities appears to be less common in secondary schools (only four of our cohort of 20 secondary-based second year teachers compared with six of our 18 primary second year teachers). The Becoming a Teacher survey (cited above) reported a wider gap between primary and secondary sectors for taking on a subject co-ordinator role, but more secondary teachers are asked to take on the role of form tutor (92% compared with 35% of those in the primary sector, Tracey et al., 2008: 56-57). One second year teacher noted how 'freakish' had been a rapid promotion to Head of Department: "because normally people getting Head of Department posts would be 5 or 6 years in and stepping up". This second year teacher believed that getting to grips with school and departmental policies, their own teaching and confidence are the focus for NQTs, in the second year once that is embedded "you've got to be making yourself out to be an outstanding teacher, I believe, and then possibly if you feel up to it looking for promotion". Second year teachers in the independent sector did not report additional responsibilities being added to their workload.

Developing relationships with other members of staff is reported by second year teachers as being closely aligned with enhanced confidence and the new feeling of belonging at the school. One second year teacher felt that in the NQT year he set up a barrier between himself and senior management because he was "only an NQT", but now he is happy to approach them and discuss things with them; another felt the value of being able to work more effectively with TAs and senior colleagues having known them for a longer period of time. This is of particular importance for second year teachers in special schools where classroom teachers can be outnumbered 3 to 1; this causes lot of challenges because: "there are lots of different personalities and agendas".

2.3 The impact of ITT routes to QTS

Discussions about the quality and performance of second year teachers that focussed on variations by ITT route need to be contextualised by an understanding that some schools have a preference for, and may only recruit from, one particular route. Among our case study schools none recruited from only one route, though most only made comparisons between the PGCE and employment based routes (EBRs). Its seems that most schools recruit from providers they trust or are in partnership with, regardless of ITT route; in such circumstances preference variation is likely to be affected by exposure to applicants from routes offered by the preferred provider.

 As we found in our earlier Part 2 NQT year report a minority of SLs noted that some aspects of NQT's preparedness varied by route. For example, those from the PGCE route were perceived to have an edge on subject knowledge, while those from employment based routes (such as GTP) were perceived to be more prepared for the planning and behaviour management aspects of the role than are those from either the PGCE or undergraduate routes. However, it should also be noted that in both the earlier NQT report and this analysis of perceptions of second year teachers, individual characteristics contribute more to the variation in perceived quality and performance than ITT route, and this tendency becomes stronger as teachers progress in their careers.

2.3.1 Primary

Case study interviews from the Part 2 NQT year phase of this research suggested that undergraduate routes are less popular with secondary schools' SLT members, and no

comments were made via the primary case study interviews analysed in this report. Amongst the 20 case study primary schools, respondents were more likely (than secondary schools) to state that they did not consider applicants from the EBRs: 19 of the schools employed NQTs from the PGCE and 18 from the Undergraduate (BA, B.Ed) route compared with only ten that reported employing NQTs via the EBRs. When it came to expressing preferences, five each favoured PGCE and Undergraduate routes; eight schools did not express a preference and two preferred the EBRs. Analysis of preference by route reveals that where NQTs are employed from all three routes (five schools), two each preferred both the EBR and Undergraduate routes and one the PGCE route. Where PGCE and Undergraduate were the two routes employed (four schools), preferences were evenly split at two for each route. Discussions about the quality and performance of primary second year teachers were a feature of only around a third of SL interviews. Three interviewees thought that although NQTs from different routes had different strengths and weaknesses on entry, there was no lasting impact, certainly not beyond the third year of teaching and if NQTs were properly support by induction. The personality of the individual second year teacher was more important for two interviewees, one SL and one of seven mentors interviewed.

In relation to individual routes, the strengths of the PGCE route were said to be subject knowledge (Mentor, SL) and classroom experience (SL). The BA (QTS) route was also seen as strong on subject knowledge (Mentor). However one SL interviewee noted two weaknesses of the PGCE; that it was not long enough; and that younger candidates (i.e. straight from school/university with little other life experience) from this route sometimes struggle to adapt quickly enough (SL). The GTP route was associated with better quality and performance among NQT/second year teachers by two SLs and two Mentors. Positive factors highlighted were the greater experience these teachers brought to the school- one each cited life experience (Mentor) and experience in the classroom (Mentor). One mentor noted that GTP candidates often have less subject knowledge (Mentor).

2.3.2 Secondary

Case study interviews from the Part 2 NQT year phase of this research revealed that among the 21 case study secondary schools, 17 reported that PGCE was either the most common route or that intake was as likely to be from each of PGCE and employment based routes. When it came to expressing preference for one route or none, eleven of the 21 schools expressed no preference; five expressed a preference for PGCE (of which four cited PGCE as most common route); four expressed a preference for the EBRs (of which only one cited GTP as its most common route).

Among SL interviewees around a third made the point that there was no lasting impact of ITT route on teachers' development, although two SLs reported that foreign trained second year teachers took longer to integrate and develop. Three noted that individual personalities were more important overall. One SL noted that they currently had seven teachers on the staff that were formerly pupils at the school and this had made a large difference; such teachers were quicker to adapt and be offered promotions (i.e. additional school wide responsibilities) while overseas trained teachers (OTTP route) usually had to spend more time adapting to the British system and required more support.

Among SLs that did express variations by route, one made specific mention of the GTP route and another the PGCE route, though both recognised that this partly reflected their own route preferences rather than any objective comparison. For example one school that employed mainly PGCEs believed that NQTs and second year teachers from both the GTP and OTP routes were 'plunged into the job immediately'.

Mentors were generally more likely to talk about the ITT routes taken by second year teachers, though they did not differ in thinking individual personalities a more important

guide to development. Two specifically noted that the route taken had no lasting effect but others were prepared to highlight the advantages of particular routes into teaching. For example, for one mentor, those from the GTP route who trained in the school were correspondingly more experienced and perform better in the school because they were trained in-house. They are a "little bit ahead of the game in the context of the school". On the other hand the four-year BA(QTS) route found favour with one mentor as it produced more well-rounded teachers while another found the PGCE route the most consistent- the progress of those from other routes was more dependent on the individual. One of three independent sector mentors mentioned a GTP candidate favourably but noted that specifically personal factors (in this case being mature) was more important than the ITT route.

As we would expect, few second year teachers had much to say about variations between ITT routes; one former PGCE student felt that the theoretical knowledge thus gained had enabled a smooth transition to teacher status, while another from the four year undergraduate route felt that the second year teacher was effectively in their fifth year of gaining experience, which contributed to enhanced confidence in the role. Another from the GTP route made the same point: having done her GTP training in the same school this was effectively her third year, and this had contributed to an early promotion. This second year teacher also noted that peers that came through the PGCE route still struggle with behaviour management and time management (although in keeping with most interviewees this second year teacher did not feel there would be any long term difference between ITT routes). ITT routes may be seen as particularly important for teaching in special schools. Of the four second year teachers interviewed, two made pertinent comments about their training; one from a four year undergraduate (B.Ed) route believed that the additional classroom practice had been good preparation for this role; while another felt that the impact of her lack of training in special needs was diminishing over time, and that the training for a different age group is not the main issue as some of the early years training feels relevant. Special schools are so different she thinks she would have found it difficult whatever age she had trained for.

2.4 Summary

The main themes emerging from the school case studies are of second year teachers developing confidence as they settle into the role and develop an understanding of the wider context of the school including developing a better understanding of school policies and procedures. Second year teachers become more confident: in their dealings with parents; in time and behaviour management; in relationships with other staff; about curriculum and assessment issues; in understanding of school policies and procedures; and in relation to taking on additional school-wide responsibilities. The taking on of additional school-wide responsibilities (including managing support staff) is an issue for primary second year teachers (for whom it is linked with enhanced confidence) but less so for secondary second year teachers who are less likely to be offered promotions this early in their careers. Generally the influence of ITT route diminishes and characteristics of the individual such as personality and temperament are seen as more important than route in the longer term. Overall second year teachers are seen by SLs to be more able to manage both classroom behaviour and their own time (though several second year teachers noted the loss of protected time), and better at liaising with both parents and their school colleagues than during the NQT year.