

Geography initial teacher education and teacher supply in England

A national research report by
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Acknowledgements

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The Geographical Association



The Geographical Association (GA) is a subject association with the charitable object of *furthering geographical knowledge and understanding through education*. It provides support through its journals, publications, online materials, training events and networks and plays a leading role in public debate and policy relating to geography and education.

ISBN 978-1-84377-376-4

Published by the Geographical Association,
160 Solly Street, Sheffield S1 4BF
Company number 07139068
Website: www.geography.org.uk
Email: info@geography.org.uk
The Geographical Association is a registered charity: no. 1135148

Copy edited by Fran Royle
Designed and typeset by Bryan Ledgard
Printed and bound in the UK by Printmeit.com

Executive summary

Since the introduction of reforms in 2011–12, the balance in geography initial teacher education (ITE) has shifted dramatically from university- to school-led training. School-led routes, which accounted for only around 20% of new geography trainees in 2011–12, have all expanded rapidly, while the proportion of geography places allocated directly to universities has reduced by a third.

The development of subject knowledge and subject-specific pedagogy is an important element of effective ITE training; however, the evidence in geography ITE is that the amount of subject-specialist input is very variable. Some school-led partnerships rely heavily on generic training because they have not secured the expertise of an ITE geography leader.

The emergence of several hundred new geography ITE providers has brought new schools into the system. This expansion has also reduced average geography cohort size, with the result that geographers in small cohorts are more likely to be trained generically. Extreme fragmentation – the single trainee model – limits opportunities for trainee geography teachers to work together and learn from one another. Small cohort allocations have also contributed to the closure of several long-standing university geography ITE courses.

Practical training is a significant feature of both university- and school-led routes into geography teaching, so the quality of the in-school geography experience is a key factor in all ITE training. Ofsted no longer reports on geography, in either ITE providers or schools, so inspection evidence for quality subject provision is unavailable and it is difficult for new providers to make decisions about school placements based on objective

evidence of teaching excellence or mentoring capacity in geography.

The high-quality training partnerships between universities and schools, which are essential to geography ITE, evolve over many years. The annual process of bidding for allocations has introduced greater instability for partnerships led both by schools and universities, making it more difficult to forge lasting relationships that build mentor capacity. In universities, particularly, the adverse effect of this instability on their strategic planning has cast doubt on the viability of many postgraduate courses.

Key aspects of the geography ITE system depend on the subject and pedagogical knowledge and skills of school-based mentors. The expansion of school-led routes places additional demands on subject mentors, especially where there is no geography ITE subject leader, and additional support is therefore needed in these cases.

There are clear signals of a looming crisis of teacher supply in geography. Schools continued to approach ITE providers last year long after trainees found employment, and school leaders are increasingly concerned about the shortage of qualified applicants for geography posts. For the September 2014 intake, only 60% of the 1001 allocated geography places were filled.

The impact of supply shortages is highly likely to be uneven nationally, as most trainees seek work in the region in which they train and there are marked differences in recruitment to geography ITE across the regions. Across the North East, Yorkshire and Humberside, for example, there are few university-led places and school-led providers are finding recruitment difficult.



Photo: TESIG

Prospective geography trainees have a greater choice of routes into teaching than previously and this has attracted a greater diversity of applicants. There are a number of obstacles to ensuring that trainees find their way onto a course best suited to them and which provides them with the best prospects of future employment. These include lack of clear information about geography specialist provision, and marketing misinformation that conflates school-led with school-based training. Clear signposting for trainees is important, as the choices they make have implications for the qualification they attain and their employment prospects.

The new system of recruitment impacts both positively and negatively on schools: schools are positive about having greater ownership over teacher training, but the complexity of the system places significant demands on schools and may be less efficient than the previous central system.

Introduction

This report from the Geographical Association (GA) considers the impact of changes to ITE in England since 2010 and their effects on the quality and quantity of geography teachers being trained to work in English schools. Given that both educationalists and government agree on the 'vital importance of good quality teachers and teaching' to education in England¹, and the fact that over time changes to ITE 'ripple through the whole school system'², there can be no more important focus for the first of the GA's National Research Reports.³

This report starts by examining trends in the provision of geography ITE and concerns about its quality; it goes on to examine ITE recruitment and teacher supply; finally it makes a series of recommendations for policy makers, providers and the geography subject community. The report draws on a wide range of evidence to substantiate its recommendations. The GA's research involved correspondence with 68 schools and ITE providers, analysis of questionnaires on ITE and teacher recruitment from 17 schools and school-centred initial teacher training providers

(SCITTs), and in-depth interviews with ten ITE providers. This research was supported by a systematic review of references to geography ITE in Ofsted reports, as well as analysis of research evidence and data from a range of published sources.⁴ Although much of the evidence relates to post-graduate geography ITE in the secondary phase, many of the recommendations are also applicable to the circumstances of geography in primary ITE and BEd routes into teaching.

Changes in ITE provision 2010–2015

While partnerships between universities and schools have a 'great history' of providing ITE⁵, over the past 20 years English schools have taken on additional roles in this area, through SCITTs or employment-based routes such as the Graduate Training Programme (GTP) and Teach First⁶. The publication of the White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching*, in November 2010⁷ marked a sea change in the delivery of ITE in England, with increasing numbers of training places subsequently being allocated to school-based providers through the new School Direct scheme. Although the emerging system is complex, a fundamental distinction can be made between university-led routes (where schools provide teaching experience and mentoring) and school-led routes, such as SCITT and School Direct (where they lead on recruitment and, in many cases, on training provision).

Responsibility for securing teacher supply also changed in 2011, with the abolition of the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA). In its place, the National College of Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) began allocating subject quotas on an

annual basis, in response to competitive bids from individual ITE providers.⁸ The intention is to create a school-led system wherein groups of schools bid for training places based on anticipated future vacancies, tackling teacher supply through 'increased flexibility and autonomy [which] will enable schools to target school-level recruitment and retention problems'.⁹

has shifted dramatically from university- to school-led training. School-led routes, which accounted for only around 20% of new geography trainees in 2011–12¹⁰, have all expanded rapidly, while the proportion of geography places allocated directly to universities has reduced by a third¹¹ (Figure 1) – a sharper fall than in any other subjects except for history, chemistry and English.¹²

Since the introduction of reforms in 2011–12, the balance in geography ITE

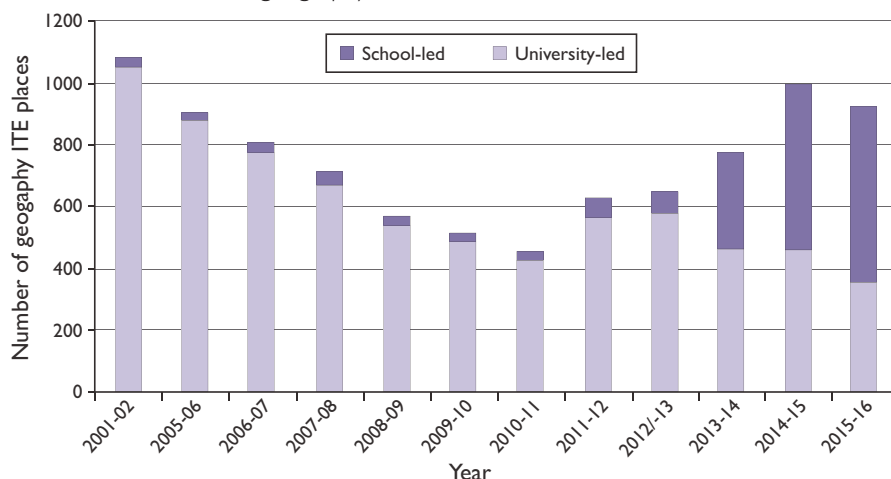


Figure 1: Geography ITE places in England, 2001–16.

Source: TTA/NCTL geography allocations excluding Teach First.¹³

Trends in the quality of geography ITE

1. The position of subject-specific knowledge and pedagogy

The most effective teachers have 'deep knowledge' of the subject(s) they teach: secure subject knowledge equips them to plan so that students progress in their learning, and enables them to evaluate students' thinking and identify and respond to misconceptions.¹⁴ The recent slight rise in the standard of degree held by trainees (from 72% having at least a 2:1 in 2011 to 76% in 2014¹⁵) is therefore encouraging. However, a geography degree does not, by itself, guarantee all the subject knowledge needed to teach. Good quality ITE develops subject knowledge¹⁶ by helping trainees to identify their knowledge gaps, by inculcating a scholarly approach to reading widely about the subject, the curriculum, resources and good practice and by arranging additional expert input. Good training promotes access to subject community expertise through professional networks and subject associations.¹⁷

The teaching profession also needs new teachers to acquire pedagogical knowledge.¹⁸ Geography teachers need to know how young people learn the subject and about the effectiveness of specific teaching approaches, such as fieldwork or the use of geographical information. Inspection evidence is unambiguous about the importance of developing subject-specific knowledge and pedagogy within ITE. Some school-led ITE providers have successfully developed new training models rated outstanding by Ofsted: 'the dedicated time that lead subject tutors have with trainees... to offer bespoke subject training and individual support, is highly effective and much valued by the trainees'.¹⁹ Conversely, Ofsted have criticised a number of school-led providers for a lack of subject focus, subject rigour or up-to-date research.²⁰ Reaching more general conclusions is difficult. It is, however, noteworthy that, while Ofsted inspection evidence between 2009 and 2014 showed that 36% of university-led ITE partnership routes were 'outstanding', for the same period around 20% of school-led partnerships achieved this grade²¹ and

that, following a national survey in 2014, inspectors concluded that school-led partnerships in history ITE should 'focus much more on subject-specific pedagogy'.²²

The GA's research revealed a wide range of provision in subject-specialist input in geography ITE, from under 30 hours in one SCITT to over 200 hours in a university-led scheme. Interviews and questionnaire evidence suggested that some school-led partnerships find subject-specific training challenging because they are unable to release specialists from teaching duties, and therefore rely heavily on generic training. One school alliance described how their model of fortnightly two-hour sessions contained no subject-specific input, although 'we are trying to embed more subject-specific foci into these sessions, for example... hosting a 'sharing best practice event' for geography trainees'.

Good quality ITE is, however, about more than sharing practice. Integrating theory and practice, in a way that helps trainees to understand and explore the links between research and classroom practice, has been described as 'crucial' and 'critical'.²³ Good teachers have more than mere technical mastery of teaching strategies; they have a clearly-developed view of the purposes and nature of their subject and an appreciation of their subject discipline as a resource, which sustains them throughout their career by providing a moral and intellectual basis for their practice. Ofsted describes the pivotal role expert university tutors play in providing practical workshops, seminars and discussion about practice with teachers and fellow trainees through both school- and university-based sessions.²⁴ In one outstanding

university-led partnership, for example, inspectors praised how:

'Highly skilled and very well-qualified university-based tutors, many with national and international reputations in their subjects and curriculum areas, ensure excellent integration of research and training... The very strong integration of theory and practice, informed by the most up-to-date and relevant research, enables trainees to gain an in-depth understanding of the latest developments in education and in their subject areas. This provides trainees with an exceptional introduction to the teaching profession and encourages them to use this understanding to enhance their teaching practice... the legacy of this very high-quality training feeds into their teaching long after the original training is over'.²⁵

Perhaps this explains why some School Direct trainees expressed the view that those of their peers who had followed a university-led Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) route received better grounding in subject-specific pedagogy, despite the input to their own course from excellent classroom practitioners.²⁶

2. Reduced cohort size

As school-led ITE has expanded, so too has the number of geography ITE providers, with 370 recruiting for 2015–16.²⁷ Since 2011, four universities have opened new geography courses and 18 have created new geography partnerships through School Direct²⁸, but most of the increase has come from School Direct and SCITT providers. This additional university and school involvement has brought new schools with good capacity to join or participate in ITE partnerships into the system.²⁹



Photo: TESIG

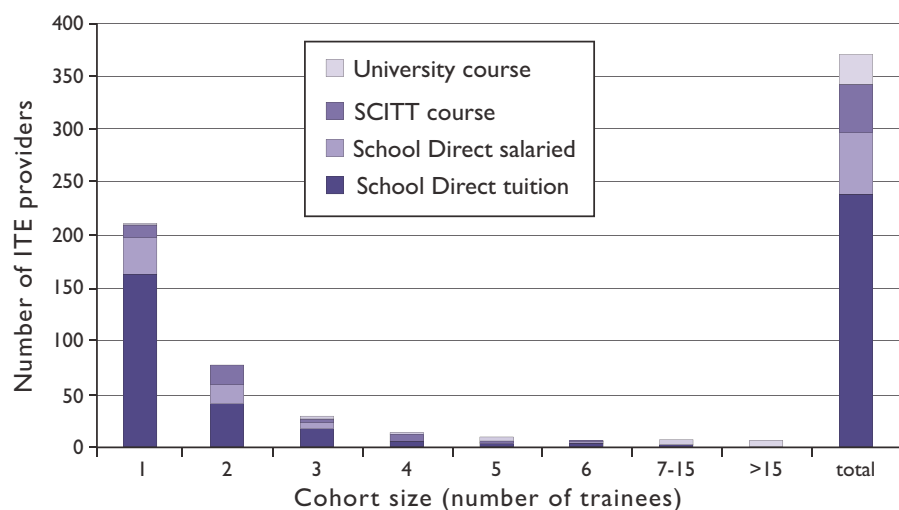


Figure 2: Geography cohorts by type of ITE provider, 2015–16.

Source: Provisional ITE allocations for the 2015–16 academic year (13 October 2014).

However, this expansion has reduced average geography cohort size, as broadly similar numbers of trainees are distributed across a vastly increased number of providers. Almost all school-led geography training occurs in cohorts of less than six and new geography courses average just four trainees apiece; two thirds of School Direct geography cohorts consist of single individuals (Figure 2). Small cohorts attract limited funding for geography, which restricts providers' ability to appoint a dedicated ITE geography subject leader. The result is that geographers in fragmented cohorts tend to be trained generically or alongside 'humanities' subjects, usually history. Extreme fragmentation – the single trainee model – is undesirable since it limits opportunities for trainee geography teachers to work together³⁰, a valuable process which Ofsted says 'enables trainees to share resources, resolve queries and try out teaching methods on each other'.³¹

While university-led ITE cohorts are generally larger (see Figure 2) the size of the average university-led geography cohort continues to fall (from 16.8 trainees in 2012 to 14.7 in 2015).³² Financially unsustainable allocations have contributed to the closure of eight long-standing geography courses in the last three years, and the university sector has expressed its concern at the viability of courses if these trends continue.³³ Furthermore, it has been argued that the closure of university-led courses is resulting in the loss of internationally-recognised research capacity from geography education in England, in contrast with high-performing

jurisdictions such as Singapore or Finland, where great value is placed on university expertise and research.³⁴ The GA's research suggests that the growth of school-based research capacity is not likely to replace this loss. Although some school providers, for example one SCITT that requires its tutors to undertake Masters-level study so they can help their trainees to gain Masters credits³⁵, are making commendable efforts to support the research element of their training, their provision is focused largely on an impact-research model rather than the development of new theoretical and professional knowledge or new approaches to research. In the longer term, the disconnect between school-based and university research therefore threatens what inspectors describe as 'fruitful professional dialogue between university and school-based staff', 'knowledgeable... readily available' university tutors and 'wide-ranging, continuing professional development accessible to all their teachers and trainees'³⁶, reducing the role these subject experts play in supporting NQTs, curriculum innovation and the subject community more generally.

3. Providing school experiences in high-quality settings

There is little distinction between partnerships led by universities and schools regarding the amount of time spent on practical training: secondary trainees in university-led partnerships spend at least two thirds of their time in school while also being taught in-depth

subject pedagogical knowledge at university. The quality of geography within the school experience is therefore a key factor in the quality of *all* training. However, as Ofsted no longer inspects geography directly, in either ITE providers or schools, objective evidence for quality subject provision is unavailable. Lead schools *do* require a 'good' or 'outstanding' Ofsted award as a prerequisite to apply for School Direct places, but this is no indicator of whether the school is able to provide high-quality mentoring and expert teaching in *geography*. Traditionally, subject tutors in university-led partnerships used school visits, joint lesson observations with mentors, scrutiny of lesson feedback and monitoring of trainees' experiences over many years to identify schools where trainees would receive good-quality geography provision matched to their needs. Such knowledge is frequently unavailable to newer providers and it is increasingly difficult for providers to make placement decisions based on considerations of quality in geography.

The GA's research shows that the weakness of national subject quality controls has prompted some providers to look for alternative ways to identify schools for suitable ITE geography experiences. One SCITT, for example, invited expressions of interest from schools from which they identified the applicants' strengths in particular subject areas and strong subject mentors, using their previous experience with the school 'in consultation with professional mentors working in the schools and in consultation with our tutors who work across our partnership schools'. However, judgements about suitability are largely being made by non-specialists, particularly in smaller providers lacking ITE geography subject leaders. The GA's research also shows how some school-led providers marginalise the geography expertise available locally. One university geography ITE tutor reported that, in their School Direct partnership, 'I was not involved in recruitment and I have no idea about the quality of the geography departments involved'. In another case, an ITE external examiner recounted that when an ITE geography course she had examined for two years switched to School Direct she was no longer asked to review geography assignments or observe geography

teaching: 'instead my role was general, and I was given other subjects to examine'.

4. The stability of subject training partnerships

High-quality training partnerships between universities and schools evolve over many years. Ofsted praises collegiate partnerships between universities and schools where 'to talk about a school or the university is to miss the point'³⁷ and across the system, all types of provider now emphasise the importance of genuine partnerships.³⁸ Inspection evidence also highlights the positive impact of established university-school partnerships on geography expertise in schools and how 'much-valued subject networks contribute to... "lifelong" professional development'.³⁹

One of the beneficial outcomes of ITE reforms – drawing new schools and universities into the system – has already been acknowledged, but the annual process of bidding for allocations has also introduced uncertainty and instability for both school and university providers. The GA's research found school-led providers working with different university and school partners each year; and that this had contributed to the break-up of long-established geography ITE partnerships. Universities reported that they were finding it more difficult to forge stable relationships with schools and expressed concern that this would limit their ability to build the expertise of geography mentors. Indeed, uncertainty over the viability of PGCE courses or the extent of services needed by schools has led some long-established university providers to withdraw from ITE at short notice, as the Open University did in 2013, and universities have also identified adverse effects on their strategic planning.⁴⁰

Some of the GA's research suggests that we may also be witnessing a fundamental change in the nature of some university-school partnerships, with universities being asked to offer 'in-depth subject knowledge and access to research' and schools to 'lead the commissioning of tailored training from universities that is matched to their own needs'.⁴¹ We found instances where universities were seen by schools simply as suppliers of off-the-shelf or

compartmentalised geography training, and examples where school and university providers regarded one another as competitors for partner schools. In these cases, the complementary expertise of schools and universities (e.g. university expertise in the theory that underpins effective teaching, and school expert knowledge of aspects such as behaviour management, pastoral care and the operation of school systems) had been replaced by a belief on the part of schools that their role, and the purpose of ITE, is to train staff to teach effectively in particular schools.

5. The role of mentors

Analytical professional dialogue between trainees, mentors and subject experts underpins quality training and develops the professional criticality needed for teachers to become 'high-level knowledge workers who constantly advance their own professional knowledge'.⁴² The role of the school-based mentor, to engage trainees in high-quality subject dialogue, provide effective feedback on performance and set clear targets, is regarded as 'critically important' to high-quality ITE.⁴³ As such, mentors need to have up-to-date subject knowledge and keep in touch with emerging knowledge through links to subject associations and access to subject-specific professional development.

Ofsted emphasises the importance of subject mentor selection and support through central training and school visits by lead providers.⁴⁴ Inspectors praise partnerships that provide opportunities for subject mentors to develop their role. For example, in one SCITT 'regular meetings between mentors and partnership managers... have a positive impact on the quality of training by helping school-based trainers to understand their role more effectively and helping subject mentors to share good practice'.⁴⁵ However, inspection and review evidence suggests that the quality of mentoring across ITE programmes is inconsistent.⁴⁶ Given that mentors have a primary commitment to their school students it can be difficult to manage the competing demands from ITE. As inspectors found under the GTP, where mentors had limited time to work with trainees there was a negative



Photo: TESIG

effect on the quality of training.⁴⁷ More recently, Ofsted judged that trainees on School Direct routes who lack understanding of subject pedagogy do so because:

*'the crucial training role of the subject mentor is not fully developed. These trainees are not encouraged to develop a deeper understanding through probing questions about why and how to teach aspects of the subject. Although these School Direct trainees do extensive reading, this is often not followed up to help them apply the lessons learned to their teaching.'*⁴⁸

Effective mentors challenge trainee teachers to focus on pupils' geographical learning and to reflect on the impact of their teaching. Inspectors criticise mentors who fail to articulate precise subject-related areas for development following lesson observations and those who set generic targets, such as 'improve differentiation' or 'work on your pace'.⁴⁹

The expansion of school-led routes places additional demands on subject mentors in cases where the provider is unable or unwilling to provide a geography ITE subject leader, yet at the same time Ofsted has reported how opportunities for subject-specific CPD are restricted for many geography teachers, despite the assistance on offer through the subject association.⁵⁰ Although key aspects of the ITE system depend on mentors, the vital subject skills they contribute are currently insufficiently supported.

Trends in geography ITE recruitment, and teacher supply

1. ITE under-recruitment and implications for teacher supply

The expansion in the total allocation of geography training places since 2011, shown in Figure 1, reflects the growing demand for geography teachers; a result both of the growing school population and the increased popularity of geography GCSE⁵¹ (attributable to a combination the subject's EBacc status and the positive impacts of the Action Plan for Geography⁵²). However, attracting geography graduates into teaching has long been a challenge. Having a 'recession-proof' degree⁵³ with wide employment opportunities, geography graduates enjoy lower-than-average unemployment rates.⁵⁴ Consequently, only 5% of new geography graduates opt to become teachers.⁵⁵ Under-supply into both training and teaching goes back at least to the 1990s and some of its causes have been the subject of investigation and action in the past.⁵⁶ Furthermore, the real extent of the shortage of geography teachers can only be gauged by taking into account the large number of secondary geography classes being taught by non-specialists, as evidenced by Ofsted and the NFER over the past decade.⁵⁷

Recently, attempts have been made to boost recruitment to geography ITE by designating it a 'priority' specialism, and by increasing bursaries and offering these for 2:2 degrees.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, under-recruitment to geography ITE has re-emerged as a serious concern (Figure 3), particularly for school-led routes. The most recent intake (September 2014) recruited 19% below target overall and only 60% of the 1001 allocated places were filled. While universities and SCITTs met 83% of their allocation, School Direct providers filled only 58% of salaried and 37% of fee-paying places. The ITE under-recruitment described above and shown in Figure 3 has clear implications for teacher supply, but the discrepancy between supply and demand widens further if one distinguishes between recruitment to and



Figure 3: Geography ITE recruitment 2008–15.
Source: NCTL/DfE trainee number census 2014–15.

qualification from ITE. Some trainees do not complete their course and some that do qualify choose not to seek or remain in teaching posts, which is why the annual subject allocation exceeds the target. In 2014, for example, the geography target was 770 but the allocation was 1001: with only 601 recruited, the discrepancy between the demand for and supply of geography teachers is likely to be very significant by September 2015. Indeed, GA research suggests that the problem is already apparent: evidence from school leaders revealed that they grew more concerned about the shortage of

qualified applicants for geography posts in 2013–14, and university tutors reported not only that trainees with a geography specialism found teaching jobs more quickly than usual that year, but also that schools continued to make approaches long after students had found employment. Looking ahead, there are clear signals of a looming crisis of teacher supply in geography or, as the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) recently put it, a 'possible shortfall in the supply of newly qualified teachers that may result from less centralised (typically university-based) training'.⁵⁹



Photo: TESIG

2. Regional variations in supply

Analysis of the evidence suggests that not only are geography teacher shortages in England likely to worsen in the immediate future due to under-recruitment in ITE, but also that the impact of this is highly likely to be uneven nationally. This is for two reasons: first, training places are now allocated according to localised demand; and second, there are marked regional differences in the composition of routes into geography ITE (Figure 4) and, as we have seen, some are struggling to recruit trainees.

The teacher supply implication is that regions that have lost much of their established university-led routes face more acute supply shortages, especially since most trainees seek work in the region in which they train. Across the North East, Yorkshire and Humberside, for example, there are few university-led places and school-led providers have found recruitment difficult: we found one SCITT that did not receive a single application for geography in 2014 and which – despite its success in other subjects – has not recruited for geography since it began offering places in 2008. Finding geography teachers is already problematic in this area of the country. A Sheffield head teacher told us how, when her school advertised nationally for a full-time geography teaching post in Spring 2014, they:

'had three applicants, of whom two were very weak. The third was asked for interview, but had already been asked to attend two others that week. We contacted the local PGCE course and all that year's cohort already had



Photo: TESIG

jobs by May. Recruitment in geography is most comparable to recruitment in mathematics in regard to the difficulty in attracting applications from well-qualified subject specialists who are excellent teachers. The contrast with recruitment in history is significant.'

3. The effects of choice and diversity

With more than 370 providers nationally, prospective trainees now have a greater choice of routes than previously. Recent research shows that, although this increased choice does not raise overall quality, it has attracted a greater diversity of applicants into teaching and that applicants base their choices on the perceived suitability of a course (e.g. for meeting their capacity or appetite for further academic study).⁶⁰ Clear signposting is therefore required to ensure that trainees find their way

onto a course best suited to them and which provides them with the best possible prospects of future employment and progress in teaching.

The achievement of these outcomes faces a number of obstacles. Recent research shows that large graduate debt constrains trainee choice by bringing the financial differences between routes to the fore.⁶¹ The uneven regional pattern of ITE provision introduces a further constraint; for example, salaried routes are not available to prospective geography trainees in some parts of the country (Figure 4). The GA's research revealed additional issues with information and perception. For example, we found that UCAS does not provide clear enough information about geography specialist provision to allow applicants to discriminate between courses effectively. Marketing also emerged as an issue; although the DfE has promoted school-based routes vigorously, in some cases this has obscured the distinctions (or created false distinctions) between university- and school-led provision and makes well-informed choice more difficult.⁶²

This last point is particularly significant, as the distinctions between routes do have potential implications for employability and career progress, and therefore for teacher supply. For example, although all geography training schemes award Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), only 55% offer postgraduate qualifications with credits towards a Masters degree⁶³, and only 40% of School Direct salaried

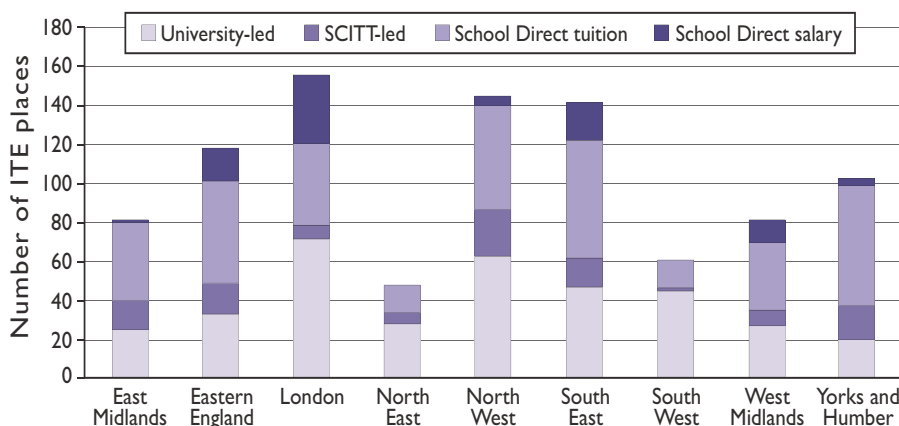


Figure 4: Regional allocation of geography training places 2015.

Source: Initial ITT allocations for 2015–16, NCTL/DfE, 14 October 2014.

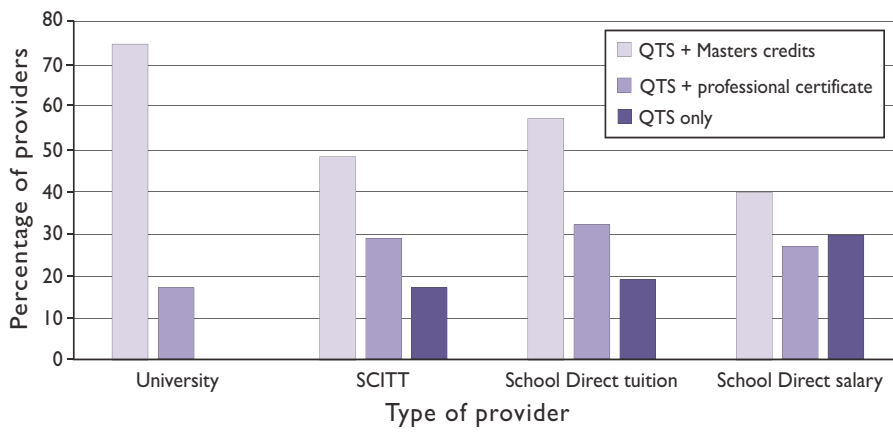


Figure 5: Percentage qualification outcomes for geography ITE routes.

Source: UCAS website.

routes do so (Figure 5). Likewise, while all ITE candidates are required to gain practical teaching experience in at least two schools⁶⁴ (preferably schools that offer contrasting experiences, e.g. varying socio-economic circumstances and/or differing models of teaching), the GA's research suggests that time spent in the second school may be shorter through School Direct salaried routes. As Ofsted has demonstrated, narrow training experience creates NQTs who are confident about the curriculum in their placement schools but whose 'subject knowledge does not extend beyond

this'.⁶⁵ Schools may show enthusiasm for the School Direct 'grow-your-own-teacher' approach but this does not provide a guarantee of employment: recent evidence from the IFS shows that only 70% of schools expect to hire their salaried trainees⁶⁶ and the GA's research confirms that schools continue to select the 'best' candidate for a geography post, not necessarily the one they have trained. The complexity of the new system of recruitment affects schools in various ways. NCTL research showed that school providers were positive about the opportunities offered them by School

Direct, particularly the 'greater ownership over teacher training' and the chance to develop staff they felt would be 'effective' in teaching in their schools. However, the same study also acknowledged that capacity in terms of co-ordination, finding placements, contacting schools, arranging placements and interviewing prospective students is a 'massive issue' for schools and that they had underestimated these demands.⁶⁷ Inefficiency also appears to be an issue: the GA's research revealed much time and effort being wasted by school and university staff interviewing the same candidates for more than one course, or waiting for interviewees who failed to appear, and the IFS concludes that the new system of recruitment may be proving less economical than the previous central system, with additional costs being borne by schools and university partners.⁶⁸

Tensions within the school-led recruitment system between local requirements and the national responsibility for ensuring an adequate supply of high quality geography teachers for the future are apparent and clearly unresolved.

Notes

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- Millett, A. (1999) 'Recruiting geographers for the future' in *Teacher Training Agency (TTA) Understanding Teacher Supply in Geography*. Publication 110/3-00. London: TTA.
- For further information about the GA's National Research Reports, see www.geography.org.uk/news/papersandresponses
- A full list of providers who took part in the GA's research, alongside details of the research materials used, can be found at www.geography.org.uk/news/papersandresponses
- James Noble-Rogers, quoted in Ward, L. (2014) 'Gove announces independent review of initial teacher training courses', *Guardian*, 1 May. Available online at www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/teacher-blog/2014/may/01/gove-initial-teacher-training-courses-independent-review
- SCITTS were introduced in 1993. Teachers are trained by consortia of schools accredited by the National College of Teaching and Leadership. GTP 'on-the-job' training, first offered in 1998, was replaced by School Direct from 2012. Teach First is a charity that since 2002 has run two-year courses for outstanding graduates to train and work in challenging schools in low-income communities. Training is in partnership with a university, offering QTS and the possibility of a postgraduate qualification and Masters-level credits.
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Recommendations

For policymakers

1. Working with the subject community, facilitate the development of 'geography ITE quality criteria' and a system of 'mentor accreditation', and promote their use by schools and providers.
2. Arrange for regular inspecting of the quality of subject provision and outcomes, using evidence from specialist inspectors, and intervene to secure improvements where necessary. Use inspection and research evidence on the comparative quality and outcomes of different routes, including retention of teachers, to influence future allocations.
3. Require all geography providers to provide full details of their subject-specialist credentials and training in their application for accreditation and recruitment information for trainees. Ensure the UCAS site provides sufficient details of subject provision to enable trainees to make informed course choices.
4. Seek ways to broker trust and partnership between school and university providers.
5. Provide further resources for mentor training to build capacity for high-quality geography training. Work with the subject community on a subject-specific 'mentor quality mark' scheme.
6. Reverse the trend towards small and fragmented provision. Set minimum allocations of 10 trainees to encourage partnerships and the appointment of subject leaders. Ensure that allocations to universities are sufficient to safeguard their role in professional development, curriculum innovation and research in geography education.
7. To promote stability, set providers three-year geography quotas for core provision, with a range rather than a single figure to allow leeway without financial penalties.
8. Consider awarding QTS for secondary teachers in specific subjects and ensure that all trainees have the opportunity to study for Masters credits including those that relate to geographical education.
9. Monitor the impact of the increased bursaries in geography in 2015: take any necessary steps to secure a coherent national approach to teacher supply, in order to meet both national and regional demands.
10. Revise the Teacher Supply Model upwards to take account of the level of non-specialist teaching of geography. Commit additional resources to marketing teaching as a profession and to recruitment activity. Prioritise support to courses that recruit successfully.

For providers

1. Maintain a relentless focus on high-quality subject teaching which recognises the key role of subjects in the Teaching Standards for QTS, the need to apply theory to practice and the importance of structured training in subject pedagogy in geography ITE.
2. Prior to bidding for training places, secure appropriate subject expertise to lead geography ITE. Source geography expertise from within and beyond the partnership as required.
3. Publish clear information about subject-specific aspects of the training programme on the UCAS and provider websites. Include details about the specialist input, school experiences, geography expertise of trainers and type of qualification offered.
4. Establish collaborative, stable partnerships between suitable school geography departments and the lead provider.
5. Ensure mentors have sufficient time and resources to meet their training responsibilities, and have access to the subject community to develop their expertise. Work with the subject community and NCTL to implement a 'geography subject mentor quality mark'.
6. Fulfil the inspection framework requirement for subject community engagement by encouraging trainees to engage with their subject association and by developing long-term relationships, beyond ITE, with the subject community.
7. Ensure that trainees are not isolated and help them engage with their geography peers through local networks, training events and conferences.
8. Provide opportunities for trainees to gain Masters-level credits in geography/geography education and consider whether subject course tutors should undertake Masters-level study.

For the geography subject community

1. Set expectations for high-quality geography training and mentoring through 'geography ITE quality criteria' and a system of 'mentor accreditation' by working with Ofsted and the NCTL.
2. Create geography-specific professional standards that build on Teaching Standards and demonstrate the importance to QTS of geography subject knowledge and pedagogy. Do this independently of political influence but in agreement with key stakeholders, e.g. NCTL.
3. Ensure subject specialist professional training opportunities for ITE students and mentors are publicised to providers by all available channels, including via NCTL.
4. Collect together, publish and promote models of good subject partnership training.
5. Promote closer links between universities, undergraduates, ITE providers and schools, e.g. through GA Branches.
6. Draw geography ITE subject leaders from schools into the geography teacher education community, e.g. via emails and conferences.

ISBN 978-1-84377-376-4



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Published by the
Geographical Association,
160 Solly Street, Sheffield S1 4BF

