

# Excellent Teacher Scheme Review

Merryn Hutchings, Ayo Mansaray, Sarah Minty,  
Marie-Pierre Moreau and Sarah Smart

Institute for Policy Studies in Education  
London Metropolitan University



Research Report No  
DCSF-RR137

---

# *Excellent Teacher Scheme Review*

---

*Merryn Hutchings, Ayo Mansaray, Sarah Minty,  
Marie-Pierre Moreau and Sarah Smart*

*Institute for Policy Studies in Education  
London Metropolitan University*

The views expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

© London Metropolitan University 2009

ISBN 978 1 84775 498 1

July 2009



# Contents

<b>Executive summary</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>2 Literature review</b> .....	<b>10</b>
2.1 Background to the Excellent Teacher Scheme (ETS) .....	10
2.2 The Excellent Teacher Scheme .....	12
2.3 Take-up of the ETS.....	14
2.4 Mentoring and coaching roles in schools.....	19
2.5 Career pathways in other countries .....	21
2.6 The review of the Excellent Teacher Scheme .....	24
<b>3 Research design</b> .....	<b>25</b>
3.1 Aims .....	25
3.2 Overview .....	25
3.3 Telephone interviews .....	25
3.4 Case studies of schools with ETs in post.....	28
3.5 Transcription and analysis .....	29
3.6 Survey of teachers .....	29
3.7 Structure of report .....	31
<b>4 Schools that have not appointed ETs</b> .....	<b>32</b>
4.1 The perceptions of headteachers who have not appointed ETs.....	32
4.1.1 Awareness and understanding of the scheme.....	32
4.1.2 Reasons why headteachers considered appointing ETs.....	34
4.1.3 Reasons for not appointing ETs.....	36
4.2 The perceptions of teachers in schools where there are no ETs.....	42
4.2.1 Awareness and understanding of the scheme.....	42
4.2.2 How teachers think their schools might benefit from the ETS .....	46
4.2.3 Teachers' career plans and the ETS .....	49
<b>5 Schools that have appointed ETs</b> .....	<b>62</b>
5.1 School and ET characteristics .....	62
5.2 Creating the ET post .....	65
5.2.1 Sources of information .....	66
5.2.2 Including an ET post in the 2005 staffing structure.....	66
5.2.3 ET post not included in staffing structure.....	70
5.2.4 The chronology of creating an ET post.....	70

5.2.5	Difficulties experienced in relation to creating and recruiting to ET posts .....	71
5.2.6	The external assessment.....	72
5.3	The Excellent Teachers and their careers .....	76
5.3.1	Previous careers and the move to ET.....	76
5.3.2	Future career plans.....	79
5.4	ETs' pay .....	80
5.4.1	Initial pay, and changes from September 2008 .....	80
5.4.2	Understanding of the ET pay arrangements.....	82
5.5	The title 'Excellent Teacher' .....	84
5.5.1	ETs' views of the title Excellent Teacher .....	85
5.5.2	Colleagues' views about the ETs' title .....	87
5.6	The ET role, and how it relates to other roles in the school.....	89
5.6.1	The ETs' roles.....	89
5.6.2	How much time are ETs allocated to undertake their ET role? .....	97
5.6.3	ET roles in comparison to AST .....	99
5.6.4	ET in relation to other roles in schools.....	102
5.7	Outcomes for the school.....	104
5.7.1	School leaders' perceptions of outcomes for the school .....	104
5.7.2	ETs' perceptions of outcomes for the school.....	105
5.7.3	Personal outcomes for the ETs.....	107
5.7.4	Other teachers' and trainees' perceptions of outcomes for the school and for their own practice.....	108
5.7.5	Key factors in the ETS working effectively.....	112
5.8	Other teachers' perspectives in relation to their own careers .....	115
<b>6</b>	<b>Suggestions for future development of the ET scheme.....</b>	<b>120</b>
6.1	Views about what might increase the number of ETs.....	120
6.2	Suggestions for changing the ETS to make it more attractive to schools and teachers .....	121
6.2.1	Change the title Excellent Teacher.....	121
6.2.2	Review the requirement to provide a specific example of searching analysis .....	125
6.2.3	Change the eligibility criteria .....	125
6.2.4	Create short-term ET posts.....	127
6.2.5	Change the pay arrangements .....	128
6.2.6	Allocate funding to schools that appoint ETs.....	128
6.2.7	Allow teachers to apply for assessment if there is no post in the school, in order to get recognition of excellence .....	129
6.2.8	Allow teachers to apply for assessment in order that they can apply for ET posts in other schools.....	131
6.3	Wider changes to the career and pay structure for teachers .....	132
6.3.1	To what extent are classroom and management/leadership career paths distinct? .....	132
6.3.2	Combine ET and AST into a single route .....	133

6.3.3	Review the distinction between ET and TLR .....	135
6.3.4	Replace the ETS with a scheme based on professional development.....	136
<b>7</b>	<b>Discussion and implications for policy and practice .....</b>	<b>139</b>
	<b>References .....</b>	<b>143</b>
	<b>Appendix A: Information about the Excellent Teacher Scheme .....</b>	<b>150</b>
	<b>Appendix B: Questionnaire .....</b>	<b>152</b>

## List of tables

Table 2.1:	Number of ET posts planned for each year: VT and Headspace surveys (unpublished)....	14
Table 3.1:	Schools in the headteacher sample.....	26
Table 3.2:	Percentage of all survey respondents in each school sector and gender group, compared with national figures (shown in brackets) (N = 597) .....	30
Table 4.1:	Percentage of respondents stating that they had <i>not</i> heard of the scheme, by pay scale (N=614).....	43
Table 4.2:	Percentage of respondents who had heard of the ETS from different sources (N=619) ....	43
Table 4.3:	Levels of understanding of different aspects of the scheme before receiving the questionnaire .....	45
Table 4.4:	Most likely direction envisaged for career development.....	50
Table 4.5:	'Have you previously considered the possibility of becoming an Excellent Teacher, or discussed the possibility with your headteacher?' .....	50
Table 5.1:	Schools that have appointed ETs by December 2008 and number of ETs appointed by school type.....	62
Table 5.2:	Schools that have created and filled ET posts, September 2006 – December 2008, by Government Office Region .....	63
Table 5.3:	Number of schools that have appointed ETs and case study schools, by school type .....	64
Table 5.4:	Number of ETs assessed nationally by gender and school phase.....	64
Table 5.5:	Differences between ET and AST application forms .....	75
Table 5.6:	Case study ETs' pay arrangements.....	81
Table 5.7:	Number of case study ETs at different pay levels, and how these relate to their pay before becoming ETs.....	81

## List of figures

Figure 2.1: Pay ranges for various posts, 2006-7 and 2007-8 (annual salary England and Wales excluding the London area, DCSF, 2007b, 2008a) .....	13
Figure 2.2: Diagram showing career routes for teachers (from TeacherNet 'Career and Professional Development', accessed Feb 2008) .....	16
Figure 2.3: Age distribution of sample, compared with that of teachers nationally (excluding headteachers) (N = 612).....	31
Figure 4.1: Prior understanding of the scheme: percentage of teachers indicating 'I knew this', by salary scale (N = 619).....	46
Figure 4.2: Percentage of teachers indicating that specified tasks are already being done, and those which would be useful to have an Excellent Teacher to undertake (N = 619) .....	48
Figure 4.3: Career plans and the ETS: extent to which respondents agreed with each statement (N = 619).....	51
Figure 4.4: Motivations to try to achieve excellence (N = 619).....	52
Figure 4.5: The title Excellent Teacher: extent to which respondents agreed with given statements (N = 619).....	57
Figure 5.1: Age of ETs on assessment (N = 59).....	65
Figure 5.2: Main subjects taught by 36 secondary ETs.....	65
Figure 6.2: AST and ET routes: extent to which respondents agreed with statements (N = 619) .....	133

## **Acknowledgements**

The research team would like to thank all the headteachers and teachers who took part in the research. In particular, we are grateful to the Excellent Teachers, their headteachers and their colleagues, who made us welcome in their schools and gave so much time to us. We would also like to thank Nathan Fretwell and Zuleika Candan, IPSE project administrators, for their work on this project. We are grateful to James Rushbrooke and Sarah Baker, research project managers at the DCSF, and to the steering group for all their support and suggestions.



## Executive summary

### The Excellent Teacher Scheme

The Excellent Teacher Scheme (ETS) came into being in September 2006 to provide a new career route for experienced teachers as an alternative to management and leadership posts. It was envisaged that over time, some 20% of eligible teachers would be employed as Excellent Teachers (ETs)<sup>1</sup>. However, by December 2008, only 59 teachers in England and Wales had undergone assessment and fully met the ET Standards (information from DCSF, 11.12.08).

### Aims

This review aimed to explore:

- what teachers and schools with no ETs perceive to be the barriers that have prevented them from engaging with the scheme;
- why posts in schools with planned ETs have remained unfilled; and
- how schools with ET posts are benefiting from the scheme.

In the light of the low number of ET posts that have been created, an additional aim was also to understand reasons for the low take-up of the scheme.

### Research design

The research was in three phases:

*Telephone interviews with headteachers and teachers.* The intention was that half of these should be in schools that had planned to appoint ETs but had not done so (selected on the basis that they had either stated in the survey conducted in 2007 that they had included ET posts in their staffing structures, or had advertised for ETs), and half in a random sample of schools. However, the division between 'planned' and 'random' schools was less clear-cut than anticipated, and many heads contacted were unwilling to be interviewed, or to allow us to interview teachers in their schools. In total, 28 headteachers (or other members of the school leadership team) and 20 teachers were interviewed in schools that had not made ET appointments, and an additional five headteachers and one teacher in schools that had appointed ETs or were in process of appointing them. These were conducted in summer and autumn 2008. All interviewees received an information sheet about the ETS before the interviews took place. They were asked about their awareness and understanding of the scheme, and their views about the low take-up of the scheme and its future development. Headteachers were asked why ET posts had not been created, and teachers were asked whether they saw this as a career route they might want to pursue.

*Case studies of 16 schools in which Excellent Teachers had been appointed.* In each case study school interviews were conducted with the headteacher or another member of the school leadership team, the Excellent Teacher and two to five other teachers. These were normally face-to-face interviews. School governors were also invited to participate but none did so. The case studies were undertaken in autumn 2008. Interviewees were asked about the reasons for and the process of creating the ET post; the career trajectories of those appointed as ETs; their roles in the school; and the outcomes for the schools of having ETs in post. They were also asked to comment on low take-up and the future of the scheme.

---

<sup>1</sup> RIG, 2004a, para 53.

*A survey of teachers.* This was conducted in autumn 2008 in a stratified random sample of schools drawn from a comprehensive listing of all schools in England and Wales. The sample was designed to be proportional to the number of teachers (by type) in the nine English Government Office Regions plus Wales. The questionnaire asked teachers about their awareness and perceptions of the ETS. The response rate was 15.5 per cent (without reminders); 619 questionnaires were entered into the database and analysed using SPSS.

## **Findings: Schools with no ETs**

### ***The perceptions of headteachers who have not created ET posts***

While the majority of headteachers were aware of the ETS, citing a range of sources of written information, many acknowledged that their understanding was limited, and most considered that publicity for the scheme was poor, and dissemination of information to schools could be significantly improved.

Some had considered appointing ETs, or included ET posts in the school staffing structure. They saw the scheme as a reward for exceptional teachers, which would contribute to their motivation, and might increase retention. A few talked about the possibility of attracting high quality teachers. Some talked about the ways in which the ET role would benefit the school, often seeing it as more useful than the outreach work of ASTs.

However, their reasons for not creating ET posts included budgetary constraints; lack of appropriate candidates (either because staff on U3 had TLRs, or because teachers were not interested or were deterred by the assessment process); a perception that a candidate would not be eligible because her role did not include data analysis; perceptions that the ETS is divisive; post-threshold teachers and members of the leadership team were already carrying out the duties listed for an ET; a preference for ASTs; and discouragement from the LA.

### ***Perceptions of teachers in schools where there are no ETs***

Teachers knew rather less about the ETS than headteachers, and those who were aware had often received their information through word of mouth rather than documentary sources. In the survey, 32 per cent of respondents had not heard of the ETS.

Teachers identified a number of ways in which their schools could benefit from creating ET posts; these included retention of older teachers (who might become ETS) and the provision of support for inexperienced teachers. However, they were aware that budgetary issues could deter headteachers from creating ET posts.

Some saw the ETS as a possible future career path, identifying as attractions the potential for recognition of their skills and financial reward; the valuing of classroom practice; and the emphasis on experience which made this an appropriate route for older women who have missed out on earlier promotion. While most interviewees identified at least some positive aspects of the ETS, the majority gave much more emphasis to negative aspects, and in particular to concerns that the scheme, and the title ET, are potentially divisive. Some were deterred by the assessment process, and some preferred other career pathways.

## **Findings: Schools that had appointed ETs**

### ***School and ET characteristics***

ETs are more likely to be appointed in secondary schools, and in schools with high numbers of pupils. A disproportionate number of ETs are female, particularly in secondary schools. Age and ethnicity data has not been collected for all ETs. More than half those in secondary schools teach core subjects (mathematics, English and science).

### ***Creating an ET post***

In the majority of the case study schools, the ET post was included in the 2005 staffing structure as a strategy to improve teaching and learning, though in many of them it was not filled until a later date when a suitable candidate was identified and encouraged to apply. Five of these schools still had an unfilled ET post in their staffing structure. A small number of ETs had found out about the ETs and had suggested to their headteachers that this was a career route they would like to pursue. Posts were generally internally advertised, but this was not always the case. There seemed to be a tension between notions of equality of opportunity, and a culture in which leaders are able to reward staff or use performance management to foster individual careers.

Some interviewees talked about difficulties they had experienced in obtaining information about the ET scheme, and most would have welcomed contact with other schools with ETs. ETs had found preparation for the external assessment to be time-consuming, and had been unsure how much evidence they should produce. Some interviewees queried the requirement for ETs to produce an example of 'searching analysis', when ASTs do not have to do so. The assessor's visit was generally described as thorough and professional.

### ***The Excellent Teachers and their careers***

The average length of time since entering teaching was 27 years; this does not represent length of service, as some ETs had taken career breaks. Fourteen out of 17 case study ETs had previously held paid responsibilities (including seven who had been heads of department). Seven of these lost their previous role under restructuring; others had chosen to step down, often because of the workload and stress of their management roles. Only three ETs had not previously held substantive posts of responsibility, and of these, only one had progressed straight up the main and upper pay scales to a point and had just become eligible to become an ET.

In the course of this research we heard about five ETs who are no longer in ET posts, but have TLRs or are in leadership. One of these was interviewed; she described her current head of department role as being more in her '*comfort zone*'. Two other ETs said they might apply for management posts in the future, because becoming ETs had given them added confidence. A further two ETs had considered stepping down from the role, one because of the workload and the other because it involved spending too much time away from her class. The remaining twelve ETs were generally enjoying their roles, and intended to continue in them for the foreseeable future.

### ***ETs' pay***

There was widespread confusion and concern about the pay arrangements for ETs. One factor in the confusion was that some of the ETs were not paid on the original ET spot rate because some had protected salaries or other school arrangements which maintained their salaries at previous levels. Three of the case study ETs had taken substantial pay cuts, and one a slight cut, when they moved to this role; this was because in each case their previous

role had been head of department in a secondary school. The majority had experienced small pay increases. The factors headteachers took into account in determining ETs' pay varied; one head described ETs as a '*soft option*' and thought ETs' pay should be low because they are not accountable for results, while at the other extreme, another head considered the level of responsibility to be similar to TLR1.

The concept of spot pay set within a range caused some confusion; while there appears to be some acceptance that increments should relate to performance, ETs said that not having an incremental scale placed them at a disadvantage. A number of heads had decided that the ET should be on a scale equivalent to AST, or should be paid the equivalent of a TLR.

### ***The title Excellent Teacher***

The vast majority of ETs strongly disliked the title Excellent Teacher; only one positively liked it. Most of them told of being teased by colleagues. While much of this was 'jokey', the cumulative effect of this had made some of them miserable. They felt the title placed an onus on them to be excellent in all aspects of their work, and this was hard to live up to. They were also aware that there were many other excellent teachers in their schools. In two schools, the title was not used at all, and in others, the ET discouraged its use. All this contributes to the invisibility of the scheme. But they also complained that in some public contexts and research contexts, ET is not included as an option, and this also tends to make the whole scheme invisible.

A minority of the ETs' younger colleagues did not see any reason why the title should be changed, but this was often because they saw it as an award for excellence rather than as a job. Most older teachers shared the ETs' view that the name was poorly thought out. Many argued that the job title should refer to the role carried out (mentoring, coaching etc.). It was clear from the interviews that the title had given rise to ill-feeling in many of the schools, particularly among teachers who did not have a personal relationship with the ET. Interviewees used words such as 'stigma' and 'cynical' when talking about the title.

### ***The ET role and how it relates to other roles in the school***

The case study ETs all carried out a variety of work; their main roles were as follows:

- three were NQT co-ordinators or mentors, and one was a professional mentor for ITT students;
- seven offered support to other teachers across their schools, one working with every teacher in the school, two with teachers new to special schools, three with teachers whose lessons had been identified as having weaknesses, and one helping those with good lessons to move to excellent;
- three worked mainly in secondary subject departments in a range of roles including developing resources and methods of assessment; one had a similar role in a primary school;
- three primary ETs had multiple roles.

The time allocated for ETs to undertake these roles varied from none (three ETs) to a day a week (one ET). The secondary ETs with no time allocation undertook ET work in their free periods (including their PPA time); the primary ET had to arrange for other people to observe the NQTs she was mentoring.

Many of the schools also employed ASTs. While the key difference between the two roles was generally identified as the AST doing outreach work while the ET did not, this was not always the case; a number of the schools employed 'inreach' ASTs. In these circumstances, there was little difference between ET and AST roles. Generally, however, ASTs were perceived as being better paid and having higher status. They were also seen as more likely than ETs to move into management roles, while ET was described by some as a '*dead end*' in terms of career progression.

TLRs were seen as being distinct from ET roles because they involve line management and being accountable for pupil progress. However, in secondary schools, heads of department with TLRs were also expected to develop teaching and learning in their department, and to undertake coaching and mentoring. In that way, they were perhaps less distinct from ETs than it first appeared.

It was pointed out that the post-threshold standards include coaching and mentoring, and that this had reduced the distinction between ETs and post-threshold teachers, and perhaps reduced the need to appoint ETs.

### ***Outcomes for the school***

Three headteachers argued that there had been no particular benefits in appointing an ET because their role (such as mentoring NQTs) had been carried out under the previous staffing structure, and little had changed. However, most identified a range of benefits including recognition for the ET, leading to greater confidence and (in some cases) retention in the school. Many spoke about improved standards of teaching and increased confidence and self-esteem among teachers. In two schools this was also said to have raised standards (in a subject department, and for a specific group of pupils). Where ETs worked across the school, heads felt that it was not possible to make a direct link with standards.

The ETs themselves tended to talk about the affective and interpersonal aspects of their work, and to describe the outcomes in terms of happier, more confident teachers. One talked about changing the culture of a subject department, something borne out by other interviewees. Those who said that their impact had been limited generally attributed this to lack of time, or lack of planning and discussion of their role. In some cases where a new headteacher had been appointed, it appeared that the original vision for the ET role had been lost, though in other cases the new head brought a different vision to bear.

Some of the other teachers interviewed were spoke very positively about the ET's role and the support that they personally had received.

A number of factors emerged which enabled ETs to be very effective in some schools:

- appointing the right person, who was an excellent and enthusiastic teacher and an excellent and approachable mentor;
- separating the ET role from management;
- harnessing the ET's talents and enthusiasms and allowing them to move the role forward;
- allocating the ET enough time each week to carry out their role, and allowing enough time for other teachers to develop within the mentoring /coaching relationship.

### ***Other teachers' perspectives in relation to their own careers***

Teachers were asked whether they saw the ETS as the gold standard for classroom teaching to which teachers could aspire, and whether they would be interested in becoming ETs in the future. Very few saw the ETS as a realistic prospect for their own careers.

Those in the early stages of their careers saw it as too far in the future to think about realistically. Moreover, they did not know enough about the ETS to say whether it was something that they might want to do. Only two of 14 in this group spoke with enthusiasm about the ET role, identifying it as a way of gaining a post with higher pay and enhanced responsibility while staying in the classroom.

The teachers with two to six years teaching experience generally saw becoming a head of department as their next career step. None of this group aspired to become ETs.

Similarly the majority of post-threshold teachers interviewed had no interest in the ETS. Some had ruled it out because of the title or the workload or because it would take them away from their pupils. Others already had management roles or expected to move into them. However, three teachers were genuinely interested in becoming ETs. One said that it was unlikely to happen because he worked in the same department as the current ET. The other two were both concerned that they still had about five years to go before they would be eligible, so although this was a preferred route, they doubted whether they would become ETs.

### **Findings: Suggestions for future development of the ET scheme**

#### ***Views about what might increase the number of ETs***

It was agreed that more publicity was essential; this should be directed both at headteachers and at teachers. While paper publicity has some effect, it was also suggested that it would be useful to have presentations at headteachers' conferences and meetings, and that workshops should be held for prospective ETs.

#### ***Suggestions for changing the ETS to make it more attractive to schools and teachers***

Many interviewees argued that the ETS needed changing; the most specific suggestions came from those in schools employing ETs. The vast majority of interviewees supported changing the title Excellent Teacher. A considerable number of alternatives were discussed; among the ETs themselves and their headteachers, the most preferred option was a version of the AST title - AST2 or AST inreach. The STRB had suggested Principal Teacher; some preferred this, but many had reservations, including the overlap with the increasing use of the title Principal for the headteacher.

Other suggestions that attracted a large measure of support were changing the eligibility criteria to allow teachers to become ETs earlier in their careers; changing the pay arrangements either to a scale or to a payment like the TLR; allocating some funding to support schools creating ET posts; and allowing teachers to apply for assessment so that they could apply for ET posts in other schools. It was also suggested that it would be useful for schools and for teachers' career development to be able to make fixed-term ET appointments. It would also be helpful to clarify the requirement to provide a specific example of searching analysis carried out in the last two years as part of the ET assessment, providing exemplification of how it can be met, and showing explicitly that ETs are not being asked to do something that is not required of ASTs.

While it was generally agreed that ETs should have a career-long record of CPD, the current ETs and their headteachers argued that they had demonstrated this in the evidence they presented at their assessments, and that no further requirement was necessary.

There was little support for the STRB suggestion that teachers should be able to apply to be assessed in order to have ET status and recognition, even though a post was not available.

### **Wider changes to the career and pay structure for teachers**

Many interviewees argued that rather than making changes to the ETS alone, it would be helpful to make wider changes to the career and pay structure for teachers. While it was agreed that it was helpful to have some career options other than management, the majority argued that it is unhelpful to regard classroom and management career routes as entirely separate, in the way suggested in some government documentation. They felt that it would be helpful revise documentation to recognise the fact that some teachers find classroom related posts such as AST or ET give them the confidence to move into leadership roles, and that equally, some teachers in leadership positions have welcomed the opportunity to move to teaching and learning (or 'classroom') roles. In practice, the evidence showed that some teachers had switched from a managerial role to an ET post, and that others were using their ET posts as a stepping stone into management.

There was considerable support for reviewing the AST and ET roles to create a single coherent career route. It was argued that schools could create posts for such teachers that involved outreach or that were entirely inreach. The two roles could be identified by titles such as AST1 and AST2, or AST outreach and AST inreach.

It was also argued that there is considerable overlap between the TLR and the ET role, in that both roles have some responsibility for teaching and learning. One suggestion was that the definition of the TLR should be broadened to offer schools more flexibility in creating roles that meet their needs.

Some interviewees suggested that the ETS should be replaced with a scheme that involves studying, more like the Scottish and Welsh Chartered Teacher schemes. It was argued that this would reinvigorate teachers who might have become stale after twelve years or so of classroom teaching.

### **Discussion and implications for policy and practice**

A particular difficulty of the ETS appears to be that it tries to bring together notions of moving to a higher pay level on the basis of experience and excellence (which do not necessarily go together) with a requirement to carry out a specific role. In a context where there is an increasing trend for fast tracking to leadership roles, and an emphasis on standards and quality rather than experience per se, this appears an uneasy combination.

In revising the ETS, the following issues will need to be considered:

- Changing the title Excellent Teacher: this attracted overwhelming support, though no clarity about alternatives;
- Publicising the scheme much more forcefully; interviewees suggested that this could best be done through events including workshops for potential applicants;

- Enabling teachers to apply for assessment against the ET standards at an earlier stage in their career: obviously the ETS was set up specifically to provide a route for those who have reached U3 without becoming an AST, gaining a TLR or moving into leadership - but interviewees emphasises that this group may not be the most appropriate for the role;
- Changing the pay arrangements to an incremental scale, rather than spot pay within a range; this would be more easily understood, and would reduce ETs' feeling of being singled out by a different pay structure;
- Considering wider changes to the career and pay structure for teachers such as:
  - bringing together AST and ET into one route under the AST title (this being more familiar and accepted); this route could then include 'AST outreach' and 'AST inreach';
  - creating a wider and more flexible definition of a TLR within which schools can create permanent or temporary roles which focus on teaching and learning but do not necessarily involve line management. TLRs could then be created with different foci: outreach, inreach, head of department, coaching, professional mentor, and so on;
- Clarifying the requirement to provide a specific example of searching analysis carried out in the last two years as part of the ET assessment.



## 1 Introduction

The Institute for Policy Studies in Education was commissioned by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) in March 2008 to undertake a one-year review of the Excellent Teacher Scheme (ETS).

The scheme commenced in September 2006, following lengthy deliberation about progression for teachers on the Upper Pay Scale. It provided a new career route for experienced teachers and is an alternative to management and leadership posts. The aim of the ETS is to allow teachers to concentrate on using their pedagogic skills in ways which will have a positive impact, improving pupil attainment across the whole school. This means that in addition to their normal classroom duties, Excellent Teachers (ETs) should be role models for less experienced teachers, providing demonstration lessons and helping their colleagues to improve their effectiveness, for example through coaching and mentoring. Teachers who have spent two years on Upper Pay Scale 3 (U3) and do not have Teaching and Learning Responsibility Payments (TLRs) are eligible to become ETs, and to gain this status they have to undergo an external assessment. However, this can only be arranged when there is a vacancy for an ET in their school (i.e. their headteacher and governing body have created and budgeted for an ET post) (STRB, 2005).

It was envisaged that over time, some 20 per cent of eligible teachers would be employed as ETs. In its first year of operation it was anticipated that there would be between 3,000 and 5,000 ET posts established, but that has not proved to be the case. Up to December 2008, just 59 teachers had successfully been assessed as ETs in England and Wales (information from DCSF).

Before the scheme commenced, the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) (2005) made a number of recommendations which the Secretary of State deferred for further consideration. The STRB subsequently recommended, and the Secretary of State accepted, that the DCSF should monitor the bedding down of the ETS, and how ET and Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) posts are used, and should review the scheme by December 2008.

This review aimed to explore:

- why most schools have not created ET posts (including those that had indicated that they planned to do so);
- why some schools have created ET posts, and how they and the ETs themselves are benefiting from this;
- whether teachers see the ETS as a welcome addition to the career structure, and whether they personally aspire to become ETs; and
- the views of headteachers and teachers about the future of the scheme.

The next chapter sets out the discussions that led to the creation of the scheme, and reviews the limited information that is available about the reasons for low take-up. Chapter 3 explains the research design, and the following chapters report findings.

## 2 Literature review

In this chapter, we review the process of debate between DfES<sup>2</sup>, STRB and teacher and employer associations that led to the creation of the ETS. The second section of the chapter sets out the criteria for appointment as an ET, and the duties that ETs are expected to perform. We then consider the very limited evidence available about the take-up of the scheme, and possible reasons for the very small number of ET posts.

### 2.1 Background to the Excellent Teacher Scheme (ETS)

The creation of the Excellent Teacher Scheme (ETS) followed a long period of debate about progression on the Upper Pay Scale (UPS). From the time this scale was first envisaged, key stakeholders disagreed about arrangements for progression on this scale. The Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth STRB Reports (2000, 2001, 2002, 2003) all set out a similar range of arguments, summarised here.

- The Government believed that progression beyond the threshold should be based on teaching quality, and proposed a pay scale of five points which could be awarded at intervals of several years to recognise substantial and sustained performance, and should become 'progressively more challenging' towards the top of the range.
- The teacher unions expressed a variety of views, but agreed that, in relation to motivation, recruitment and retention, it was crucial that progression through all five points should be a reasonable expectation for the great majority of teachers (which they claimed had been initially promised in the Green Paper, DfEE, 1998); they rejected moves to 'progressively more challenging' criteria or quotas to limit progression, arguing that these would have an adverse effect on morale.
- The STRB argued that arrangements for the UPS must be simple and straightforward with progression based on continued and sustained performance and contribution to the school, part of which could relate to performance objectives. It envisaged that all teachers would progress, but at differing rates. It did not support the inclusion of reference to 'progressively more challenging' standards.
- All parties expressed concern (in different ways) about funding UPS progression.

Meanwhile the first round of threshold assessment took place in 2000, and 194,249 teachers were successful in meeting the Post Threshold standards and moving on to the upper pay scale (CEA, 2001). The need for agreement about their progression on the UPS became increasingly urgent; in September 2002 the first cohort to pass the threshold became eligible to progress to UPS2. The STRB Twelfth Report (2003) states that the DfES evidence said that it had made available sufficient resources in 2002-3 for a substantial majority of eligible teachers to progress to UPS2, and that the guidance on progression was that performance and contribution should show a greater breadth and depth than indicated by the threshold standards. The DfES wanted to put in place a different approach for UPS points 3, 4 and 5, with 'progressively more challenging' criteria for progression. The STRB argued that there was no new substantial evidence to make them change their view, and said that as the first cohort would not become eligible for progression to UPS3 until September 2004, there was still time for debate.

---

<sup>2</sup> The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) became the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) in 2007.

The DfES submission to the STRB (July, 2003) stated that 90 per cent of those who passed the threshold in the first cohort had progressed to UPS2. It argued that this undermined the purpose of the UPS, and that progression should not be automatic but should distinguish between teachers, with excellence as a goal. If such a high proportion of teachers continued to progress through the UPS, the DfES predicted that £700 million would be added to school costs by 2009, which it said was unsustainable (paras 42-43).

Additional evidence came from PriceWaterhouseCoopers' report for the STRB on research into allowances and pay (May, 2003). This reported that headteachers were unclear about how to link performance and pay, and many felt that linking the two would damage the positive impact that performance management was having in schools. This echoed previous findings from Ofsted (2002) that schools were not using performance management outcomes to determine future pay.

In the light of all this, the DfES proposed new arrangements to allow 'substantial numbers' to move to UPS3. These included rigorous criteria for excellence, and teachers having to make a short application setting out how they met the criteria. It proposed making available ring-fenced funding to support progression of 33 per cent of the cohort, and stated that 'UPS3 is targeted on the best within the UPS2 cohort *within each school*' (DfES, 2003, para. 46).

The STRB Thirteenth Report Part 1 (November, 2003) reported concerns from teacher unions about associating excellence with the third point on a five point scale, and about the notion of an arbitrary quota of one third of eligible teachers. However, the STRB agreed that a 'tapering scale' was needed, but felt that, even with clear criteria, an external element was needed in the assessment, because the capacity of schools to make decisions linking performance and pay was underdeveloped. They therefore recommended urgent consultations on a new framework for progression to UPS3.

In January 2004, an *Agreement on rewards and incentives for post-threshold teachers and members of the school leadership group* (DfES, 2004a) was signed between relevant members of the social partnership that had previously signed the national agreement on teachers' workload (i.e. ATL, NAHT, NASUWT, PAT, SHA, the National Employers' Organisation and the DfES). This proposed that progression to UPS3 should go ahead and should not be limited by a quota, but that UPS4 and 5 should be deleted, and instead that a new scheme for Excellent Teachers should be introduced to take effect in September 2006. Those who had reached UPS3 could access the new scheme, which was likely to benefit some 20 per cent of those reaching UPS3. The agreement proposed that standards for the new scheme could draw on Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) Standards, but that unlike ASTs, who undertake outreach work, Excellent Teachers (ETs) would support colleagues in their own school. External assessors should sit with those making decisions about the ETS in order to provide reassurance to heads, governors and teachers for a transitional period. Signatories of the agreement formed a new Rewards and Incentives Group (RIG) which would meet on a regular basis to monitor implementation of this agreement; to work at new ways of ensuring appropriate rigour in performance management and related pay decisions; and consider the scope for agreeing further changes to the pay structure.

Following the RIG Agreement, the STRB Thirteenth report (Part 2) (March, 2004) accepted the proposals for an excellent teacher scheme, which they envisaged as 'the pinnacle of a classroom teacher's role' (para. 2.31). Their recommendations were generally in line with the RIG proposals: that the scheme should be open to those on UPS3, that there should be a process of external assessment similar to that for AST to ensure that only the very best teachers could achieve the new status. They also proposed that the criteria should include a programme of study leading to an appropriate qualification.

RIG (2004a, b) fleshed out their proposals in evidence to the STRB in September 2004. In particular, they now linked progression to the availability of an ET post in the school, and proposed that in addition to their normal classroom duties, Excellent Teachers should have a substantial involvement in a range of activities including mentoring and sharing good practice. Rather than the STRB's proposed criterion of involvement in a programme of study leading to a qualification, RIG proposed that teachers should provide evidence of work involving a 'searching analysis' of what was needed to address the needs of a particular group of pupils, and that was 'of sufficient substance to have a positive impact beyond their assigned pupils' (2004a, para. 62).

STRB (2005) generally supported the RIG proposals, while acknowledging that opposition to the joint proposals was 'not inconsiderable', and a significant proportion of the workforce were not party to the agreement (i.e. those in teacher unions that were not members of RIG). They made a number of recommendations in their Fourteenth Report (2005) (paras 5.38 and 5.49). However, the Secretary of State felt that some of the recommendations needed further consideration, and thus deferred those about revising the expectations of the role; allowing teachers to seek ETS accreditation regardless of whether there was an ET post at their school; changing the post title to 'Principal Teacher'; changing the admission criteria to include demonstration of a sustained record of continuing professional development throughout the teacher's career; and allowing teachers to apply for accreditation for posts at any school. The STRB, in their Sixteenth Report (2007) reiterated concerns about the title; the fact that assessment against ET standards was restricted to those in schools with an ET post available; and the lack of distinctive positioning of ETS in the teachers' career structure.

This account shows, then, that the Excellent Teacher Scheme was created in response to concerns about UPS progression. Several strategies were put in place to ensure that only the best progressed; there was to be external assessment, and the status was firmly linked to the existence of a post. The scheme clearly fitted with policy moves to raise standards by focusing teachers' work on teaching and learning (rather than administration), and to create career pathways for teachers that focus on teaching rather than management. However, these were not the main drivers.

## 2.2 The Excellent Teacher Scheme

The Excellent Teacher grade commenced on 1 September 2006. The DCSF Guidance stated:

*The ETS offers the most experienced classroom teachers a rewarding career route which is an alternative to posts that attract Teaching and Learning Responsibility (TLR) payments, and Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) grade or leadership group post. (DCSF, 2007a, para. 6)*

An Excellent Teacher has to meet the core and post-threshold standards, as well as the Excellent Teacher Standards<sup>3</sup>. (An AST has to meet all of these together with additional standards specific to ASTs.) Teachers can apply for assessment against the standards only when an ET post is available in their school.

---

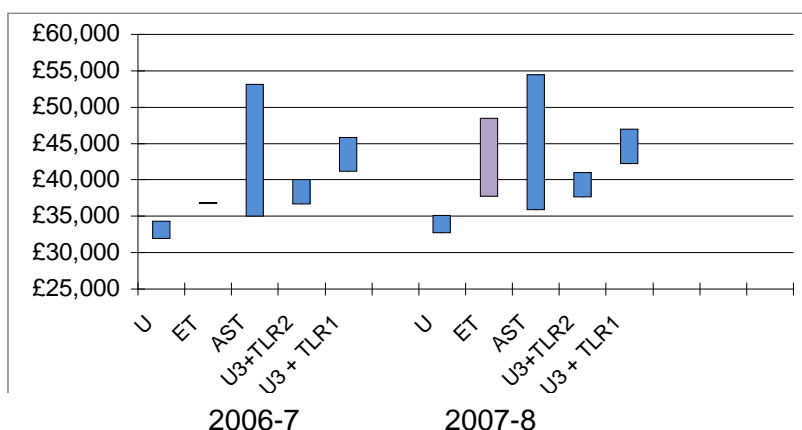
<sup>3</sup> Revised Professional Standards for Teachers were introduced in September 2007 (TDA, 2007). Thus the first ETs were assessed against the previous standards, which differed in some respects from the 2007 standards.

Excellent Teachers differ from ASTs in that their role includes supporting other teachers within their schools, while ASTs have an outreach function. They are not eligible for TLR payments because they should not be responsible for developing a subject or curriculum area or have significant line management responsibility. *Excellent Teachers: Guidance for teachers, headteachers and local authorities, (England)* (DCSF, 2007a)<sup>4</sup> states that ETs should have substantial involvement and specific responsibilities in these areas:

- participating in the induction of newly qualified teachers;
- participating in the professional mentoring of other teachers;
- sharing good practice through demonstration lessons;
- helping other teachers to develop their expertise in planning, preparation and assessment;
- helping other teachers to evaluate the impact of their teaching on pupils;
- undertaking classroom observations to assist and support the performance management process; and
- helping other teachers improve their teaching practice including those on capability procedures.

It was decided that ETs should be awarded a spot salary. While initially it was proposed that schools should set this spot salary within a recommended range, the Secretary of State decided that initially this would be a single salary rate for all ETs within each pay band. However, from 2008, this was changed to a spot salary set within a range (Adonis, 2008; STRB, 2008). This approach does not apply to any other grade in teaching. Figure 2.1 shows ET pay in 2007 and 2008 in comparison to pay for other teachers. The new range clearly increases the potential earnings of an ET, making it a post that could attract higher pay than a TLR1, though not as much as some ASTs.

**Figure 2.1: Pay ranges for various posts, 2006-7 and 2007-8 (annual salary England and Wales excluding the London area, DCSF, 2007b, 2008a)**



<sup>4</sup> A separate Guidance document is available for Wales, produced in English and in Welsh.

### 2.3 Take-up of the ETS

RIG (2004a) anticipated that some 20 per cent of those on U3 would become Excellent Teachers. The DCSF specification for this review stated that in the first year of operation, it was anticipated that there would be between 3,000 and 5,000 ET posts established. However, two unpublished surveys of schools (the Excellent Teacher Survey conducted by VT Education and Skills<sup>5</sup>, and Headspace, both conducted in February to March 2007) reported that schools anticipated establishing much lower numbers of posts, though both show that numbers were anticipated to increase a three year period (information provided to the research team by the DCSF) (Table 2.1).

**Table 2.1: Number of ET posts planned for each year: VT and Headspace surveys<sup>6</sup> (unpublished)**

	VT	Headspace
2006-7	440	550
2007-8	930	1,500
2008-9	1,590	2,500

The data from these surveys also show a very low percentage of all schools anticipating one or more than one ET posts (2006-7, one per cent; 2007-8, three per cent; 2008-9, four per cent, VT survey). Predictably, more secondary than primary schools planned ET posts, and secondary leaders were far more likely to anticipate establishing more than one post.

However, the number of Excellent Teachers in post is far lower than anticipated from any of these figures. In May 2007, just 34 had applied for assessment, of whom 26 had qualified (TES, 18 May). By December, 2008, 59 had been successfully assessed, and eight had been unsuccessful (communication to research team from DCSF).

A number of factors that may have contributed to the low number of Excellent Teacher posts can be identified from the views put forward to the STRB, from the VT and Headspace surveys of school leaders, and from a very small number of other sources, including two case studies on TeacherNet (accessed February 2008), case studies in *Primary Teachers* and *Secondary Teachers* (DCSF, 2008b, c); three articles in the TES (2006, 2007a, b), and one online account (Cheshire County Council, 2006). In that the number of posts so far created is small, the evidence is inevitably limited and anecdotal; it was used only to identify issues that merited further exploration in the research. This section sets out evidence and concerns under four headings:

- school leaders' perceptions of the role;
- teachers' perceptions of the role;
- the title 'Excellent teacher'; and
- the assessment and appointment arrangements.

<sup>5</sup> VT Education and Skills are the National Assessment Agency for Advanced Skills Teachers and Excellent Teachers.

<sup>6</sup> The VT survey achieved a 32% response rate, with responses from 1381 schools included in the database. The Headspace figures are based on responses from 989 schools.

### ***School leaders' perceptions of the role***

There has been very little published about the take-up of the ET scheme in schools, and in this section we draw largely on a limited number of published case studies. These suggest that a variety of factors appear to have contributed to the establishment of ET posts. The expectation was that schools would consider creating ET posts when reviewing the school staffing structure (which schools were required to do in autumn 2005). The Guidance on this (DfES, 2005a) explicitly refers to the possibility of creating ET posts, and Explanatory Notes for Schools on the ET scheme (DfES, 2005b) were issued at the same time (though the first ETs could not be appointed until September 2006). In some of the case studies this appears to have been the case. For example, at Springhill High School (TeacherNet, accessed Feb 2008) during the staff restructuring exercise, a decision was made to replace second in departments with ETs or ASTs, in order to focus departments more strongly on teaching and learning issues. A further issue that has been raised in relation to the School Staffing Review is the extent to which governors did (or did not) have relevant information. Janette Owen, writing in the Guardian (2005) points out that the RIG guidance states that having received recommendations from the headteacher, 'it is the responsibility of the governing body to decide on the further structure and implementation of the plan.' However, she claims that many schools did not receive adequate information, and that RIG's information was not flagged on the GovernorNet site, but could only be downloaded through TeacherNet. This may mean that some governors have not had adequate information about the ETS.

The school staffing review is not referred to in other accounts and case studies of Excellent Teachers (though it may well have been a factor). At Ripley St Thomas High School (TeacherNet, accessed Feb 2008), ET status was seen as fitting in with designation as a Training School. Other ET posts appear to have been created specifically for a deserving individual; for example, one account reports that the head suggested to the teacher that he apply for the role because he was recognised throughout the school as a first class teacher (TES, 2006). Another suggests that an ET post was created specifically for a teacher who had lost a management allowance but not gained a TLR (TES, 2007a). And a third explains that the ET post is putting on 'a formal footing' the roles that the teacher had already been undertaking (DCSF, 2008b).

The ETs in the case studies available were all long-standing staff in their schools; only one case study refers to any process of internal advertisement and selection. However, some ET posts have been externally advertised<sup>7</sup>. In that teachers can only be assessed in relation to ET vacancies in their own schools, this was perhaps not what was originally envisaged. However, between January 2007 and December 2008, Education Data Surveys recorded advertisements for such 113 posts in 89 secondary schools. Of these, 61 were in mathematics, 24 in science, 12 in English and the other 16 in a variety of subjects (communication from Education Data Surveys, 2009). This suggests that some secondary schools may be seeing ET posts as a potential way to recruit experienced and outstanding teachers of secondary shortage subjects, and as an alternative to the use of recruitment and retention points.

The Springhill High School case study mentioned above (TeacherNet, accessed Feb 2008) involved a decision to appoint ETs or ASTs to replace second in departments. This suggests that the distinction between these roles was not seen as important in relation to the needs of the school. Similarly schools have advertised posts for 'Advanced Skills Teacher / Excellent Teacher' (e.g. Stockwell Park High School, in TES Jobs, accessed April 2008).

---

<sup>7</sup> One issue apparent here is that teachers may not find it easy to locate such advertisements. E-Teach has not created a specific category for them or for ASTs; presumably both are listed under 'other'. On TES Jobs they are listed under Leadership / Excellence Teacher.

The evidence above suggests that the schools that have established ET posts have done so for a variety of reasons. However, both the VT and Headspace Surveys reported that about half the school leaders they surveyed indicated that they lacked knowledge about how ETs fit into the school structure and were confused about the benefits of having ETs.

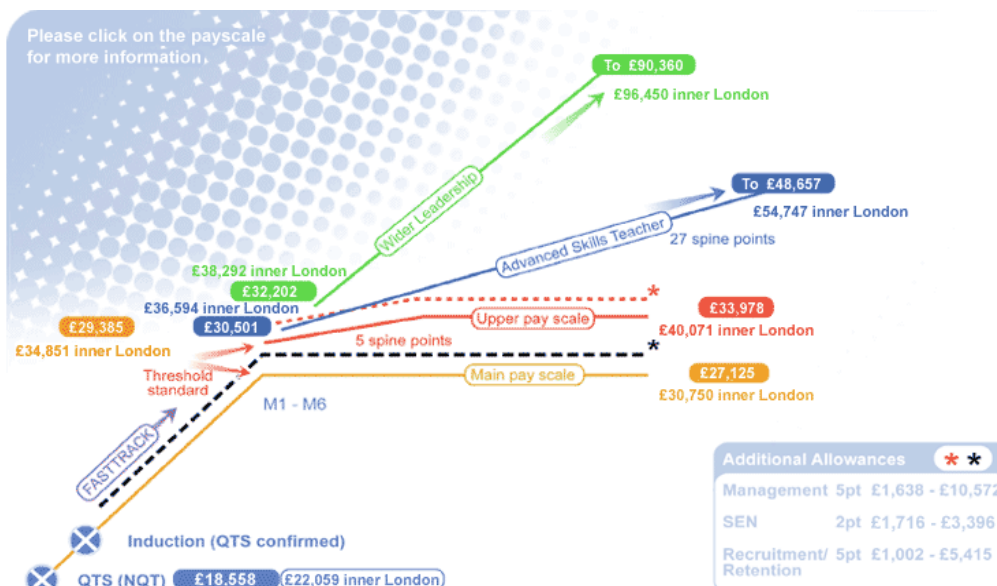
**Teachers’ perceptions of the role**

The ETs who were the subject of case studies all expressed considerable satisfaction at the public recognition they have achieved, one describing ET status as an ‘honour’. However, some concerns were expressed; for example, one expressed concern that the operation of the market would result in more ET posts being created in shortage subjects, rather than all teachers having equal opportunities to gain the status (TES, 2007a). This would fit the pattern suggested by the external advertisements for ETs.

The VT survey data indicate that two fifths of school leaders cited a lack of interest in applying for the grade on the part of teachers as an obstacle to establishing ET posts. However, the Headspace survey reported that ‘few teachers state they have ‘no knowledge of the Excellent Teacher Scheme’ (nine per cent of primary; five per cent of secondary)’. It is unclear where these latter data come from as Headspace is described as a survey of school leaders. Nevertheless, our investigation of available information about the scheme suggests some limitations in communication with teachers about this career route.

While *Excellent Teachers: Guidance for teachers, headteachers and local authorities* (England) (DCSF, 2007) can be found on TeacherNet (accessed Feb 2008), it is not located or signposted in the ‘Professional and Career Development’ area of the site. This area is introduced with a statement, ‘Our aim is to show YOU how to map YOUR career and professional development’. However, the map of possible career paths and pay, shown below, does not include the possibility of becoming an Excellent Teacher (Figure 2.2).

**Figure 2.2: Diagram showing career routes for teachers (from TeacherNet ‘Career and Professional Development’, accessed Feb 2008)**





Similarly the section within 'Professional and Career Development' on 'Careers in the Classroom' provides examples of pathways such as Advanced Skills Teacher, Fast Track, but there is no reference to Excellent Teacher. Thus a teacher investigating career possibilities would be unlikely to hear about the scheme from this source.

The TeacherNet page on the Excellent Teacher Scheme (accessed Feb 2008) can be found by routing through *management* → *pay and performance* → *teachers' pay* → *Excellent Teacher Scheme*. The page states that it has been designed to provide information about the ETS to 'teachers who are considering applying for an Excellent Teacher (ET) post, and headteachers and governors who are thinking about creating an ET post and who are interested in the potential benefits for their school'. However, this part of the site is targeted at school leaders, rather than teachers, and is arguably not the most obvious location for teachers to explore. The two case studies of Excellent Teachers referred to earlier can be found in the same part of the site.

An alternative way in to information about the Excellent Teacher Scheme is via the *Professional Standards for Teachers* (TDA, 2007). Here the Introduction to the Standards states:

*Teachers seeking Excellent Teacher or AST status need to apply and be assessed through an external assessment process. Teachers seeking to cross the threshold are assessed by their head teacher. The standards for Post Threshold Teachers, Excellent Teachers and ASTs are pay standards and teachers who are assessed as meeting them also access the relevant pay scale. (p. 2)*

This does not explain that a teacher can only apply to be assessed against the ET Standard when there is a vacancy for an ET post in their school (see below), and so may result in misunderstandings.

Some research indicates that at least some teachers do not understand what the Excellent Teacher role involves. In the *GTC Survey of Teachers 2006* (Hutchings et al., 2006), 3665 teachers gave responses to a question about how they envisaged that their career would develop over the next five years; the options listed included 'gain Excellent Teacher status'. Of the class teachers, one per cent indicated that it was 'highly likely' they would gain Excellent Teacher status, and five per cent that it was 'likely'. However, further analysis showed that almost half of these had less than five years teaching service, and so would not be eligible for ET status within the next five years. These data also show that secondary teachers were more likely than primary to anticipate becoming ETs. The *GTC Survey of Teachers 2007* (GTC, 2008) included the same question. It reports that two per cent of class or subject teachers said they were 'highly likely' to gain ETS and nine per cent 'likely'. Again, secondary teachers, and those with a shorter length of service were more likely to anticipate this.

The data above suggest that some teachers may not be fully aware of the ETS. This research reviews the extent to which this is the case.

### ***The title 'Excellent Teacher'***

The title 'Excellent Teacher' is something that it has been suggested could both deter schools from establishing such posts, and teachers from applying. The VT survey asked headteachers how more schools could be encouraged to establish ET posts. It listed five possible strategies, and headteachers were asked to rank these as 'the main issue', 'the second issue', and so on. VT reported that 45 per cent of respondents indicated that changing the name of the grade would encourage more schools to establish ET posts, and that 25 per cent of respondents had identified this as 'the main issue'. An ET interviewed by

the TES commented that she had been concerned that the title 'sounded awful', and might be divisive, though this had not been the case (TES, 2007b).

The STRB Fourteenth report (2005) discussed title and its use. It argued that if the grade was to be linked to a specific post, the notion of status and recognition among peers would be lost, in that some teachers would not have the opportunity to become Excellent Teachers. It therefore recommended that in order to emphasise this notion, and create a gold standard to which teachers could aspire from an early stage of their careers, all eligible teachers should be able to apply for assessment against the Standards, and, on passing, be called Excellent Teachers, though this would not impact on their salaries. If this were to be the case, another title would need to be found for post-holders, and it suggested that they should be referred to as 'principal teachers'. This is among the proposals on which a decision has been deferred.

One of the difficulties of the title Excellent Teacher is that this is a widely used phrase, and may not apply to the role. It is often used, for example, in job advertisements for posts that are not 'Excellent Teacher' jobs. Protocol Education uses a strap line on its advertisements: 'Excellent job for excellent teacher' (Guardian Jobs in Education, accessed February 2008). Some advertisements state, for example, 'Excellent teacher of English required', but closer examination shows that the post is for any classroom teacher (for example, Gumtree, accessed February 2008).

### ***The assessment and appointment arrangements***

The assessment and appointment arrangements suggest two reasons why numbers may be low. When the performance threshold was first introduced, research found that many teachers found the process of collecting and presenting evidence and being assessed a daunting one, and one that had a considerable emotional impact (Mahony et al., 2004, 2005). It is possible that teachers who have been through this process are unwilling to subject themselves to another, and even more testing, assessment.

A second issue relates to the stipulation that teachers can apply for assessment against the ET standards only in relation to a vacancy for an ET post in their own school, and similarly headteachers can only put a teacher forward for assessment against the ET standards if there is an ET post available. This is referred to as a 'post-related' approach. However, some schools wishing to appoint an ET may not have an eligible teacher on the staff. Similarly, some teacher who would like to become ETs may not be in schools where ET posts have been created. This clearly limits the potential number of ETs.

Some schools have advertised, but this is clearly a problematic process. The wording of external advertisements suggests that they anticipate that the teacher would be appointed to the staff, and then would then apply for assessment against the ET standards. For example, a post was advertised in February 2008 as Excellent Teacher of Mathematics. The salary is listed as '£36,711 (when established as an Excellent Teacher)'; eligibility is 'UPS3 for two years or more', and the advertisement states 'The Governors ... are seeking to appoint an outstanding teacher of mathematics who is aspiring to be or is eligible to be an 'Excellent Teacher' in the near future' (TES Jobs, accessed 07/02/08). Presumably the teacher appointed cannot apply for Excellent Teacher Status until they have taken up the post - but may then fail the assessment. It is possible that schools may be less willing to advertise externally when there is no guarantee that the person appointed will be successful in gaining Excellent Teacher Status, and that teachers may be reluctant to apply for posts when the status and pay cannot be guaranteed until after they have taken up the appointment.

## 2.4 Mentoring and coaching roles in schools

In this section we consider potential demand for the specific roles that ETs carry out, and the potential overlap with other grades of teacher. As Section 2.2 explained, ETs are expected to be involved in mentoring, sharing good practice and helping other teachers to develop their expertise. Over recent years there has been an increasing recognition that these activities should form part of the professional development of all teachers, rather than simply trainees and NQTs. The GTC have summarised recent research findings about effective CPD; their summary of the activities that should be included lists:

- sustained access to coaching and mentoring, for getting support with knowledge and/or skills;
- opportunities to see good practice in action, both in classrooms and in adult learning environments;
- a range of opportunities for observation and feedback as part of collaborative and collegial working practices; and
- sustained, structured and cumulative opportunities for practising and evaluating what has been learnt.  
(GTC, 2007, p.7)

Similarly, the TDA (2008) list 'induction, coaching and mentoring, lesson observation and feedback, collaborative planning and teaching, shadowing, [and] sharing good practice', as aspects of 'within school' CPD (p.4), and argue that research shows that effective CPD is 'supported by coaching or mentoring from experienced colleagues, either from within the school or from outside.' They state that coaching is most effective when a staff member with a clearly identified need is paired with a colleague who has acknowledged expertise in that area. Effective CPD also includes lesson observations 'conducted in a collaborative and supportive manner, and 'models effective learning and teaching strategies' (p.6).

The TDA's State of the Nation synthesis report (Pedder et al., 2008) found that, while classroom-based collaborative approaches to CPD have been identified in research as effective, most teachers' approaches are neither collaborative nor clearly contextualised in classroom practice. However, both Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs) and ETs were exceptions to this, and so were identified as being well placed to take CPD leadership roles working with teachers to encourage more classroom-based and collaborative CPD. AST was the first role established with this agenda at its heart was It has much in common with the ET role; thus when discussing the creation of the ETS, the STRB (2005) were concerned about 'the apparent overlap with the AST grade' (para.5.38). The obvious difference is that ASTs are intended to spend 20 per cent of their time on 'outreach' work outside their own schools, while ETs work only in their own schools.

In the light of the potential overlap, we briefly discuss the rationale for and work of ASTs. Sutton et al. (2000) report that the grade emerged both from the Labour Party's commitment in its 1997 manifesto to 'create a new grade of teacher to recognise the best' (Labour Party, 1997), which was followed by proposals in the Green Paper Meeting the Challenge of Change (DfEE, 1998), and from the TTA's early work on national standards, which included 'Expert Teacher' as a grade that it was expected most teachers would attain. The AST grade which eventually emerged was seen as a recognition of classroom excellence, and post-holders had responsibility for providing feedback, advice and coaching to others (DfEE, 1999). This has many similarities to the ET grade. A further resemblance is that at first, Advanced Skills Teachers were frequently referred to as 'superteachers' (e.g. TES, 1997,

1998; Blake et al., 2000; Sutton et al., 2000; McCormack, 2003); - a label which clearly has similarities with Excellent Teacher in identifying some teachers as being better than others. Concerns voiced about the AST grade were also similar to those about the ETS: the NUT said the scheme was 'potentially divisive', and the NAHT that it 'failed to recognise that there are many more good teachers than could be covered by the grade' (quoted by Blake et al., 2000). A survey conducted by the staff at the University of Chichester in 1998 investigated teachers' views<sup>8</sup>; overall just 41 per cent supported the introduction of the new grade, while 59 per cent opposed it (though a majority of younger and less experienced teachers supported it (Blake et al., 2000).

In contrast to the ETS, some government funding was provided in the early stages; specialist schools were able to bid for this. Subsequently LAs could bid for funding for ASTs (but had to provide matched funds) (Sutton et al., 2000). Nevertheless, the numbers of ASTs appointed was lower than had been anticipated; the government's target set in the Green Paper *Teachers Meeting the Challenge of Change* (DfEE, 1998) was 5,000 in post by the year 2000, reaching a total of 10,000 in the longer term (para. 52). However, in January 2003, just 2,270 were in post (DfES, 2004b). Even by January 2008, the total was only 4,300 (DCSF, 2008d), and the provisional figures for January 2009 show a fall to 4,030 (DCSF, 2009).

However, evaluations of ASTs' work suggest that they are making a valuable contribution. . Ofsted have published two reports (2001, 2003). The 2003 report concluded that 'the scheme continues to recruit highly competent teachers who are able to make a difference in their own and other schools' (para. 33). It stated that 'ASTs have significantly improved the quality of teaching and learning in over three-quarters of the schools inspected in the survey' (p.5). More recently, an evaluation of ASTs working in primary learning networks concluded that 'the ASTs' experience and expertise in influencing teachers in a positive way contributed to the successful implementation of the pilot' (p.1), and referred to the 'particular credibility' that ASTs have with other teachers (p.4) (TeacherNet, 2006).

More recently, the importance of mentoring and coaching has been recognised in the revised *Professional Standards for Teachers* (TDA, 2007). The Standards for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and Core standards include being 'open to coaching and mentoring'; and the Post Threshold standards require teachers to 'contribute to the professional development of colleagues through coaching and mentoring, demonstrating effective practice and providing advice and feedback'. The Excellent Teacher and Advanced Skills Teacher Standards do not specifically mention coaching and mentoring, though this is explicitly central to both roles. If all post-threshold teachers are expected to engage in coaching and mentoring, the need for the ET role becomes less obvious.

Moreover, restructuring of teaching staff roles, from 2006 onwards, which took place from autumn 2005, required all additional responsibilities taken on by teachers to focus on teaching and learning; thus Management Allowances were replaced by Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLRs). The duties of a teacher with a TLR include, among others, 'leading, developing and enhancing the teaching practice of other staff' (para. 25.3, DfES, 2005c). Again, there is an evident potential overlap with the role of an ET.

---

<sup>8</sup> 800 completed questionnaires were analysed, a response rate of 26.5%.

## 2.5 Career pathways in other countries

A number of other countries have developed initiatives to reward excellent teachers, or to provide for career development for experienced teachers who wish to stay in the classroom. In this section we outline four such schemes, and evidence from their evaluations.

### *AST in Australia*

Advanced Skills Teachers were introduced in Australia in the early 1990s. The scheme is administered by states rather than nationally. All states presented the scheme as recognising and rewarding highly skilled teachers wanting to stay in the classroom. Kleinhenz and Ingvarson (2004) identified this as a shift from a career ladder of promotion of management positions to a skill-based pay system. It was not tied to a specific post or particular duties, though some Advanced Skills Teachers said that, as a result of this recognition, they were asked for advice by colleagues (Smyth and Shacklock, 1998).

There was some criticism of the AST grades in Australia, particularly when they were first introduced (Ingvarson and Chadbourne, 1997; Smyth et al., 1997). Ingvarson (2008) identified poorly defined roles as one aspect which has led to the poor take up of the scheme. The time-consuming preparation of evidence also affected take up, as did the financial reward, which some teachers said was mismatched against the demanding criteria (Smyth and Shacklock, 1998). There were also concern for those teachers who failed the assessment and the impact this may have on their self-esteem, identity as a teacher and relationship with colleagues. Kleinhenz and Ingvarson (2004) conclude that it did not achieve its aims, and ultimately lost credibility in most states. Ingvarson and Chadbourne (1997) identified a number of reasons for this. With hindsight, Kleinhenz and Ingvarson (2004) claim that the most important were:

- the lack of credibility of the system for assessing teacher performance: teachers put forward reports of how they met the criteria, and submitted referees' reports; teachers were then interviewed by a panel in their own school (portfolios of evidence, observations of teaching, and external assessors were not used); and
- 'the inability of both unions and employers to conceive of paying teachers more just for being better teachers, rather than for extra work' (p.34).

The state of South Australia still runs schemes for Advanced Skills Teachers 1 and 2, and has tackled the weaknesses in the original assessment system. Their website describes the two roles as such:

*1: An AST 1 teacher is an exemplary classroom practitioner who is a role model for other teachers.*

*2: An AST 2 teacher is also an exemplary teacher but one who is able to take their skills, understanding and practice and use it to influence the practice of their colleagues thereby improving the learning outcomes for students.*

*(Government of South Australia, no date, accessed January 2009)*

In South Australia, AST 1 involves teachers developing a portfolio to demonstrate that they have the skills, knowledge and experience to satisfy the criteria. The portfolio can be developed over time through performance management, and in the AST1 process, there is line manager support, classroom observations, and a presentation to a panel that includes an experienced generalist peer evaluator.

Other Australian states have developed alternative schemes; for example, Victoria introduced the experienced teacher with responsibility (ETWR) in 2001 (Kleinhenz and Ingvarson, 2004). The assessment process described for this role is very similar to the original AST assessment; Kleinhenz and Ingvarson argue that it has very similar problems.

### *NBCT in the USA*

National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) are verified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) and are promoted as the '*highest symbol of professional teaching excellence*' (NBPTS, no date, accessed January, 2009). Teachers have to have been teaching for more three years, and the certification process may take as long as three years. NBCTs are assessed through portfolio entries (including examples of written feedback to students, a self-assessment of effectiveness and videotaped examples of lessons) and assessment centre exercises in the form of six essays. They are assessed by a minimum of 12 teachers. The certification process costs more than \$2500, but there are some scholarships and assistance with fees available. Some schools/states provide salary bonuses to NBCTs (Cavalluzzo, 2004).

NBCTs were introduced in 1987; there are now more than 74,000 certified teachers in the US, with 9,600 achieving it in 2008. It was anticipated that the designation would impact on increased teacher retention, improved professional development and would affect school improvement and student learning (NBPTS, 2007). NBPTS describe the NBC as 'a linchpin of some states' efforts to strengthen mentoring for new teachers and develop pay-for-performance programs to encourage more talented teachers to remain in the classroom' (2007, p.3).

Research has shown links between NBCT and teacher effectiveness: Vandevort et al. (2004) found that students in the classes of National Board Certified Teachers surpassed students in the classrooms of non-Board certified teachers in almost three-quarters of the comparisons. Goldhaber and Anthony (2007) similarly found consistent evidence that NBCTs are generally more effective than teachers who never applied to the program. However, they noted that there was no evidence that the NBPTS certification process itself does anything to increase teacher effectiveness. The NBPTS cites other impacts on teacher practice and morale, professional development, and areas of school improvement - such as leadership development, teacher mentoring, monitoring student performance, team-building, and curriculum development (NBPTS, 2007). However, despite the links between student attainment and being taught by NBCTs there is also evidence that such teachers are less likely to work in schools with low performing students (Berry and King, 2005).

### *Chartered Teachers in Scotland*

The Chartered Teacher grade was introduced in 2003 in response to the *McCrone Report* (Scottish Executive, 2000), which found few opportunities for experienced classroom teachers who did not wish to seek management posts to advance their careers. As such, it was designed to 'provide an alternative career choice to promotion into a management post' (CTS: Frequently Asked Questions). The *Continuing Professional Development* document (SEED, 2003) described the role of the CT:

*A CT will promote learning and will be committed to the development of educational excellence in the school and the wider professional community. (SEED, 2003)*

Originally the scheme was envisaged by the McCrone Committee as a two-tier approach, with both Chartered Teachers (CT) and Advanced Chartered Teachers (ACT). It was anticipated that CT status would be achieved by most and would allow them to develop classroom expertise as an alternative to management. ACT status was envisaged as a four year programme of research and advanced learning to develop classroom practice. The CTS is a combination of these two ideas. Like ETS it was anticipated that CTS would be within reach of a significant majority of teachers and that most teachers would be motivated to achieve it.

Chartered Teachers have the option of following two alternative routes to achieve professional recognition; the accreditation route or the programme route. The grade is based on completing a GTC Scotland accredited Masters course, but without having to provide direct evidence of teaching. All teachers at the top of the main grade who have maintained a CPD profile are eligible. Teachers have to pay their own fees; around £500 per module with each teacher having to complete 12 modules, though half of these can be achieved through recognition of prior learning. The accreditation route costs £1200 (in addition to the cost of module 1). They receive an increment for every two modules completed and on completion are entitled to an increased salary of £7161 (Scottish Government, 2008a).

In September 2008 there were 716 Chartered Teachers, with almost equal numbers in primary and secondary schools. The majority of CTs have been accredited rather than going down the programme route (546 teachers). Most CTs are aged between 46 and 60 (GTC Scotland, 2008).

Research conducted by McMahon and Reeves evaluating the impact of CTs in Scotland (2007) found that many headteachers were unclear as to the remit of the Chartered Teacher, as were many CTs themselves. They also found tensions around salary differentials; for example, some CTs earned as much as Principal Teachers without having any of the additional responsibilities. However, CTs contributed to CPD, and provided mentoring and support to other teachers. Team teaching and demonstration lessons were also found to make up a substantial part of their role. Like the ETS, there are some problems with the way CTS is perceived by other teachers. Some CTs spoke of not talking to colleagues about their work on the programme because of their lukewarm responses (Connelly and McMahon, 2007).

*A Report of the Chartered Teachers' Review Group* (Scottish Government, 2008a) recommended reviewing the standards and closing the accreditation route in 2008. It also found that cost, level of time commitment, salary enhancement and promotion of the CT standard affected uptake. The Group reported 'a lack of evidence around the impact on and outcomes for learning and teaching' (para. 3.7). In response to this the Scottish Government commissioned Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) to conduct a review of CTs and the impact they have in schools (Scottish Government, 2008b).

### *Chartered Teacher Wales*

The Welsh Assembly is currently piloting a Chartered Teacher Programme similar to that in Scotland. Two routes were piloted in September 2007 – a programme (taught) route and an accreditation route (similar to Scotland). The CTW appears to be popular with the 140 places available on the pilots oversubscribed. An independent evaluation of the pilot is expected in August 2009. The programme will be rolled out nationally in 2010, if accepted (Porter, 2009). Chartered Teachers in Wales differ to those in Scotland in that it has been decided that the scheme will be open to those teachers who wish to pursue leadership posts and middle management rather than only the most experienced who wish to remain in the classroom. The GTCW (2006) identified that it would have benefits both for classroom teachers and for middle leaders; among its aims were:

*to enable teachers to choose a route that will allow them to stay in the classroom rather than follow a leadership pathway, and at the same time, one which structured professional development and professional study; ... to raise the status and public recognition of teachers who choose to stay in the classroom; ... to enable teachers to enhance their middle leadership skills and develop their own roles as middle leaders. (GTCW, 2006, p.35)*

Hepburn (2009) reported that the GTCW believed that those aiming for headship should not be excluded, because the difference between classroom teachers and school leaders is too blurred to create a programme only for classroom teachers.

Significantly, teachers will not have to pay for the programme themselves; however, there will be no link to pay once status is achieved.

## **2.6 The review of the Excellent Teacher Scheme**

This survey of literature and policy documents raises a number of issues that may have impacted on the number of ET posts created, and teachers' enthusiasm for applying for these posts, including:

- the extent to which headteachers and teachers are aware of and understand the scheme;
- perceptions of the scheme, and specifically the title Excellent Teacher, as divisive;
- the use of spot pay rather than an incremental range;
- the extent to which ET posts have been created in secondary shortage subject areas, rather than being available to teachers in any phase or subject;
- whether external advertisements for ETs have been effective;
- whether the external assessment has acted as a deterrent to teachers; and
- the potential overlap in the roles of ETs, ASTs, post-threshold teachers and teachers with TLRs.

These issues have been taken into account in the research design of this, which is outlined in the next chapter.



### 3 Research design

This chapter sets out the aims of the research and explains the design of the data collection and analysis. It describes the achieved samples of respondents.

#### 3.1 Aims

This review aimed to explore:

- what teachers and schools with no ETs perceive to be the barriers that have prevented them from engaging with the scheme;
- why posts in schools with planned ETs have remained unfilled; and
- how schools with ET posts are benefiting from the scheme.

In the light of the low number of ET posts that have been created, an additional aim was also to understand reasons for the low take-up of the scheme.

#### 3.2 Overview

The research had three main strands:

- a) telephone interviews with headteachers and teachers in schools that had not appointed ETs, including some that had previously indicated that they intended to create such posts, and others in a random sample of schools in England and Wales;
- b) case studies conducted in a sample of schools that had appointed ETs; these involved face-to-face interviews with the headteacher, the ET, and a number of other teachers, including post-threshold teachers who might see ET as a possible career step, and teachers who had benefited from the ETs' work; and
- c) a postal survey of teachers in England and Wales.

In addition we interviewed with staff at VT Education and Skills, the national assessment agency for ETs and ASTs.

#### 3.3 Telephone interviews

The original intention was to interview headteachers and teachers in 15 schools that planned to appoint ETs and 15 random schools. The 'planned' schools were identified from two sources. The first was a list of 61 schools that had indicated in a survey conducted by VT in April 2007 that had included ET posts in the revised staffing structure, and had also stated that they were prepared to take part in qualitative research. This list was provided to the research team by the DCSF. The second source was schools that had advertised externally for ETs. These schools were selected from a list of 76 schools that had advertised secondary ET posts in the period January 2007 to April 2008 provided by Education Data Surveys. The 'random' schools were selected from a random sample of schools in all Government Office Regions and in Wales, provided by the DCSF and the Welsh Assembly Government. These samples were selected to include schools that varied in size, location, governance, attainment and so on.

In the event it proved harder than anticipated to find headteachers who would agree to take part. Moreover, we found that many of the schools that had planned ET posts no longer intended to make such appointments, while some of the random schools were intending to do so. Three 'planned' and two 'random' secondary schools had appointed ETs, or were in process of doing so. The division between 'planned' and 'random' schools was thus less clear-cut than anticipated.

### **Headteacher interviews**

As indicated above, many headteachers were unwilling to take part. Some others were willing to give us only a very short time, so that we were not able to ask all the questions on the interview schedule (we refer to these as partial interviews).

The achieved sample of headteachers is shown below. Included in this analysis are full interviews in 27 schools (11 primary, 14 secondary and two special), of which 11 were 'random' and the remainder 'planned'; together with partial interviews in six schools (one primary and five secondary schools); these were all schools that had planned to appoint ETs (all 'planned')<sup>9</sup>. The vast majority of the interviews were with headteachers, but some in secondary schools were with other members of the school leadership team, including deputy heads, and business managers. (We generally refer to interviewees in this group as headteachers, though this is not strictly accurate.) Table 3.1 shows that the achieved sample included a regional spread of schools that varied in size and governance.

**Table 3.1: Schools in the headteacher sample**

	Primary	Secondary	Special
Inner London	VA Primary (230)	<b>Foundation 11-18 (1650)</b> <i>Academy 11-18</i>	
Outer London	Community Primary (400) Community Primary (480)	Foundation 11-18 (2300) <i>Community 11-18 (1500)</i> <i>Community Girls 11-18 (1100)</i>	
South East	Community Primary (134)	Foundation 11-18 Boys (1600) <b>Community 11-18 (1900)</b> <b>Community 12-16 (1300)</b> <i>Foundation 11-18 (2000)</i>	
South West	VC Primary (420)		
East Midlands	Foundation Junior (250)	Community 11-16 school (750)	
West Midlands	Community Primary (700)	VA selective girls 11-18 (900) <i>Community 13-18 (900)</i>	
East of England		<b>Community 13-18 (1400)</b> VA comprehensive 11-18 (1000)	<b>Special boys 11-15 (90)</b>
Yorks and Humber	Community Primary (340)	Academy 11-18 (1200) Community 11-16 (1300)	
North West	VA Primary (140) <i>Community Primary (460)</i>	Boys Grammar 11-18 (1000) Academy CE (11-16) (700)	Special 5-16 (150)
North East	VA Primary (250)		
Wales	Community Junior (100)	Comprehensive 11-18 (900)	

Schools in italics are partial interviews. Schools in bold had appointed ETs

<sup>9</sup> In total, 16 out of a total of 43 schools we contacted from the VT survey took part, as did six schools that had advertised ET post (out of 18 contacted) and eleven random schools (out of 64 contacted).

We followed up most of the schools from the VT survey that had not responded to invitations to take part in interviews to find out their reasons for non-participation (generally we spoke to the headteachers' PAs). The majority said the head was too busy. In at least ten schools the headteacher listed on the 2007 database had now left; in such cases it was generally the previous headteacher who had included the ET posts in the staffing structure and the current one had removed them. Some of these schools told us that, contrary to their previous survey responses, they had not included ETs in their staffing structure,

Of the schools that had apparently advertised ET posts, a few said they had not done so<sup>10</sup>, while others had advertised for an ET or AST, and had not appointed ETs.

### ***Teacher interviews***

Our intention was to interview one teacher in each of the schools where we interviewed the head. However, some headteachers refused to ask any teachers if they were willing to be interviewed (generally stating that teachers would not be interested, or, in some cases, that they did not want the teachers to know about the ETS). We interviewed 11 teachers from schools where we have interviewed the heads, and a further ten randomly selected teachers; five of these were from primary schools, two special and the remainder secondary. One of the teachers interviewed had already been appointed as an ET, though had not been assessed. In another school a team of ETs / ASTs were being appointed, and a face to face group interview was conducted with this four teachers. It emerged, however, that all of them had decided to apply to become ASTs rather than ETs.

In addition to identifying school sector in which they were teaching, we have indicated teacher gender, as this emerged as a factor in their perceptions of the scheme. Where appropriate we also refer to length of experience (NQT, early career teacher etc.) and to current level of pay and / or responsibilities.

### ***Information sheet***

Before the interview, all prospective interviewees were sent a sheet giving them information about the scheme (see Appendix A). However, it was evident that some had not read it before the interview.

### ***The interview schedule***

Headteachers were asked about the school and current staffing; the 2005 review of the staffing structure; their decision to include (or not to include) ET posts in this, and their reasons for this; and their views about the ETS and its future.

Teachers were asked about their career trajectory and current role; their awareness and understanding of the ETS; their views about the value of establishing an ET post in their schools; whether they were interested in becoming an ET in the future, and why; and their views about the ETS and its future.

---

<sup>10</sup> Many advertisements ask for an excellent teacher (referring to quality), and it is not always possible to distinguish these from an Excellent Teacher post, particularly where capital letters are used.

### 3.4 Case studies of schools with ETs in post

The intention was to conduct school case studies in 15 schools where ETs had been appointed; in fact two extra case studies were conducted, making 17 in all. The case study schools were selected from a list of 41<sup>11</sup> schools employing Excellent Teachers supplied to the research team by the DCSF. Of the schools contacted, 18 either did not respond, declined to take part, for reasons including Ofsted inspections, being busy, and the ET no longer being in post. The case study sample, and the extent to which it is representative of all schools with ETs, is discussed in Chapter 5.

In each case study school we aimed to interview:

- the headteacher (or a relevant member of the school leadership team);
- the Excellent Teacher;
- a teacher (or teachers) who may have benefited from the existence of the ET; for example, an NQT, a GTP, a junior colleague, or a teacher of a different subject who has benefited from generic advice. The schools were asked to select appropriate individuals, and in some schools two or three teachers were interviewed as a group;
- a teacher (or teachers) who were eligible for ET status (had been on U3 for two years) but had not applied (if applicable), or who were interested in applying to become ETs; and
- a school governor.

Normally a member of the research team visited the school and conducted face to face interviews with the headteacher and relevant teachers. Interviews in one school were conducted by telephone because this was more convenient for the school.

In most cases, during the visit we handed the headteacher a letter addressed to the chair of the governing body asking him or her to contact us to arrange an interview. None of them did so. We cannot tell whether this was because schools did not pass letters on, or governors were not interested.

In total, then, interviews were conducted with 17 headteachers (or in two schools, other members of the leadership team); 17 ETs; 37 teachers ranging from leadership team members to NQTs; two Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) trainees; and two PGCE students.

#### ***Interview schedules***

Headteachers were asked about the school and staffing; their sources of information about the ETS; their reasons for creating an ET post and the process involved; the ET's work and its impact; how this related to other roles in the school; and their views about reasons for the poor take-up of the scheme and its future development.

ETs were asked about their careers to date; their decision to apply to become an ET; the application and assessment process; their current role as ET and its impact on the school and on them personally; and their ideas about the future of the scheme.

---

<sup>11</sup> This included the majority of the schools in which ETs had been successfully assessed. However, before we were sent the list, ETs had been asked whether they were willing to take part in the research, and the seven who said they were not were omitted.

Teachers were asked about their careers and current roles; their awareness and understanding of the ETS; the ET post in the school and its impact; their own aspirations in relation to the ETS; and the future of the scheme.

### ***Documentary data***

In addition to the interviews, relevant documents such as ET job descriptions were collected.

## **3.5 Transcription and analysis**

All interviews were digitally recorded and fully transcribed. Interviews were then coded using NVivo; this facilitates analysis of recurrent themes and patterns, commonalities and differences.

## **3.6 Survey of teachers**

### ***Aims***

The survey of teachers was designed to investigate the views of a wider sample of teachers. The survey was designed to explore:

- the extent to which teachers are aware of and understand the ETS;
- whether a contributing factor to the low level of ET posts is a lack of interest on the part of teachers;
- the extent to which teachers see the ETS in the way the STRB intended, as:
 

*... the pinnacle of a classroom teacher's role, a 'gold standard' ... which motivates teachers to develop themselves, their colleagues and their teaching practice right through their careers. (Fourteenth report, 2005, p. xii)*
- teachers' views on issues identified in the previous chapter, and on the STRB recommendations.

### ***Questionnaire design***

The questionnaire consisted of an A4 booklet, including the information sheet we had sent to interviewees (see Appendix B). These focused on:

- teachers' current roles (pay scale and point, length of experience, age etc.)
- their career aspirations
- their knowledge / understanding of the ETS
- the source of their information about the ETS
- whether this is a career trajectory they would be interested in
- the reasons for their interest / lack of interest.

### **Sample selection**

Questionnaires were distributed to a stratified random sample of schools. This was drawn from a comprehensive listing of all schools in England and Wales, provided by the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the National Assembly for Wales. Sampling involved stratifying by school and by government office region. The sample is designed to be proportional to the number of schools (by type) in the nine English Government Office Regions plus Wales. Within each stratum, schools were selected at random without replacement to achieve specified quotas (900 primary schools, 1100 secondary schools and 100 special/PRUs).

### **Survey administration and analysis**

Two questionnaires, each with a reply paid envelope, were posted to each school in the sample. The headteacher or school administrator was asked to hand one questionnaire to a teacher who was relatively inexperienced; and the other to a teacher with substantial experience. The survey was sent to schools in early November 2008 with a deadline for return by 19 December.

The response rate (15.5 per cent, 619 completed questionnaires entered into the database) was rather less than we had originally anticipated, but in view of the fact that many of the respondents knew little about the ETS, it was decided that it was not worth sending reminders to try to increase the number of responses. This low return rate almost certainly introduces some bias into the findings, and it seems most likely that those responding were more knowledgeable about and interested in the ETS than those who did not respond. Data was entered into an SPSS database, and analysed using frequencies, cross-tabulations and tests of significance (Chi-square or Fisher exact test, as appropriate), to help to identify patterns. The following key variables were used throughout: age, gender, length of service, school phase and pay scale. All differences identified in the report are statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ).

### **The achieved sample**

The achieved sample is broadly representative in its regional distribution, and in the proportions of primary and secondary teachers. However, women teachers are over-represented, particularly in the secondary sector (Table 3.2).

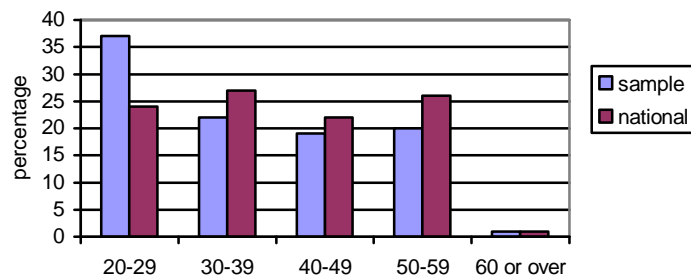
**Table 3.2: Percentage of all survey respondents in each school sector and gender group, compared with national figures (shown in brackets) (N = 597)**

	primary sample ( <i>national</i> )	secondary sample ( <i>national</i> )	special sample ( <i>national</i> )	total sample ( <i>national</i> )
Male	4 (6)	18 (23)	1 (1)	22 (30)
Female	36 (37)	37 (30)	4 (3)	78 (70)
Total	40 (43)	55 (53)	5 (4)	100

Source for national figures: DCSF: School Workforce in England (including Local Authority level figures), January 2008 (Revised), Table D4.

The sample is also skewed in relation to age (Figure 2.3), years of service and pay scale. This results from the distribution instructions, requesting schools to give one questionnaire to an inexperienced teacher and one to an experienced teacher.

**Figure 2.3: Age distribution of sample, compared with that of teachers nationally (excluding headteachers) (N = 612)**



Source for national figures: DCSF: School Workforce in England (including Local Authority level figures), January 2008 (Revised), Table D4.

In terms of ethnicity, an overwhelming proportion of respondents to the survey (95 per cent) identify as being from a White ethnic group. This is in line with the most recent DCSF data on the school workforce in which slightly over 94 per cent of teachers are recorded in the White ethnic groups (DCSF, 2008d).

### ***Presentation of survey data***

All figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number. As a result of rounding, figures may not add up to 100 per cent.

## **3.7 Structure of report**

The findings are presented in three chapters. In Chapter 4 we present data from schools with no ET posts. It reports on the extent to which interviewees were aware of and understood the scheme; the reasons why ETs have not been appointed, and the views of teachers in these schools about ET as a possible career route. It also draws on relevant data from the survey of teachers.

Chapter 5 focuses on the schools where ETs have been appointed, drawing on data from 17 case study schools and from telephone interviews in five schools where ETs had been appointed. The chapter reports on to the creation of ET posts, the ETs' career trajectories, their current roles, and the outcomes for the schools. It also discusses whether teachers in these schools aspire to become ETs.

Chapter 6 draws together respondents' ideas about the future of the scheme, discussing ways in which the scheme might be changed to make it more attractive to schools and to teachers, and reporting responses relating to specific STRB recommendations.

The report concludes with Chapter 7, which summarises findings and considers their implications for the future of the Excellent Teacher Scheme.

Interviewees are identified by school phase and role.

## 4 Schools that have not appointed ETs

This chapter is based on data from telephone interviews with headteachers and teachers in schools where there were no ETs, and the survey responses of teachers in schools with no ETs.

### 4.1 The perceptions of headteachers who have not appointed ETs

We consider first responses from headteachers (or other leadership team members), exploring their awareness and understanding of the ETS; the reasons why they might consider appointing an ET, and the reasons why they had not done so.

#### 4.1.1 Awareness and understanding of the scheme

Headteachers identified a number of sources from which they had gained information about the ETS. Two or three heads mentioned each of the following:

- documents sent to schools about restructuring (*'One of the novelties in the staff restructure documentation was about the Excellent Teachers Scheme'*);
- the revised Standards (*'I think you know the use of the standards is actually quite helpful because it gives you the differential between what's in a main scale teacher, UPS sort of style teacher threshold, and then what's additional to that if you're an Excellent Teacher, and where is the demarcation between an excellent teacher and the AST'*);
- teacher unions (*'The other document I found very useful is the ASCL summary documentation. They are very good at giving information'*);
- information about, and training in, performance management;
- TeacherNet;
- other information sent to schools (*'I think it was just through the Spectrum material that comes to school, that the DCSF puts out'*);
- the educational press; and
- the Teachers' Pay and Conditions document.

The fact that so few ETs have been appointed has limited the extent to which headteachers are finding out about the scheme through networking; heads rarely referred to hearing about it through the grapevine sources that they find useful: *'It's very difficult to find information about it because there are so few in the country'*.

Some commented that while they had initially heard of the ETS when it was first created, it had been helpful to be reminded of it in the revised Standards.

*When there was the restructuring in the TLRs in 2005, it was really about then that I sort of started to hear about it ... but I must admit (since then) I haven't heard an awful lot. Till to be honest, till the performance management, the new regulations, came in last year, and you got all your grids with the actual standards for each part, and I think that sort of brought it back into focus again. (Primary head)*



However, while these sources had provided some information, in many cases there were still gaps in their understanding. One deputy head said, for example, that he had seen ET on the Standards diagram, but was not aware that it had replaced UP4 and 5 (*'Blimey! I didn't realise that. Teachers here haven't realised that!'*), and did not realise that schools had to create ET posts (Secondary head).

Several heads admitted to having a limited understanding:

*The reason we haven't, I think is because we simply don't know an awful lot about it. What is the difference between an Excellent Teacher and an Advanced Skills Teacher? What are the fundamental differences? (Secondary head).*

*I'm trying to remember the scheme as well, I think it's written down in my pay thing that they can put themselves forward? As well as us to designate it they can put themselves forward, is that right? (Primary head)*

This second suggestion is incorrect; teachers cannot put themselves forward if there is no post in the school, and their application must be supported by the headteacher. Some heads commented that they felt they had not been adequately informed: an interviewee in Wales claimed that the Welsh Assembly Government were poor at disseminating information. Another head said:

*Now what interests me in terms of the Excellent Teacher role is how people become it. It's never well publicised and it's never sort of talked about, the actual process of gaining that status. (Primary head)*

*The one thing against it is its lack of publicity. I don't think enough people know what it is and how to go about gaining it as well, because I don't think it's been publicised very well amongst the teaching profession. Not a lot of people are aware that these things exist, so something along those lines needs to be done that makes it more of a viable proposition for teachers to go towards. (Primary head)*

One business manager contrasted the limited information received about the ETS with much better information about ASTs:

*... whereas the AST, even [this LA] is very clear about what an AST does and the information that feeds down from the local town hall is very clear. We have very little that comes into school about Excellent Teachers. (Secondary head)*

He went on to say:

*I don't think anyone's actually said, 'Have you thought about having an Excellent Teacher in this particular area or category?' If somebody could come in and say, 'This is what one of these can do', all the lights may go on in the school and think, 'Ah, we could actually have three of those there', but as I say we know very little about them. (Secondary head)*

Many of the headteachers interviewed had only a very vague awareness, and some comments showed misunderstandings of the scheme, in this case not realising that it is only open to those on U3:

*Is it the Excellent Teachers don't have to, do they have to have experience, I can't remember even. They don't, do they? They can be NQTs, as long as they are willing to go fast, isn't it? (Secondary head)*

One head was unclear how ETs were appointed: *'I would like it to be an external assessment, I'm not sure if it is an external assessment?'* (Primary head). Another said:

*I don't fully get my head round how it's done because it's external assessment, isn't it, and that's the bit, I can't get my fully get my head round, how you go through the process of getting that accreditation and getting that status.* (Primary head)

In particular, there was some lack of clarity about the pay arrangements; one headteacher was uncertain whether it was spot pay fixed within a range or incremental progression through a range.

*With the Excellent Teacher Scheme as a fixed point it's manageable, so yeah it [the change to the salary] is going to discourage me from deploying ETs, yeah I might take it out of the structure in fact. With a spot salary you have fixed points. If what they're now saying is you can put someone on a spot salary along this spine, great I'll do that. What I will not do is put someone on a spine that they then progress up.* (Secondary head)

Another was unclear whether the spot pay could be altered:

*In my reading of it, ... it wasn't absolutely clear whether ... it's at that point and then that's fixed for ever, or whether you could say well we've got an excellent teacher who's at that point, oh she's done really well and she's fabulous, she's hit all of her targets so we can shift her spot point to there. I couldn't work that out.* (Primary head)

#### **4.1.2 Reasons why headteachers considered appointing ETs**

##### ***Recognition and reward***

Four heads talked about it principally in terms of rewarding teachers, or as recognition of their merit: *'I like to reward staff'* (primary head). One said: *'Well the reason would be to reward somebody who's an exceptional teacher in the school and has a great track record, who was already helping other schools'* (primary head).

One head argued that the external assessment made such recognition acceptable:

*I wouldn't want to set the teacher apart from the rest, you know, why has that person got it and not me, whereas the assessment, the objective assessment really brings the credibility to it, that obviously that person has the skills necessary to take on that role in the school.* (Primary head)

Linked to these arguments was the notion that gaining recognition also increases motivation.

*I think the Fast Track teacher, the Excellent Teacher, all of those, things to motivate class teachers are good for that individual. ... The benefits are to the school as well because if you've got a teacher who's very well motivated they're going to put a lot into the school and therefore the children benefit from it.* (Primary head)

### **A career route in teaching**

Several headteachers appreciated the creation of another career path:

*I think it's a really good idea, because so many people who are good at teaching actually stop teaching and go into leadership roles because it's the only way they can gain promotion. ... A lot of my colleagues prefer teaching to the job they do, and I know I probably would have gone that way if I had been around at the time. (Primary head)*

A secondary head argued that, while he personally was very cynical about the ETS (and about ASTs) and saw the roles as 'a joke', he felt that he had a responsibility to his staff to create roles that could advance their careers and increase their pay. Consequently the school had created six excellent teacher posts and six AST posts in its shadow staffing structure in 2005, with an understanding that 'when they became affordable they would be brought into life', and anticipates making appointments at some time in the future (secondary head).

### **Retention and recruitment**

Some heads suggested that this would also increase retention of 'good teaching staff'. One had created an ET post in the staffing structure with the expectation that this would be filled by a specific individual who had previously had a management allowance but did not have a TLR. He said that the ETS provided 'an opportunity for those staff who lost responsibility allowances to go into a different form of responsibility' (Secondary head).

Other heads talked about using the ETS to attract high quality staff: The head of an inner urban academy that had placed an advertisement for Excellent Teachers explained:

*We are a new academy, we have a lot of NQTs, we are growing quite fast and we've taken on a lot of new staff every year. We're in a position where, unless you're offering management positions you're always going to get brand new staff, rather than someone with experience. What we were trying to do was get someone with, of higher quality that we could work with. But we didn't get any applications [for the ET post]. (Secondary head)*

Two heads said they had thought that the scheme might be useful for shortage secondary subjects; one said: 'When we had looked at the Excellent Teacher scheme initially, what I'd envisaged was having an Excellent Teacher in the either science or technology or ICT area', but went on:

*But I think you're looking at an Excellent Teacher who should be sufficiently wide ranging to be able to give good advice on developing teaching and learning across the curriculum really. So that would have been a preference but it wasn't an absolute must be. (Secondary head)*

### **The ET role**

Some headteachers also talked about the role of the ET and how this could benefit the school. ETs could share their expertise with colleagues through coaching and induction, and could 'build professionalism' (primary head). A junior school head talked about the difficulty that in a paired coaching arrangement, teachers 'often will make their own assumptions about who's the strong one and who's the weak one', and argued that 'if this is the person that's got this role in the school, it might actually in many ways eradicate some of those fears', and be less 'threatening' (Primary head).

Several headteachers argued that they would prefer ETs to ASTs. One head said she would prefer to have an ET *'because our AST is off in other schools which is an irritation'* (primary head). This sentiment was echoed by a number of other heads: one explained, *'one of the things that attracted me to the Excellent Teacher scheme was that they would be working within the school'* (secondary head). Another said:

*The Excellent Teacher would be able to do inreach work if you see what I mean. They'd be able to do some coaching and observing and mentoring and all of that sort of within the school. That's the appeal to me.* (Primary head)

Another headteacher argued that in comparison to AST, the ET role offered greater encouragement to teachers; the post has financial rewards and explicitly congratulates teachers on their work, and has *'added kudos'*.

Other headteachers referred to the relevance of the role in a training school, and in a school that has found it difficult to attract experienced teachers, and so has many NQTs. The latter argued that having Excellent Teachers would also enhance the school's reputation.

#### **4.1.3 Reasons for not appointing ETs**

While most of the headteachers identified some positive aspects of the ETS, the majority also gave reasons why they had not appointed them, and in most cases, did not intend to do so.

##### ***Budgetary constraints and other financial issues***

Some primary heads said that the budget was the main constraint. One head explained that she has never considered including ETs in the staffing structure *'because it's too expensive we cannot afford that within a primary school - our budget, by the time you take the head, deputy, and the AST, we are really struggling.'* Another primary school that had originally placed an ET in its staffing structure had now removed this, because with a deficit budget it was out of the question. A third primary head explained that he did not want his teachers to know about the scheme (or even about U3) because he could not afford to fund the posts, and argued that the government should provide the extra funding needed:

*If the government are saying we want to reward Excellent Teachers, ... fine, put the money in. The schools would love to reward the teachers with more and more money of course I would love to do it. The girl I am thinking of at the moment ... would be well worthy of UP3, and it is her right if she is an excellent teacher, which she is. It puts a lot of pressure on me to think, well look she is entitled to UP3 next year, I can't tell her about it because I can't afford it. Because the County won't give me the money the government won't give the County the money.* (Primary head)

Another head argued that the government should put some funding in to enable the ETS to take off:

*If the scheme hasn't taken up well across the country, I would have thought that the DCSF should be looking at well, how do we get this initiative going in a better way? Do we actually support it through some additional funding for three years and then evaluate where we are at the end of that three year period to see the effect of that? I reckon you would get a good take up. I think people would welcome joining the scheme.* (Primary head)

Some secondary heads also referred to funding as a barrier; one said, *'If the DCSF funded it as additional funding to the school, I would say, yeah, I would go for it, but if I've got to do it from my budget, no thank you'*.

A number of headteachers argued that it made much more financial sense to create AST posts because the Local Authority funds the post (paying the difference between the top of the main scale and the AST rate). Consequently, they said, there was no incentive to create ET posts.

For smaller schools, a further issue was that the level of ET pay was too close to that of the leadership posts:

*Excellent Teachers are going to be classroom teachers who could be earning more than the deputy head or just a little bit less than the deputy head. The gap between the classroom teacher and the manager would be too small. (Primary head)*

*The amount that an Excellent Teacher might receive may be at odds with the differential between those people in leadership positions. (Primary head)*

One headteacher of a large primary school also referred to the differential:

*And actually as a headteacher at the moment I am beginning to think the differentials are just not good enough. ... I'm being asked to manage a company with 100 staff and other people who take charge of one subject. You just look at it and think, I'm not sure about it. (Primary head)*

### **Lack of appropriate candidates**

Several headteachers explained that they had not appointed ETs (or in some cases, considered creating such posts) because there were no teachers in the school who would meet the criteria. This primary head had included an ET post in the staffing structure:

*We've not filled the post and it's because we've not yet had someone who we felt would meet the criteria, and so I think we've seen the worth of the role but not the reality of it as yet. (primary head)*

A secondary head explained that in his school, appointing ETs was still some way off:

*I'd certainly want to push the idea if I could see somebody who hadn't already got a TLR and who I could see making a really good role ... but at the moment that person isn't there and that person won't be there for quite a few years because they've got to go up the UPS1, the UPS3. (Primary head)*

In some schools where the ET post had been designed to reward a specific individual, that teacher had now moved into leadership, or left the school.

In other schools, all those who were deemed excellent already had TLRs or were in leadership posts:

*The ones who I would have thought would be suitable for the Excellent Teacher role already have some sort of other responsibility and of course we can't give the Excellent Teacher on top of a TLR can we. (Secondary head)*

*All of our staff who are worth their salt who are post threshold are all on TLRs. (Secondary head)*

This argument seemed to suggest that any teacher who had not taken on additional responsibilities after 12 or 13 years was perhaps not the sort of person that would make a useful contribution in the ET role. Similarly other headteachers said that teachers in their schools who met the criteria (U3 and no TLR) were not 'excellent':

*When we did the restructure, ... I put in that we would have some Excellent Teachers within the structure. But when it came to looking at that in 2007, I felt that there weren't any members of staff who hadn't already got TLRs who I would want to push to become an Excellent Teacher because I felt they were okay but they weren't that outstanding. (Secondary head)*

Some argued that the sort of person they would like to see in the role, a teacher who was enthusiastic to share good practice, would have applied for an AST post at a much earlier point in their career.

In some schools it was extremely rare for any teacher to reach U3 without having other responsibilities; the deputy head of a secondary school in London explained:

*The market that we're in is that all the young teachers that I work with they're all desperate to get on the TLRs route because obviously wherever you are in the main scale plus the TLR starts to bring in a salary earlier. They can't wait until U3 to get a sum of money. (Secondary head)*

She explained that in order to retain teachers, the school ensures that they receive early promotion. After the NQT year, young teachers are paid to do a defined project, 'then by the time that you've finished that in a couple of years there'll be a TLR waiting that they can apply for.' Thus it would be very unusual to have an experienced teacher in that school with no TLR.

Several headteachers claimed that one of the reasons they had not made appointments was that teachers were not interested, even when they were told about the scheme:

*When I've circulated the information about the Excellent Teacher scheme amongst the staff expecting some interest from it I got zero interest, so I just haven't pushed it. (Secondary head)*

*And my experienced teachers, there was only one out of a potential 15 or 20 that was interested in it. (Secondary head)*

Other headteachers argued that teachers would not put themselves forward as potential ETs:

*Yes but some people just want to do their work really well. They don't want to be rewarded really. This particular teacher [described as suitable for the ET role], she is quite happy to carry on doing work. ... If [my teachers] saw [the ETS] they wouldn't think it was them because they are very modest and humble. (Primary head)*

*And people haven't been knocking on anyone's door saying 'I really want to be an Excellent Teacher.' They might say, 'I'm thinking about AST', they might say, 'I really want to do a responsibility', but they wouldn't say, 'I want to be an Excellent Teacher,' not at this school. (Secondary head)*

Teachers' lack of interest was attributed partly to lack of awareness of the scheme, or of the details of what is involved: *'I don't think enough people know what it is and how to go about gaining it as well, because I don't think it's been publicised very well amongst the teaching profession'* (primary head). One primary head said his teachers would not know unless he told them. A secondary head said, jokingly, *'I don't think teachers in the main know anything about the ET scheme, and as far as I'm concerned I don't want them to!'*

### **The ET assessment**

A primary head argued that teachers do not understand the assessment process:

*People don't quite know what they're putting themselves forward for. It's one of the things that is stopping people from putting themselves forward for Excellent Teacher, because they're thinking, well how does that happen and who'll come and see me and what will they be looking for. You know it's not as clear as even as AST.*

Some heads argued that teachers were deterred by the process of assessment: *'They will associate it to more form filling like the threshold, and that puts people off'*; *'They don't want to go through an external assessment'* (Primary heads).

One of the special schools had been keen to create an ET post. The head explained that the post had been designed for a specific teacher: *'she is one on her own but she is an outstanding teacher and gives 120 per cent all the time.'*

However, when the head examined the standards for ET more closely, she concluded that the teacher could not meet them because she is a music teacher in a special school and *'there is no data analysis involved in her subject'*. She argued that this would also be the case for teachers of some other subjects:

*I feel that unless you are a mathematician or a statistician, unless you are responsible for a subject that is a core subject, particularly within a special school you are not going to get that opportunity because of those criteria.*  
(Special school head)

Staff at VT Education and Skills have explained to us that this interpretation is incorrect, but it had certainly prevented this school from creating an ET post.

### **Perceptions of the scheme as divisive**

A third of the headteachers interviewed used the word *'divisive'* in relation to the ETS:

*In regards to the Excellent Teachers then, it's the divisiveness of it, really, is why I object to that.* (Primary head)

This concern related both to the title Excellent Teacher, and to the process. Some heads felt that to create a post for a specific outstanding teacher could be divisive. One talked about the difficulty headteachers would have in making any internal appointment, and said that staff might perceive any appointment as *'favouritism'*, and this could lead to *'bitching'* in the staff room (Secondary head).

But equally there were concerns that if the post was internally advertised, it might not go to the most outstanding teacher:

*... the fact that I would have to advertise that post for all the teachers, and so I think it's very divisive if I've got in my head somebody I know deserves Excellent Teacher, but there is somebody else who possibly doesn't, but could meet more of the criteria on paper. It's very difficult to then just promote one person and not give other people the opportunity. ... If it becomes a promoted post, rather than a 'you deserve it more than anybody else', I think it's putting headteachers in a very compromising position. (Special school head)*

Another head said:

*I think that the snags will be more sort of internal politics within a school, as to how to, just the logistics of doing it .... I think that would create a little bit of unrest. (Primary head)*

Many headteachers argued that the scheme is problematic labelling one person 'Excellent Teacher' implies that others are less excellent:

*It can be divisive because you're then, if you've got somebody who's an Excellent Teacher, what are the other teachers? You know so it can cause a bit of resentment in that way as well. (Primary head)*

*To call somebody an Excellent Teacher are you discriminating against other teachers? ... It kind of suggests if you're an Excellent Teacher, that therefore, are your colleagues not excellent? (Secondary head)*

Moreover, it was argued that many teachers would not put themselves forward because 'there's a modesty in the profession' (special school head). One head reported:

*I've heard it said to me, 'oh no I would never put myself forward for that, because you can always get better, and I look around and I see practitioners who do lots of things better than me so I'm not excellent.' ... It does have a double edge to it. (primary head)*

The majority of the headteachers interviewed supported these points, arguing that the title was not appropriate. Headteachers said this title was 'childish', 'a bit naff', and 'ridiculous'. One said:

*Some part of me would say that sounds awfully odd, it sounds like I have visited the Golden Temple and come away with the secret of all success. Most of the excellent teachers that I work with, and I work with very many of them, are so professionally modest that [ET posts] wouldn't turn them on. (Secondary head)*

He went on to explain that in his view, what excites teachers, and enhances their status, is 'touching a wider and wider circle of people', starting from the classroom, and extending to the department and to other schools, rather than having 'a badge that says 'I'm an Excellent Teacher.'"

Others argued strongly that the title is deeply problematic, identifying it as 'off putting' (secondary head) 'divisive' and an 'absolute disincentive' (primary heads). One said:

*I think it's a term of derision. ... Teachers, oh dear, we're about teamwork. We're into skills that work together. (Secondary head)*



One headteacher told us that when the governors were discussing the staff structure they had expressed concern about the title:

*When we discussed this at the governors, and I said there was a bit of scepticism about it, that was something that a couple of the governors raised. ... They said, 'Well isn't that making a distinction between teachers who are 'Excellent' and other teachers who we know we've got who are outstanding anyway?'* (Secondary head)

Only one of the 33 headteachers interviewed spoke positively about the title:

*An Excellent Teacher is what it says you are, an excellent teacher. Congratulations, we are very proud to have you on our staff, and thank you for working so hard to get to this position.*

### **The ET role**

Several headteachers argued that the various roles that have been identified for an ET (coaching, mentoring etc.) were already being carried out adequately in the school, and there was therefore no point in creating an ET post. A secondary head argued:

*When I looked at [the ET roles] and looked at the post threshold standards, [the ET roles] are really what I expect my post threshold teachers to be doing anyway, so I don't know if there's anything I'm going to get extra from this. ... Coaching skills and working with others and sharing good practice are very much part of the core standards.* (Secondary head)

A primary head said that these roles were part of the assistant heads' job description:

*I'm expecting assistant headteachers to be able to be good coaches and direct people to working with a colleague in a coaching scenario and we have a lot of that on the go at school.* (Primary head)

One had argued that in a primary context it was difficult to see how an ET would be used:

*It's good to have an excellent teacher, but you've got one class in a school of 14 classes, so if I had one class with an excellent teacher, how do I use that expertise? How do I share that expertise? If that one person is stuck in a classroom, and yes, you can get other people to watch, but if you take that person out of a class then the children in that class suffer ... because children, especially our children, need continuity and consistency.* (Primary head)

In talking about the ET role, comparisons were made with the AST route. These are discussed in a separate section below.

### **Preference for ASTs**

In discussing why they did or did not want to develop ET roles in their schools, headteachers often compared the ET role with ASTs. Several heads felt that the roles were so similar that they could see no need for the ET role; one commented, *'I must admit I find difficulty in distinguishing it from AST'* (Secondary head), and another said, *'I can't see why we need Excellent Teachers and ASTs'* (Secondary head). A third argued:

*I can't see where there is a fundamental difference. If I accept the AST, I think 20 per cent of their time is supposed to be outreach, but because we did a kind of a local deal in this LA.*

*... Predominantly all their work is inreach anyway. But even if they'd done four days in school and one day out, apart from the U3 bit I don't see a difference.*

(Secondary head)

Others argued that the AST role was the more useful of the two. Some felt that dynamic and enthusiastic classroom practitioners would apply for AST before they had sufficient experience to apply for ET, and several heads argued that the funding for ASTs made it a more feasible proposition. The outreach aspect of the AST role was also seen as valuable:

*... in the context of the AST being a person that outreaches to other schools, and I think that is a big learning curve when you go visiting other schools, and I mean it benefits the school enormously as well because then they come back with further ideas which they share with our staff. I think that is the huge benefit of it.*

(Primary head)

### **Other reasons for not creating ET posts**

One head argued that the ETS was '*not encouraged at all by the LA*', because the LA strongly supported the appointment of ASTs:

*I think they see it very much that if you go with an Excellent Teacher model then you would have no need of ASTs and so you would then negate the LA's model. Well of course that isn't true but I don't think they've got their heads round that. So I think that's one pressure and it's maybe that that's just true of us in a very small authority.* (Primary head)

Several heads argued that the current small number of ETs is a deterrent in itself, because they are not hearing from headteachers who have made successful ET appointments.

## **4.2 The perceptions of teachers in schools where there are no ETs**

In this section we turn to the views of teachers in schools where there are no ETs. We review their awareness and understanding of the scheme; how they thought the appointment of an ET might benefit the school; and their views about the scheme in relation to their own careers. This section draws on data from the national survey of teachers, as well as telephone interviews with teachers.

### **4.2.1 Awareness and understanding of the scheme**

In the survey, teachers were asked to indicate the sources from which they had heard about the ET scheme before being sent the survey and accompanying information. Alternatively, they could state that they had not heard of the scheme. Almost a third of respondents (32 per cent) indicated that they had not heard of the scheme. There were some differences across groups of teachers. Those on the main pay scale were less likely to have heard of it than those on the upper pay scale (45 per cent had *not* heard of it versus 31 per cent). But, as highlighted in Table 4.1, it is precisely those who are eligible (i.e. those on U3 with no TLR) who often said they had not heard of the ETS.

**Table 4.1: Percentage of respondents stating that they had *not* heard of the scheme, by pay scale (N=614)**

Pay Scale	No TLR %	TLR %
Main pay scale	45	35
Upper 1-2	20	30
Upper 3	41	21
Leadership, AST	11	

Note: Those on the leadership scale and ASTs were grouped together for analysis purposes because the number of ASTs was very small (just 13 ASTs returned questionnaires)

Source: Survey of teachers

While over 40 per cent of primary and special school teachers had not heard of it, this was the case for only 25 per cent of secondary teachers. Younger teachers more often said they had not heard of it (41 per cent of those in their twenties compared with 23 per cent in their fifties).

Respondents had mainly heard of it through the TES or another newspaper and, to a lesser extent, through other teachers, internet sources or teacher unions (see Table 4.2).

**Table 4.2: Percentage of respondents who had heard of the ETS from different sources (N=619)**

	%
TES or other newspapers	31
Other teachers	27
Internet sources	23
Teacher unions	18
My headteacher	15
Newsletters or circulars in schools	12
Job advertisements	9
My performance management review	5
Don't know	2

Source: Survey of teachers

Those on the upper pay scale and in leadership were the most likely (and those on the main pay scale the least likely) to have heard of it from their headteacher. Those on the leadership or AST scales were far more likely than other groups to have heard of it through the TES or another newspaper, or through newsletters or circulars in schools, or internet sources. Those in primary and special schools were less likely to have heard of it from other teachers and from internet sources.

The teachers we interviewed who had heard of the scheme were generally uncertain about how they came upon the relevant information:

*I'm not sure. I mean I read the Times Educational Supplement ... or I'm married to a teacher so it might have been through a conversation I had with her.*  
(Secondary teacher, m)

Of the 21 teachers we interviewed, only 13 said that they had previously heard of the ETS, and ten of these had found out about through word of mouth from their headteachers, partners, or other sources. Two of these ten also mentioned additional sources (their union<sup>12</sup> and the TES). Two other teachers said that they had found out about the ETS through the internet (one specifying TeacherNet).

Five teachers explicitly stated that they had never heard of the scheme until they volunteered to be interviewed and were sent the information sheet. The following comments were typical: *'No, honestly I didn't know [about] the ET scheme,'* and *'I've just heard [about] it from you.'*

Teachers explained their lack of awareness in several ways. A few pointed to their busy working lives and the time pressures they were under:

*We get so much stuff through, and it's a question of sifting through to find out what is relevant, and I don't have time to do that. And to be honest, we've got the union documentation up in the staff room and there's a lot on the notice board of general things but then it's having the time to go through it really.* (Secondary teacher, f)

Another key factor was that the vast majority of teachers had never encountered an ET:

*I don't know anyone that is [an Excellent Teacher]. You know, my friends in other schools, and I don't think, are there in [this county]? I don't know.* (Primary teacher, f)

In interview, teachers were candid about their lack of knowledge and vagueness regarding the details of the role and scheme e.g. the pay, the process of becoming an ET and how it fitted *within the staff structure and career pathways*.

*I know it's for somebody that's not necessarily in management but has kind of proved that they're an excellent teacher and maybe in the earlier stages of your career, I don't know, I'm very hazy on it.* (Primary teacher, f)

Consequently many interviewees were unclear about the ETS and its relationship to the AST role; one said:

*I wanted to become an Advanced Skills Teacher and I asked my school, so that's what my interest is, but I didn't know what the difference was between the Advanced Skills Teacher and the Excellent Teacher.* (Secondary teacher, f)

This is discussed later in the report.

In the survey, we attempted to tease out what respondents had known about the scheme before reading the information sheet accompanying the survey. As can be seen from Table 4.3 below, most respondents were not very well informed.

---

<sup>12</sup> While a number of teachers said they had heard about the abolition of U4 and U5 through the union, only one mentioned unions in relation to the ETS.

**Table 4.3: Levels of understanding of different aspects of the scheme before receiving the questionnaire**

		I knew this	I was vaguely aware of this	I did not know this	N
The Excellent Teacher Scheme (ETS) is designed for experienced teachers who wish to develop careers in the classroom	%	49	22	29	617
An ET's role is to mentor and share good practice in their own school	%	42	21	37	611
Becoming an ET involves undergoing an external assessment against the ET standards	%	23	24	53	612
Only those on U3 are eligible to become ETs (Excellent Teachers)	%	15	14	71	609
Teachers can be assessed against ET standards only when an ET post is available in the school they work in	%	12	14	74	606
The ETS has replaced points 4 and 5 on the Upper Pay Scale	%	9	17	74	614
From September 2008, ETs receive a spot salary within a range from £37.7k to £48.4k	%	5	13	83	613

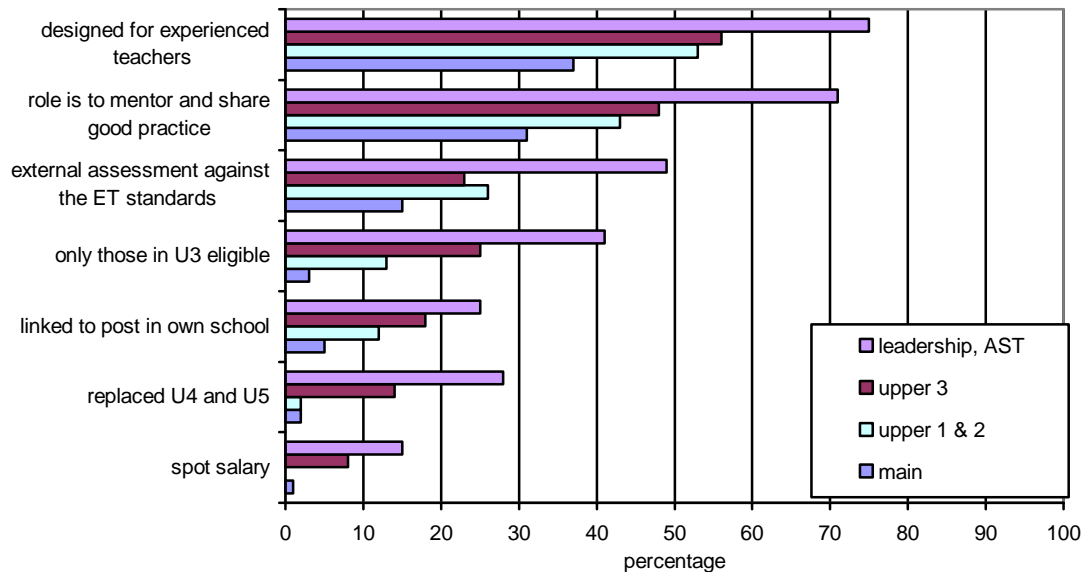
Source: Survey of teachers

For each aspect of the scheme considered in the survey, only a minority declared they 'knew this'. The aspects they were the more likely to know about were 'The ETS is designed for experienced teachers who wish to develop careers in the classroom' and 'An ET's role is to mentor and share good practice in their own school'. They were least likely to say they knew that 'The ETS has replaced points 4 and 5 on the Upper Pay Scale', or that 'From September 2008, ETs receive a spot salary within a range' (see Table 4.3).

There were some differences across groups of teachers. Overall, younger teachers knew less about all these aspects. For example, just three per cent of those in their twenties knew that the ETS had replaced points 4 and 5 on the upper pay scale, compared with 19 per cent of those in their fifties. Similarly, while 37 per cent in their twenties knew that the ETS is designed for experienced teachers who wish to develop careers in the classroom, 60 per cent in their fifties knew this. Secondary school teachers were more likely to say they knew about each aspect than primary and special school teachers.

Our analyses also show that the higher the pay scale the respondent is on, the more likely he or she is to know about the different aspects of the scheme. Differences between pay scales are consistently highly significant (Figure 4.1).

**Figure 4.1: Prior understanding of the scheme: percentage of teachers indicating 'I knew this', by salary scale (N = 619)**



Source: Survey of teachers

The majority of teachers we interviewed said that publicity for the scheme was poor, and dissemination of information to and within schools could be significantly improved; two suggested that schools circulate information only when it suits them:

*I think it's the government not making a big enough thing about it. And I think also maybe schools, even though the information is there, maybe they don't know enough about it. And you know schools are very good at - ... they don't like change or anything that's too dramatic. So maybe that's the reason. (Primary teacher, f)*

*If headteachers don't feel it is going to benefit them, then I doubt they would forward information to their staff. (Secondary teacher, f)*

There was a perception that the scheme was not being 'pushed' by headteachers and local authorities, partly because of budget restrictions and the knowledge that they would not be able to afford to create the roles. Certainly Figure 4.1 supports the notion that headteachers are not passing information about the scheme to their staff, though this may be simply because they do not consider it important.

#### 4.2.2 How teachers think their schools might benefit from the ETS

The survey asked teachers how far they agreed that 'Excellent Teachers could make a valuable contribution to teaching and learning in schools'. Thirty-two per cent indicated that they strongly agreed with this statement, and a further 56 per cent agreed. Only two per cent disagreed. The teachers we spoke to had varying impressions of the benefits that appointing ETs might offer their schools.

##### **Retention**

Some saw the scheme as a means of retention; both in terms of retaining good, experienced classroom teachers and encouraging younger, less experienced teachers and NQTs to remain in teaching. One teacher described the scheme as a 'carrot', which could help schools to 'keep hold of their good teachers' (Secondary teacher, f). Another said:

*It might encourage people to stay in the schools; there is more of an incentive to be in a school because it gives another route of prestige and finance. (Special school teacher, f)*

One teacher referred to the scheme as 'a really good powerful tool to keep people' (secondary teacher, m).

### **The ET role**

Teachers spoke of the benefits of sharing best practice:

*I think it's really good to share things that you've done and have been successful and we don't on the whole have a lot of time to do that. (Secondary teacher, f)*

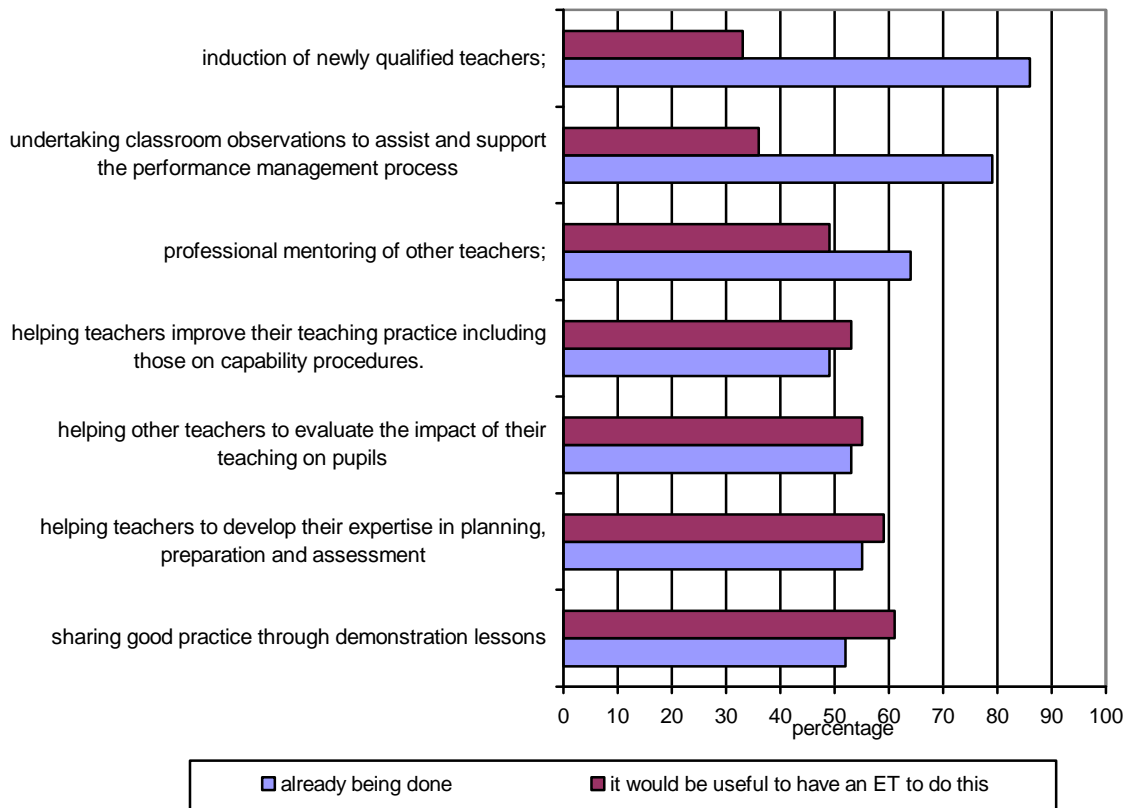
This was seen as especially important in terms of working with less experienced teachers. Both NQTs and more experienced teachers said that the ET role could help support teachers at the beginning of their career. A teacher described the role of the ET as, among other things, '*sharing good practice and it's like having a role with induction of staff and being like a buddy with new staff and so on*' (secondary teacher, f). She went on to say that this support could have positive effects:

*I think it would help retention in the first years when as a young teacher you are totally bombarded with things that you have to do and it can be a bit of a sink or swim time which helps people to get through that stage. (Secondary teacher, f)*

Teachers had mixed views in relation to the roles expected of ETs. There was a perception that there was some duplication of roles. Teachers referred to the activities expected of ETs and pointed out that many of these were already carried out in their school, mainly by senior leadership team members. An NQT questioned whether, as a consequence of this duplication, headteachers '*may see it as pointless creating a role, or an unnecessary hassle*' (secondary teacher, m).

The survey explored this in more depth, listing the duties of an ET set out in the Guidance (DCSF, 2007) and asking teachers to indicate whether each of these was already being carried out, or whether it would be useful to have an ET to do it (Figure 4.2).

**Figure 4.2: Percentage of teachers indicating that specified tasks are already being done, and those which would be useful to have an Excellent Teacher to undertake (N = 619)**



Note: The questionnaire instructions pointed out that the options 'already being carried out' and 'it would be useful to have an ET to do this' were not mutually exclusive.

Source: Survey of teachers

The aspects of the scheme that respondents identified as the more likely to be already done were also those for which respondents thought it would have been the less useful to have an ET (Figure 4.2). This was particularly the case for induction of newly qualified teachers and undertaking classroom observations to assist and support the performance management process. Aspects which respondents thought could most usefully be undertaken by an ET were sharing good practice through demonstration lessons, and helping teachers to develop their expertise in planning, preparation and assessment.

There are some differences across the groups of teachers in relation to the tasks it would be useful to have an ET to undertake. Women in secondary schools were consistently more likely than male secondary teachers or primary teachers of either sex to think it would be useful to have an ET for all the listed tasks except induction of new teachers.

Teachers on different pay scales had different views about whether Excellent Teachers would be useful to help other teachers to evaluate the impact of their teaching on pupils (61 per cent) and to help teachers improve their teaching practice (59 per cent). ASTs and those on the leadership scale were less likely to indicate that this would be useful (45 per cent, 40 per cent respectively).



Whilst it was acknowledged in interviews that there was some duplication of roles, some teachers pointed out that it would be useful for inexperienced teachers to have a definite person to go to whose role is to provide help and advice rather than various members of staff within the school. An NQT said, *'it kind of sounds like it's consolidating a lot of things that maybe a variety of people do into just one person doing it, and so maybe that would be a benefit of it'* (secondary teacher, m). Similarly, another early career teacher explained that while mentoring, lesson observation and sharing of best practice were encouraged between teachers, *'because a lot of this is informal it doesn't normally get done; we do encourage it but I'm not sure how often it actually happens because it's nobody's job to do that sort of thing'* (secondary teacher, f). She discussed the difficulties encountered by inexperienced teachers, who may hesitate to ask advice from those who are more experienced and very busy, and who are not paid specifically to support them. If there was an ET in the school, the less experienced teachers would feel *'entitled'* to ask them for help, support and advice, because it was a specific part of their role.

### **School reputation**

Some teachers pointed to the fact that it could reflect well on a school to have an Excellent Teacher amongst their staff. One teacher explained that *'It will enhance the school's already good reputation by having someone like that in place'* (secondary teacher, f). Another saw it as *'a good thing'* (secondary teacher, m) for a school to be able to say it had an ET on its staff, *'when you've got league tables to worry about'*. A third teacher (secondary teacher, f) said that it was *'a very good thing for marketing the school'* in terms of promoting the school to parents.

### **Barriers preventing school creating ET posts**

Whilst teachers identified many aspects of the creation of ET posts as positive, there was a perception that inevitably lack of money to fund the posts, lack of publicity (both by the government and by headteachers) and lack of management backing acted as barriers to the creation of such posts. Funding was identified as the main issue here. Teachers were aware that while headteachers and teachers may see the benefits of ETs, *'there's just not the money to include something like that'* (primary teacher, f), particularly if the roles are to be funded by school budgets. Another explained that it wasn't in headteachers' interests to pay more expensive teachers when they could recruit less experienced teachers more cheaply (secondary teacher, m). A secondary teacher summed it up saying, *'If you have a Principal who is not on board with the scheme I think as it stands they can actually prevent it from happening'* (secondary teacher, f)

### **4.2.3 Teachers' career plans and the ETS**

The questionnaire asked teachers whether they saw the ETS as 'a welcome addition to the range of career pathways' available; 29 per cent strongly agreed, and a further 49 per cent agreed, with just three per cent disagreeing and one per cent strongly disagreeing. There were no statistically significant differences across groups of teachers in their answers to this question.

Teachers were also asked how they expected their careers to develop in the future (Table 4.4). They were asked to indicate a single 'most likely direction', and also to indicate any other possibilities they would consider. The single most likely direction envisaged was promotion in school leadership, followed by promotion as a classroom teacher.

The main differences in these responses related to current pay scale. Over half of those in leadership or AST posts and those on U3 envisaged no further development. The group most likely to indicate that they would gain promotion as classroom teachers were those on the main scale (29 per cent, compared with 15 per cent of the upper pay scale. Main scale teachers were also the most likely to anticipate gaining a TLR (22 per cent, compared with 11 per cent on U1 and 2 and just five per cent of those on U3). Those on U3 were also very much *less* likely than those on the main scale, U1 and 2 and those in leadership or AST posts to indicate that the most likely move was into leadership (23 per cent of those in U3 compared with around 40 per cent of all other groups).

**Table 4.4: Most likely direction envisaged for career development**

	most likely direction %	other possibilities that would be considered %
Promotion in school leadership	35	21
Promotion as a classroom teacher	20	33
Gain a TLR	14	14
No further development anticipated	29	5
Move to a career other than teaching or school leadership	3	17
Total (N)	580	619

Source: Survey of teachers

We also asked teachers whether they had considered the possibility of becoming an ET and whether they had discussed this with their headteacher (Table 4.5). Just ten per cent had seriously considered becoming an ET. This was higher among those in their forties (15 per cent), secondary teachers (15 per cent) and those on U3 who did not have TLRs (24 per cent). Fewer respondents (just four per cent) had seriously discussed this possibility with their headteacher; again those in their forties (ten per cent), secondary teachers (six per cent) and those on U3 with no TLR (12 per cent) were more likely than others to have done so.

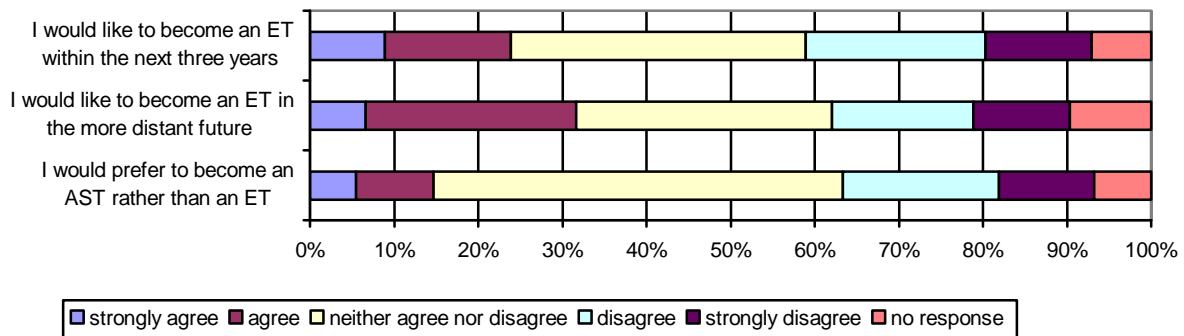
**Table 4.5: 'Have you previously considered the possibility of becoming an Excellent Teacher, or discussed the possibility with your headteacher?'**

		Yes, seriously	Yes, in passing	No	<i>N</i>
Have you previously considered the possibility of becoming an Excellent Teacher?	%	10	28	62	610
Have you ever discussed this possibility with your headteacher?	%	4	7	89	590

Source: Survey of teachers

Having read the information about the ETS provided with the questionnaire, teachers were asked to give some indication of when, if at all, they might consider becoming an ET. Figure 4.3 shows that a quarter of the respondents indicated that they would like to become an ET within the next three next years, and almost a third in the more distant future. However, some ticked both categories, so in total around 44 per cent indicated that they would like to become an ET at some point.

**Figure 4.3: Career plans and the ETS: extent to which respondents agreed with each statement (N = 619)**



Source: Survey of teachers

Those on U3 were the most likely to agree with the statement 'I would like to become an ET within the next three years' (48 per cent of those without TLRs and 34 per cent of those with TLRs). Those in their forties were also more likely than other age groups to agree (32 per cent). However, almost a quarter of those on the main scale indicated that they would like to become an ET within the next three years, and this cannot be seen as a serious aspiration because they would not meet the eligibility criteria; also almost half of these had not previously heard of the scheme. When asked whether they would like to become ETs in the more distant future, those on the main pay scale were more likely to agree than other groups.

Just 15 per cent of respondents indicated that they would prefer to become an AST rather than an ET, but the majority of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this.

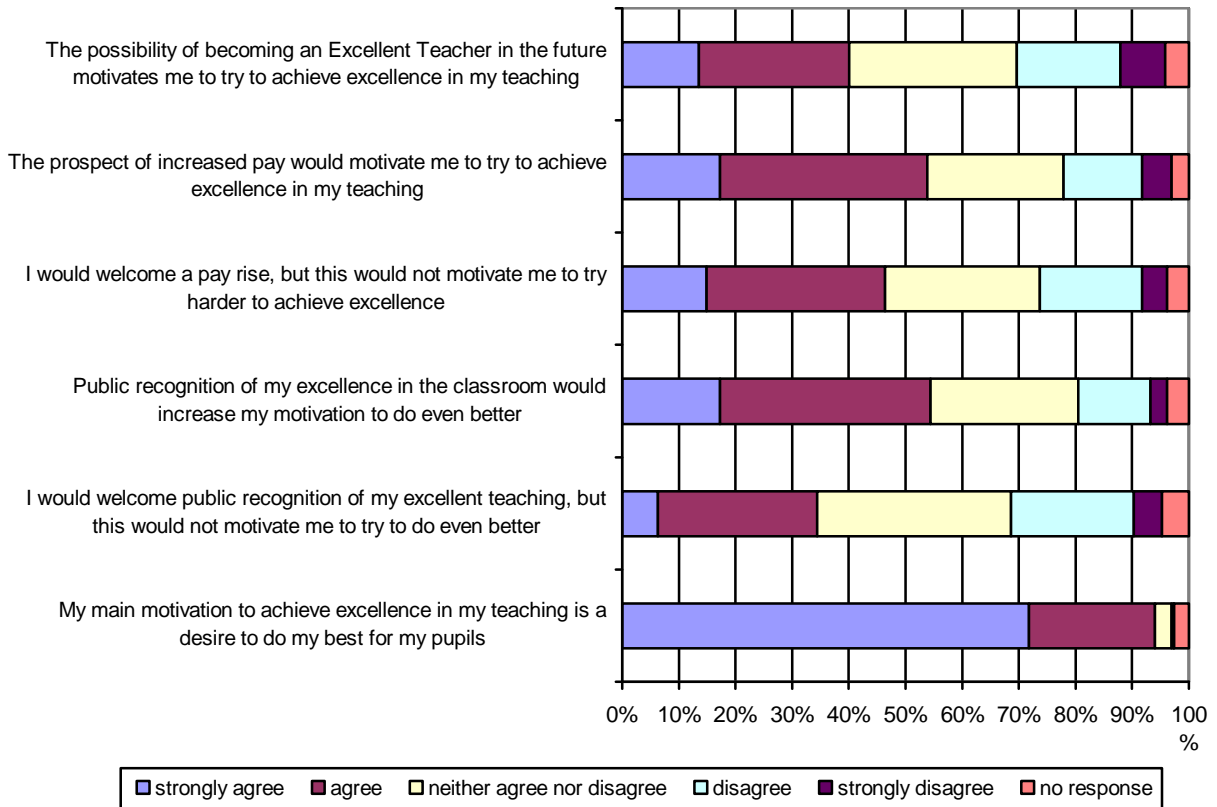
We were interested to find out whether teachers saw the ETS in the way the STRB had envisaged, as:

... the pinnacle of a classroom teacher's role, a 'gold standard' ... which motivates teachers to develop themselves, their colleagues and their teaching practice right through their careers. (STRB, 2005, p. xii)

In the survey, we asked teachers about their motivations to try to achieve excellence (Figure 4.4). A very large majority agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, 'My main motivation to achieve excellence in my teaching is a desire to do my best for my pupils'. More than half agreed that public recognition and the prospect of increased pay would increase their motivation to achieve excellence.

Teachers in their twenties were the most likely to agree that the possibility of becoming an ET acted as a motivation to try to achieve excellence in their teaching (57 per cent compared with 23 per cent in their fifties). Similarly, younger teachers were much more likely to say that they would be motivated by the prospect of increased pay or of public recognition. Those on U3 were the least likely group to agree that they would be motivated by public recognition.

**Figure 4.4: Motivations to try to achieve excellence (N = 619)**



Source: Survey of teachers

In interview, teachers were asked what attracted them to the ETS, and what deterred them from this career path. As Section 4.2.1 highlights, teachers’ grasp of the details of the ETS was generally poor, and this meant that most of those interviewed had not considered the role in relation to their own careers. However, some commented positively, saying that they were attracted by the potential for recognition from peers and higher pay, and the focus on classroom teaching, while others expressed a range of concerns about the scheme. Their responses are grouped under the headings below.

**Attractions of the ETS: recognition and reward**

Some said that becoming an ET would be a recognition of their skills and status as classroom practitioners:

*Well, it’s the recognition of what you’ve done already I think. [The ET post] gives it some sort of legitimacy and recognition. (Secondary teacher, f)*

*I think it would be good for personal development to feel that people think a lot of you. (Secondary teacher, f)*

The scheme was often viewed as a reward for excellence rather than a job for which teachers apply; this is illustrated below in an extract from an interview with a GTP trainee:

*It’s pinpointing those teachers that excel in their job. ... if the government can recognise these teachers than it’s almost like a team of teachers that are spreading the word and passing on their attributes and I think that is brilliant. ... A teacher doesn’t need to say, ‘Right I’m an excellent teacher,’ you know, they should be almost proud to be selected.*

This view was most often held by younger and less experienced teachers. One teacher on the main scale argued that teachers do not currently get sufficient opportunities for recognition and financial reward:

*If I do better what's my reward? I don't get any reward. I'm not recognised as being better than anybody else. I'm on the same pay scale; I'm doing the same hours so I'm not recognised for it. ... I want to develop my skills in the classroom. I'd never want to be head of year or head of department. I just want to be recognised for what I'm good at.* (Secondary teacher, f)

For many of the teachers, the pay on offer for the ET role was a vital demonstration of the importance of classroom teaching. As one teacher, who had known little about the ET scheme, said:

*I think that's amazing and I wish I knew about this sooner but I think in terms of decency, I think that's probably what good teachers deserve in terms of the effort they put in. ... It shows much more recognition.* (Secondary teacher, f)

### **Attractions of the ETS: focus on classroom teaching**

For several teachers, the ET scheme resonated with their professional identities and values, which centred on the relational aspects of teaching, and the valuing of pedagogic practice. This was generally contrasted with administration and management:

*It's all about the teaching. That's what people that I know - in our department particularly we all really value that above all the other stuff, and really try to push administration and bureaucracy to one side and keep it all about what people do day to day. I think it's all about valuing like professional teaching.* (Secondary teacher, f)

*Valuing learning, which is what it's all about, rather than management. And actually you're financially rewarded for being a manager, and that's not why people go into it, and that's not really what it's all about so it [the ETS] is good, it seems.* (Secondary teacher, m)

These values were also associated with sharing skills and practice, and some teachers welcomed the opportunity for mentoring colleagues which the ET role involves:

*I'm not actually that interested in having management roles, and it's these things like helping teachers develop their expertise and mentoring of other teachers that I enjoy doing, like working with my colleagues and sharing stuff with them. I'm interested in that more than being a manager.* (Secondary teacher, f)

For some, the ETS provided a welcome possibility of career progression related to their orientation towards classroom teaching:

*I think that for teachers ... who are not sure whether to stay in the classroom or go for leadership, it might give another opportunity for us to actually say, look we're good at teaching, why should we be going towards management and deputy headship when we could do what we're really good at and keep doing it, and strive for that.* (Primary teacher, f)

*I might be more inclined to do [the ETS] than go into management; I don't really like managing people and so, yeah, it might suit me further down the line.* (Primary teacher, f)

However, while the focus on classroom practice was identified as an attraction, teachers *were concerned that the ET's work would take them out of the classroom:*

*There's a sort of paradox isn't there that you're going to reward people for their excellent classroom practice partly by taking them out of the classes on something else. ... For some people I think the strength of the upper pay scale system is that you get rewarded for really for your classroom teaching. (Secondary teacher, m)*

In this teacher's view, she would lose some of her contact with pupils by becoming an ET.

### ***Attractions of the ETS: an opportunity for experienced teachers***

In the survey, three-quarters of all respondents agreed with the statement, 'the ET role is welcome because it is designed for experienced teachers.' Agreement was highest among those on the upper pay scale and those in their forties. Among secondary teachers, women were more likely to agree than men (77 per cent compared with 64 per cent).

In interview, some teachers identified the ETS as a welcome career opportunity for experienced older women teachers. One 54-year-old woman teacher was keen to become an ET, and fitted the eligibility criteria, but explained her previous lack of career progression in terms of her part-time mode of working, and her attitude; she said: *'I've never been one for pushing or being particularly career minded. I couldn't even tell you what I earn right now, that's an admission isn't it?'*

Another experienced woman teacher argued that older women are often subtly 'discriminated' against for not having been sufficiently ambitious and striving for leadership positions when they were younger:

*There are fewer and fewer people who are on UPS3, people who are not holders of TLR points, and they're on the whole teachers my sort of age where they don't know what to do with you. They want to encourage the younger teachers to stay, and so they promote them ... If you're over 40 and you apply for a job for another school on main professional grade or one TLR point they want to know why at 40 you're still there. (Secondary teacher, f)*

She concluded that the ETS would be particularly useful for this group:

*It's very difficult, each school has got their 40 year old women on UPS, and the Excellent Teacher scale would pay them and reward them for being there, because once you reach a particular age and you haven't gone up, for whatever reason, on the scale you are trapped.*

These comments highlight the significant differences and inequalities between men's and women's career trajectories within teaching (Moreau et al., 2005) and how these might relate to the particular pathways available. Attention has frequently been drawn to the long-standing imbalance through which disproportionate numbers of male teachers are found in leadership positions (e.g. Acker, 1989; Coleman, 1996, 2002; Thornton and Bricheno, 2000; NUT, 2001; Hutchings, 2002). DCSF(2008d) figures show that in 2008, men comprised 13 per cent of primary classroom teachers, but 32 per cent of headteachers. Similarly, men comprise 43 per cent of secondary teachers, but 63 per cent of headteachers. This imbalance has been decreasing slowly in recent years, but is still a strong feature of the workforce. Many reasons have been put forward for this, including men's ambition; the long working hours associated with headship; women being disadvantaged by taking career breaks); female careers often being secondary to those of their husbands; reluctance to

move away from their chosen career, teaching children; and concern about isolation and loss of job satisfaction from collegiality (Coleman, 1996, 2002; Thornton and Bricheno, 2000; NUT, 2001; Moreau et al., 2005). It is in this context, that the interviewees above identified that ETS as a possible career progression route for older women who had not previously moved into management or leadership roles.

### **Concerns about the ETS: divisiveness**

We now turn to consider the reasons some teachers put forward to explain why they do not see the ET scheme as a relevant career path for themselves. Lack of awareness of the scheme was frequently mentioned and has already been discussed; one teacher said, '*I don't know - the thing is you're asking me why I wouldn't want to do something that I don't know that much about*' (secondary teacher, m). Teachers also expressed concern expressed concern that their headteachers would not necessarily be interested in the scheme, which would disadvantage any eligible teachers in that school. But the most frequently expressed concerns focused on collegiality and fairness, their own modesty, and the assessment process.

Many of the teachers said they were deterred by the name of the scheme, describing it as '*divisive*'. They argued that the fact that some teachers are labelled as '*excellent*' suggests that other teachers have not reached the same level of excellence. Some also saw the scheme as divisive because it involves a differentiation of teachers' pay and working conditions between Excellent Teachers and those who are not ETs, yet '*do as good a job*'.

*I wouldn't like to be sort of branded with that sort of title... I think you know it could cause resentment, put you under personal pressure and I wouldn't feel comfortable. I don't think that's ever going to happen anyway, but I wouldn't feel comfortable earning more than a colleague who was doing just as good a job as I was.*  
(Secondary teacher, m)

A teacher explained that ET status '*automatically puts you in a position where your colleagues who may also be excellent teachers are seeing in a different light*', comparing it to the '*them and us*' of senior leadership (secondary teacher, f). By distinguishing Excellent Teachers from others working in the classroom, the scheme was perceived to set up divisions between staff. A number of teachers referred to the title as '*divisive*', while others spoke of ETs being held up on '*a pedestal*' (primary and secondary teachers, f). Others expanded on this idea, pointing to the fact that it '*takes away from other teachers perhaps in the school who may be working just as hard but don't have this role*' (secondary teacher, f), and '*implies the other teachers are not excellent*' (secondary teacher, m).

The difficulty of assessing teachers' work and decide who was an excellent teacher was also raised:

*It's difficult, you see I've always believed the classroom teacher is as important as the management and should be rewarded a lot - but it's hard to reward the teachers - it's hard to judge them I think. It's a problem. I mean the only way you can measure a teacher is by applying new formulae which don't really work. I don't obey the rules unless I'm being watched. And when I'm being watched I don't do as well.*  
(Secondary teacher, m)

More generally, some teachers argued that the divisive aspects of the scheme conflicted with the '*team player*' or '*collegial*' ethos that is important to teachers. One explained that it might impact on teacher morale:

*I think teaching's a team thing and to be branded as an excellent teacher over say another teacher, say, who might be doing just as good a job, I think could be a little bit sort of difficult from a morale point of view. (Secondary teacher, m)*

He also suggested it could have a negative impact on team work:

*I think [as an ET] you could be putting yourself under pressure, and it could affect the team situation so I think it's not something that I would personally seek myself.*

Finally, he imagined how he might feel towards colleagues appointed as ETs:

*If I was working with an Excellent Teacher I might find it a little bit difficult if I didn't think that that particular person was you know as good as what we were led to believe.*

There were also some concerns among the teachers interviewed that school management might use the scheme to reward teachers, but not necessarily those who most effectively met the ET standards:

*I'm suspicious also that managements would be able to use it to reward the people they wanted to reward. I mean in principle it's a nice idea, but I feel that probably in practice it would not be very consistent and not very fair, not very responsive to actually what really makes an excellent teacher. (Secondary teacher, m)*

In particular, several teachers raised concerns about how it could be used as a measure for retention in shortage subjects, to the disadvantage of those who teach other subjects. One concluded:

*And actually they just want this person because they need him because they can't get anybody else and it's a shortage subject ... Yeah, it could create great difficulties. (Secondary teacher, m)*

He argued that in such a case other teachers would justifiably be indignant, and this could damage collegiality, which was what had attracted many teachers to the profession:

*Maybe it's a sign that teaching is becoming a lot more like the private sector really, and much more competitive. ... That's why we went into teaching because we thought it was a fairly humane environment. It's less and less of a humane environment but there's still quite a lot of integrity within it, I think. You don't throw it all out because the rest of the world's like that, do you? (Secondary teacher, m)*

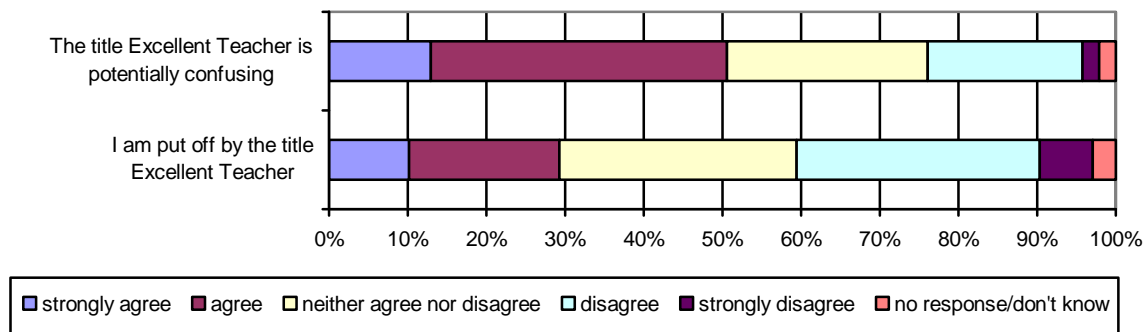
This was a teacher aged about thirty, not someone reminiscing about an imagined golden age. Similarly another young teacher said he saw the ETS as '*part of this whole sort of corporate culture that creeps into everything and that puts me off*' (secondary teacher, m).

### **Concerns about the scheme: the title ET**

The discussion above indicated that the title ET was perceived by some as divisive; others just found it confusing, or said they would not like to be identified as Excellent Teachers. The survey asked teachers to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with statements about the title (Figure 4.5). Just over half the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that 'The title Excellent Teacher is potentially confusing'. Almost 30 per cent said that they were 'put off' by the title.



**Figure 4.5: The title Excellent Teacher: extent to which respondents agreed with given statements (N = 619)**



Source: Survey of Teachers

Younger teachers were less likely to say they were 'put off' by the title (20 per cent, rising to 50 per cent of those in their fifties). Similarly, those on the main pay scale were less likely than to say they were 'put off' (21 per cent, compared with 42 per cent on U3).

Some teachers said that they would be reluctant to put themselves forward as 'excellent': as one teacher said, '*not a lot of people have enough confidence to call themselves excellent*' (secondary teacher, f). Another interviewee in the early stages of her teaching career said she did not want to be seen as the kind of person who thought of herself as 'excellent':

*I think that people who are very confident will have no problem with the name of the scheme, but people who are very modest about their own ability would hesitate to apply because they wouldn't believe that they were an Excellent Teacher even if they were.... It would be something I'd be interested in, if people in the school thought that I was an Excellent Teacher and I'd be interested in doing. ... I'm quite a modest person. (Primary teacher, f)*

A primary teacher who was keen to pursue a classroom career route said:

*Although I'm interested in the classroom, I don't think there is any way you would want to put yourself forward as being an Excellent Teacher. I think the name just puts people off.... You're setting yourself up, saying I'm an Excellent Teacher, and in the school environment I just don't think that goes down very well. (Primary teacher, f)*

Some teachers seemed to feel that it would be inappropriate to approach the head saying that you were interested in the ETS, because teachers '*feel they don't deserve, you know that they're up there enough to do it*' (Primary teacher, f).

Although more evidence would be needed, these data suggest that teachers from groups with lower levels of confidence may be more reluctant to apply, with possible implications in terms of gender, social class background and seniority. This extract also suggests that peer backing and encouragement to apply to become an Excellent Teacher may be very influential in teachers' decisions. Previous research has found that this sort of peer encouragement was a crucial factor for women teachers applying for promotion (Boulton and Coldron, 1998).

### **Concerns about the assessment process**

A few teachers identified the amount of paper-work which they anticipated having to produce as evidence of their performance at Excellent Teacher level, as a deterrent, because they already had considerable pressures in their time.

*... if you had to provide evidence and then you had to duplicate everything and produce massive files worth of things... because teachers already have so much work to do that, even if it's going to be something that's a benefit to them, it's finding the time to do it in, so streamlining the process so that people are really looking at what it is that you need to prove to be an Excellent Teacher and just doing that rather than providing evidence of all the teaching you've ever done.*

(Primary teacher, f)

One teacher argued that having to produce evidence and be assessed should not be necessary:

*I think if you've been in the school a good few years, really they should know whether you're an Excellent Teacher or not. I mean having to provide all this evidence just seems to me to be quite a bureaucratic sort of exercise. I don't really see that it's necessary. I mean it's almost like saying I want you to provide me with evidence that you're doing this, it's almost like saying you don't trust that you're actually doing it. (Secondary teacher, m)*

Some of the responses from teachers were similar to those that Mahony et al. (2004a, b) reported in relation to the threshold assessment. They said that many teachers felt discomfort at what they saw as 'selling themselves'. Some interviewees explained this in terms of professional culture and 'Britishness', but the researchers also identified it as a gendered response in which women tend both to under-rate their achievements and to proclaim them less than men (see also Collinson and Hearn, 1996).

The teacher who had been appointed as an ET but had yet to go through the assessment felt that the process was similar to threshold assessment, and while she was not '*too confident about the process*', said that she had '*the support of the senior team as well as the Principal*', and that her previous work in the school had allowed her to accumulate '*enough evidence*' (Secondary teacher, f).

Only one of the teachers interviewed had seriously considered the ET role: a woman, who teaches music in a special school. She had wanted to apply but had been deterred by one aspect of the assessment process. In that she did not have any additional responsibilities, she was typical of the teachers for whom the ETS aims to create opportunities. She said that she had never been assessed as less than 'outstanding' in Ofsted inspections, and that she has done some outreach work in other schools. She had contemplated applying to become an AST, but her headteacher had told her that this was not possible because she works part-time<sup>13</sup>. More recently the head had discussed the possibility of an ET role. She had decided she would apply; she told us:

*I'm no way coming to the end of my career, I'm sort of as full of enthusiasm and perhaps more now than I've ever been, I love the challenge, but maybe now I'm thinking well, maybe it would be nice to have a bit more and be recognised for what I've contributed, what I've done. It does seem to appeal now more than ever before.*

(Special school teacher, f)

<sup>13</sup> ASTs can in fact work part-time; 20 per cent of the hours they work is used for outreach work.

However, she explained:

*[The head] did look into it, she brought me into her office and she said, 'Just look at this, about collecting data.' Now I didn't see my role - I don't do that, I do not collect data, I just didn't seem to fit into what she thought I needed to fit into the Excellent Teacher, and yet obviously in her mind she's thinking, 'Well, you are an Excellent Teacher,' and she would like to recognise that.*

The reference here is to the 'searching analysis' which ETs have to have undertaken as part of the assessment process. She felt extremely frustrated at the barriers that appeared to prevent her from having the opportunity to progress in her career:

*It has made me think, well why can't I? Is it because I'm in a special school, is it because I'm only part time, is it because I'm not doing GCSE and I don't collect data and I'm not looking at graphs or progress? What is it that would stop somebody like me, who people tell me I'm an excellent teacher, what's stopping me or people like me getting Excellent Teacher status? Is there nothing for us out there?*

It may be that this teacher and her headteacher had misinterpreted the assessment requirements, but nevertheless, it is a fact that they have prevented this teacher from applying to the scheme.

### **Preference for other career pathways**

Some teachers indicated a preference for other career pathways. Some preferred the AST route, having worked with ASTs successfully, or aspiring to become ASTs. Teachers felt that they understood the scheme better than the ETS and that it was more established. A deputy head explained:

*[ASTs] have got a role where they're working with new teachers, and not necessarily in competition with their colleagues, because there's this element of being able to do outreach work and work with different schools. But if you've got an ET within a school, that's immediately setting someone aside from their colleagues and not many people will want to be put in that position. (Secondary teacher, f)*

Some teachers also said that the ET role was not very different from the AST role. However, AST was perceived as a preferable option, because it was established, and was less divisive than the ETS:

*I think the AST programme has worked so well that they'd go for the nearest AST course. ... also the AST programme is established and doesn't seem to - it doesn't seem to present any conflict or not double standards - I can't think of the word - it doesn't put people at each other, whereas the Excellent Teacher might. (Secondary teacher, f)*

For others, the ETS did not compare very well with the management route. Although many teachers agreed that it should not be compatible with TLR points, as the position did not imply management responsibilities, this was perceived as problematic in practical terms, as teachers may have already embarked on a management route, thus would have to forego their TLR points to become ETs. This, combined with the fact that a post had to be available in the school beforehand, was perceived as a major hindrance:

*I had a discussion with my boss yesterday, whether it was worth me looking into Excellent Teacher or maybe Advanced Skills Teaching. ... I didn't realise that to be an Excellent Teacher ... you couldn't have a TLR which was interesting. ... And then a post has to be made available in your school. And to me that just seems quite a lot of ifs and buts. (Primary teacher, f)*

*I knew I couldn't go on it because I couldn't be a head of department, be a TLR and be an Excellent Teacher. It's like you can't be an AST and something else. (Secondary teacher, f)*

The drop in salary that would be incurred by teachers on the leadership scale should they move to ET posts was identified by one teacher as an important issue, especially for those who were older<sup>14</sup>, as it would affect their pension rights:

*Not only would I lose salary, I would lose pension. I am already an excellent teacher I don't need ... I think a lot of people wouldn't do it, especially the older age range of people I think you would be foolish to. It's like cutting your pension and taking a massive pay cut and doing more work. (primary teacher, f)*

The multiplicity of career routes was also felt to represent a key hindrance.

*I think there are so many different avenues to go now ... that I would say that there would be low take up because there are so many different things people can do. So they wouldn't necessarily need to take Excellent Teacher status because ... there's the threshold; there's the AST route; there's leadership roles ... I just feel people just need to get on and do the teaching! All teachers should be excellent teachers to be honest with you. (Secondary teacher, f)*

More generally, it seems that some teachers were, from their own admission, 'a little bit cynical' towards yet another scheme, perceived as distant from what preoccupies and motivates them.

---

<sup>14</sup> Data on age was not collected.

**Summary: perceptions of headteachers and teachers in schools where there are no ETs**

While the majority of headteachers were aware of the ETS, citing a range of sources of written information, many acknowledged that their understanding was limited, and most considered that publicity for the scheme was poor, and dissemination of information to schools could be significantly improved.

Some had considered appointing ETs, or included ET posts in the school staffing structure. They saw the scheme as a reward for exceptional teachers, which would contribute to their motivation, and might increase retention. A few talked about the possibility of attracting high quality teachers. Some talked about the ways in which the ET role would benefit the school, often seeing it as more useful than the outreach work of ASTs.

However, their reasons for not creating ET posts included budgetary constraints; lack of appropriate candidates (either because staff on U3 had TLRs, or because teachers were not interested or were deterred by the assessment process); a perception that a candidate would not be eligible because her role did not include data analysis; perceptions that the ETS is divisive; post-threshold teachers and members of the leadership team were already carrying out the duties listed for an ET; a preference for ASTs; and discouragement from the LA.

Teachers knew rather less about the ETS than headteachers, and those who were aware had often received their information through word of mouth rather than documentary sources. In the survey, 32 per cent of respondents had not heard of the ETS.

They identified a number of ways in which their schools could benefit from creating ET posts; these included retention of older teachers (who might become ETS) and the provision of support for inexperienced teachers. However, they were aware that budgetary issues could deter headteachers from creating ET posts.

Some teachers saw the ETS as a possible future career path, identifying as attractions the potential for recognition of their skills and financial reward; the valuing of classroom practice; and the emphasis on experience which made this an appropriate route for older women who have not pursued the leadership route.

While most interviewees identified at least some positive aspects of the ETS, the majority gave much more emphasis to negative aspects, and in particular to concerns that the scheme, and the title ET, are potentially divisive. Some were deterred by the assessment process, and some preferred other career pathways.

## 5 Schools that have appointed ETs

This chapter focuses on schools that have appointed ETs. The majority of the data used comes from the 17 school case studies in which headteachers, ETs and a range of other teachers (including both those on the Upper Pay Scale and teachers in the early stages of their careers) were interviewed. In addition, we refer to data from interviews with headteachers of five schools that were part of the telephone sample and had either appointed ETs or were in the process of doing so.

In the case study schools, we made it clear to all interviewees that the interview was confidential and their views would not be fed back to any other interviewees in the school. For this reason, we have not indicated which schools the interviewees quoted worked in. Moreover, we have referred to all ETs as female, whether or not this was the case, because only two were men, and they could therefore be more easily identified. Similarly, the roles of leadership team members are not always given accurately (e.g. the distinction between deputy and assistant head).

The chapter discusses the characteristics of the schools that have appointed ETs, and the extent to which our case study sample is representative of these. It then turns to the process of creating an ET post - the reasons for doing so, and the process of making the appointment including the external assessment, and any difficulties encountered. Next we consider the ETs themselves: their career trajectories, what they were paid, and their views on the job title Excellent Teacher. The focus then moves to the ETs' current roles; the outcomes for schools; and the factors that make the role effective. Finally we consider the views of other teachers in the case study schools about the ET role in relation to their own careers.

### 5.1 School and ET characteristics

In this section we review the characteristics of all the schools that had appointed ETs by December 2008, and indicate the extent to which our case study sample is representative of all the schools that have appointed ETs. We also review the characteristics of the ETs appointed, and of those that took part in case studies.

#### *School characteristics*

**Table 5.1: Schools that have appointed ETs by December 2008 and number of ETs appointed by school type**

	number of schools with ETs	number of ETs
primary	17	19
secondary	36	36
special	4	4
Total	57	59

Source: Data sent to the research team by DCSF, 11 December 2008

As discussed earlier, it was initially anticipated that in time, around 20 per cent of eligible teachers would become ETs. However, by December 2008, only 59 had been appointed. Table 5.1 shows that more than twice as many secondary schools have appointed ETs as primary schools. In that nationally there are more than five times as many primary schools as secondary, this suggests that secondary schools are much more likely to appoint ETs; one in a hundred secondary schools have made such appointments, but only one in a thousand primary schools. In either sector, numbers are extremely low.

We reviewed the characteristics of all the schools that had appointed ETs by December 2008. If we consider first the 17 primary schools with ET posts, it is clear that they are larger than the national average size, having an average of 356 pupils compared with the national average of 238 pupils (DCSF/National Statistics, 2008). This is probably because only larger primary schools can afford to have a range of promoted posts. Primary schools with ETs also tend to have better than average Ofsted ratings for overall effectiveness. In 2007-8,

Ofsted (2008) reported that of all the primary schools inspected, 13 per cent were judged to be outstanding and 50 per cent good. But if we consider only those primary schools with ET posts, in their most recent inspections, 25 per cent were judged to be outstanding and 63 per cent good. Similarly, average KS2 attainment and CVA<sup>15</sup> scores for the schools with ETs were above the national average figures (DCSF, 2007c). However, there is no reason to assume a causal relationship e.g. either that schools with ETs are more effective, or that more effective schools appoint ETs.

The secondary schools with ETs are also larger than average, with an average of 1240 pupils compared with a national average of 972 (DCSF/National Statistics, 2008). Their Ofsted ratings are only slightly better on average than secondary schools nationally (overall effectiveness of 64 per cent judged to be outstanding or good, compared with 57 per cent nationally), and attainment and CVA are average.

ETs can be found in all Government Office Regions, though in comparison to the number of teachers in each region, a disproportionately large number of schools in the North West and South East regions have ETs.

**Table 5.2: Schools that have created and filled ET posts, September 2006 - December 2008, by Government Office Region**

	no of schools
South East	13
North West	11
Yorks & Humber	7
East of England	5
London	5
South West	5
West Midlands	5
North East	3
East Midlands	1
Wales	2
Total	57

Source: Data sent to the research team by DCSF, 11 December 2008

Finally in this section, we review whether the case study sample is representative of all the schools with ETs.

<sup>15</sup> CVA (Contextual Value added) scores measure the attainment of pupils in comparison with those with similar prior attainment; and with a number of other similar factors (gender, age, special educational needs, first language, ethnicity, eligibility for free school meals, income deprivation, in-care, mobility). School CVA scores show pupil progress when all these factors relating to pupil intake are taken into account.

**Table 5.3: Number of schools that have appointed ETs and case study schools, by school type**

	number of schools with ETs	number of case study schools
primary	17	4
secondary	36	10
special	4	3
Total	57	17

Source: Data sent to the research team by DCSF, 11 December 2008

Table 5.3 shows that our sample slightly under-represents primary schools and over-represents special schools. This was due to the difficulty of finding primary schools that were willing to take part in this review. The sample is reasonably representative of all ET schools in terms of school size and pupil numbers, but over-represents schools judged by Ofsted to be outstanding (47 per cent of the sample, compared to 25 per cent of all the schools with ETs) and under-represents those judged to be good.

The case study sample included schools in all regions except Wales (which has only two ETs).

### ***ET characteristics***

Unfortunately the data about ETs is limited. We know whether they are male or female, and details of their role in school (subjects taught etc.), but age data has been collected for only 60 per cent of those who have been successfully assessed, and ethnicity data was not made available to the research team.

The majority of ETs are female (Table 5.4). In primary and special schools, the proportion of female ETs is similar to the proportion of 'classroom teachers and others' nationally (DCSF, 2008). But the proportion of female secondary ETs (75 per cent) is rather higher than that of female teachers on U3 (56 per cent). Given the disproportionate number of men who are in leadership positions (Moreau et al., 2005), this suggests that some women who have not followed the leadership career path are attracted to the ET route. The characteristics of ASTs reported by Taylor and Jennings (2004) are not dissimilar; two-thirds worked in secondary schools and 70 per cent were female.

**Table 5.4: Number of ETs assessed nationally by gender and school phase**

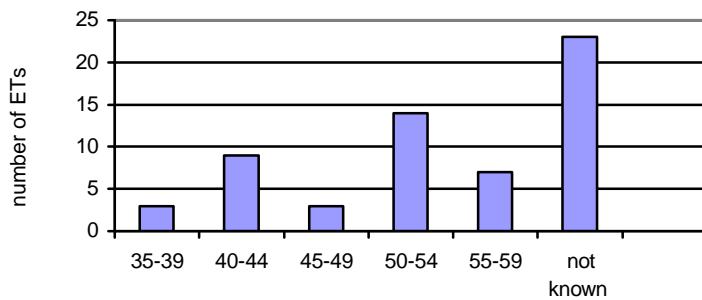
	male	female	total	% female ETS	% female teachers on U3 nationally
primary	1	18	19	95%	90%
secondary	9	27	36	75%	56%
special	1	3	4	75%	74%
Total	11	48	59		

\* Sources: ETs: data provided by the DCSF; national data, calculated from DCSF (2008d)

Age data are available only for those who were assessed up to September 2007. Following this, ages were not recorded on the application form. Figure 5.1 shows the age of ETs on the date they were assessed.



**Figure 5.1: Age of ETs on assessment (N = 59)**

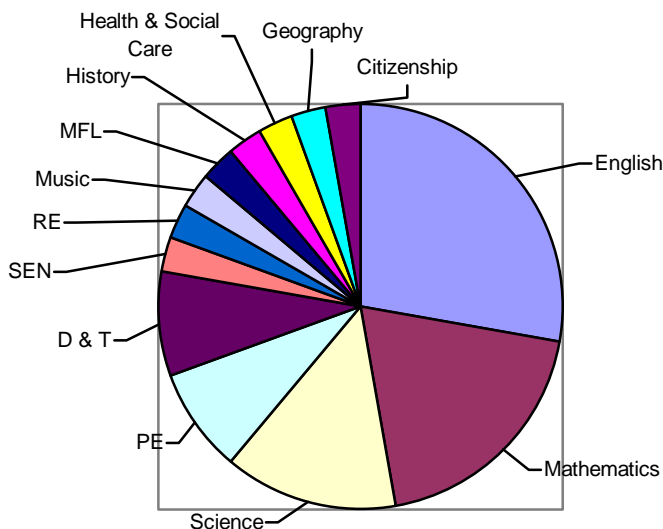


Source: Data sent to the research team by DCSF, 11 December 2008

It is possible that this age distribution may partly be related to restructuring; teachers who lost management allowances and became ETs as a result of restructuring may be older than those appointed more recently; however, without age data for all the ETs, it is not possible to tell whether this is the case.

Figure 5.2 shows the main subjects taught by the 36 secondary ETs. It shows that more than half of them teach the core subjects: mathematics, English and science. Six of the ten case study secondary ETs taught core subjects, matching the overall distribution.

**Figure 5.2: Main subjects taught by 36 secondary ETs**



Source: Data sent to the research team by DCSF, 11 December 2008

## 5.2 Creating the ET post

We asked headteachers and ETs where they accessed information about the scheme. Headteachers were asked to describe how the ET post had come into being: whether it was in the 2005 revised staffing structure; why and when the appointment had been made; the process followed (whether the post was advertised, how the ET was selected); whether any difficulties were encountered; and so on. In five of the 17 schools new headteachers had been appointed since 2005, and so it was not always possible to trace the entire process.

### 5.2.1 Sources of information

The majority of headteachers said they had heard about the ETS through the documentation around restructuring, though some referred to other sources listed in Section 4.2.1. Most ETs had heard about the scheme from their headteachers, either through a circular to the staff or more often through a personal approach. However, a substantial minority had identified the role for themselves, and had approached their headteacher. One of those in the telephone interview phase of the research explained:

*I was trawling on the internet and I came across this Excellent Teacher and I thought, wow, that seems to be where I would like to go, because I didn't particularly want to go up the leadership with TLR, because I wasn't really interested in a leadership role, I was much more interested in the teaching and learning side of things, which I felt was perhaps my forte. .... Originally I actually felt that I wanted to be an Advanced Skills Teacher, but then when the Excellent Teacher came along I liked the inreach, I liked the idea of making an impact or making a positive change within the school, rather than going outreach. (Secondary teacher applying to become an ET)*

Many other ETs gave similar accounts of the attractions of the scheme. This teacher had then talked to the headteacher:

*I then approached the Principal to say well, you know, is this possible, what do you think. She absolutely said, 'Fantastic, it's perfect for you, we would really like Excellent Teachers within the school.'*

She said that the headteacher '*didn't know the details until I plonked them in her lap*'. She had resigned from her TLR in order to become an ET. The fact that pay arrangements had been changed meant that she could do this without loss of salary.

### 5.2.2 Including an ET post in the 2005 staffing structure

In at least 13 of the 17 case study schools, the revised staffing structure had included one or more ET posts (or in some cases, a post or posts that could be filled by either ASTs or ETs). These posts had generally been included because of a perceived need for a greater emphasis on improving teaching and learning. However, in some cases it was included the ET job description includes roles for which a specific teacher had previously received a management allowance.

Among the secondary schools, a common motivation was to create a team of ASTs and/or ETs to develop teaching and learning across the school. One assistant head explained the thinking behind the school's new staffing structure:

*What we did in our school is to identify quite clearly teaching and learning as a key to improving the quality of the results. So we put together a team of people. Originally in the structure we have 5 ASTs and 2 ETs. And the idea of the group was obviously to work with staff to up-skill them and to provide the kind of pedagogical support necessary to ensure that standards of classroom practice were actually improving.*

In some schools, the long-term plan was to have one member of this team in each department; in one school they have replaced the traditional assistant head of department role.

One special school head said that the ET role was created because of the large turnover in staff, and the number of new teachers coming into the school from mainstream teaching:

*It was felt that the time was right to develop an Excellent Teacher post in order to support the new teachers that were coming in in their professional development, to work alongside them, and to team teach alongside them, and to demonstrate good practice.*

The head of another special school explained:

*There was this sort of deficit of information of how to deal with more challenging and more complex children in the classroom and how to deliver the curriculum. ... We actually wanted someone that would go in as a critical friend rather than a school leader, that could just go in and sit in the classroom and say, 'have you tried' or 'what about doing it this way', in a non threatening way.*

A major reason for including ET posts in the staffing structure instead of (or in addition to) AST posts was that schools wanted a role that focused on 'inreach' rather than the AST outreach role. However, while some schools thought of AST exclusively in terms of outreach work, others had already appointed ASTs who worked only in the school. The difference between the two roles thus becomes less clear-cut; this is discussed in Section 5.6.3.

In several of the schools that appointed ETs very soon after they drew up their staffing structure, the headteachers acknowledged that they had had a specific person in mind when creating the staffing structure. For example, a secondary head in the telephone interview sample explained that the post had been specifically designed for a teacher who had held a post which was not in the new structure, 'but I still wanted her to have a role in the school.' She added, 'The fact that the Excellent Teacher focuses on teaching and learning suited our needs and suited her needs.' She explained that at least 15 other members of staff 'would have been eligible to apply in terms of length of service, but they just weren't interested.' She also said that, while she had appointed an ET because 'it suited a purpose for me', this was not something that she would necessarily do in the future. Similarly, the head of a case study school explained that the teacher who was appointed as ET had already been doing many aspects of the role under the previous staffing structure, and that he had created an ET post with that person in mind, to formalise the work that was already being done.

Despite including ET posts in their staffing structures, only one or two of the schools moved immediately to appoint any ETs. Box 5.1 explains what happened in one of these.

**Box 5.1: ET in new structure: immediate appointment**

A primary headteacher explained:

*When schools were being restructured and we had to announce our new structure, we did it as a whole staff and we were, and still are, a staff that do a lot of coaching, mentoring and working alongside each other. When the structure was being discussed with the staff, a lot of people said that we needed a position on the structure that was heading up the sort of coaching aspect of it.*

For this reason, an ET post was included. The head told us:

*I have to say [the process] wasn't completely smooth, but we didn't have problems with the staff because they came up with it. And this structure wasn't done with anybody in mind. We deliberately called it 'positions that have never existed in the school', and so nobody saw it as their job.*

She explained that ET rather than AST posts had been included:

*Excellent Teacher was where we saw it, because there was not outreach for Advanced Skills, and that's what interested us, having no outreach. We didn't want, however selfish, somebody to be going to other schools, we didn't mind people coming here but we definitely didn't want our school to miss out by somebody else going out. That was how it came about in our structure.*

The headteacher wanted the structure to be put in place immediately, with all new post-holders taking up their posts in January 2007. Accordingly, the ET post was advertised, and internal interviews held. The external assessment followed, and the post was filled in January 2007.

Some schools with ET posts in their staffing structures moved rather more slowly to make appointments, because they were keen to identify and appoint appropriate people. One secondary headteacher argued that such people did not necessarily put themselves forward, and so the leadership team had to identify suitable candidates and persuade them to apply. (See Box 5.2).

**Box 5.2: ET in new structure, delayed appointment**

One secondary school had previously been in 'an Ofsted category', and the headteacher explained that their aim was 'to be outstanding by 2010'. In order to being about this rapid improvement, one of the strategies is to appoint ETs and ASTs to form 'a school improvement team that will go in, either collectively or individually, and work with teams of staff or individual staff, to bring about improvements in teaching and learning.' At the time of the interview, three ASTs and one ET had been appointed, and further appointments would be made 'as and when it becomes appropriate'. The head explained:

*We said, this is the structure we want, these are the TLRs etc., and we're also happy to create AST or ET posts in each faculty. Nothing happened at that time, and what we found we needed to do was to sidle up to people and say, 'We think you probably meet the criteria. Would you be interested in either AST or ET?'*

The potential pool for ET was limited by the requirement to be on U3. Of this group, '[The current ET] was certainly the first person we sidled up to.' They felt that she would be a good candidate for the job because she 'coped fantastically' with top and bottom sets:

*If you can deliver with both of those two totally different ends of the range, we felt that we'd be very happy as a school to support the application, because the outcomes showed that she was good, lesson observation showed that she could do all the bits and pieces.*

A number of schools had included ETs in the staffing structure, but explained that they had had no intention of making early appointments. For example, one secondary head said that two ET posts were 'sketched in', and while one ET had recently been appointed as a result of 'particular circumstances', they were not actively looking for a second. Half the case study secondary schools had originally planned to appoint more than one ET, and two still anticipated further appointments. In a number of the schools in this group, the circumstances that had prompted the creation of the ET post that existed in the staffing structure had been a teacher stepping down from a management role, and the need to find a different way to make use of their skills. Some of these teachers had suggested to their headteachers that ET or AST would be their preferred role. (See Section 5.3.1 for further discussion of ETs' career paths).

One of the schools contacted during the telephone interviews had included ETs in the staffing structure, and had also included 'time-limited TLRs'.<sup>16</sup> They were designed to get specific activities set up and developed (such as coaching triads, or Gifted and Talented), but the head and governors did not feel that they needed TLR post-holders to maintain them. The plan was that after a time they would appoint different members of staff to the time-limited posts in order to get other activities going. The ET posts were created for those ending their time-limited TLRs. 'We had a word with them, and we said, why don't you become an Excellent Teacher? It's a more permanent post.' (secondary head). The ETs had been appointed but at the time of the interview had not been assessed.

<sup>16</sup> The amendment to paragraph 25.1 of the 2005 Pay and Conditions Document makes it clear that temporary or fixed-term TLRs cannot be paid except where a teacher is substituting in the temporary absence of another teacher, for example, where a teacher in a permanent TLR post is absent on sick leave or maternity leave (RIG Note 4, 2006).

### 5.2.3 ET post not included in staffing structure

At least two of the case study schools had not included ET in their staffing structure, but had created the post subsequently for specific individuals following discussion in performance management. In one case, it had been the future ET who identified this as the post she would like because she saw this as an appropriate next step in her career (see Section 5.3.1).

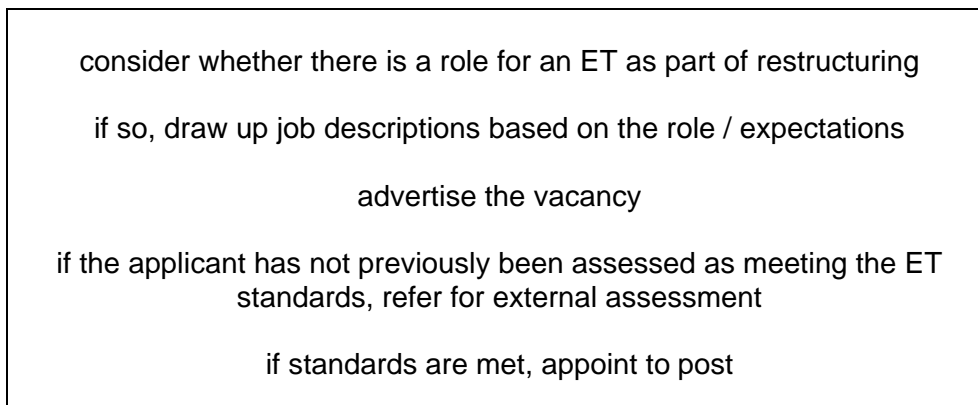
One head in the telephone interviews explained that the post in the staffing structure had been for an AST, but changed this to ET because they were concerned that the school's existing AST was not happy about spending so much time out of school, and so the head did some investigation, and discovered that there was an alternative, ET.

In one school it appeared that the ET post had first been suggested by the new headteacher who had joined the school after restructuring. She thought that the ETS provided a good opportunity to reward staff. This was to prevent them from becoming 'stale' rather than to increase retention. She said:

*You get a lot of staff who stay here, and you're continually trying to provide progression for them otherwise they get stale and cheesed off, and they just come in and it's just a joke. And so we've done an awful lot of work ... in trying to find progression for our best staff. (Secondary head)*

### 5.2.4 The chronology of creating an ET post

The September 2005 explanatory notes on the ETS (DfES, 2005b) include a diagram which sets out the procedure as follows:



This procedure is also included in the 2007 guidance document (DCSF, 2007). However, it does not always seem to have been followed. In about half the schools the post was never internally advertised, because it was designed for a specific individual, arising either from performance management discussions, or from a desire to retain that teacher. As one headteacher put it, it was for 'reward and recognition, and keeping her here for as long as possible'. Moreover, it was implied that putting the post in the staffing structure was equivalent to advertising it internally.

*It's there in the staffing structure. We were waiting for people - there were a number of people who we thought might jump at the chance, but actually in the end probably couldn't be bothered. (Secondary head)*

In some cases the post was advertised only after the ET had been assessed. One school leader said this was what they were advised to do:

*We did as we were advised to which was to put [name] through the assessment process and you know to give her the badge of an ET and then to put up an advert saying we had a vacancy for an ET, which seems a bizarre way of doing it, but that's the way we were advised to do it. (Secondary head)*

In another school, the ET's account indicates a similar procedure:

*Yes it was advertised internally. [Was there any interest?] No, because I was the only one that had the Excellent Teacher status and so it was pretty obvious that it would be me that would apply for it. ... But I think he advertised it internally because obviously there are rules and regulations and you have to, don't you? And I did go through an interview process with the governors. But it was ten minutes and it was basically me telling the governors what I thought my role entailed. And so it was sort of done and dusted really. (Primary ET)*

One school had a rather different scenario; the post was advertised internally, though the headteacher had one person in mind as the most appropriate candidate. Having agreed the ET's appointment, she was then released one day a week to start providing support, and to enable her to get used to the role. During this period the external assessment took place, but it was a further six months before she officially took up the post.

The variation in relation to advertising the posts highlights the tension between a strict notion of equality of opportunity, and a culture in which leaders are able to reward staff on merit by offering promotion opportunities, or use performance management to foster career moves that will benefit the organisation. Moreover, the title Excellent Teacher and the need for the headteacher to endorse the application for assessment both mean that it is unlikely that many teachers will put themselves forward for this role without being specifically encouraged or invited to do so by the headteacher. Even in schools where the post was advertised, only those who had been encouraged to apply did so. We found no school where there had been competition for the role.

In some cases there was a long gap between assessment and taking up the post. There were a number of reasons for this: one ET had not been on the Upper Pay Scale for a full two years when she was assessed; in another school the ET moved from a head of department role, but the vacancy in the department had not been filled, so she continued to act in that role for a considerable time; in a third school, concern about the relatively low pay for ETs delayed taking up the post until the pay was altered in 2008.

### **5.2.5 Difficulties experienced in relation to creating and recruiting to ET posts**

Several of the schools felt that the process had been hampered by the limited information available. In particular, two talked about receiving incorrect advice about ET pay from their LAs. A school that wanted their ET (who was moving from a TLR) to take up the post in September 2008, was apparently advised by the LA (in summer 2008) that there was only one fixed spot for ETs. The head's PA explained:

*I did some research and I found out that it was going to change to a range. But then the LEA wouldn't approve the contract ... They came back and said you can't do this. I told them about the research I'd done about the changes that were coming in. And then a few days later they came back and said yes, they'd found the same things and it would be OK. (Secondary PA)*

More generally, several headteachers and ETs said that the process had felt isolated and unsupported. They would have welcomed contacts with other schools that had appointed ETs, or with other ETs engaged in completing the application and preparing documentation.

### 5.2.6 The external assessment

The ET assessment involves completing a form, collecting together evidence to demonstrate how the standards are met, and a half day visit during which the assessor interviews the head and the applicant, and observes a lesson. The ET standards, and consequently the application form, changed in September 2007. Some of the comments made in case study interviews therefore refer to the earlier procedures.

Many of the comments highlighted the time that it had taken to complete the form and assemble all the evidence. One ET said, *'I loathe filling forms in because I go through ten, 12, 15 drafts. So that took me an awful long time. I mean weeks and weeks.'* Two of the headteachers acknowledged that they had contributed to completing the form. One said that the prospective ET had come to him saying, *'You write what you think I ought to say.'* He had done so because he knew the quality of the teacher and wanted the appointment to go through, but said, *'I wouldn't do it for anybody else.'*

Another ET explained that she had panicked:

*What I found really scary was when I was looking at the form, and I thought 'oh my goodness, I don't understand this, what evidence, what does it mean, what do I have to show?' That was the scariest part for me actually ... My director of Faculty was really excellent - I'm not one to sit back and not say 'help' so I went to her straight away, and we sat down and she started to say, 'Well you do this, and this is what this means', and then it sort of fell in to place, and I can show evidence of this and, 'oh it means exam results', but I wouldn't have - I think I would have been put off [without her help]. (Secondary ET)*

All the ETs commented that completing the form and collecting evidence was extremely time-consuming:

*I actually spent the Easter holiday - we had two weeks official Easter holiday so I was working ... really solidly, like I was for 12 hours or so a day preparing everything, and I wouldn't have managed that if my husband hadn't been cooking but yes, so it was very, very focused, yes. (Secondary ET)*

One secondary ET said that overall the process had taken a year, because, she explained:

*There were gaps that I needed to fill, and I was looking for those opportunities so that I could create the evidence to fill in the pieces that weren't there, and the school were very supportive ... My line manager [said], 'If you need this, let's make it happen.'*

Another secondary ET had a rather more cavalier approach; she said, *'I wasn't awfully clear what you had to do, but what I did, I just took verbatim from my past appraisals any quotes that said 'excellent' and put those down.'*

A third said she had found the process of collecting together evidence to be quite positive:

*I did find it sort of invigorating in a way to look at something and say well, have I done that? How do I do that? What evidence have I got? And starting to pull things together. It does actually make you think about what you've done and what you're doing and how you're doing it.*



One issue that was raised was that it had not been clear how much, or in some cases what, evidence was required. One primary ET said she thought she had '*overproduced evidence*'. Another said, '*When the assessor saw the files, she said, 'You've given me a lot to go and look at.' So you don't really know how much they want.*'

A secondary ET said she was complimented on producing a succinct volume:

*I came into the room ... and I pushed this file towards him and he said to me, 'Is that it?' And my heart sank, and I just said to him, 'Yes', and he said, 'Well, thank God for that. I've been into schools and there's been box files, and the room's just been full of stuff.'*

The assessor suggested using this as a model for others. ETs suggested that more specific advice in this area would be helpful to prevent applicants spending unnecessary time and effort in preparation.

Two of the ETs had found the actual assessment traumatic because they were asked for evidence they had not collected:

*I wasn't sure what she was looking for actually, and at one point she was saying, 'Well I need to find evidence in what, in a certain aspect', and I was thinking, 'Oh well, I don't know, I don't know what you want.' So she was saying, 'Well I'm really struggling to find something here', and she left it at that ... and I was thinking 'Oh my God, that's it!' (Secondary ET)*

Another was indignant because:

*[The assessor] asked for some letters of recommendation from parents or members of staff, and on my letter that I got beforehand, that was missing, I didn't need to have that. And I could have got those. But I just thought it was really unfair. (Secondary ET)*

In general, however, headteachers and ETs were positive about the external assessor's visit. One primary head commented:

*I was very impressed with it. It left no stone unturned and it was extremely good ... Just the fact that the person who was assessing had really prepared well, and she had built up a picture of this person who she was going to assess from the application ... and she had a lot of knowledge about teaching and current issues. ... In the end you felt the accreditation when it was given was very well deserved because they really had gone through the hoop.*

Many ETs were equally positive:

*The actual person who came to assess me on the morning was lovely. He was a really nice person, he made me feel comfortable .... It was more of a chat rather than an interview and so I think that was done just right. ... He watched a lesson and he had to have an interview with the head, an interview with myself and then we all chatted together with the deputy as well at the end. And so that I thought was perfect that was spot on. (Primary ET)*

*A fabulous bloke came to interview and watch me teach, and at the end of it, it made me feel really good about myself. (Secondary ET)*

Inevitably these interviewees were those who had been successful in the assessment, and their recollections were coloured by the fact that they had been successful. However, in one case study school the headteacher talked about his experience of an unsuccessful assessment. The school had put forward a second applicant, following the successful assessment of their first. The headteacher told us that second assessor concluded that the ET standards were not fully met, because, despite many positives (*'standards were fantastic. relationships with students were very good, all of those things'*), he judged that practice as not innovative, apparently because there was no use of an interactive whiteboard. The head commented that this was a funding issue, not an issue of the competence of the teacher. Moreover, the successful ET had also not used a whiteboard, but the assessor on that occasion had listened to other evidence of innovation. While the head said he accepted the judgement, he was concerned that the two assessments had apparently used different criteria, and had had *'different expectations'*. He added:

*Of course the colleague who didn't get through it doesn't want to touch it again. You put yourself down for assessment when you've been teaching that long, and you fail, then it's not a good feeling. Probably what it means is that we probably won't put many forward, because we don't want to run the risk of that person's confidence being eroded or damaged in that way. Similarly with AST. (Secondary head)*

Concerns about equity were also raised by one of the secondary ETs. A colleague had been assessed as an AST only three months before her own assessment, and so they had compared notes about the processes.

*It was identical apart from the ET had to have more, the ET had to have a project as well. An AST didn't have to have a project ready for inspection and so that was one thing and so that just seems bizarre to me. If an ET is supposed to be a lesser role<sup>17</sup> then why do we need everything they've got? But this project - .*

In fact, ASTs have to meet all the ET standards and additionally, the AST standards. However, this teacher was referring to a difference on the application forms (see Table 5.5). The ET is asked to provide a specific example of searching analysis, and it is not apparent on the forms that prospective ASTs have to have undertaken any such analysis. Another difference is that the AST application invites candidates to say why they want to become ASTs, while the ET one does not.

---

<sup>17</sup> The notion that ET is the lesser role is supported by the Professional Standards (ASTs have to meet ET Standards and additional AST Standards. It is also a common perception resulting from the differences in pay. See Section 5.6.4.

**Table 5.5: Differences between ET and AST application forms**

ET	AST
<p><b>Professional development</b> In this section you will need to show that you have continued to develop yourself professionally and provided regular coaching and mentoring to others. You will also need to provide a specific example of searching analysis that you have carried out, normally within the last 2 years. In doing this, you should explain how you addressed the identified needs of a group or groups of pupils, and show that it was of sufficient substance to have had a positive impact beyond your assigned pupils.</p> <p>In each case you will also need to describe the evidence of the impact of the activity / work.</p> <p><b>Please describe how you have continued to develop yourself professionally</b> <i>What is the evidence of the impact of these activities?</i> <i>Headteacher's comments</i></p> <p><b>Please describe your role in coaching and mentoring others</b> <i>What is the evidence of the impact of this activity /work?</i> <i>Headteacher's comments</i></p> <p><b>Please provide an example of a piece of work (normally undertaken within the last 2 years) that: involved searching analysis/ r esearch, identified and addressed the needs of a particular group of pupils and was of sufficient substance to have an impact beyond your own pupils</b> <i>What is the evidence of the impact of this work?</i> <i>Headteacher's comments</i></p>	<p><b>Continuing professional development</b> Please give details of the key aspects of your continuing professional development (CPD), concentrating on the last two years. You should explain how you have used your CPD to improve your own teaching and that of others and how it reflects your subject knowledge and pedagogy.</p> <p>This is not restricted to attendance at training courses but could also include other activities such as secondments, research, visits and working with other teachers.</p> <p><b>Why do you want to be an AST?</b> Please explain: your rationale for wanting to be an AST; and your view of how, as an AST, you can improve the quality of teaching and learning.</p>

Source: ET and AST application forms, online at <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk>

One of the secondary headteachers also commented about the requirement to produce an example of searching analysis:

*I mean why would a normal teacher undertake a big data analysis project I mean you wouldn't do that really, would you? ... Why did they have to put that in?*

This head was keen to appoint further ETs, but said:

*I am sort of grooming so to speak two or three of them. But I haven't even mentioned the data analysis. If I mention that they'll not want to do it you know. And so that is one thing I really recommend, you must take that bit out of it.*

### 5.3 The Excellent Teachers and their careers

This section discusses the career trajectories of the ETs. They were asked about their careers to date and their reasons for becoming ETs, and their plans for the future.

#### 5.3.1 Previous careers and the move to ET

We did not ask the ETs their ages, but did ask when they started teaching. The average date was 1981 (i.e. 27 years ago). Many of them had had career breaks, so this should not be equated to length of experience, but does give some indication of the characteristics of the ETs. Seven of them started teaching more than 30 years ago, and only two less than 20 years ago.

We found three main career trajectories:

no paid responsibility → ET (3 ETs)

previous paid responsibilities lost through restructuring → ET (8 ETs)

secondary head of department → ET (7 ETs)

One ET fell in both the second and third group. She had been a head of department and stepped down several years ago, and become a second of department, a post which was lost through restructuring.

We consider each of these groups in turn.

#### ***No paid responsibility → ET***

The ETs replaced points 4 and 5 on the Post Threshold (previously known as Upper) Pay Scale, and thus might be seen as being the logical progression for teachers who had reached U3 without gaining a TLR or leadership post or becoming an AST. However, just three of the 17 ETs interviewed fell in this category. One of these had completed six years on the Classroom Teacher (previously known as Main) Pay Scale and two years on each point of the Post Threshold Scale, and was now considering what to do next to move on in her career. Becoming an ET fitted her personal agenda and the school's ethos, and also acted to retain her in the school (see Box 5.3).

**Box 5.3: Becoming an ET as a logical career step having reached U3**

This teacher had worked in the same below average sized, village primary school throughout her career. Before applying for ET she had taken responsibility for introducing the new Foundation stage curriculum. She was also KS1 coordinator and responsible for assessment, and she taught music to junior classes.

At a performance management interview, the head discussed with her the possibility of having a TLR, but the teacher had read a case study of an ET in *Primary Teachers' Magazine* (March, 2008).

*I happened to read an interview with somebody who was an Excellent Teacher and thought I'd be interested in doing that myself. ... I was thinking, I've got to the end of my threshold bit now ... you wonder, what am I going to be doing next, what's the next step? ... I'm coming up to the end of the second year of the third threshold. And at the end you've got nowhere to go unless you get management points. ... Now a new stage has been made for me, and I don't actually have to go anywhere.*

Not only did this solve the question of what she would do next in her career, she also said that it fitted in with the school's agenda:

*At this school we do tend to go for things that have a bit more prestige about them ... we tend to go for things that the other schools in the area haven't achieved, definitely distinctive from other schools, which is the way it has to be at this time.*

A further two ETs had not previously held substantive posts of responsibility, though both had started teaching over 25 years ago. One had previously been acting deputy head, but this was only for a limited period. Both worked in special schools, and said that their main commitment was to their pupils, and this involved staying in the classroom.

All the other ETs interviewed had had paid management responsibilities at some point in their careers.

***Previous paid responsibilities lost through restructuring → ET***

Eight ETs had lost their management allowance or head of department role as a result of restructuring. For some, ET was the only role they could achieve under the new structure, while for others restructuring provided a welcome opportunity to move to another role. In some cases maintaining their pay level after the three year protected period was an important factor; others said that their main concern had been to continue to contribute and have a role in the school. Box 5.4 sets out two contrasting accounts.

**Box 5.4: Becoming an ET as a result of restructuring**

One primary ET had started teaching 36 years ago. She had taught in schools in various parts of the country, and had had a range of responsibilities including literacy coordinator, home school links, EAL and art co-ordinator. She explained that her previous role had 'disappeared' as a result of restructuring; in the subsequent round of appointments, she did not get the role she most wanted, and had applied for the ET role because it was there:

*I came here and I did the PE coordinator here and then I did the EAL co-ordinator here and then we were restructured and all the jobs disappeared. ... So my job disappeared because it became part of inclusion, so we all had to apply for other jobs, and I actually applied for a deputy project leader because I wanted to do some work on history and geography, but didn't get that. ... I was left with the fact that I hadn't actually got a role left in school, so I would have lost quite a lot of money, so the Excellent Teacher job was really the one that was left of the others that I hadn't done.*

In contrast, another primary ET said she had chosen not to apply for the TLR which replaced her former management allowance:

*I was what was classed as a team coordinator and then they changed the roles to the team Teaching and Learning Role. ... I will be honest, I've done it for years, I don't want to do it any more. .... I just got to that stage in my teaching career where I thought, I just want to teach, I don't want to do all this paperwork. I don't want to be responsible for this that and the other, but I wouldn't mind mentoring and helping people, yes helping them on their way I suppose. ... Well when I decided I wasn't going for the TLR the head said, 'Well I wish you would', and I said, 'I'm not going to do it, ... I've made my mind up.'*

While she wanted to stay in the classroom, she also said she did not want to move to a position where she had no voice in the school:

*I suppose I had been middle management for so long, and then I wasn't middle management I thought, 'hmm, I've still got something I want to say and I can't always say it, and so maybe if I sort of sidle in through the side. I mean the school, they're wonderful, I am sort of classed as middle management almost. I don't go to all the meetings and I don't go to all the training now, I can choose. ... And so [applying for ET] wasn't for my career. It was just basically, I don't know, self-esteem. It sounds really vain that doesn't it!*

**Head of department → ET**

Seven secondary heads of department (HoDs) had resigned HoD roles (and a further one a second in department role) before taking up the ET role, though none of them had done this as part of restructuring. Some of these had stepped down several years before becoming ETs, while others had moved directly from HoD to ET. ETs in this group generally explained this career move in terms of the pressure and stress experienced as head of department. In some cases this was exacerbated by personal events. One headteacher indicated that the ET had been encouraged to switch roles by the leadership team because, while a brilliant teacher, she had not been a particularly good head of department. Two of these ETs said they had originally wanted to become ASTs, but this had proved impossible because at that

time no AST appointment was to be made in their subject (in one case, in the school, and in the other in the LA, which only made one AST appointment each year).

This career route was reported by Ofsted (2003) in relation to ASTs; they state that around half the ASTs in secondary schools had previously been heads of department.

### 5.3.2 Future career plans

In this section we review what the ETs said about their future career prospects, and the actions that some had already taken.

In the light of the STRB emphasis on creating career routes in the classroom as well as routes in management, it is interesting to note that a number of ETs have already moved on to management roles, and others intend to do so. In the course of contacting schools for this research, we were told about five ETs who had now moved to management roles.

Two of these had become assistant head and head of department in the schools they worked in as ETs. We conducted a case study in one of these schools, and explored why the ET had moved back to her previous role as head of department. She explained that she it was more in her 'comfort zone' working in her own subject area, and that while she had been able to support teachers of other subjects '*generically with teaching styles, learning styles, behaviour management and all that sort of thing*', she had found herself at a loss when thinking about how to support teachers in delivering subject knowledge outside her area. However, she was not sure that she had made the right decision, because the majority of her time as head of department was spent on management, rather than on developing teaching, which is what she wanted to do. Moreover, one of her reasons for taking the head of department job had been that it was better paid, and she was frustrated to find that the potential pay of ETs had now been increased:

*It has sort of changed my psyche a little bit knowing that range of pay. I think if I could turn the clock back I probably would still be an Excellent Teacher.*

She did not rule out applying for an ET post again at some point in the future:

*Well, I've always got it [ET status] haven't I, I've got it, it stays with me, ... Obviously if there is an Excellent Teacher post within another school I can apply for it because I've got that recognition. Just because I've given up the post I don't give it up.*

Another ET had moved to a different school to become a subject coordinator; we were told that she had originally applied for a different role under restructuring and was '*gutted*' when she didn't get it. It was suggested that she had applied for the ET post '*to prove to the head that she was a very good teacher*', and then, having been successful, she had applied successfully for a post in another school.

In addition to those who had already moved to leadership or TLR posts, two of the case study ETs said that, as a result of becoming ETs, they were now more likely to move into a leadership or management role than they had previously been. One said that she expected her next move would be to primary deputy headship:

*It does make you ambitious though, because I think you think, well I must be all right. I'll er, you know, the world's my oyster. Off I go!*

The other had applied recently for a head of department post. This was partly a result of the confidence that she gained through becoming an ET:

*I think it's almost like the rubber stamping that I needed. I don't know why, it sounds silly really, but you know you're good because people tell you you're good, you make an impact, but it has changed everything for me. It seems to have just snowballed and being able to prove my ability in certain areas is leading to other things and I just feel like I'm flourishing.*

But she had also applied for the post because she wanted a higher salary because of personal circumstances: *'Ultimately I will have to look to progress and earn more in the future, although I do love what I do, and I'd probably like to stay an ET forever really.'*

Two of the case study ETs (in primary and special schools) said that they had thought about resigning from the role, one because she found it took her out of the classroom more than she liked, (*'I was out of the class too much and I thought I don't want this job, I don't need it, the pay is not that brilliant'*) and the other because the workload was too much. She said, *'I was thinking, right, if the workload thing carries on - and I haven't even been paid for this yet - I can always give it to the end of the year, and say 'sorry, I don't want to be excellent any more, I'll just be bog standard.'*

In several of these accounts, the low level of ETs' pay featured as an additional incentive to move on; pay is discussed in detail in the next section.

The remaining twelve case study ETs had no immediate thoughts of moving into leadership or gaining a TLR, and were generally enjoying their current roles. Several of these commented that the review of the scheme had made them anxious about the future of the role. Because of their ages, some anticipated retirement in the next few years.

## **5.4 ETs' pay**

The previous section showed that some ETs had applied for other posts, partly because they could earn more. This section reviews what the ETs were paid; whether this had been reviewed in the light of the 2008 pay arrangements; and ETs' and headteachers' understanding of these arrangements.

### **5.4.1 Initial pay, and changes from September 2008**

For many ETs, the move to the ET post potentially involved a loss of pay; the previous section showed that all but three of the ETs had previously had management responsibilities. This included seven who had lost management allowances as a result of restructuring, and who therefore potentially had protected pay until December 2008 (depending whether their management allowance was greater than the difference between ET and U3), and three who had moved directly to ET from secondary school head of department. As a result, a number of them were not initially paid as ETs, and this possibly has contributed to some confusion about ET pay.

Moreover, the pay arrangements changed from September 2008. Prior to this date, ETs were paid on a specific spot salary (which was higher for those in the Fringe area, and in Outer and Inner London). From September 2008, a range was introduced, within which schools could set a spot salary. Of the 17 case study ETs, 12 took up post before September 2008 (i.e. at a time when the pay was a single spot); the pay of these ETs should therefore have been reviewed in September 2008 when the range was introduced.

Table 5.6 below sets out in detail the case study ETs' initial pay, and changes from September 2008 (or January 2009 when protected pay ends), and Table 5.7 summarises this information.



**Table 5.6: Case study ETs' pay arrangements**

<i>initial pay</i>	<i>from Sept 2008 (or Jan 2009 when protection ended)</i>
Five were paid the ET spot pay (which was higher than the pay they had previously been receiving).	One has had a pay increase of £2000. Three said spot salary has not been revised: i.e. they are now paid at the bottom of the range. One is no longer an ET.
One said she experienced a slight drop from her previous management allowance (though it is unclear why that was not protected).	Spot salary has not been revised and she is paid at the bottom of the range.
One experienced a pay cut from head of department to ET spot pay.	Spot salary revised - now equivalent to pay scale ' <i>underneath the AST</i> ', but well below the previous HoD pay.
Two were initially paid above the spot rate because they had protected pay.	The spot salary has been revised to ensure no salary drop, and possibly an increase (though the pay committees yet had to meet to confirm at the time of our visit).
One had been assessed as an ET but had been earning more than the ET spot pay, so, the head explained, ' <i>We moved her sideways to take on slightly different responsibilities but still paid her on the TLR structure to maintain her salary</i> '.	From September 2008 she officially became an ET with a spot salary equivalent to a TLR1 in that school (an increase on her previous salary).
One would have experienced a pay drop and so the school made up the difference in pay using recruitment and retention points.	Spot salary revised but R and R points removed – no change in pay level.
One resigned as HoD but continued to act in that role because no appointment was made; she was therefore paid as HoD rather than ET until Sept 08.	She is no longer HoD and has experienced a pay cut; current pay is equivalent to TLR2b. .
	Three ETs took up their posts in September and were placed at the bottom of the pay range (an increase on pay in period immediately before taking up the post).
	Two ETs took up their posts in September and were placed on higher salaries determined by referring to the leadership or AST pay scale. One of these had stepped down from HoD, potentially risking a pay cut of £10,000. The school ' <i>compromised</i> ' by making it a lesser cut, and referring to the pay level of ASTs in the school. .

Source: ET interviews

**Table 5.7: Number of case study ETs at different pay levels, and how these relate to their pay before becoming ETs**

	at bottom of range	above bottom of range	<i>all ETs</i>
overall pay cut since becoming ET	1	3	4
same pay as before becoming ET		1	1
overall pay increase	6	5	10
Total	7	9	16

Source: ET interviews

It was clear from the interviews that headteachers took into account different factors when deciding appropriate pay levels. Affordability was clearly an important issue, particularly in primary schools. One of the primary heads explained that even appointing an ET at the minimum point in the range was imposing a financial strain in a school which, until recently, had had a deficit budget. Another had been unaware that the ETs pay could now be set at a

higher point in the range, but that even if he had known, the budget could not have borne any increase. Similarly, a special school head said that it had not been possible to review the ET's pay in September because the budget could not stand it.

One primary head to the criteria set out in the *School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document 2008* (DCSF, 2008a) in explaining why the pay had not been revised in September. She explained that there had been no significant changes in the nature of the work undertaken, and that the role did not have a high level of challenge because:

*We are all doing it and it's not particularly challenging here. ... Other people are in every single day in people's lessons modelling, working alongside, collaborating, raising the quality of teaching and so we couldn't say that the degree of challenge of that particular role is any more than any other role. So we don't place it very high.*

This decision not to change the ET's pay clearly assumed that the initial spot pay had been at an appropriate level. Other headteachers thought that this was not the case, and were keen to revise the pay upwards as soon as it became possible. With the introduction of the new ET salary arrangements, one ET has been awarded a pay rise of £5,000 '*because the pay was so poor for Excellent Teacher*' (secondary headteacher in telephone interview). Another secondary headteacher argued the pay should initially have been set higher because ETs are '*taking on a responsibility for others' development*'. Similarly a special school head argued that the job involves '*a lot of skills and expertise*' and '*really helps the school move forward.*'

One secondary school had set the ET's pay as the equivalent of TLR1. The ET was taking '*specific responsibility that will have an impact on the ITT students we have in school, ... on a number of department areas, on other staff*'. The headteacher said, '*we decided that we wanted it to be equivalent to the level that our TLR1s are paid because we thought the responsibility was fairly similar.*'

But another secondary head, in a school where the ET's responsibilities were similar to those in the school above, said, '*I didn't think the job warranted the money [i.e. more than the minimum pay]. ... She's not accountable for any exam results. [It] is really a soft option.*' In a context where ETs' pay level can be set within such a large range, it is perhaps worrying that there is no common understanding among headteachers of what sorts of tasks and responsibilities do merit higher pay.

#### **5.4.2 Understanding of the ET pay arrangements**

There was widespread confusion and concern about the arrangements for ET pay. This mainly centred around the fact that schools are expected to set spot pay within a range, rather than a scale up which teachers could progress (subject to satisfactory performance review). A minority of headteachers simply did not seem to be aware of the arrangements, and were glad to gain information, to the extent of photocopying the interviewer's copy of the new pay range. One secondary head said, '*the Excellent Teacher scale ... appears to be still very grey and nobody's really quite clear how it works ... It's where we can identify where the spot goes.*' A primary headteacher explained that the LA produces the pay figures for teachers in the school, a service he buys into; he explained that they had never told him that he could place the ET on a higher spot within the range, and he had not been aware of this before the interview. (He added that he would not in any case be able to do so because of the state of the school's budget.)

The notion of determining the level of the spot salary is an unfamiliar one for schools; one ET explained:

*In the beginning, I assumed and the Head assumed that it would be equivalent to the pay scale to Advanced Skills Teacher. ... The problem is that it took a long time to convince the Head that it was up to her to decide how much to pay me because nobody else in the school was paid in that way, she didn't understand.*

Several headteachers also referred to the difficulty in getting accurate information or appropriate advice from their LAs. The ET above said that the head had contacted the LA:

*They contacted the Borough, the Borough didn't have any answers and this went on for months. The first time they actually quoted how much they were going to pay me it was less than a U3. And I said you can't pay me that. You know, even without doing any of this I've got to have my U3.*

This particular difficulty seems to have arisen because the ET taught in London. Currently the lowest point on the ET range (£37,672) is below the level of U3 in Inner or Outer London (£42,419 and £38,634 respectively). The ET was not happy with this; she said the headteacher had initially described the move to ET as 'a sideways move' from her previous post as head of department, but in fact she has taken a considerable pay cut. She said, 'You think, well why did I do it? Well by this stage I was so far down the line there was no way to come back.'

Interviewees could not understand why ET pay arrangements are so different from those of other teachers, and specifically of ASTs, who in many schools are doing very similar jobs. This is further discussed in Section 5.6.3.

A further concern expressed by several ETs was how progression would actually take place. 'A spot salary, I thought it was odd. And I thought, well, what about progression?' They felt that negotiating a spot salary was something new and alien for teachers. One said:

*In business, my husband's in engineering and they go in and say, 'Right you're going to pay me this.' 'No we're not; we're going to pay you that'. 'Let's negotiate it, let's talk about it.' I mean, you just don't do that in teaching.*

They felt this placed them at a disadvantage in comparison to other teachers who are on salary scales, for whom it is always clear what the next salary point would be, even when there is discussion about whether an increment is merited.

Table 5.6 showed that some schools had tackled this issue by using the pay arrangements for another grade to determine their ET's pay. They had placed them on the AST scale or paid the equivalent of a TLR within that school. The job description of one ET states that she is paid on the AST spine. In the same vein, the salary for an ET post recently advertised in GisaJob (accessed January 2009) was given as TLR2b.

## 5.5 The title 'Excellent Teacher'

In all the interviews, and in the survey, we asked all respondents their views about the title Excellent Teacher. Responses are discussed in Chapter 6. But here we focus on the views of the ETs themselves, because their views about the title often coloured their feelings about having become an ET. We also review what their colleagues said about the title in relation to the specific post and post-holder.

However, before turning to views on the title, it is worth noting that in some contexts it is not used, and this may contribute to limited awareness of the scheme. In two of the case study secondary schools, *'the 'E' word is never used'*. One ET refers to herself as NQT coordinator, and another as simply a teacher. This created some problems in the case studies when we wanted to interview the ETs' colleagues about the scheme and their work. In these two schools, the colleagues knew little or nothing about the scheme. Here two teachers are talking together:

*Teacher A: People would always say 'Jane is an excellent teacher', and I would say 'yeah she blooming well is!' And then I suddenly realised it was with a capital E and it was a thing.*

*Teacher B: I've never since I have been here heard her referred to as 'Jane Jones, Excellent Teacher', with a capital E. I never realised until this morning that it was Excellent Teacher. I always thought it was Advanced Skills Teacher. (secondary teachers)*

This reluctance to use the title has obviously contributed to the wider lack of information about, and interest in, the scheme. We reported in Chapter 4 that staff in schools without ETs said that they had never met an ET, and this was one of the reasons for their lack of interest. This must be exacerbated by the fact that some ETs do not refer to themselves as such, and so even those in schools with ETs sometimes know very little about the scheme.

But at the same time, some of the ETs interviewed commented that the title Excellent Teacher is often not used in 'official' contexts where it should be included, and that this also contributes to their invisibility. One explained:

*I went to a conference ... the National Centre for the Excellence in Teaching in Maths, right it's a grand title. And so it was supposed to be, the title of the conference was Influential Teachers in Maths. ... On the website, it says who is supposed to go to this. And it was Advanced Skills Teachers, Lead Practitioners and there were three others, but no Excellent Teacher.*

Another talked about some research she had been involved in:

*Yesterday I happened to be collared in the staff room for a MORI poll because I was the only teacher in the staff room, and they asked me what my role was in the school, and one of the options was not Excellent Teacher. And I said, 'well it's like Advanced Skills but it's not, it's Excellent Teacher.' 'Oh we haven't got that.' 'Right,' I said, 'Classroom teacher, then.'*

A further complication is that some schools invent their own titles for posts, which may make Excellent Teacher, which is official, seem like an invented local title:

*I met somebody yesterday who's an Outstanding Teacher. I don't know where that came from. I thought, oh is this a new scheme that I haven't heard of, but that's her position in her school, which I think actually has possibly been created to attract either AST or Excellent Teacher. ... She actually introduced herself as Outstanding Teacher of English.*

### 5.5.1 ETs' views of the title Excellent Teacher

Only one of the case study ETs said that she positively liked the title.

*I think it's good. Speaks for itself, doesn't it? Yeah, that's fine by me! ... It has to be something special for it to have to say what it did, doesn't it? Without sounding stupid, without getting silly. (Primary ET)*

A secondary ET said she 'found it quite amusing actually', and that she felt 'flattered' by the recognition, and proud of what she had achieved. She uses the title (for example, signing her letters with her name, followed by Excellent Teacher), and has experienced some positive feedback from pupils.

But the vast majority of the ETs interviewed were strongly in favour of changing the title.

*If you have got any clout to change the name, please make a name change. (Secondary ET)*

*The name has to change. That is without a shadow of a doubt. (secondary ET)*

Most ETs thought it was embarrassing:

*The title is a nonsense and it's frankly embarrassing. Because I've only ever made the mistake once of answering a question, 'What do you do?', 'I am an Excellent Teacher', and that taught me. (Secondary ET)*

*I went to a maths conference ... 'Oh what's your role?', and so you feel a plonker saying, 'Oh I'm an Excellent Teacher.' (Secondary ET)*

They also argued that it deterred others who might have thought of becoming ETs:

*It will put more people off than anything, because who wants to walk down the corridor, and somebody says, 'Oh, there goes our Excellent Teacher', because there are lots of excellent teachers. ... And so it's a nightmare, the title is a nightmare!*

They protested that there were many excellent teachers in their schools and it was problematic being singled out and labelled.

*There are lots of other excellent teachers within schools. You know it's that name Excellent Teacher, there are lots of us about, and I didn't want people to feel that I was sort of bragging or whatever. ... I didn't want it to cause any ill feeling or it to be taken as a negative thing. (Special school ET)*

*And then in the staff handbook when it says everybody's names you know Jane Smith RE, Sue Jones Head of RE, Ann Robinson Excellent Teacher that's like saying the other 110 aren't Excellent Teachers. (secondary ET)*

One ET compared the title Excellent Teacher with Advanced Skills Teacher, which she saw as much less problematic:

*If you say AST that's not like saying you're good at everything, whereas an Excellent Teacher implies that you're always punctual, you have everything marked, you're good at everything. Excellent means you're good at everything. And so you're open, you're putting yourself up there for criticism. Whereas Advanced Skills, yes I've got some skills but I'm not very good at those other things. (Secondary ET)*

Thus one ET said that she was reminded by her colleagues of her title whenever she made a slight error, for example, in entering marks.

Several of the ETs said that the title had led to them being teased by colleagues. Two said they had been called 'Your Excellency', and another explained, 'I got the ribs about, 'ET phone home' you know, the extra terrestrial and all that.' She explained that this was not done 'in any derogatory way', but added, 'I don't like that sort of thing I don't like being teased' (secondary ET). In another school the regular joke was that when a problem arose, someone would say, 'Let's send for the Excellent Teacher' (Secondary ET). Another ET said:

*The name is shocking, absolutely shocking, because all you do is you end up being teased by people. ... 'That is an excellent skirt you're wearing', 'that's an excellent hairdo', 'that's an excellent cup of tea you've made for me.' Because obviously I've been here a long time and it's a very happy school, ... and so you've obviously got a lot of banter between staff. And so it is done in a jokey way. But I do think the name is ridiculous and it would put lots of people off. (Secondary ET)*

While generally the ETs found the teasing tiresome, in one case it had become very upsetting:

*You know we had a bit of banter. I must admit privately it did get to me a little bit because I am a sensitive person and I don't like being personally attacked. And there were times when I could have turned round and really said something, but I didn't, I let it go and when I got home I had a little weep, you know. [Was that kind of just at the start?] No it's carried on, it has carried on, and there are still times ... I mean within the school we've got fabulous teachers who would all come under that umbrella of being excellent, and so yeah, the name was very poorly thought out. (primary ET)*

Several of the ETs all felt that the title placed an onus on them to be 'excellent' in all their teaching, and this was not possible to live up to.

*I don't like it because it comes with expectations that are unrealistic in everyday life. ... It's a crown that's heavy to wear. (Primary ET)*

*I do think that especially when I teach a lesson which hasn't gone that well I think, 'and you're an Excellent Teacher?' you know. I do find that I hit myself over the head. You expect - yes, I'm not always an excellent teacher. (Secondary ET)*

*I actually think it is a lot of live up to Excellent Teacher. I mean we've just had an Ofsted and luckily I did get a 1 but it's a lot to live up to. (Secondary ET)*

One primary ET explained that when the deputy head undertook her last performance management, he observed her teaching a class she was not familiar with:

*I had to go to a class that I'd not taught before and teach a lesson of maths and the groundwork had not been done before, and I hadn't got much of a handle on what the children had done before, and his comments were; he said it was a good lesson, but you're now an Excellent Teacher and I expect you to be excellent all the time. So I think that handle can be a disadvantage. ... He used that as a bit of a lever to prod with. (Primary ET)*

The consequence of all this is that many of the ETs prefer not to use the title Excellent Teacher.

*I have to be honest and say it's not something I tell people. (secondary ET)  
I keep asking the Head not to use it in front of the whole staff because you've got a staff of excellent teachers. (Secondary ET)*

*I don't run round saying I'm the Excellent Teacher because I don't want people to feel I'm showing off or feel that she thinks she's better than we are, because I'm not. (Primary ET)*

### 5.5.2 Colleagues' views about the ETs' title

We interviewed a wide range of other teachers in the case study schools. A minority of these (and particularly the younger ones) did not see any reason why the title should be changed. However, it transpired that many of these had no understanding of how the title is gained; some seemed to see it as an award rather than a job that is applied for, and a role in school. But a clear majority of the interviewees in the schools with ETs saw the title as problematic, and many told us that it had given rise to some negativity in the school. The arguments they used were very similar to those put forward by the ETs themselves: the title was seen as embarrassing; it put pressure on ETs, and was hard to live up to. A secondary headteacher referred to it as being '*put on a pedestal*', or '*set up to fail*', and argued that that is the last thing we should be doing to some of our best teachers. Two school leaders described the title as '*elitist*'. The most frequent concern was that many other teachers are excellent, but are not labelled as such. It was suggested if one teacher is identified as excellent, '*the connotation for parents and students is like, 'What, so the rest of them are rubbish, then?''*' (secondary deputy head).

A key issue here was that ETs are not selected on the basis that they are the best teachers in the school; they are selected because they are eligible teachers who want to do the job and meet the standards. Headteachers talked about this as a real concern:

*I think it's marking her out to be something different in terms of the quality of what she does in the classroom from a lot of other staff, and there are others who are excellent teachers who are on M4 or M3<sup>18</sup>. There are people who produce outstanding lessons in the classroom who aren't eligible to be an Excellent Teacher, which therefore doesn't make any sense. (Secondary head)*

One headteacher said quite explicitly that her ET was not the best teacher in the school – or even an excellent teacher:

*I don't like the word excellent because I don't think my teacher is an excellent teacher, the one who got it. And at the time I had people who I felt were better teachers than her but they couldn't apply for it. However she is not a weak teacher, I knew she would get straight through that assessment because I don't think the assessment was based on excellence. How can you tell somebody is excellent by seeing one lesson or whatever? (Primary head)*

---

<sup>18</sup> M3 and M4 are points on the main pay scale. Teachers on these points are not eligible to apply to become Excellent Teachers.

Moreover, ETs are selected not just because they are excellent, but also because they have the ability to fulfil a specific role. A secondary assistant head said:

*There are lots of other people that teach maybe just as well, but couldn't support other people to do it, or could support other people, but don't teach quite as well.*

This issue of using a quality (excellence) to label a role (mentoring and coaching) was identified by several interviewees:

*It might be a nice thing to be called, but I don't think it really describes the job that [the ET] does at our school. ... She does a lot more hands on work, helping people out. (Secondary teacher)*

*Lots of people go, 'oh she's the Excellent Teacher' ... I think it's a dreadful name. I wouldn't want to be called an Excellent Teacher because you probably have to live up to those expectations. I think she is more of a teacher mentor. The name doesn't fit. (Special school teacher)*

*It's the role that's important so we would make great emphasis on [name]'s role but not the Excellent Teacher bit. (Special school head)*

The consequence of all this was that in a majority of the case study schools, ETs' colleagues talked about some negativity or ill-feeling that had arisen as a result of the title. This was evident in the language some used; interviewees in six schools (and at different career stages) used the word 'stigma' in relation to the title:

*I wouldn't want the stigma that was attached to it in the beginning! It's just the word 'excellent' isn't it? If you are the excellent teacher then you are seen as the all knowing ... It's quite a title to place on somebody because if you do make a mistake you are going to get picked up on it, 'Yeah, but you are the Excellent teacher, you know best,' and all that sort of stuff. (Secondary teacher)*

*The cynical people, when it came out, it was like, 'Ooh Excellent Teacher', and there was always that stigma that was attached to it. (Special school teacher)*

Other interviewees used the word 'cynical':

*Perhaps I'm the only one, I don't know but I'm sure other people are cynical when they hear the word Excellent Teacher, 'Oh, they're an **Excellent** Teacher.'*  
(Secondary teacher)

Some interviewees talked in hypothetical terms about the potential for ill-feeling:

*We all make mistakes, we're all human and teaching is not a precise science, so you know, for her to be set apart by being called Excellent, you know, on a normal day to day basis, she might have a few problems. (Secondary head)*

*The actual title Excellent Teacher could imply that all teachers apart from those teachers aren't very good, just by implication, 'I'm an Excellent Teacher and you are not.' I can see that happening in a school where you've got lots of politics going on and I can see it being used as a weapon for absolute definite I can see that happening. (Special school teacher)*



Others explicitly talked about the ill feeling it had created in their schools:

*The title has been an issue for lots of people. 'They're the excellent ones', a bit like the chosen ones. (Special school teacher)*

One secondary head explained that the title was used as 'a term of endearment or derision', and said that this 'depended on the part of the staff room that you were in'. Several interviewees argued that those close to the ET (in the same department or area of the school) accepted the title, but that those who had less contact with the individual were more likely to make negative comments. A secondary teacher talked about the response in her school:

*I also think, if somebody has got a title of Excellent Teacher, does that mean that other people aren't? ... And it could be perceived in that way. Definitely. [Did you feel it was ever perceived like that in your department with your ET?] Not in the department, maybe within the school. I'm talking a small minority that always is there, yeah, certainly the older members.*

The consequence of all this is that some headteachers and ETs preferred not to use the title at all. This inevitably contributes to the invisibility of the scheme. Alternatively, they try to make its meaning explicit; one headteacher told us that in any written documentation, she uses the term 'accredited Excellent Teacher' rather than just 'Excellent Teacher' in order to show that it is part of a scheme, rather than to imply that there is just one excellent teacher in the school.

As explained earlier, we have been unable to interview any school governors. However, two headteachers explained that their governors had had reservations about the title Excellent Teacher; one said:

*They first raised it and I hadn't thought of it, this idea of calling someone an Excellent Teacher as if, if you're not excellent, you're only standard. But it wasn't actually a worry for the staff, I did check with the staff that they were OK with that because we understand that this is the jargon that governments and organisations use, and just, it was just another piece of jargon. (Special school head)*

One headteacher thought that, as a label, it might work better in America, but 'being British etc. we don't like it.'

## **5.6 The ET role, and how it relates to other roles in the school**

There is considerable variation in the way that ETs are deployed in schools. In this section we review their roles, considering what they do (and whether there is a written job description); whether this work was previously being undertaken (and by whom); and how the roles of the teachers who have become ETs have changed since their appointment. We then review how these relate to other roles in the schools, such as AST and TLR.

### **5.6.1 The ETs' roles**

The *Guidance on Excellent Teachers* (DCSF, 2007) states that ETs 'should have a distinctive role in achieving improvements in teaching and learning across the school' (para. 14). It specifies a number of areas in which ETs should have responsibilities; these are set out in full in Section 2.2. They include induction of newly qualified teachers; professional mentoring of other teachers; demonstration lessons; helping teachers to develop their plan and evaluate; undertaking classroom observations; and helping other teachers improve their teaching practice.

The case study ETs generally worked across these areas. Most also had some involvement in initial teacher training (ITT). We asked each headteacher and the ET to describe the ET role in their school, and where job descriptions were available, we collected them. Only seven of the 17 schools gave us copies of the ET's job description, and many said they had not written a job description; for example, one secondary head said '*I'm now concerned that perhaps we've never written it up, to be entirely honest with you*'; another said that the job description was '*kind of ad hoc, pragmatic*'; and a primary head said that the ET had no specific role '*she is recognised as an Excellent Teacher*' - and therefore had no job description. This is interesting in the light of the STRB (2005) comment that a merit of tying the ET salary to a specific post is that 'the duties and expectations of the individual will have to be spelt out in the job description' (para. 5.27).

Most ETs undertook multiple tasks, but the list below aims to summarise their main roles.

- *NQT co-ordinators or mentors*: one primary and two secondary ETs described this as their main role. Seven other ETs said they sometimes mentored NQTs; in secondary schools this was generally the NQTs in their department.
- *Professional mentor for ITT students*: one secondary ET saw this as her main role. Seven other ETs also said they were involved in mentoring ITT students.
- *Supporting other teachers across the school*: this was the main role of seven ETs, though they worked with different groups of teachers:
  - teachers who had been identified through lesson observations as having weaknesses: three secondary ETs;
  - teachers whose lessons were good, to help move them to excellent: one secondary ET;
  - all teachers in the school, regardless of need: one special school ET;
  - new teachers (either NQTs or those who had moved from mainstream to special education): two special school ETs;
- *Working primarily within a secondary subject department*: two secondary ETs were deployed within departments, and a further one had been working mainly in her department, but with the arrival of a new head, was moving to work more across the school.
- *Multiple roles in primary schools*: three primary ETs.

As indicated above, many of the ETs carried out more than one role; some of these additional roles involved liaison with other schools or work in external groups. For example, one was the primary school link; and another was involved in a Family 11 project '*about raising standards in a teamwork scenario*' in a group of schools with less than 30 per cent of pupils achieving five A\*-C GCSEs including English and maths).

In this section we give more detail of work carried out in each group above, including detailed accounts of some more innovative approaches.

### ***NQT co-ordinator and ITT professional mentor***

These roles have been grouped together because they are traditional roles which are presumably carried out in most schools, though not by ETs. They will therefore not be described in detail. One of the ETs engaged in this role said that she had wanted to move from head of department to become NQT mentor, and that it was the headteacher who suggested that the way to do this was to become an ET. She referred to herself as NQT coordinator, and the NQT interviewed had not known that she was an ET. Another ET had been the school's NQT mentor for seven years, well before she became an ET.

The ET working as professional mentor for ITT students worked in a secondary school with a new headteacher; the vision for an ET was that of the former head. The new head was uncertain about the post and the role; he said:

*In her current role it's a professional mentor job. I see no particular reason why she has to be an Excellent Teacher to do that. In other schools I've been in it's been a professional mentor job and you've been appointed to be a professional mentor.*

He then talked about the difficulty of fitting this role into the TLR structure:

*The difficulty with putting that role within a TLR structure is that you've got to define it within a TLR label, and yes, it does have an impact on other staff, and it does have an impact on development of teaching and learning, but it's quite difficult to - it doesn't necessarily fit within the TLR structure.*

It would be interesting to know how other schools have resolved this. In those where we explored the question, the professional mentor role was generally part of the portfolio of a member of the leadership team.

### ***Supporting other teachers across the school***

This was the most frequent way of deploying an ET, though as we have shown above, the ETs who supported teachers across the school did so in very varied ways, and in this section we include accounts of four different approaches (Box 5.5 – Box 5.8). Teachers in this role generally used the word 'support' rather than 'mentor' or 'coach'; one teacher who had this role explained that she saw her role as a combination of coaching, mentoring and counselling.

**Box 5.5: Supporting teachers whose lessons have been identified as having weaknesses**

This secondary ET currently has an allocation of seven periods a fortnight for ET work. When formal lesson observations reveal weaknesses, the school provides support; this is sometimes through the ET, but a number of other people on the staff also contribute. The Assistant Head refers some teachers to the ET. This coaching role is new for the school and for the ET. The ET explained what she typically does:

*I was asked to see [name], full of self doubt, been out of the profession a while with a child, came back in. And what I normally do in that position, I have an initial meeting, talk about what's going well, what's not going so well, what they would like, you know, to improve.*

*I invite them to come and observe me and try to show them something they've talked about with a truculent group, ... I tend to get ones perhaps who are a bit disaffected. Then I go and observe them, and I have a little book and I write down everything they say and the pupils say. Then we have another meeting, a debrief, and I tell them exactly what they've said and what the pupils have said, and they're often amazed about that.*

*And I hope I'm not threatening because I'm not, I'm not anybody, I'm not a head of department, it's nothing to do with appraisal, and I perhaps suggest little ways forward, and quite often it's just a question of reinforcing all the fantastic things they're doing and saying 'That's really good, a tiny little tweak here but you're doing really, really well,' and then if they want to carry on further and they want to invite me back in, it's totally up to them.*

The effectiveness of this support is evaluated in a number of ways: feedback from the teachers concerned (e.g. a teacher saying 'Yes, *it was really useful working with [the ET], that's really good I've tried this, I've tried that*'); student feedback; and subsequent observations.

In addition to this role, the ET mentors the school's current GTP trainee, and runs CPD sessions on classroom behaviour.

**Box 5.6: Supporting weaker teachers through projects focusing on pupils**

This secondary ET was universally agreed to be an outstanding and inspirational teacher. In contrast to the previous case study, this school did not use the title ET, and did not indicate to teachers that they were being supported. This obviously limited the teachers who we could interview in this research; the deputy head explained:

*The fact that I didn't bring anybody in from outside the department to talk to you should speak volumes to you, because what I don't want to do is highlight a particular teacher ... who [the ET] has been working with, and make them aware of the fact that she's been working with him. Because if you do that, it's like, 'why is this person from [another department] coming to give me advice on something?' At the moment she can go in there and have an informal conversation, which helps to move them forward and I'll know she's had the conversation because she talks to me, and they might go and talk to their line manager who talks to me. If I did it officially it would be like SLT going in. [The ET] isn't SLT, so she doesn't have that baggage, ... she's coming in like helpful [name] who has good ability and knowledge.*

While the ET's work sometimes involved giving 'informal' support to other teachers who had been identified through formal lesson observations, she also worked in a more ad hoc way through a series of projects.

*What we're now doing is taking these marginal kids – especially boys – and observing them across the curriculum – or [the ET] is, so that she can then give advice to teachers about how to engage them ... [and she can say to teachers], this is what happens that's successful in this class with those kids, try some of that... [The ET] is a great champion of under-motivated, disenchanted boys in particular.*

Thus the ET observes very effective lessons as well as those that are less effective, and in an informal way, shares with other teachers the things that make some practice effective with particular groups. She explained:

*I have spent a lot of time working in and observing in teachers who do get consistently superb results to try to identify if there are some issues, some strategies and techniques that they used which can be transferable. So I've delivered quite a number of Inset sessions to the whole staff.*

In addition to her work across the school, she also works with teachers in her own department including NQTs; she said, 'I'm an obvious person for them to come to, 'them' being newly qualified teachers, because I don't have a title.'

The way that this ET is deployed has developed very much as a result of her personality, skills and interests. The leadership team feel that it works in that they have been able to retain the ET and to deploy her doing work at which she excels. The ET's work is one aspect of ongoing work to develop teaching and learning, and one that in some circumstances is particularly effective. The deputy head said:

*Are we getting the most out of [name]? I think we are, because she's not someone who is good at paperwork and administration and all those kinds of things so being a subject leader or manager of people is not a good idea. What she is, is a guru when it comes to teaching and learning but she is a very much student-focused person so she knows what makes students tick, who can talk about things like that.*

**Box 5.7: Supporting teachers throughout the school**

The assistant headteacher of this special school explained that the ET's '*planned purpose is to be a critical friend and an advisor to every teacher in the school*', and that '*every teacher has equal access to her*.' Over a year, each teacher gets about two half days of the ET's time, though those with greater identified need may have more time. This is a new role for the school; previously mentoring was carried out by the leadership when they wanted to '*sort out a problem*', but the notion of working with all teachers was new. He explained:

*[The ET]'s role isn't for the best teachers, for the worst teachers, it's for every teacher. And every teacher has the opportunity to bounce off ideas, [name] has a wealth of experience so she can go in and look at a lesson and sing its praises and suggest ways of improvement without it being a formal lesson observation that the leadership have to do.*

Part of the aim was to bridge the gap between identifying ways in which teachers could improve, and actual classroom practice: previously what the school was missing was a strategy to help people make the identified improvements.

The ET has half a day a week allocated to undertake her ET role. She explained:

*The way it's run for the last two years, it was very much a supporting role for teachers which actually was intended to be resultant from lesson observations, and so teachers were asked to take account of feedback from lesson observations and any areas that were identified ... I would then set dates where I would meet with the teachers during the lunch time. I would have asked them to have identified the area of focus which was up to them, that was the good thing about it really because they actually chose the area of focus, that wasn't me or anybody else saying this is what you have to do.*

*And that was how it differed really from lesson observations and the other procedures that we had in school. ...*

Subsequently she would observe a lesson, and make notes which would lead to a further discussion that might have implications for resources or CPD provision. Her notes would be copied to the relevant co-ordinator and the deputy head. At the end of the year, the process was reviewed, and teachers gave feedback on their experiences and suggestions for further development of the scheme.

In the current year, it has been changed '*because it was becoming a bit samey*'. It is now linked more closely to the school improvement plan, and a single focus has been agreed: lesson plenaries; this which arose from formal lesson observations across the school. The ET and deputy head led a CPD session with this focus as a start to the year.

The ET said that a key element in the scheme is that she is not management, which enables people to be '*a little bit more honest ... than you can with your boss*'; however, in that her reports are given to the school leadership, she was perhaps less separate from the leadership than some of the other ETs.

The assistant head said that as a result of this work there has been an improvement in standards '*particularly for the more complex less able children*', and that it had raised teachers' self-esteem about what they do in the classroom.

**Box 5.8: Supporting teachers new to special education**

This special school has experienced high staff turnover as a result of retirements, maternity leaves and long-term sickness; at the time of the interview two staff were just starting long-term absences. Most of the new staff have come from mainstream education. The headteacher explained that the ET post had been created specifically to try to minimise this impact of this instability by providing mentoring and support for new staff.

Thus the ET's role is *'to support the new teachers ... in their professional development, to work alongside them and to team teach alongside them and to demonstrate good practice.'* In addition, teachers can observe the ET when they have release time. The head explained that *'areas of specific support that might be needed'* are identified, in addition to *'the general overall support work that she will be providing to new teachers'*. Areas covered include aspects of the curriculum, and *'how to write IEPs for planning purposes and planning documents'*.

The ET explained that she has one day a week allocated to undertake her ET work. She said:

*It depends on the teachers that we've got, how and who I work with. At the moment I'm working with an NQT and a mainstream teacher who has just joined us and another teacher from mainstream. ... I work alongside teachers throughout the school at all key stages. I do a lot of modelling lessons and what have you. It depend what the teacher needs - I tend to work alongside them in class because obviously when I'm out of class it's their teaching time and so I work alongside them in class. And we look at the planning of the series of lessons and ways of putting that into practice and helping them develop their skills.*

She said that she thought her work had had a positive impact on the teachers involved; *'the knowledge and understanding has increased and the confidence.'* She attributed this success in part to the *'comfortable open relationship'* that she had developed with them. She said, *'I think they feel that they can approach me now, you know, come and ask me things even if it is simple things that they might think, 'oh I should know that.'*

The head saw the main benefit as having *'somebody who can lead by example and is on the spot, who is immediate help for anybody when they need it.'* When asked whether this process had raised standards in the school, she said, *'I think so it is too soon to tell really, but people have learnt a lot from [the ET].'*

**Working within a secondary subject department**

Two of the ETs were deployed almost entirely within secondary subject departments. In one school, the staffing structure replaced deputy head of department with ASTs or ETs, *'with the intention that that would focus that person more on teaching and learning and support for new teachers, newly qualified teachers or young teachers or people who were new to the school.'* The head of the ET's department said that this arrangement worked effectively because the roles complemented each other.

In the other school, described in Box 5.9, the ET was an additional key member of staff in the department. These two ETs had rather different concerns from the other ETs, such as developing resources and pupil intervention strategies, and how teachers used these. In a third secondary school the ET role was in process of being redefined; she had previously

worked largely in her department, but the new head had set up a teaching and learning team, and was encouraging the ET to share her innovative practice (for example in assessment) with those in other departments.

**Box 5.9: An ET working in a secondary subject department**

The headteacher explained they saw appointing an ET *'as a route to really driving standards up in the department and we knew there would be spin offs across the school.'*

The school employed a number of ASTs, but they were mainly involved in the training school. In contrast, the ET's focus is *'very much on making the Maths Department even better.'* The ET explained that she had only wanted to take on the role if the focus was in the department. She had lots of ideas about ways to develop the department, and was glad to have an opportunity to put them into practice, and to encourage others to do so. She said that she had previously undertaken some whole school work, such as leading training days for all staff, and that she did not want *'go down that road'*.

The head explained that what the ET' role:

*... changes all the time really depending on what's needed. ... I think in the first instance she really wanted to resource the department and she spent the extra time we gave her on working with an admin person and creating loads of innovative resources and gathering things. And so horizon scanning and gathering the best practice from elsewhere. She has also brought people in to do master classes and primary school teachers as well and sort of shared things beyond the school like that. And just sort of energising the maths department.*

Since then her work has changed:

*The resources thing ... has eased off a bit now because the resources are just to die for. And so she is doing more of a sort of mentoring role and we ask a lot of people go and see her teach, young teachers and teachers who are struggling and teachers we want to see really structured lessons and focused lessons, and so we do send them in.*

Obviously it is crucial that her role and that of the head of department are complementary, and that the two work well together. The head of department said:

*I am so involved in the day to day running of the department that things like, those sorts of initiatives could easily pass me by and I wouldn't necessarily trial them, flagship them, where as she's in a position where she doesn't have the extra burden of the organisation she just goes ahead and does these things. ... She is so aware of the latest initiatives in teaching and learning and she is happy to try them and then to discuss them to feed back so everybody's performance then improves.*

As well as developing resources, mentoring, leading Inset sessions and providing demonstration lessons, this ET has taken on the role of intervention tutor, in line with *'the big thrust in schools now to get the grade C at GCSE'*.

Both the head and the head of department said that *'learning is more effective'* and there had definitely been an impact on results.

The ET said that her work had changed the culture of the department. Her own workload had increased, but she acknowledged, *'It's a nice workload.'*



### ***Primary ETs with multiple roles***

The roles of three of the primary ETs were less easy to categorise than those of their secondary counterparts; they are described here.

One primary ET had expected that mentoring NQTs would form a key part of her role, but since she took up the post, the only NQT has been in KS2, and has been mentored by a colleague in that Key Stage. So her main role has been working with the deputy head in supporting new policies such as APP (Assessing Pupils' Progress), and a school speaking and listening policy. She attended the training and fed back to staff teams, then worked alongside teachers supporting implementation. She has also worked with Y2 and Y3 pupils to ease the transition from KS1 to KS2. She generally focuses on KS1; there is an AST who does similar work in KS2. She has concerns about the amount of time spent out of the classroom attending training.

Another primary ET conducts performance management for all the teachers who are not leadership or TLRs. The school improvement plan and individual targets are closely related. This part of her work made this teacher effectively part of management in a way that the other case study ETs were not. She also runs a peer observation scheme, and mentors trainee teachers. She also has a role in mentoring NQTs and early career teachers, but the most recently joined teachers are now in their fifth year, so this is not currently an active concern.

An ET in a small village school has no job description, and her role has not changed since her appointment, which was apparently viewed as a validation of her excellence and her ongoing role in the school, rather than as taking on a new role. Thus she continues to mentor student teachers, and is a person who others turn to for information and support, and may sometimes observe. She would not want to spend any more time out of class, because *'your class are going to suffer, no matter how good the person is who goes in and replaces you'*. However, she does expect that as a result of having gained this status, new challenges will emerge, and cited as an example a recent visit to a link school in Delhi during which she had led workshops for the Indian teachers.

#### **5.6.2 How much time are ETs allocated to undertake their ET role?**

There was considerable variation in the amount of time that ETs were allocated, ranging from none (in four schools) to a maximum of a day a week (in one school). This clearly impacted on their ability to work effectively. The time allocation appeared to bear little relation to the roles they were expected to carry out. This section provides some examples of time allocations and roles.

##### *No time allocated*

- working mainly in the department (foundation subject), but also increasingly as a member of the school's teaching and learning team; acting as subject mentor PGCE and GTP trainees in the department;
- mentoring student teachers, acting as primary school link (a role which predates the move to ET), working with ASTs in the school improvement team (mainly within own core subject department);
- primary NQT mentor: in previous years this teacher had had more time allocated, but in the current year she has been unable to observe lessons or work alongside NQTs, and instead had to organise for other members of staff (generally the leadership team) to do this.

*Up to half a day a week (or equivalent) allocated*

- PGCE and SAS professional tutor, allocated one hour a week;
- works mainly in her core subject department, particularly introducing new ideas and practices (which she sometimes goes to other schools to observe); some Inset for the whole staff; allocated three periods in two weeks;
- supporting all teachers across the school, allocated half a day a week;
- supporting new teachers in a special school, allocated half a day a week.

*More than half a day a week (or equivalent) allocated*

- NQT co-ordinator (secondary), allocated four periods a week;
- supporting secondary teachers across the school who have been identified through formal observations as having weaknesses; GTP professional tutor; planning and delivering Inset sessions; allocated seven periods in two weeks;
- supporting staff identified as having weaknesses; identifying and sharing effective practice in working with disaffected pupils across the school; planning and delivering Inset sessions; working with NQTs in own (core subject) department; allocated nine periods in two weeks;
- coaching and mentoring teachers across the school who have been identified as unsatisfactory or struggling; Inset sessions to develop kinaesthetic aspects of teaching across the curriculum; allocated two thirds of a day a week.
- supporting new teachers in a special school, allocated a day a week.

*Variable allocation depending on need*

- performance management throughout the school, running a peer observation system, mentoring ITT students, general support for other teachers, responsible for primary science.

This last ET was the only one to work part-time. She teaches three days a week, and any ET work undertaken is on the other days, for which she is paid extra. When needed, she also covers for teacher absences on these two days. Since performance management and ITT students both involve greater workloads at certain times of year, the time allocated is variable. However, it also depends on the state of the school's budget, and we were told that the peer observation system is not operating this year because the school cannot afford to pay for the time needed.

Obviously all the schools allocate time partly on the basis of what they can afford, but there seems to be no general consensus about what is an appropriate time allocation for specific roles. It is concerning that some have no time allocated. A secondary ET said she had initially had no timetable reduction to mentor trainee teachers. She had 'had to fight' to get one hour to meet with them, but has still not been allocated any time to conduct lesson observations. As her unprotected free periods are often used for cover, she now has to use some of her PPA time to observe students

Some of the ETs, particularly those in primary and special schools, were concerned about taking time away from their classes. One argued:

*I think taking me out and going somewhere else is good and well for everywhere you're going, but your class I think are going to suffer, and no matter how good the person is who goes in and replaces you, they're going to do things differently to the way you do it, you know what I mean, and different teaching does disrupt the children. (Primary ET)*

A special school teacher said that as a result of the demands of the ET role, she knew she had been spending less time on her own class *'doing quick and easy things ... and not putting the same amount of time and effort into my own class.'*

A secondary ET pointed out that while the ETs is thought of as a career route in the classroom, it inevitably involves teaching pupils less:

*If you want me to be a teacher who teaches good lessons, put me in the classroom. If you want me to be a teacher who shares my good practice with somebody else, you are going to have to get them in my classroom, or I'm going to have to go in their classroom or I'm going to have to have time to organise and prepare and I'm going to be out of the classroom. You have to decide what we're going to do, either we just do our own job and get better at that. If we're working with other people the chances are we are going to have less time in the classroom.*

### 5.6.3 ET roles in comparison to AST

All but one of the case study secondary schools employs ASTs as well as ETs. One of the three primary schools has an AST, but none of the three special schools does. We asked the headteachers what they saw as the distinctions between AST and ET, how they are deployed differently in the school, and why they had chosen to create an ET post rather than an AST one. We also asked the ETs how they perceived the differences between roles, and whether they had considered becoming ASTs.

The DCSF set out the differences between AST and ET on TeacherNet. They identify three main differences:

- ASTs undertake outreach work in other schools for 20 per cent of their time; ETs do not.
- In career terms being an AST can be seen as an alternative to moving into a leadership post, whereas becoming an Excellent Teacher can be seen as an alternative route to that of a classroom teacher with responsibilities that attract a Teaching and Learning Responsibility (TLR) payment.
- A teacher can apply for an AST post at any stage in their career whereas access to Excellent Teacher posts is only from U3.

(TeacherNet: Frequently asked questions: ASTs, accessed Jan 2009)

When asked about the differences, most interviewees responded with the first of these distinctions: that ASTs have an outreach role while ETs do not. Many heads saw this as making ETs preferable, because they benefit the school more, and often this was the main reason for creating an ET post. One secondary head said, *'ET is better than the AST because with the AST unfortunately I have to agree with them going out, and you lose your best teachers don't you?'* Several of the ETs identified the lack of outreach work as a key factor that had attracted them to become an ET; they preferred to focus their efforts in their

own school. One told us that the school's current AST did not enjoy the outreach work, and this had encouraged the school to make their next post ET rather than AST (special school head).

However, while some of the ASTs employed in the case study schools, some ASTs were funded by the school, and did 'inreach' work. One secondary head explained:

*Back in the times when we had schools in challenging circumstances, which we were and still are, if you had an AST in school you didn't have to let them do outreach. You could keep them all to yourself because you were in challenging circumstances. Now I've never actually seen it written down anywhere that that's changed, so as far as I'm concerned we do keep them pretty much to ourselves.*<sup>19</sup>

The deputy head of another secondary school similarly explained that they funded their own ASTs. This was an arrangement that they had come to with the borough, and the school is 'footing the bill'. This was not in any sense a school in challenging circumstances. The deputy head argued:

*It seemed more sensible to subsume the two [AST and ET] and you think about a person who has very particular skills to do this sort of work and whether you call them an Excellent Teacher or an AST didn't seem to be important to me.*

An AST interviewed explained that her work had changed from outreach to inreach; she said:

*The head felt that there was a lot of work to be done in school and that perhaps financially it was better to pay the salaries of our own ASTs and use the majority of that expertise in school.*

Where that key difference in role - outreach or 'inreach' - is removed, it becomes particularly important to consider what distinguishes AST and ET. Several of the case study schools made no apparent distinction. In one school where we interviewed a newly appointed teaching and learning team, those involved had been allowed to choose whether they would apply for ET or AST; at the time of the interview they were all tending towards AST, because they said, 'There is a financial difference, I think you're able to earn more money as an AST.' When ASTs did inreach work, headteachers found it quite difficult to define the differences between the roles, and they did not all make the same distinctions. One explained:

*ET is probably more akin to working in a kind of coaching model, yes I know ASTs do that as well, but they also, whenever it's required, certainly in our school, they work with a mentoring model as well.* (Secondary head)

Two schools explained that ASTs were more likely to work across the school, while ETs were based in departments. But in other schools ASTs had the departmental role, while the ET had a cross-school role. And in two schools, both ASTs and ETs worked in specific subjects, and the school aimed to appoint one AST/ET in every subject. Taylor and Jennings (2004) reported that ASTs saw themselves as 'deliverers of subject support rather than as school improvement generalists' (p.9).

---

<sup>19</sup> On Teachernet, the section 'Frequently asked questions: Advanced Skills Teachers' states 'An AST post normally includes 20% outreach work. ... The only general exceptions to this are where an AST is employed in a school that is subject to special measures or facing challenging circumstances. In these cases they can concentrate on working with teachers in their own school (inreach) activities as part of the LA's plan for removing the school from this category. Accessed February 2008.

It appeared then, that there was no clear-cut or universal distinction between the work done by ETs and ASTs. Some of the ETs claimed explicitly that there was no distinction between the expectations of them and of the ASTs in their schools, yet ASTs had better pay and conditions. One secondary ET said, *'to be perfectly honest, here I do more or less the same job [as the ASTs] but they have a pay scale, don't they? If they achieve their targets, they move up whereas I don't.'* Another argued:

*In business, I know people would be saying, you do the same job as the AST, why aren't you paid the same? Because at the end of the day I have been treated equally here by management, i.e. the expectations are the same, yet they have more time than me on the timetable, and basically I'm expected to do the same. And I don't mind that, but I sometimes do, on days when I can't go shopping or I need a new pair of shoes and I think, you know, if I was earning that -*

Thus rather than role differences, interviewees tended to talk about differences such as pay, conditions, status and career trajectory. Headteachers considered ET to be less financially attractive to teachers:

*It's taking on a responsibility for others' development and you're going £2000 year gross, no thank you. And I can tell you now, ... people in this school felt like that, 'It's very nice, thank you very much but it really isn't worth my while.'*

But inevitably, this difference also made ET more financially feasible for schools; one secondary head argued, *'I suppose the advantage of ET is you can pay them at a lower level. I mean ASTs are on a particular scale, they're quite highly paid.'*

Linked to the better AST pay, some heads suggested that ASTs have *'higher status'*, and one ET said *'there's possibly more value placed on the ASTs than there is on the ET'*.

Some interviewees suggested that AST was above ET in the career ladder, and that a reasonable career path would be to move from U3 to ET to AST. In the same vein, one of the ETs said, *'I think there is definitely the idea that the ASTs are a step up again.'* This would fit with the DCSF suggestion that ET parallels TLR, while AST parallels leadership. This idea was apparently supported by one of the ET assessors, who suggested to the ET that she should keep all the evidence in case she decided to apply for AST assessment in the future.<sup>20</sup> However, one of the other ETs said that when she was assessed:

*The headteacher asked the question about what naturally would be progression for me at this point, and would it be AST, and [the assessor] said, 'Oh absolutely not because you've already been judged by AST criteria, so AST would not be the next step.'*

It is worth noting that the STRB (2005) discussed arrangements for ASTs moving to become ETs. It seems very unlikely that this would happen, given the way the two roles are currently set up. The DCSF notes refer to AST as an *alternative* to leadership; however, interviewees more often talked about ASTs *moving into* leadership. Several interviewees argued that AST is more likely than ET to lead to school leadership; one ET said, *'I think it's very easy for Advanced Skills Teachers to move to leadership ... Whereas ... I couldn't see an Excellent Teacher applying for an assistant head.'*

---

<sup>20</sup> An ET applying for AST has to complete an application form (available on TeacherNet) and demonstrate that the three AST standards have been met. It is not necessary to demonstrate again that ET standards have been met.

A secondary head who had appointed both explained:

*The way we viewed it, AST is for somebody on the way to school leadership, ... and ET was about recognising those staff who have been teaching a number of years, recognising the experience and what they bring to bear in terms of classroom pedagogy.*

Several interviewees argued that ASTs are better placed to move into leadership roles because they take on a leadership role in their interactions with other schools. An assistant head pointed out:

*Once you're an AST, you're not concentrating in a classroom, you're leading other people by its very nature, and you're getting a lot of experience of other schools, and you look around and you see the job you want and you go for it.*

A secondary headteacher argued that as an AST 'you can see potentially how your job role may then lead itself to something like an assistant head', but that this was not true of ET, which he saw as a dead end, in career terms:

*The ET in terms of career progression, it's almost in a sense like a dead end. ... I think it's a nice post ... but at the end of the day, you know, where does it lead to? If you were career-minded, who in their right mind is going to go down this particular route when it leads nowhere?*

Another head made the same point: 'there isn't a kind of progression, really, beyond Excellent Teacher.'

As well as status, pay and career progression, the headteachers tended to differentiate between AST and ET in terms of the teachers who undertook the roles. One head said that the two routes 'provide development and recognition for different sets of people.' He suggested that while potential ETs have to be encouraged to apply, and are often somewhat self-effacing, potential ASTs 'want to do it, - it's much more their agenda, so it's more likely to be successful. ... They're a different type of person.'

Nevertheless, while drawing all these distinctions, many of the headteachers and ETs concluded that the roles are similar. One headteacher said, 'there is overlap'. Another said that the distinction needs to be made clearer, and another that the two roles 'are in the same bracket'. According to another head, they both 'work alongside and support'. Suggestions for changing the ETS in the light of these issues are discussed in Chapter 6.

#### **5.6.4 ET in relation to other roles in schools**

TLRs were generally seen as quite distinct from ET roles. One secondary headteacher explained the difference:

*Teachers with TLRs tend to be tied in to a particular subject area or a particular area of the school in terms of pastoral structures. For particular line management roles they're accountable for pupil progress and developing the curriculum to their subject area. I would see an ET as being somebody who is outside that structure, who is developing teaching particularly and has a generic role in that which isn't tied to a particular subject, and I think the same is potentially true of an AST, it should be true of an AST.*

The headteachers emphasised two key aspects; a TLR involves line management, while an ET does not, and a person with a TLR is accountable for pupil progress. These distinctions are both set out in the STPCD (DfES, 2005c); it states that a TLR is awarded for undertaking 'a sustained additional responsibility ... for the purpose of ensuring the continued delivery of high-quality teaching and learning and for which he is made accountable', and includes 'line management for a significant number of people.' (Section 3, para. 57).

One head stressed that this accountability explained the higher pay that goes with a TLR; she described the ETS as a '*soft option*' in comparison to this. Another head said:

*[Teachers with TLRs] have much more of a monitoring role rather than a developmental role and they analyse data and spit it out again and I suppose they're probably more accountable when it comes down to it, whereas [the ET] has a bit more fun.*

However, other headteachers emphasised that a head of department is also responsible for teaching and learning within the department. One said:

*I think it depends on your perception of what your TLR is. For example if we take head of maths, ... part of [her] job is the monitoring, the tracking, the setting the targets and that sort of thing, but to me a big part of [her] job is monitoring teaching and learning and using her skills to develop less experienced people within her team.*

Another made a similar point:

*You can argue that any person on a TLR, it's about leading people. And if that's improving their performance, i.e. coaching is in fact part of any TLR. ... So I would argue that some elements of coaching colleagues, in other words, of the Excellent Teacher role, should be part of every TLR.*

A deputy head argued that the role of the head of department is '*to promote excellent teaching in their department area*', and if you take this away, they '*just become a glorified manager.*'

However, as we showed in the previous section, many interviewees considered that one of the strengths of the ET role was its separation from management, and reported that in some circumstances coaching from a non-manager was more effective. Drawing on this experience, they argued that there is a role for both ETs and teachers with TLRs to be undertaking coaching and mentoring.

A further overlap of roles was highlighted by a secondary deputy head, who argued that the 2007 professional standards (TDA, 2007) mean that there is no longer a sufficient distinction between post-threshold teachers and ETs:

*I kind of suspect the new standards kind of hit the Excellent Teacher thing in a negative way, because in the new standards there's a very clear standard that says, to get onto the new upper pay scale you will now mentor and coach other members of staff. Everybody has to be doing it. You don't have to pay somebody as an Excellent Teacher any more because everybody's got to do it.*

In her view, schools would no longer see any point in paying someone to be an Excellent Teacher to mentor and coach, when this is now an expectation of all post-threshold teachers.

## 5.7 Outcomes for the school

In this section we consider the views of headteachers and other senior leaders, ETs and other teachers. The school leaders have an overview of impact, and the relationship between this and other initiatives. The ETs were generally very modest about claiming any benefits for other teachers or pupils. Other teachers inevitably tended to focus entirely on their own interactions with the ET. Perceptions of outcome inevitably related to the specific role being undertaken by the ET, and to the date they took up the post; in five out of 17 case study schools the ET had been in post less than a term.

### 5.7.1 School leaders' perceptions of outcomes for the school

Three school leaders argued that there had been no new benefits for the school from the ET's work; these were all headteachers who had appointed the ETs. This was generally because the role they were carrying out had been undertaken by someone (in one school, the ET herself) under the previous structure. These were all schools where the ET's main role was to mentor trainees or NQTs. A primary head explained:

*I think it has limited impact because we are still doing what we did before. So has it made that much difference to us? No, ... because the only reason we have it is because we have so many NQTs. That teacher would have had that role whether she was an Excellent teacher or not.*

However, most headteachers identified a wide range of benefits. Many focused on the benefits to the ET herself; this was often the case where the ET appointment was recent:

*I think it's to give [name] the recognition of being an outstanding teacher in the classroom and to provide her with a career opportunity ... it gives her an opportunity to be recognised for the person she is and the skills and qualities and attributes she has. It also gives her an opportunity to feel, I think, her self-value and self-worth has been increased. (Secondary head)*

Three schools made an explicit link to retention; one secondary headteacher explained: '*I wanted to keep her, I didn't want her to go anywhere else, she was an outstanding maths teacher.*' A primary head said: '*She has tremendous skills, expertise and it's a case of wanting to keep her within our recruitment, and so it's the idea of making her feel fulfilled.*' The third school focused more on the fact that they had found a role which enabled them to retain the teacher and make effective use of her skills, rather than on the external recognition of her qualities. It was perhaps surprising that retention was not mentioned more frequently, but the vast majority of the case study ETs were older teachers, some approaching retirement, and most had no thought of moving to another school.

As well as status for the ET, some heads mentioned impact on the school's reputation; one primary head referred to '*increased status*' for the school, and several schools had gained positive publicity by having the '*first Excellent Teacher*' in their area or LA (though they realise now that this was because of poor take-up of the scheme).

In schools where the ET was being used to coach other teachers, particularly those who had been having problems, headteachers often spoke about improved standards of teaching ('*it's definitely increased the ability of staff to deliver more effective lessons*' (secondary), and greater self-esteem and confidence among teachers who had received positive feedback. Generally the headteachers were less prepared to relate this directly to improved pupil outcomes, because this will take time, and because many of the ETs were working across the school with teachers from different departments, so any impact on results would have been difficult to demonstrate. This response was typical:



*It's sometimes difficult to evaluate impact by hard outcomes. So you can't really say, I have a teacher here, and then after [the ET's] input exam results were better. It is not as simple as it, is it? In terms of looking at classroom observations, in fact, that is measurable impact if I see a teacher that is having trouble with a certain target audience, and three months down the line that target audience is much, much better and learning is better. ... I could name you several teachers whose classroom performance has definitely improved because of [the ET's] help and advice, yes definitely. (Secondary head)*

Other heads argued that it is not possible to attribute increases in attainment directly to a single initiative, because so many things come together to contribute to raising standards. One said, *'It's not directly measurable and you have to wait a little time to see the results, and there are other factors that can feed into the raising of standards as well'* (special school head).

In one school where the ET worked entirely in the mathematics department, and so had a more focused input, the head argued that not only the standard of teaching, but also results had improved.

*Well the results in the maths Department have gone up to start with, the quality of the teaching in the maths Department has completely changed. And I have to say the Head of Department is very supportive too. They were the traditional department, everybody sat in rows, the teacher explains, you practise. And now it's just been exploded – they're in groups, they have interactive whiteboards, really structured lessons. ... You see when you put somebody in a role like that, if they're the right person they energise the whole department and create this momentum and then everybody starts to get on board and the whole thing moves forward. [And do you think it can be linked to standards at all?] Oh absolutely, our standards have gone up, our results have gone up.*

Only one other head spoke of improved pupil outcomes, and this was in a special school. The headteacher said, *'I think there's been an improvement in the standards particularly for the more complex, less able children, because of the Excellent Teacher input.'*

A primary headteacher summed up by saying, *'Knowing what I know about [the ETS], and seeing it in practice, I would be an advocate of the scheme because I think it works; I think it's working for us.'*

A secondary head was planning to appoint more ETs. She said:

*I am sort of grooming so to speak two or three of them. ... The people I'm thinking of are like trail blazers, the people who have tried new things, who are making them work, who are delivering fantastic outcomes. They are really spot on teachers.*

### **5.7.2 ETs' perceptions of outcomes for the school**

Like the headteachers, many ETs said that it was too soon to tell how much the school had benefited from their work. Those who focused on NQTs and/or student teachers generally referred to improved standards among their mentees. Otherwise they tended to be cautious in their assessments of the benefits for the school.

Rather than talking about improved teaching or improved results, the ETs tended to talk about the interpersonal and affective aspects of their work; they often spoke of it in terms of helping teachers who were not happy (because they were not as successful as they would like to be) to become happier and more confident. A secondary ET explained:

*I think it has benefited individuals who maybe would have dropped through the net, and I've had a lot of success, and a lot of people now are actually a lot happier in their work. I haven't had total success because there are people who are still not happy who I still work with and that's all I can do. I don't have the answers for everybody but I can put them on the right path, and sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. But on the whole I think it is a success.*

Similarly, an ET in a special school talked about her role in relation to mainstream teachers who had joined the school. She said she had helped them to understand the pupils' needs: *'It is just giving them that confidence and that knowledge to be able to go out and do it.'* There was a sense in which some of the ETs appeared to have acted as counsellors;

*If somebody wants to talk I listen. But it's a very, very necessary job because [two teachers] were absolutely annihilated by their head of department and I've picked up the pieces.*

Similarly a secondary ET explained, *'I've helped other people sharing their worries as well because they will say, 'I can't do this and I can't do that,' and I will say, 'Well I don't know, but let's work through it together.'* Another secondary ET talked about the support she had given over a long period to a teacher whose competency was in question. She said:

*I'd like to think that I've had a personal impact on the professional lives of many people in the school whether it's people who just consult me on teaching and learning or have private chats about issues they might have in the classroom. ... I feel that I'm making a difference to people's lives not just to the work that they do and I like that. I think that's very humbling for me.*

They also emphasized the importance of opening up a different space in which teachers could talk about their work, bouncing ideas of each other. Some ETs also said that the school had benefited from other aspects of their work - developing the curriculum, writing schemes of work, introducing new resources, and so on.

Some of the ETs argued that having the role of ET perhaps made other teachers more inclined to listen:

*Instead of me over the last ten years saying, 'Oh this is a good idea,' [and them responding,] 'Yes, yes, right we might try it', - and they won't, ... now everybody is kind of like, 'Yeah we'll try it, we'll try it', and people talk to each other more about, 'Oh can I try this? Can I come and watch you?'*

One of the primary ETs also spoke about the difference that it made having ET status; she said that while her role had not changed greatly, people now saw her in a different light.

*Because I've been there a long time anyway, I'm maybe respected. They would come and ask me, and if I gave them my opinion they would think, 'Oh well, maybe she's right.' ... But I think now, they may be more interested in what I'm doing, they take more notice, and think,*

*'Oh this definitely is good practice, because [name]'s an ET.' I think when you've got that accreditation, it's been made firm, hasn't it, that what I'm doing is right.*

Like the headteachers, some ETs mentioned the impact on the status of the school, and particularly on parents (or prospective parents). One argued that knowing your child would be taught by an Excellent Teacher in the reception class *'would push me towards sending my child to that school.'*

A minority of the ETs said that their impact had been limited. This generally seemed to reflect a lack of discussion and planning of the role. For example, a secondary ET who taught PE was asked whether she thought her work had had any impact on other teachers. She responded that it had not, because, for example, teachers were not directed to observe her teaching in the way that they were directed to the ASTs. She was unsure whether this was because she was an ET rather than an AST, or whether it was because her subject was PE, and her practice was therefore not seen as relevant to others. But she argued that other teachers could learn from observing PE, and explained the way that she made it applicable to PGCE students across the school. They could learn, for example, *'how to manage the children in moving situations'*. She said:

*You will pick up some really good tips. What do you do when you're on a football field and the kids are 100 metres away from you? How are you still in control? What do they do to get that control?*

Similarly some ETs said that their impact was limited because they had very little time allocated to carry out their ET role.

### 5.7.3 Personal outcomes for the ETs

The ETs also talked about a range of personal outcomes. We showed earlier that some said their confidence had increased substantially. For example, one said, *'it is a confidence boost, it is nice having the extra money, the variety, working with other people you know.'* Another commented, *'I just feel so much more important now.'*

An ET who had stepped down from HoD said:

*I'm enjoying the work more because my work is related to teaching. I was really pleased that somebody came up with the idea that teachers could [do this] rather than going to be a manager.*

She went on, *'I used to go home feeling stressed, now I go home feeling tired, which I prefer.'*

Several other ETs commented that their workload had increased with the ET role. While several said that teaching their own classes remained the best part of the job, they also gained satisfaction from supporting others: *'when somebody's in a muddle and I can give them some ideas, that's good.'* Another ET commented, *'There is more workload but it's a nice workload.'* However, one said that the counselling aspects of the role were tiring, and could be *'harrowing'*:

*It just becomes very tiring that's the main thing. Some weeks it's non-stop and other weeks it's not so bad. (...) It's the one to one it's the one to one that can be quite harrowing at time.'*

Several of the ETs, and in particular those who were class teachers in primary and special schools, talked about the tension between their commitment to their pupils and their work as an ET: *'sometimes you are torn both ways'*.

#### **5.7.4 Other teachers' and trainees' perceptions of outcomes for the school and for their own practice**

We interviewed two GTP and two PGCE trainees who were being mentored by the Excellent Teacher in three different secondary schools. All had high praise for the level of mentoring they were getting; one of the PGCE students commented:

*It makes me confident actually having her as an Excellent Teacher knowing that I'm being directed down the right route and that I'm being given the best opportunity because she's obviously had all this experience.*

However, they knew little about the ETS or wider aspects of the ETs' work. This was also often the case for NQTs and teachers early in their careers.

Many of the teachers we interviewed who were in the early stages of their careers spoke very positively about the support that they personally had received from the ET. One said, 'I can't talk highly enough of her to be honest. From where I was to where I am now there has been a massive improvement and that's a lot down to her she's been great.'

One secondary teacher in his second year explained, 'With my NQT last year, I didn't get the support I needed and so I was pointed in [the ET]'s direction.' He described the ET as 'the sort of mentor I would have liked', and talked about the formal and informal ways in which the ET had supported him, leading to a 'massive' increase in his confidence level. He pointed out that this also benefited pupils:

*If she is helping my teaching develop, then she is obviously helping the quality of learning of my students as well. And so the 250/300 kids that pass through my door each week get a better quality lesson, they are getting a better environment and delivered to a higher standard purely because I'm a better teacher for having worked with [the ET]. In the whole school I know she works with several others and so that's going to have an exponential impact on the teaching of the staff in the school in general.*

Another NQT also spoke very positively about his informal interaction with the ET in his department who was not his mentor (see Box 5.9).

**Box 5.9: NQT supported by ET**

This secondary NQT was a mature entrant to the profession in his first term in teaching. He said that he felt '*a bit like [he] was swimming in treacle*', and that currently his aim was simply to become a better teacher. There was no formal arrangement for the ET to support him, but he had approached the ET and asked for help. He was not aware of the ET's title or role; he simply approached someone who was approachable. Key factors in this interaction seemed to be that the ET was an outstanding teacher, and that she was there, ready willing and available to offer support.

*I have just gone to her with individual things. ... The first ever time I marked a GCSE essay, I said, 'Can you just look over this for a minute and see what you think?' And she said, 'Yes of course,' and she says, 'This is what to look for, this is what you need here.' I got her to observe one of my year 7 lessons, not an official one, because she is not my mentor, but I wanted to see how she, because again its about skills in the classroom and I want to see how far I am behind to get to be really good at my job. So that is why I said to [name], 'Sit in the back of the class and just watch and feed back.' Then I watched [name] take my class, the same class - I provided her with a lesson plan and everything and watched her do it to see how we both did things differently. Things like that, she's very good.*

He went on to explain that '*sometimes things get on top of you as an NQT*', and the ET is quick to notice and offer advice and reassurance. He had approached the ET not because of her role but because she was friendly and approachable.

*She is one of these people you can just walk up to and say, 'I have a bit of a problem, how do I deal with this?' So she has supported me even though I have a great mentor and great head of department, they are lovely but also [name], you can really lean on her. I know she helps a lot in our department meetings and I know the others come to her, even Head of English, because of her skills for want of a better term, and her knowledge and they tend to put things to her, 'what do you think?', 'Do you think it's a good idea?' and so you can see the dynamics where people realise her skills and ability, and tend to run things by her.*

More formal support took place when teachers who were identified as having problems were referred to Excellent Teachers; this kind of support was the main role of three of the ETs. In one secondary school, a main scale teacher with three years experience told us:

*I was actually referred to our ET to help me develop my teaching, and it has basically turned me from a sort of scraping sort of satisfactory teacher to one who was achieving a couple of outstanding features on lesson observation. Someone who has gone from being monitored on how they are doing, to in a sense to coordinating Key Stage 3 in the department and then within the next couple of weeks when someone goes off on maternity leave sharing sort of the role of active head of department for 6 months; I think it's had a very positive impact.*

This had been an ongoing relationship in which the ET observed him, he observed her, and they had meetings at which he had 'the opportunity to bounce ideas off her'. Even after the 'official' period of mentoring was over, he still referred to her as '*a source of information, a source of how can I develop ideas, you know as a focal point*', and the person he would turn to with his worries. He felt he had benefited from her substantial experience and wider perspective.

Box 5.10 is an account of a similar support arrangement experienced by a teacher who had just reached the threshold.

**Box 5.10: Experienced teacher supported by ET**

This secondary teacher had just reached the threshold, but also had five years experience of teaching in schools overseas. She hoped her next career move would be to deputy head of department, and described herself as a 'confident teacher'. It had therefore come as a shock when the headteacher observed a lesson and said it was unsatisfactory. She said, '*I'd never had an unsatisfactory lesson and been observed. I hope I haven't had that many full stop - and knowing that it is on record.*' However, she acknowledged that with that particular class, discipline had been variable:

*When these kids were coming in sometimes you'd have fantastic lessons, sometimes we'd have not so fantastic lessons and I couldn't put my finger on what made the difference. Basically I felt that I should have been able to anticipate that and I couldn't, although I generally can, I couldn't with that particular class.*

She said she felt that in that particular lesson '*the children played up to the fact that the head was in the room.*' She went on:

*Some groups might think, out of respect - but no, they felt the need to just say 'Oh we don't know how to play dominoes' and I was like a loser from my starter. And - well, they do, they're 14 or 15 year olds, they know how to play it but they just didn't want to play the game. And so that felt, yes that hurt, quite tough. ... Whereas on another occasion they'd be fantastic and they'd get stickers galore and they'd work really hard.*

She said she had been keen to have some support, and it was suggested that she did some observation with a colleague in her department. However, she thought this could be problematic because they are a '*close-knit*' department, and she did not want friendships to be compromised. She found it particularly useful to have support from a teacher of another subject, because then the subject knowledge '*doesn't get in the way*'. She explained:

*It was behaviour that I was more concerned with than anything, and also it's just the whole idea of structuring your lessons. ... I think it really helped because then you're really focusing on learning styles and learning abilities and you just put the context of your own subject in afterwards. ... It's the teaching and learning as opposed to teaching knowing about a specific subject.*

She explained what happened:

*We had a chat, and it was setting some objectives based on what we gleaned from that conversation, what our objectives were and how we would work on that. She knew a lot of those students, and I observed some of those students in her lesson ... [When she does Inset] she talks about the whole background of kids and seating plans and ... I've got a copy of [her handout] and she talked me through that. But I think for me it was just reassurance really, that I was doing a lot of the right things. ... I was on the right lines but it was just the nature of the beast, and it was - the fact that a certain amount of setting out your stall again in September, and keeping notes. ... What was great, really, was just the opportunity to have that because - we've got a very good close-knit department but having said that, you're still there with the kids by yourself. And I quite like that and that's why I'm in the profession but by the same token there are times when you think, I'd like to know where I am - you know you need reassurance.*

When asked whether having an ET had benefited the school, she replied that it had and it had certainly benefited her. She expressed some concern about whether the ET had *'enough time on her timetable'* and whether it had *'a high enough profile'* in the school, and suggested that it would be useful if the ET told the staff more about her work, and they were able to approach her for support when they needed it.

Boxes 5.9 and 5.10 identify a similar range of features that contributed to the success of the mentoring: being observed and then observing the ET teaching the same pupils; reassurance and encouragement; and being able to approach the situation as a peer rather than as a member of management.

As we have shown, ETs did not all work with weak or inexperienced teachers. We interviewed two UPS teachers who both felt that it was beneficial *'having a co-teacher come into your classroom in a supportive role and being able to just talk'*. They argued that a key factor was that the ET was not part of the management team, and this made teachers more inclined to discuss their problems freely; one said, *'I think it allows the teacher to have a professional dialogue in a non-threatening way.'* In their view, it had been useful to have specific foci for their interaction; for example, one teacher said that the focus on plenaries *'has really made us think, well okay, we do do plenaries, how do they work? why do they work? how can we improve them?'* They also argued that having an ET had raised the school's profile, and had possibly contributed to reducing the barriers between staff working at different key stages.

Teachers who were new to special education were also enthusiastic about the benefits, and argued that the ET's work had impacted on standards. One said:

*It's showing ... what can be done and how it can be done and it gives you that kind of like hope "oh I can do it", and especially if I'm having a low moment and you think "oh I can't think how to teach this and I'm really, really stuck" and then [the ET] might come up with an idea and it just gives you that to put you back on track.*

A post-threshold teacher in that school said:

*I think if it benefits the staff and if the staff are getting what they need so that they can then confidently teach, then I think that's going to benefit the pupils and it's going to benefit other staff, because you're going to get more teachers that are confident in a bigger range of situations, and then if you're more confident, your teaching assistants are much happier about it and they sort of - you can actually run the classroom better so I think it's one of these things that spreads.*

Another post-threshold teacher in the same school argued, *'We did get outstanding for our Ofsted, didn't we, and without [the ET]'s input there is no way ... that we would have got outstanding.'*

Where ETs worked in secondary subject departments, they were perceived as having a rather different impact. One secondary head of department talked about the outcomes in terms of more interactive teaching methods, better paced lessons and more effective learning. An NQT explained the value of being offered subject-specific advice:

*Senior management can offer good feedback, but not all of senior management teach maths. So she can offer me, I mean it was one silly little thing but she said when, writing a number of questions, on a board, instead of putting '1.' and then the question to put a bracket there instead because then it doesn't look like one point something and that's something that probably the other teachers wouldn't pick up on. It's just one little thing but now I do it all the time.*

She also explained that she had joined in with the ET in developing resources: *'I've sort of tagged on to what she started.'* This had enabled a very junior teacher to make a real contribution to the department.

### 5.7.5 Key factors in the ETS working effectively

In these accounts, a number of key factors emerge that appear to have enabled some of the ETs to be extremely effective.

#### ***Appointing the right person:***

Most of the interviewees claimed that the outcomes were positive because of the ET's skills and personal qualities.

*If I have a particularly bad time, I might, for respite, go and sit in her class for twenty minutes. She is phenomenally good.*

*He is very approachable ... exceptionally good to talk to about teaching things.*

*She is genuinely very humble and understated about her capabilities.*

A key aspect of this is that the person should have interpersonal and mentoring skills. One NQT argued that while the ET teaches *'really good lessons'*, the reason she had benefited was because of the ET's mentoring skills. Thus she did not see the role as *'a gold standard to which all teachers could aspire'*; she saw it as essentially about mentoring. Several interviewees commented that being an outstanding teacher did not necessarily translate into being an effective mentor - something that has been noted in relation to ASTs:

*There is little hard evidence to indicate that excellence in practice is necessarily or automatically connected with the ability to influence for the better the performance of a fellow professional. (Taylor and Jennings, 2004, p.4)*

A minority of interviewees also identified having many years of experience as a key aspect of the success of the role: *'If I've got any worries our ET is the person to go to. She knows through her experience of being a teacher for sort of 30 years how things work, how people think.'* However, a larger number argued that some teachers with rather less experience could equally well do the job. For example, an assistant head said:

*I'd say the fact that you've got to have been on the upper pay scale six years is not necessarily a useful thing. ... I feel that once you've got onto the upper pay scale, you've been teaching long enough to do it [the ET role].*

Similarly, a teacher argued that teachers ought to be able to become ETs at a much earlier point in their careers:

*I think the very nature of it means that you're somebody, maybe it's a vocation for you, you just have your niche and that's what you're really, really good at ... and wanting to mentor other teachers to help them improve ... and I don't think you have to have been teaching 12 years to be that sort of person.*



### ***Separating the ET role from management:***

The importance of separating this type of mentoring and coaching from a management role was one of the strongest messages from the interviews: it came up again and again in the interviews with headteachers, ETs themselves, and other teachers in the schools:

*[The ET] not having any other responsibility other than now being the ET, has a different sort of credibility and a different opportunity to work with people, because, the hierarchical thing isn't there. ... It's less directive probably, even though [the ET] will say this is what you need to do, she is not telling them, she's advising them, and I think that's probably the best way of describing it. It doesn't come from a position of hierarchical dominance, it comes from a position of peer advice, as it were, but this peer is particularly credible because they are an ET. (secondary head)*

Just one of the 17 ETs was involved in performance management, which clearly makes the ET role an aspect of the school management. The remainder saw their role as supporting and developing teachers rather than assessing their work. Ofsted (2003) reported a similar pattern among ASTs; very few were involved directly in the appraisal of other teachers.

It is worth noting that this notion was highlighted by the STRB (2005); they argued that the list of wider expectations of the ET's role set out by RIG (2004a) overlapped with those of a head of department, some aspects of TLR responsibilities, and those of an AST. But they argued that the distinctiveness of the ET role was that their primary responsibility was to help other teachers:

... there is a distinctive role for someone whose primary responsibility is to help other teachers within the school. Whilst the increasing emphasis on performance management and accountability in schools is desirable and welcome, some teachers might view it as a harder-edged environment. We therefore see a role for someone who is not a line manager who devotes some of their time to helping colleagues improve their effectiveness, deal with performance management issues, and address their development needs. (para. 5.24)

### ***Harnessing the ET's talents and enthusiasms:***

The different patterns of working that had developed across the schools seem to reflect not only different school's aspirations for the ETs, but also the particular enthusiasms and interests of the ET concerned. For example, the ET who started by working on the departmental resources perhaps initially seemed to be taking on a role which was not in the ET's list of duties. But from this start, she has been able to transform teaching in the department. Similarly, the ET who spends time tracking groups of pupils and seeing how they respond in different lessons is doing so because her passion is for pupils and their learning. But from this, she is able to give valuable advice to teachers. It is clear that there does not need to be a single pattern for developing the quality of teaching and learning in a school, and that personal enthusiasm has an important role to play.

### ***Allowing enough time***

Many of the accounts showed that effective coaching or mentoring can take a great deal of time, and often involves ongoing interactions over weeks or months.

*She actually has time off the timetable to come and work with us. ... What she did to begin with is she modelled it and then as the weeks went on she modelled it and then we joined in and then she has gone further back you know with the support, and so she is more in the supporting role not a leading role. (Special school NQT)*

Another aspect of time was that the ET has a clear allocation of time to support others. This was important for the ETs, and also for those they supported, because it meant they were more likely to feel able to ask for support:

*Sometimes senior management are that busy that you don't want to be pestering them. ... You know [the ET] has that day out of class so you can go and say 'I'm really struggling with so and so' and she'd be able to find the time to come and see you, whereas you're not putting added pressures on someone else because the time is already there. (Main scale teacher)*

### **Other factors**

Some secondary teachers felt that it had been particularly helpful being supported by someone outside their own department. Similarly some ETs argued that working across departments allowed them to tease out aspects of teaching and learning, and to identify practices that are generally subject specific but can be usefully applied in other subjects.

Some teachers spoke particularly about the benefits of observing others: 'You can read books and read excellent practice until you are blue in the face but seeing it is totally different' (Special school teacher).

### **Issues that may limit effectiveness**

While there was considerable support for generic support across subjects, some interviewees suggested that this was sometimes less effective where ETs worked with teachers of very different age groups, and perhaps had a more limited understanding of curriculum and appropriate pedagogy in certain key stages.

Primary ETs identified a tension between their preference for being classroom teachers, and the role of ET which in some cases took them away from their own class. This was perhaps most effectively resolved in the class was shared with a job-share partner.

All the schools had a range of arrangements for supporting and mentoring staff (often including a member of the leadership team with responsibility for teaching and learning, and sometimes with a team in place to work on different aspects of this). It was also clear from the accounts of the ETs work that there are a number of different groups of teachers who may potentially need support: all staff; staff identified as having difficulties; staff teaching pupils who are not progressing well; new staff; NQTs; GTP, PGCE or SAS trainees. Sometimes there was perhaps a need for clarification about where the ETs' role fitted in this overall web of support. In primary schools, the responsibility for developing teaching and learning was more likely to be shared across all experienced teachers. It was argued that the ET should not be the only person with this role. But when everyone is involved in mentoring and supporting, it sometimes became difficult to see what the ETs' particular contribution was. One teacher argued that it would be easier if teachers actually had the ET's job description, and maybe a more open invitation to teachers to approach her.

Some ETs are not able to be effective in their roles because they do not have sufficient time allocated. While the concept of leadership and management time is well-established, it might be helpful to have greater clarity about time for mentoring and coaching which is explicitly not part of leadership and management.

## 5.8 Other teachers' perspectives in relation to their own careers

We asked teachers whether they saw the ETS as 'the pinnacle of a classroom teacher's role, a 'gold standard' ... which motivates teachers to develop themselves, their colleagues and their teaching practice right through their careers' (STRB, 2005, p.xii), and asked them whether this would be something they would be interested in applying for in the future.

Very few of the teachers interviewed saw the ETS as a realistic prospect for their own careers. We interviewed two PGCE students, two GTP trainees, and ten teachers who were in their NQT year or had just completed it. Of this group, the vast majority saw the possibility of ET status as too far ahead to contemplate realistically. (*'I wouldn't mind doing that at all. It would be - I'm just starting teaching, so for me it's far in the future.'*). As one NQT said, *'getting through the next year would be good, you know.'*

Moreover, even with an ET in the school, many of the NQTs said that they did not know enough about the scheme. One said, *'It sounds very nice to be called an Excellent Teacher, but yeah I don't really know enough about it, I don't think.'*

Several of them said that they would like to teach as well as the ET in their school (*'If any of my lessons could be like [name]'s, I'd be dead chuffed!*'). However, some argued that they would not see the ET role as a 'gold standard' to aspire to because the role was not awarded simply on the basis of excellence, but also relied on having twelve years' experience. One said:

*The person has to be on a certain pay grade and they have to have been teaching for a certain amount of time. I don't necessarily think that as a contributing factor to be an excellent teacher. I think you could be an excellent teacher you know after a year in a classroom. ... Maybe that's one of the things why there's been not a great uptake.*

However, many NQTs suggested, like this interviewee that ET would be an option:

*... if I get to a certain point and I think, oh right, I don't want to go any higher, I don't want to take on any more management responsibility and I feel that I do want to do something that improves my status then yeah I would [apply for ET].*

Just two expressed real enthusiasm for the ET role:

*I think it's brilliant, the ET scheme is really great, because it encourages really good teachers to stay in the classroom, whereas before if they wanted a promotion they would have been taken out of the classroom and so I think that is one of the main benefits of it. And most teachers go into teaching because that is what they want to do, and it is kind of crazy that if they want to sort of move on up the ladder that they get taken out of classes.*

*It is like the perfect opportunity for somebody to be recognised that all the skills and the experience that we've got without having to go into, a management post, plus as well it means that they can still stay in the classroom.*

Of the ten teachers on the main pay scale who were interviewed the majority were aiming to become heads of department as a next career step. One said it was too early to think about a move; and another that the name was a deterrent:

*No, because lots of people go, ooh, she's an Excellent Teacher .... I think it's a dreadful name, I wouldn't want to have to live up to those expectations.*

None of this group aspired to become ETs.

We also interviewed ten post-threshold teachers. Of these, one wanted to move into management; one was about to become an advisory teacher; one saw her next career move as retirement; and two were enjoying their current departmental roles.

This group had ruled ET out for various reasons; one because of the job title, and one because of the workload she saw the ET in her school undertaking.

*Every year she has an additional layer of responsibility and expectations and workload that then requires a certain amount of time away from the children on top of usual non-contact time. And my only concern there is that the more layers you expect a class-based teacher to perform, the less time they can complete their teaching. I then feel there is a certain amount of panic of, 'I haven't done that for my Excellent Teacher job', or 'I haven't done that for my class role.'* (Special school teacher)

One argued that it would take her away from her main interest of teaching pupils. She was also concerned about the title:

*I never would describe myself as an Excellent Teacher. I'd know that I'm effective with young people in particular ways. ... And that's what gives me the buzz. But you know Excellent Teacher - its tick boxes, isn't it? You have certain criteria to satisfy and although I know that I'm quite effective with young people, I'm not convinced I would fit that model. ... I feel it would restrict me more, because I know it's supposed to be the role that keeps in you in the classroom, but if it's a role where you're going to use your expertise to try to develop other staff, ... as opposed to looking after the kids.* (Secondary teacher)

One teacher who had been eligible to apply for the ET role in her school had decided not to apply because of the title: *'I didn't feel I was good enough to do it. I couldn't put myself forward and say I'm an excellent teacher.'* (Primary teacher)

Three of the post-threshold teachers interviewed were genuinely interested in the ET role. However, one of these considered it very unlikely that his school would create another ET post in the same department as the existing ET. He said he would prefer to remain in the school, and so as an alternative, he might seek an LA-funded AST post.

The other two teachers both still had some years to go before they would have enough experience to apply for ET status. One said:

*I joined teaching for the reason that I wanted to be a teacher, I wanted to stay in the classroom, I wanted to work closely related to my subject areas ... Excellent Teacher enables me to look at those opportunities. ... The frustration of it is, I'm not quite at the point where I'm eligible to apply for it. ... And so that is kind of an issue, because I'm at the point in my career where, am I waiting to consider ET, or am I going to move down the route of head of department?*

The third post-threshold teacher who would have liked to become an ET had actually been identified by the school leadership as a potential successor to the current ET, who is to retire this year. While flattered that they saw her as having the potential for the role, she was aware that she would not be eligible for another five years. The school leaders felt equally frustrated that when they had a teacher who was extremely well equipped to take on the ET role, she would not be able to attain the status.

A number of other interviewees argued the same point; they felt that it is not necessary to have that much experience to become an ET. A secondary deputy head said:

*In another life I would have really seriously considered being an Excellent Teacher ... if it could have fast-tracked. ... I'm Deputy Head and I've been teaching for 12 years and so one can progress relatively quickly. If some of those processes could be fast tracked for people who were aspiring to that position and want that, otherwise the attractions of leadership become greater, because it is chronological – it is not based on performance.*

However, some argued that the experience is key to being able to develop constructive working relationships:

*I think the experience has been paramount because that ability to know how to talk to different types of people, how to assimilate to people at different stages in their career, people who are happy to receive her. ... I think Experienced Teacher would be a better heading to Excellent Teacher because it is about sharing experience as opposed to being excellent. (Special school teachers)*

In summary, then, we found that very few of those we interviewed in school with ETs were interested in the role. Some did not know much about it, and others saw it as too long to wait when they could apply much sooner to become an AST, or for a post with a TLR or in leadership. Moreover, it was argued that the status is gained on the basis of length of service as much as of excellence in teaching.

### **Summary: schools that have appointed ETs**

ETs are more likely to be appointed in secondary schools. A disproportionate number are female. More than half those in secondary schools teach core subjects (mathematics, English and science).

#### *Creating the ET post*

In the majority of the case study schools, the ET post was included in the 2005 staffing structure but was often not filled until a later date when a suitable candidate was identified and encouraged to apply. Some interviewees talked about difficulties they had experienced in obtaining information about the ET scheme, and most would have welcomed contact with other schools with ETs. ETs said that preparation for the external assessment had been time-consuming; they had been unsure how much evidence they should produce. Some interviewees queried the requirement for ETs to produce an example of 'searching analysis', when it is not apparent that the same demand is made of ASTs. The assessor's visit was generally described as thorough and professional.

#### *The Excellent Teachers and their careers*

The average length of time since entering teaching was 27 years. Fourteen out of 17 case study ETs had previously had paid responsibilities (including seven former heads of department). Seven had lost previous roles under restructuring; others had stepped down, often because of the workload and stress. In the course of this research we heard about five former ETs who have moved to head of department or leadership posts. Of the ETs interviewed, four were contemplating moving to TLR leadership posts or stepping down.

#### *ETs' pay*

Some case study ETs were not paid on the original ET spot rate because they had protected salaries, or because their schools made other arrangements to maintain their pay at previous levels. Three had taken substantial pay cuts (and one a slight cut) when they became ETs. The majority had experienced small pay increases. The factors headteachers considered in determining ETs' pay varied; one argued that it should be low because ETs are not accountable for results, while another considered the level of responsibility to be similar to TLR1. The concept of spot pay set within a range caused some confusion and concern. ETs said that not having an incremental scale placed them at a disadvantage. A number of heads chose to pay the ET on the AST scale, or the equivalent of a TLR.

#### *The title Excellent Teacher*

The vast majority of ETs strongly disliked the title Excellent Teacher, arguing that it placed an onus on them to be excellent in all aspects of their work, which was hard to live up to., and that there were many other excellent teachers in their schools. In two schools, the title was not used at all, and in several others, the ET discouraged people from using it. But they also complained that in some public and research contexts, ET is omitted. Thus the ETs tends to be invisible. A minority of the ETs' younger colleagues did not think the title should be changed, often because they saw it as an award for excellence rather than as a job title. Older teachers generally shared the ETs' view that the name was poorly thought out. They argued that the job title should refer to the role carried out rather than to excellence. The title had given rise to ill-feeling in many of the schools, particularly among teachers in other departments or key stages, who did not have a personal relationship with the ET. Interviewees used words such as 'stigma' and 'cynical' when talking about the title.

*The ET role and how it relates to other roles in the school*

The case study ETs all carried out a variety of work; their main roles were as follows:

- three were NQT coordinators or mentors, and one was a professional mentor for ITT students;
- seven offered support to other teachers across their schools;
- three worked mainly in secondary subject departments in a range of roles including developing resources and methods of assessment; one had a similar role in a primary school;
- three primary ETs had multiple roles.

The time allocated for ETs to undertake these roles varied from none (three ETs) to a day a week (one ET).

Many of the schools also employed ASTs. While the key difference between the two roles was generally identified as the AST doing outreach work while the ET did not, this was not always the case; a number of the schools employed 'inreach' ASTs. In these circumstances, there was little or no difference between ET and AST roles. Generally, however, ASTs were perceived as being better paid and having higher status. They were also seen as more likely than ETs to move into management roles, while ET was described by some as a 'dead end' in terms of career progression. Comparisons were also made between ETs and others who are expected to undertake coaching and mentoring (including heads of department and post-threshold teachers).

*Outcomes*

Three headteachers argued that there had been no particular benefits in appointing an ET because their role had been carried out under the previous staffing structure. Many spoke about improved standards of teaching and increased confidence and self-esteem among teachers. The ETs tended to talk about the affective and interpersonal aspects of their work, and to describe the outcomes in terms of happier, more confident teachers. Some of the other teachers interviewed spoke positively about support that they had received.

*Other teachers' perspectives in relation to their own careers*

Teachers were asked whether they saw the ETS as the gold standard for classroom teaching to which teachers could aspire, and whether they would be interested in becoming ETs in the future. Very few saw the ETs as a realistic prospect for their own careers. For those in the early stages of their careers it was too far in the future to think about realistically. The teachers with two to six years teaching experience generally saw becoming a head of department as their next career step. The majority of post-threshold teachers interviewed had no interest in the ETS; some were deterred by the title, workload and time away from their own pupils, and others had management roles or expected to move into them. However, three were interested in becoming ETs, but were unlikely to do so because they had about five years to go before they would be eligible.

## 6 Suggestions for future development of the ET scheme

This chapter focuses on the various ideas that interviewees had for the future development of the ETS, and increasing the number of ETs. We have already discussed, in Chapter 4, the reasons why some schools did not create ET posts. These included limited awareness of the scheme, budgetary constraints; lack of eligible and suitable candidates; perceptions that the scheme (and specifically the title) is divisive; and having other staff who carry out the roles designated for ETs. These issues all recur in responses about how the number of ETs could be increased.

It should be noted, however, that a minority of interviewees were bemused by the lack of uptake of the ETS. When asked why there are currently so few ETs, one secondary headteacher who had created an ET post responded:

*I can't imagine ... I really do think they've missed a trick. For very little money you can get so much more capacity into your system, and give somebody a real sense of status. ... It seems to me it's excellent. I hope to goodness they're not going to drop it. I think that would be awful.*

The first section of this chapter reviews headteachers' and teachers' suggestions for increasing the number of ETs within the current scheme. The next section then discusses ways in which the scheme might be changed to make it more attractive to schools and to teachers. This section includes respondents' responses to the various recommendations put forward by the STRB. The third section discusses more radical proposals to integrate the ETS with other career paths for teachers, or to replace it with something entirely different. Many of the proposals put forward here relate to issues discussed in the previous chapters; cross-references are provided where appropriate.

### 6.1 Views about what might increase the number of ETs

Increased publicity was seen as essential. We have shown that many respondents had a little or no awareness of the scheme; one headteacher said, '*[ETs] are not openly spoken about.*' Obviously this is in part a consequence of the low numbers. While some respondents referred to the documents received during restructuring, it was argued that since that time, schools had received very little about the scheme; a secondary assistant head said:

*To be honest, nothing really comes into the school about it, we don't get information. I, as the person that is responsible for staff, don't get anything in about it, they don't contact you about it - it's not in your face. Nobody's encouraging us to think about it ever. So if you're a school where you haven't really heard very much about it, you haven't seen one in place, there's nothing really putting it into your mind even, I would say. I don't think there's enough advertisement.*

It was suggested that on-line case studies were insufficient (in view of the huge amount of paperwork that headteachers already have to read), and that more notice might be taken of presentations at conferences and headteachers' meetings.

Headteachers need more than just information about the scheme; they need to develop a vision of how it could be used to move their school forward. Heads said they would like to hear more from the schools that had appointed ETs and found it successful; '*Leadership would have to see evidence of it working.*' One ET argued, '*I think the headteachers need to be more aware of what they want from it,*' pointing out that her role had really developed from her own perception of the potential rather than the headteacher's ideas,



Informing headteachers was regarded as crucial; as one ET put it, *'If the headteacher doesn't want an ET and they don't sell it within the school you are not going to get people applying, are you?'* But equally, teachers need to know what the scheme involves or they will be unlikely to apply for it. The same ET explained, *'I applied because I had been invited. I didn't think, 'Oh look there is an ET job, I will go for it', because I didn't know what it was.'*

An assistant head suggested that teachers contemplating the ET route might be encouraged by workshops similar to those the NCSL run for teachers who may be interested in NPQH. These would provide *'information and stuff about what it really involves to take the fear out of it.'* The current ETs could act as ambassadors for the scheme at such workshops. One ET had attended a one-day course for prospective ASTs and ETs which she found helpful<sup>21</sup>.

### **6.2 Suggestions for changing the ETS to make it more attractive to schools and teachers**

While publicity was universally thought to be essential, many interviewees argued that the scheme should be changed in various ways. The ETs themselves, and their headteachers, tended to make the most suggestions here - probably because they knew more about the scheme than other interviewees. Those in schools with no ETs had generally given little thought to the scheme, and their information often came entirely from the researchers. It is not surprising, then that they made few specific suggestions about how to improve it. They could mostly see positive aspects and were of the opinion it should stay, and be more effectively promoted. Some suggested that it should remain, but with some changes; as one teacher said it should be slightly *'re-jigged'*.

All interviewees were asked for their views about specific proposals put forward by the STRB: changing the post title to 'Principal Teacher'; allowing teachers to seek ETS accreditation regardless of whether there was an ET post at their school; changing the admission criteria to include demonstration of a sustained record of continuing professional development throughout the teacher's career; and allowing teachers to apply for accreditation for posts at any school. They were also asked for their suggestions about the future of the scheme, and how they thought it could be improved. This section draws together all the ideas suggested for developing the scheme. Obviously some suggestions were made by only a small number of respondents; we were not able to ask earlier interviewees about suggestions made in subsequent interviews, and so we cannot tell how much support they would have attracted.

#### **6.2.1 Change the title Excellent Teacher**

Most of the teachers interviewed thought the title was problematic. Gillies (2007) argues that 'excellent' can be defined in distinct ways. It can mean 'pre-eminence in some hierarchical order', 'outstanding'; this norm-referenced definition can inevitably apply only to a tiny minority, and is associated with elitism. However, in a criterion referenced interpretation of excellence 'it is theoretically possible for all of a certain category to be deemed to show excellence if they meet the relevant criteria for such excellence' (p.28). Those designing the ETS clearly had criterion referenced excellence in mind, but the problems have arisen when the title has been interpreted in a norm-referenced sense, and has been seen as elitist and divisive. A similar response was reported by some of the first ASTs who were referred to as 'super teachers' and said that this had sometimes caused resentment among colleagues (Taylor and Jennings, 2004).

---

<sup>21</sup> This was run by Lighthouse Professional Development; it is offered in London, Birmingham and Manchester (<http://www.lighthouse.tv/>, accessed Jan 2009). It offers guidance on building a high quality portfolio and demonstrating outstanding teaching.

Chapter 4 showed that many headteachers and teachers in schools with no ETs perceived the title (and the scheme) to be divisive. In Chapter 5 we reported that the majority of the ETs and their colleagues believed it was vital to change the title. Only the least experienced teachers (mostly NQTs and student teachers) thought that the title should be retained, and as Chapter 4 showed, this was because they often saw it as an award rather than a post that had to be applied for. However, while a clear majority of interviewees agreed that the title should be changed, interviewees found it difficult to come up with alternatives.

The titles suggested seemed to fall into three main groups, reflecting different aspects of the role: some emphasised excellence or expertise; others focused on experience or seniority; and a third group on describing the role carried out. The first group, emphasising excellence of expertise, were the least popular, for all the reasons previously discussed. Despite this, a number of interviewees said that they were much more comfortable with the title 'Advanced Skills Teacher'; while it still implies the teacher is better than others in some respects, it does not carry the same connotations of excelling in everything, and is well-established:

*If you say AST, that's not like saying you're good at everything, whereas an Excellent Teacher implies that you're always punctual, you have everything marked, you're good at everything. Excellent means you're good at everything. And so you're open, you're putting yourself up there for criticism. Whereas Advanced Skills, yes, I've got some skills but I'm not very good at those other things. (Secondary ET)*

*It says you've advanced your skills within teaching doesn't it. ... Advanced Skills signifies that you have done something extra to hone your skills as a teacher that allows you to apply for that. (Secondary ET)*

Thus one ET favoured using the title AST2 for ET, while referring to current ASTs as AST1. (*If you were AST1 and AST2, I would have thought that would be brilliant. AST1 have to do school and/or they do outreach. AST2 could just be in school.*) Some other interviewees made similar suggestions; one head of a school with an ET said, *'I do like the Advanced Skills Teacher, because that's got a certain ring to it, and I don't think it's at all divisive.'*

Later we discuss suggestions for merging the ET and AST routes; teachers suggested that the different roles could be indicated by distinctions such as that suggested above, or 'AST outreach' and 'AST inreach'.

In their early considerations of the scheme, the STRB (2004) proposed that teachers who had passed the threshold could be called 'Senior Teachers' and those who met the excellent teacher criteria could be called 'Principal Teachers'. In their Fourteenth Report (2005), they argued that teachers should be able to undergo the assessment process, and should then be designated as Excellent Teachers, but that those who had taken up ET posts should then be designated 'Principal Teacher'.

The survey asked teachers whether they thought the title 'Principal Teacher' would be preferable to 'Excellent Teacher'. However, only 21 per cent agreed or strongly agreed, while 43 per cent disagreed or strongly disagreed. Older teachers and those on U3 were more likely to indicate that Principal teacher would be preferable.

We also asked interviewees their views about the title Principal Teacher as a possible alternative to Excellent Teacher. Some heads of schools without ETs preferred it: *'I think I'd be more in favour of that'; 'that's pretty good'; 'a name that gets away from the outstanding excellent, the Ofsted terminology'*. One saw Principal Teacher as denoting someone who was a *'leader amongst teachers'*. Another argued:

*Principal teachers doesn't denigrate everyone else ... A principal teacher implies to me a tinge of experience rather than quality if you know what I mean, if that makes sense.*

One of the ETs made a similar point: *'I think I prefer [Principal Teacher]. It suits my age as well, it sounds a bit more mature.'*

But a considerable majority of interviewees found Principal Teacher equally problematic, saying, *'it smacks of an Americanism'*, and, *'reeks of elitism'*. Several said it was *'worse'* than Excellent Teacher. One headteacher responded:

*Oh crumbs. Principal Teachers. ... You know, why don't we call them Tutankhamen teachers or Carmen Roller teachers? We're just who we are. We're just teachers. We don't need stupid names and badges. I think that's a load of rubbish.*

The major problem identified by many interviewees was that Principal Teacher *'makes it sound as if they are a headteacher'*, and could potentially cause confusion. A head of a school employing an ET said, *'I think Principal Teacher's even bloody stupider, quite frankly. I'm the Principal!'* He went on:

*Principal teacher is much more, for me, about leading or being the best, but in a much more hierarchical way, and I would expect the principal teacher to be the head of faculty or the head of subject, because they lead the subject area.*

An ET said, *'in terms of how people perceive that within a school, they see Principal as being at the top of the school, the leader of the school and I don't think you're that.'* Another ET argued that 'Principal' was too closely associated with management, while she saw the key point about ETs as being that they are separate from management.

Interviewees were also asked whether Senior Teacher was a more acceptable title. Two interviewees argued that this was more appropriate because it would highlight the link to experience. One ET said:

*Senior teacher says something different doesn't it. It says, 'I respect your experience, I respect you know what you've got, what you've done and what you've got to offer.'*

But many other interviewees questioned what exactly 'senior teacher' would mean, and many dismissed it because this role has recently existed, and some schools still refer to certain members of staff as 'senior teachers':

*That takes back to the old days of senior teachers who it wasn't the fact that they were good in the classroom, it's the fact that they would tell children off.*

A number of alternative titles were suggested by interviewees. Obviously we have not been able to ask all the other interviewees for their views about these.

Some of their suggestions had a similar focus on seniority to those above. One headteacher who employed an ET said:

*I think they should think of another title you know - 'Professional Teacher' or something ... I think 'Lead Professional' might be quite nice that means they're bringing others on doesn't it and they're utterly professional in what they do. ...Something more in line the new professional standards, 'Professional Teacher', 'Lead Teacher', something that wasn't as judgmental would be better.*

Other headteachers also suggested '*Lead Professional*' and '*Lead Teacher*'. Another headteacher head said that '*Advanced Teacher*' sounded much better: '*to me that's somebody who is grounded in teaching and learning and knows what they are talking about*'.

A number of interviewees suggested the title '*Lead Practitioner*', and other supported this idea (though only a minority were asked about it):

*Lead Practitioner is a term that's very widely used now because it can be used in a variety of educational settings. Lead Practitioner would be very nice.  
[Lead Practitioner] would say what it is. That is what it says on the tin as it were.  
'Lead Practitioner' would be great.*

But most of the titles that interviewees suggested were more clearly focused on the role itself, indicating what an ET actually does. One said:

*I don't think the name actually matters. I think it is more having explicitly clear what the job entails and make sure it's advertised so people know what it is and people might want to aspire to doing it.*

This emphasis on the role rather than the standard led some to suggest '*Advisory Teacher*':

*It is the name of the role that needs redefining to be 'Advisory Teacher', 'Advisor Teacher' - something that reflects what they do.*

*I think it should be something like 'Advisory Teacher', it shouldn't be Excellent Teacher I don't think. ... Yeah something that implies that they are actually there to develop you and make you into a better teacher.*

Similar thinking led to the suggestion of '*Experienced Teacher*' as an alternative title, '*because it is about sharing experience as opposed to being excellent*'. Another head suggested '*Leading Learning Teacher*', because it describes the role. Other suggestions along these lines were '*Senior Mentor*' and '*Lead Mentor*'.

A deputy head in a school with an ET said he was unable to suggest a '*pithy little title*', but would prefer something along the lines of '*teacher with responsibility for the whole school teaching and learning*' or '*with responsibility for learning for active learning*.' In a similar vein, some regretted the current definition of a TLR, because they argued that having a '*Teaching and Learning Responsibility*' is precisely the role of an ET.

One of the ETs argued that each school should create its own title, because the roles carried out by ETs can vary: '*Rather than having one overall [title], I think the school could create their own to fit the role as it's developed or as it's been created*'.

As we have shown above, a number of titles were suggested in the course of interviews. We decided to consult all the case study ETs and their headteachers about the titles suggested. We therefore sent them a list of every suggestion, asking them to indicate those they preferred and those they disliked. Nine out of 14 ETs who responded preferred AST inreach or AST2. No other option was selected by more than three ETs. This was also the most one of the most popular options among the headteachers, together with Leading Learning Teacher.

VT Education and Skills staff have also suggested a change of name. They suggest 'Higher Threshold Teacher'. The assessment would be re-branded as the Higher Threshold Assessment, leading to the Higher Pay Scale (which would be the equivalent of the ET pay range currently operating). They argue that this title 'has no connotation of elitism or superiority', and is a 'new and unique title, free from confusion and misunderstanding'. However, while branded as a pay threshold, assessment against the higher threshold standards would, as now, be open only to teachers in schools that had created such posts. Comparison with the existing pay threshold might then result in confusion, in that any teacher can apply to go through the existing threshold, but the second would be open only to those in a school with a vacant post.

Unfortunately this suggestion reached us after we had completed all the fieldwork, so we have been unable to ask ETs, headteachers and other teachers for their responses to this suggestion.

### **6.2.2 Review the requirement to provide a specific example of searching analysis**

In some of the schools that had appointed ETs, interviewees expressed concern about the requirement to do a 'searching analysis' as part of the ET assessment. It was argued that this would deter potential applicants, and that it apparently made the assessment more challenging than that for AST, although ET is supposedly the '*lesser role*' (see Section 5.2.6). This was borne out in interviews with headteacher and a teacher in a special school that had planned to create an ET post; the head had wanted to create an ET post for a specific member of staff, but had not gone ahead because she believed that the teacher would not meet that requirement; the teacher also talked about this (see Section 4.2.3). We cannot tell how widespread this concern is, but it has certainly deterred one school from creating an ET post. It would be helpful to have clear exemplification of how teachers who do not analyse assessment data can meet the requirement. It might also be useful to review the application forms so that it does not appear as if a demand is being made of ETs that ASTs do not have to meet.

### **6.2.3 Change the eligibility criteria**

The STRB (2005) suggested that the eligibility criteria should include a record of CPD throughout the teacher's career. They argued that CPD is at the heart of the new professionalism agenda, and should also be at the heart of the ETS. A large majority of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this suggestion (78 per cent). Interviewees were asked about this; they agreed that professional development is crucial. One responded, '*It would have to. If people haven't looked after their professional development, there is a problem. How could they help others?*' (secondary head). However, the ETs and their headteachers argued that, in the evidence they put forward for the assessment, they had provided such a record, and did not see the need for any further strengthening of this requirement.

While changing the criteria to include a CPD record was not supported, many of the interviewees suggested another change to the eligibility criteria. They argued that the number of ETs would increase if the scheme were opened up to those at earlier stages of their careers. Clearly the reason that U3 was set as the entry point relates to the historical origins of the ETS as a replacement for U4 and U5. The STRB (2005) also emphasised:

*The coaching and mentoring role requires pedagogic excellence, and this in turn requires length, depth and breadth of experience to carry out well. The fact that it requires considerable experience to carry out makes it an appropriate role for someone who has reached UPS3 and can demonstrate that they have distinguished themselves at this level. (Para. 5.25)*

While interviewees agreed that experience is important, some argued that twelve years is perhaps an excessive requirement, particularly as teachers are able to pursue other career advancement routes (including AST) very much earlier.

Headteachers employing ETs felt that *'the size of the pool from which to trawl'* was currently quite limited; one pointed out, *'Teachers who you know are your best practitioners inevitably end up with TLR responsibilities.'* Another argued:

*I think you should get rid of the fact you have to have UPS 3 and have all these years under your belt, because actually your best teachers aren't always those and shouldn't be.*

Section 5.8 shows that very few of the teachers in the schools with ETs contemplating becoming ETs themselves, and that one reason for this was that they would have to wait so long to be eligible to apply. This was a considerable deterrent even to those who otherwise thought the role was one they would like. In one case a teacher had been identified by the school as a very appropriate replacement for the current ET, but she still needed a further five years' experience before she could apply.

Moreover, a teacher with the amount of experience necessary to become an ET inevitably faces a *'reputational risk'* in applying to the scheme. A headteacher who had supported an ET applicant who had been deemed not to meet the standards reported that that individual not consider reapplying, and that as a direct consequence, the school was unlikely to put forward further applicants for either ET or AST. (See Section 5.2.6.) While the risk of failure is the same whatever the stage of the teacher's career, it is the most experienced teachers who are most likely to be damaged by their failure.

Obviously the ETS was set up specifically to provide career progression for those who have reached U3, but interviewees emphasised that this group may not be the most appropriate for the role. Moreover, very few of them appeared to know that this had been the origin of the scheme.

Several headteacher argued that they would welcome greater flexibility, arguing that they would have liked to be able to appoint younger teachers as ETs. One argued that what he saw as important was that the teacher should demonstrate the qualities of an Excellent Teacher, and meet the standards. He said, *'The big blocker for me has been the age profile, and that requirement to be on U3'*.

But equally, one argued that *'the idea that there is somewhere to go after UPS3 is really important'*. Two heads argued that U4 should be reintroduced. One argued that the advantage of this would be that *'it's anonymous, and it's not inflammatory in any way'*, and that this would be a fairer system because it would be available to all teachers at that level, not simply those whose headteachers supported the scheme, or those teaching certain subjects. She added:

*There should be clear criteria for that, ... If you are attaching money to it, there should be something headteachers can point to and say, 'no, you've not done that, go away and we will look at this again next year when you have done it then.'*

The other head expressing this view argued that there should be external assessment for the reinstated U4.

Some heads not employing ETs thought that the thinking behind the ETS was fine, but the details needed reviewing:

*There should be something like the scheme that does have something teachers can aspire to, not just financially but for their own professional development, so I would be with this rather than an alternative. Just perhaps we need to look at the name, the title of it, the description of it.*

*In essence it's a good idea. But there are a number of factors that need rethinking. ... The terminology is not probably the most effective, so something could be done about that. Something could be done about educating teachers about the different pathways they can follow. ... So I think while it's a good idea, there are lots of small details that need to be ironed out and made more explicit.*

As highlighted earlier, the survey data show that the large majority of respondents are unaware that the ETS has replaced points 4 and 5 on the Upper Pay Scale. Only nine per cent said they 'knew' this, with the rest either 'vaguely aware' (17 per cent) or admitting they 'did not know this' (74 per cent).

Some suggested opening the scheme up to any teacher, paralleling the AST scheme, but others thought that it should be restricted to post-threshold teachers:

*I think after first threshold would be acceptable, sensible time to do it because I think by then you know what kind of teacher you are and the school that you're working in who knows what kind of teacher you are and that the process of going through the threshold really makes you analyse what you do and what you do well and what you don't do well and things like that, so it's a logical. (secondary teacher)*

It was also argued that perhaps the current arrangements allow teachers to apply for AST too soon, before they really have the experience that is needed to pass their expertise on; thus some interviewees favoured only post-threshold teachers being able to apply for either ET or AST.

### **6.2.4 Create short-term ET posts**

Two of the senior leaders of schools with ETs argued that it would be useful to be able to create short-term ET posts, or 'bursaries'. This was linked to the idea that many teachers do not make a firm choice between classroom and management careers. A three-year ET post might be a useful way of increasing a teacher's confidence, and helping them to decide what to do next. One secondary head employing an ET said:

*Could these not be bursaries or whatever for which you apply, because you might want to give three years of your career to spreading the message about your geography syllabus or your scheme of work and so on. Either the city or school buys into that three year placement, after which you'll re-examine which way your career's going. At the moment, ASTs and Excellent Teacher seem to be a pretty well-defined path that's not easy to get on and get off again. Bursaries would be excellent I think.*

Similarly an assistant head in a school with an ET argued:

*I think it would be quite good if there was a timescale to them, because I think people can kind of get into a position, get settled there. And for example, somebody that does an Excellent Teacher role, it might be that after a couple of years you would like to try and encourage them to apply to do something else.*

Another headteacher argued that such an approach would be beneficial in terms of teachers 'proving themselves' and having useful experience which would help their applications for other senior roles:

*I'm thinking of one of my heads of year who is on UPS3 and is a TLR post-holder, and I know her will actually want to lead a curriculum area. Now, I would be happy to give him an additional payment for two years to do something in his subject area ... something like a research and development group, or mentor a young science teacher.*

He argued that this should be 'on a time-limited basis', and saw it as a way of offering relevant experience that would help teachers in their career development; while still encouraging teachers to move into leadership, where the greatest needs are.

### 6.2.5 Change the pay arrangements

Section 5.4.2 showed that even those headteachers with ETs in post did not necessarily understand the spot pay arrangement, and their reports suggested that staff in their LAs also had difficulty with this. Having spot pay made the ETs feel singled out, and they felt uneasy about having to request and negotiate pay rises. It was generally agreed that it would be preferable to either place ETs on an incremental scale, like ASTs, or to describe their pay in a similar way to TLRs. A number of schools were in fact already doing this, because it enabled them to fix the ET pay in relation to that of other members of staff.

### 6.2.6 Allocate funding to schools that appoint ETs

Funding was repeatedly mentioned. The take-up of the AST scheme had been supported by provision of funding (to schools and then to LAs), and headteachers pointed out that many schools employed ASTs rather than ETs because LAs provide funding for these posts<sup>22</sup>. They also argued that when the performance threshold was introduced, schools were given additional funds to enable them to move a large number of teachers through the threshold. But while the ETS could be seen in a similar light (a threshold following U3) it has not attracted similar funding. Even headteachers who had appointed an ET and valued their work said that they could not appoint more because they could not afford it:

*I'm happy with it and I would encourage more people to take it up and have different roles in terms of teaching and learning, but I haven't got the money - that's all.*

Of course, this was not generally a matter of total budget available, but of priorities within this. As one head said,

*TLRs are for specific jobs that have to be done, but if you look at any particular school, staffing and all responsibility allowances take up the vast majority of the budget, and actually you need those TLRs. And of course to then add on top of that your Excellent Teachers there isn't the funding there.*

---

<sup>22</sup> AST funding to LAs was frozen in 2006; any additional AST posts have to be funded from additional LA sources, or by schools.



### 6.2.7 Allow teachers to apply for assessment if there is no post in the school, in order to get recognition of excellence

This was a suggestion made by the STRB (2005). While accepting RIG's (2004a) argument that the salary for the ET should be attached to a specific post rather than being awarded on the basis of personal accreditation, they expressed concern that the element of status and recognition among peers had thus been lost. They argued that in order to create motivation among teachers from an early stage of their careers to aspire to the ETS as the 'gold standard' for classroom teaching, any eligible teacher should be able to apply for assessment, and if successful, use the title. Teachers were asked about this in the survey. Over 70 per cent agreed. There were no differences across the various groups.

We also asked interviewees for their views. There was no clear agreement on this. A few headteachers liked the idea; one said, '*I do like the idea that Excellent Teacher is a status rather than a post.*' Another argued that it was '*a very good idea*', because it would be a clear goal for professional development:

*We like to encourage teachers to continue their learning and development, and it would be something they could say, 'yes, I've achieved that', rather than just global development.'*

A third head argued that he would be happy for teachers to be assessed and have the Excellent Teacher status, as long as they understood that the school has not got a post that it can afford to pay them in: he said, '*There's no reason why they shouldn't have the status.*' But rather more heads disagreed. One said:

*I think there's not a lot of mileage in that really. ... If somebody has got that kind of ability they should be using it within the school or move to another school to do it.*

The headteachers who had created ET posts generally thought that this suggestion was pointless. One argued that it would '*belittle*' the scheme. Most said that they did not believe that teachers would want to go through the assessment simply for recognition: '*I don't think they'd want to jump through a hoop, which can be quite stressful for some people, for no reason.*' This head also argued that headteachers know who their best teachers are, and give them positive feedback, and so '*no useful purpose would be served*'. In a similar vein, a teacher argued that '*recognition is nice, but you get through Ofsted anyway.*'

The idea was most strongly opposed by primary heads with experience of employing Higher Level Teaching Assistants, where the status is separate from the post. They argued that this was problematic; one said:

*I've got that situation in school ... I could see that despite them knowing it in the first place, I could see it creating tension. I could see the teachers turning round in the end and expecting to be paid. I don't think that's ideal.*

Another commented, '*It's like giving people a treat and saying you can't have it now.*' Teachers were generally slightly more positive about this idea. Some said that being able to apply for assessment without there needing to be a post created by a headteacher was '*absolutely right*', and that it might encourage more teachers to apply, and be more '*accessible*'. Several teachers argued that this would be a useful thing for teachers to have on their CVs for any future job applications they might make (whether for ET or other posts):

*It looks good on your CV ... but a younger person that would be quite good because that would give them the status to go for other jobs. (Primary ET)*

## 6 Suggestions for future development of the ET Scheme

One teacher said that it might also encourage schools to create ET posts: *'if teachers went out of their way to do it themselves, then schools would step in and offer it'*. Another discussed the potential for allowing teachers to make decisions relating to their career:

*You could really see who SLT valued. You could say, 'Well I've got this', and they could say, 'We're still not going to give it to you', and then you could know 'Right, this isn't the school for me, I'll leave.' It would help you know if you're favoured.*

In contrast, another teacher said that the idea of being assessed and certified without a role was *'patronising'*; *'I wouldn't go for that in a million years, show me the money'*. Others agreed that doing the extra work for the kudos and *'the sake of doing it'* was not enough:

*No, people wouldn't do that, I don't think they'd want to - it's like you spend all the time and everything and then, why? They'll wait to go to another school or wait till a post is available rather than do it in a school where there isn't a post available.*

A small number of teacher said that it would be beneficial as professional development for the teacher, but they were less convinced that teachers would be motivated to undergo the assessment:

*I think to be able to give that person the chance to be able to put themselves up against standard, then yes, because that's professional development. To do it when there is not a post, it goes back to the whole motivational thing, it might create that whole, 'why am I doing it for when there's not a post?' Especially if they're mature or older teachers, where they're comfortable in their school and they don't have any desire to move elsewhere. (Secondary GTP)*

One ET drew a parallel with the AST arrangement:

*There's certainly one person who's doing that for AST here, and I think that's absolutely right because ... I think it would encourage you to do more anyway and to pursue professional development, but then also if you do want to make change then you can use that as currency can't you? (Secondary ET)*

She argued that it would also be beneficial for the school:

*Yeah and I think it's good for the school because you know I mean I think in terms of the quality of your teaching staff is something you can really brag about as a headteacher and I think that's important.*

But most of the teachers interviewed were sceptical about whether any teachers would want to do this:

*I'm not sure that anybody would want to have to fill in all the forms for the sake of it. I can see that as recognition but I think there has to be some you know reward kind of thing.*

*Pay obviously is important to a lot of people who want to go further in their career. I don't suppose it would have that much benefit, I mean you don't walk around saying 'I'm an Excellent Teacher' so you're not going to have the status or the pay, doesn't seem a lot of point in it.*

Just one teacher thought that this was a really good idea to the extent that she said, *'the only problem you might have is that you might get inundated with people who want to be assessed in that way.'* But overall this proposal was not supported because interviewees thought it would not work.

### 6.2.8 Allow teachers to apply for assessment in order that they can apply for ET posts in other schools

This was another STRB suggestion. They reported that they found the RIG proposal that the scheme should only be open to teachers in a school where a post is envisaged and budgeted for 'puzzling', given the emphasis on wanting the scheme to encourage aspiration and professional development. They noted that there are no parallels elsewhere in the system; teachers wishing to begin leadership training or become ASTs can start preparing and seek accreditation when they wish. Thus the RIG proposal would be 'unfair on teachers who could meet the standard but happen to work in the wrong school' (para. 5.48).

The vast majority of teachers responding to the survey agreed or strongly agreed with this suggestion (72 per cent, with only four per cent disagreeing).

In interviews, unlike the previous suggestion, this one met with general approval. Headteachers commented that this would encourage teachers to look for career progression. Even those who disagreed with the previous suggestion approved this one. One said, *'that probably more workable'*. Some heads and teachers thought it would be helpful to be able to advertise an ET post and have a pool of accredited ETs who could apply; a senior leader in a school with an ET said, *'if we didn't have anybody that met the criteria, we would've liked to advertise the post as an excellent teacher post.'* They also drew parallels with the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH). One said:

*It's a bit like doing your NPQH before you become a head. It's the same kind of thing, of being accredited as an Excellent Teacher without actually having a post. ... That would be a worthwhile thing to do because if you're then going for something like an Assistant Head's post with a teaching and learning kind of remit, to have that kind of qualification behind you that says you've been assessed ... would be a useful thing to have on your application form for a promotion.*

This suggestion was also positively received by many of the teachers interviewed. They saw it as having key benefits both for teachers in terms of career progression and encouraging schools to value their teachers. One teacher referred to the need to be assessed in your school as *'almost like chaining a person'* to the school. She acknowledged that the need to retain teachers was part of the thinking behind the scheme, but said:

*If I want to make myself ready for a particular role, I would want to know that I can work with this role in other places as well. So therefore it wouldn't be a waste for me to try and get this status because then I can take it with me if I go.*  
(Secondary teacher)

In particular, it would offer some kind of externally assessed career progression for those teachers who do not feel valued in their school. As one secondary teacher said, *'you're not hindered in terms of your career and you can see what's available.'* Some teachers also identified benefits in terms of school managers, who would be made to *'sit up and look a little if people applied for accreditation in other schools'*.

However, it was argued that the current title of Excellent Teacher militates against schools successfully advertising ET posts, because of the tensions that would be created by the new arrival having that title:

*I think that it would be fraught with danger for the person coming into the post, to advertise externally as an Excellent Teacher, I'm an Excellent Teacher and here I am. As a Head of Department how would they feel, yeah I think that that would be a tricky one.* (Secondary deputy head)

*I wouldn't like to suddenly go into a school and become an Excellent Teacher not knowing that school. (Post-threshold teacher)*

### **6.3 Wider changes to the career and pay structure for teachers**

#### **6.3.1 To what extent are classroom and management/leadership career paths distinct?**

Interviewees were asked for views about the distinction between management and classroom career routes. Some heads supported the notion of career routes for the classroom teacher:

*There is some sense of keeping a teacher in a classroom who, their expertise is not in management and it's not in co-ordination, it's actually in the practice of the art of teaching ... I would say there is a definite need to develop that, so that that professionalism of teaching is upheld. (Primary head)*

Others argued that classroom and management routes are not entirely distinct from each other. There was also a feeling that the whole career structure had become over-complex:

*Now the teacher's pay and conditions change every year. There's a new set of statutes every year. They've been written on the planet Farb. They are a legal nightmare in terms of equal opportunity, in terms of how you defend decisions. They are far too complex. I don't know what these people think they're doing. They've made an unbelievably fancy soufflé when what we needed was bacon and eggs. (Secondary head)*

Teachers expressed very similar views. One argued that the multiplicity of career routes was a factor in the low take-up of the scheme:

*I think there are so many different avenues to go now ... that I would say that there would be low take up because there are so many different things people can do. So they wouldn't necessarily need to take Excellent Teacher status because ... there's the threshold; there's the AST route; there's leadership roles ... I just feel people just need to get on and do the teaching! Teachers should be an excellent teacher to be honest with you. (Secondary teacher)*

Most of the teachers interviewed agreed that there should be some means of recognising the work of more experienced classroom teachers and allowing them to stay in the classroom. However, some argued that once teachers have taken on a role such as AST or ET, they may develop other ambitions, and that it is misleading to assume some teachers will want classroom careers while others want to become leaders:

*I think it's difficult because some people will think that they want to stay in a classroom, and then when they've done something like an AST role or an excellent teacher role they realise that actually they do want something different. It's that confidence factor in the first place. ... I think if you were making people sort of categorise themselves they would do, but that wouldn't necessarily be sensible for people to do that and be stuck in those categories. (Secondary assistant head)*

It might be more helpful to recognise that what many teachers need are new challenges, which may result in a teacher staying in the classroom, or may result in them moving to leadership. This was the thinking behind the suggestion to create short-term ET posts outlined in Section 6.2.4.

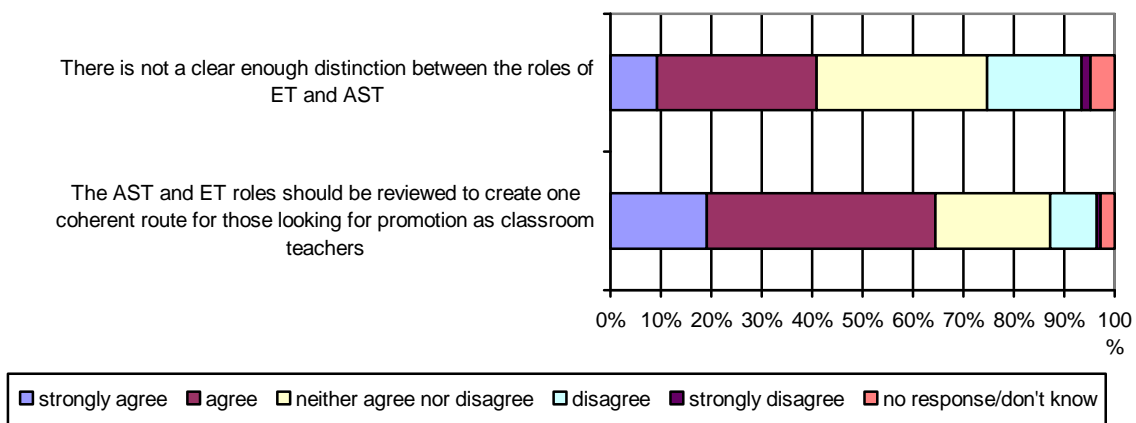
Some of the headteachers interviewed were sympathetic to the idea of classroom careers, but concerned that these might prove more attractive than leadership, at a time when candidates for leadership are in short supply. One secondary head talked about the importance of maintaining pay differentials that act as an incentive to move into leadership:

*You've got to try and make sure there are differentials. We do have another issue which we have also got to be mindful of is making sure that we have got enough aspiring leaders. And we do want people to also, yes, I passionately believe about the spreaders of good practice, the AST and the Excellent Teachers role, but I've also got very passionate support for people who are going to be subject leaders for maths and science. And then people who are going to be assistant heads and deputy heads and then heads.*

### 6.3.2 Combine ET and AST into a single route

We reported in Chapter 4 that a fifth of survey respondents envisaged seeking promotion as classroom teachers (as an ET or AST), and a further third would consider this. The survey also explored the extent to which teachers see a clear distinction between ET and AST, and whether the two distinct routes are seen as useful (Figure 6.2)

**Figure 6.2: AST and ET routes: extent to which respondents agreed with statements (N = 619)**



Source: Survey of teachers

More respondents agreed than disagreed with the statement, 'there is not a clear enough distinction between the roles of ET and AST' (41 per cent versus 21 per cent). Those in secondary schools were the most likely to agree that the distinction is not clear enough (47 per cent, compared with 36 per cent in primary and 26 per cent in special schools). In that secondary school teachers are more likely to have worked with ASTs, it is interesting that they see no clear distinction between ASTs and ETs, and this may be a consequence of the pattern we found in the case study schools of appointing inreach ASTs.

A clear majority of respondents agreed that the AST and ET roles should be reviewed to create one coherent route for those looking for promotion as classroom teachers (66 per cent, with only ten per cent disagreeing). There were no differences between groups. Among the interviewees, there was undoubtedly a feeling that the current roles of ET and AST have resulted from historical circumstances rather than being designed in a coherent way. Headteachers could not see the logic of AST being the outreach role, available to younger teachers, and paid on an incremental range, while ET was for more experienced teachers (but required fewer standards to be met), paid on a spot scale, and focused within the school. One primary head argued that, as a career path, ET should be paid on an incremental range like AST:

*I feel that that seems a bit strange in the sense of, well, if it is a career path it should, I think in my head the logic would be it would be more like the leadership spine, that you would be given a range and you would have incremental within that range. Now I don't know if that's going to be a possibility in the future.*

Some headteachers were already using ASTs for 'inreach' because they did not see any logical reason not to do so (other than the LA contribution to their pay, which these heads were prepared to forego).

The logical conclusion from this was that AST and ET should be combined:

*I don't think it really matters what you call it as long as there is an opportunity there, and what I would like to see is AST and ET put together but with a really good sliding pay scale so that people can progress up that rather like you can in senior management on leadership. (Secondary head)*

We discussed earlier the suggestion that ET should be relabelled 'AST2' or 'AST inreach'. To do this would perhaps also involve making the entry point for the two schemes the same (possibly after the pay threshold).

Many teachers we spoke to felt there was little to distinguish the AST and ET routes, and said they were confused by the similarities between them. As one secondary teacher explained:

*I think you would find at least 90 per cent of staff didn't know there was any difference between the two and think that they were called the same thing; they were the same by different names.*

Some teachers, generally those with ASTs in their school or local authority, appeared to have a greater understanding of the AST grade, and were able to point to the differences between the two.

*I think an AST leads more into like a school improvement partner. It's a different role isn't it? It's more kind of looking to the community, things like that, whereas obviously an ET is like a good classroom day to day person who's like on the corridors. (Secondary teacher)*

However, even those teachers who had some idea of the differences still indicated uncertainty.

*ASTs I suppose are more, they've got the skills in one area haven't they, whereas an ET I would imagine would be more of an all rounder, but I don't really know. (Primary teacher)*

Others were only able to point to the AST's outreach function, or indicated that they had thought ETs and ASTs were the same. This was mainly related to a lack of publicity and information about the two routes.

The similarities between the two grades also led some teachers to question whether they were both needed. A small number of teachers wondered if there was any way of amalgamating the two, but were unsure how this would work in practice.

### 6.3.3 Review the distinction between ET and TLR

In their original proposals for the ETS, RIG indicated that like ASTs, ETs should be able to hold TLRs. The STRB (2005) disagreed with this, arguing that the ET role should be 'a resource for teachers rather than an arm of management' (para. 5.37). We have shown that interviewees generally saw this separation from management as very important. However, when asked whether 'an Excellent Teacher should be able to hold a TLR', the majority of respondents to the survey agreed (60 per cent), with a third disagreeing. The highest level of agreement came from teachers who already had TLRs (73 per cent), and the lowest from teachers on U3 with no TLR (49 per cent) and those on the leadership and AST scales (47 per cent).

The proposals put forward by VT Education and Skills also suggest that Higher Threshold Teachers (the title they propose) should be able to hold TLRs, because they see the current position as denying teachers an important career opportunity. Interviewees were also asked to comment on whether Excellent Teachers should be able to hold TLRs. Those who favoured separate teaching and leadership routes tended to agree that ETs should not have TLRs. One head with an ET in post said:

*It is good, because he isn't on a TLR and he's got very much a teaching role, whereas when you start giving people TLRs, you're expecting other sort of management input aren't you? So it keeps where it should be, which is, 'I'm an Excellent Teacher and I'm now going to try and encourage others to prepare like me, to look at resourcing lessons like I do.*

Similarly, others argued that the role they wanted from ETs was different from that of those with TLRs:

*The purpose was to reward good classroom teachers and keep them there, rather than taking on admin roles or responsibilities. (Secondary head)*

*The sort of work I want them to do, it's a good idea [for ETs and TLRs] to be separate ... because I want to use Excellent Teachers to focus on teaching and learning in terms of pedagogy rather than managing. (Secondary head)*

One primary head explained that the governors had preferred the Excellent Teacher role to the TLR because they saw it as a wider and more constructive role:

*Now our governors chose Excellent Teacher rather than a TLR ... We felt that an Excellent Teacher would be far more of benefit to moving the school forward in terms of standards, but I don't mean standards in the narrow SATs level sense, I mean standards as in the enjoyment, achievement, excellence agenda across the whole sort of essence of teaching. ... They felt that the Excellent Teacher role would be far better at pushing that forward than a TLR, which would be much more about almost management. And I don't mean that in a negative sense but it seemed much more about managing a given rather than leading into a possible.*

However, those in smaller schools, and in London, saw the separation of roles as impractical, and as excluding many teachers from the ET role. The majority of staff in their schools with the level of experience required to become an ET already have TLRs. As an Inner London NQT explained:

*A lot of people who have been in the job mainly five years or so are in a position of responsibility. And those are the people you are looking to recruit, and if you can't do both then they are probably going to stay in what they are doing.*

There was, then, a level of agreement with this suggestion that ETs should be able to hold TLRs. One teacher suggested that the roles of middle management and mentoring should be combined, and that it should be up to schools to decide how best to do it because of the variety across schools. Another secondary teacher agreed:

*I think it's a good thing to mix, you could be an ET and hold TLR points because I think that's one of the things that people are not happy with not being able to move up after UPS because they might hold a TLR, and why stop them from moving up?*

However, some teachers felt that management and mentoring roles should remain separate. One teacher said that allowing ETs to 'hold TLR points as well would be defeating the object'.

We showed in Chapter 5 that the TLR role includes responsibility for teaching and learning. In some ways, it could be argued that 'Teaching and Learning Responsibility' would be an ideal label for the ET role. Thus one primary headteacher explained that three out of four of the TLR roles in their school actually fitted the ET job description, and a secondary head described the separation of teaching and management routes as '*bureaucratic nonsense*'. We have also shown that some schools were using the TLR pay arrangements as a way of determining what to pay ETs.

There is then an argument for widening the definition of the TLR so that it does not have to include line management of staff, and allowing schools greater flexibility to create roles that meet their needs.

### **6.3.4 Replace the ETS with a scheme based on professional development**

When the STRB initially discussed the proposal to set up the ETS (STRB, 2004), they argued that there should be 'a requirement for excellent teachers to have followed a course of study leading to an appropriate qualification' (p.15). This notion of encouraging experienced teacher to study is at the heart of the Chartered Teacher Scheme in Scotland.

Some of the teachers interviewed argued that to allow progression for teachers who have reached U3, a better alternative to the ETS would be a scheme that enabled them to study, and renew their enthusiasm in this way. This might include provision of funding for further Masters level study, perhaps relating to teacher's subject areas, which would then lead to the sort of recognition and pay increase that the ETS aims to offer. This would reinvigorate and re-enthuse teachers with twelve or so years of experience who might be becoming stale. This contrasts with the current emphasis on teachers undertaking Masters level study at the start of their careers (DCSF, 2008e).



## **Summary**

### ***Views about what might increase the number of ETs***

It was agreed that more publicity was essential; this should be directed both at headteachers and at teachers. While paper publicity has some effect, it was also suggested that it would be useful to have presentations at headteachers' conferences and meetings, and that workshops should be held for prospective ETs.

### ***Suggestions for changing the ETS to make it more attractive***

Many interviewees argued that the ETS needed changing; the most specific suggestions came from those in schools employing ETs. The vast majority of interviewees argued that the title Excellent Teacher should be changed; among the ETs themselves and their headteachers, the most preferred alternative was a version of the AST title – AST2 or AST in-reach. The STRB had suggested Principal Teacher; some liked this, but many had reservations, including the overlap with the increasing use of the title Principal for the headteacher.

Other suggestions that attracted a large measure of support were changing the eligibility criteria to allow teachers to become ETs earlier in their careers; changing the pay arrangements either to a scale or to a payment like the TLR; allocating some funding to support schools creating ET posts; and allowing teachers to apply for assessment so that they could apply for ET posts in other schools. It was also suggested that it would be useful for schools and for teachers' career development to be able to make fixed-term ET appointments, and that the requirement to undertake a 'searching analysis' should be clarified.

While it was generally agreed that ETs should have a career-long record of CPD, the current ETs and their headteachers argued that they had demonstrated this in the evidence they presented at their assessments, and that no further requirement was necessary.

There was little support for the STRB suggestion that teachers should be able to apply to be assessed in order to have ET status and recognition, even though a post was not available.

### ***Wider changes to the career and pay structure for teachers***

Many interviewees argued that rather than making changes to the ETS alone, it would be helpful to make wider changes to the career and pay structure for teachers. While it was agreed that it was helpful to have some career options other than management, the majority argued that it is unhelpful to regard classroom and management career routes as entirely separate, in the way suggested in some government documentation. They felt that it would be helpful to revise documentation to recognise the fact that some teachers find classroom related posts such as AST or ET give them the confidence to move into leadership roles, and that equally, some teachers in leadership positions have welcomed the opportunity to move to teaching and learning (or 'classroom') roles. In practice, the evidence showed that some teachers had switched from a managerial role to an ET post, and that others were using their ET posts as a stepping stone into management.

There was considerable support for reviewing the AST and ET roles to create a single coherent career route. It was argued that schools could create posts for such teachers that involved outreach or that were entirely inreach. The two roles could be identified by titles such as AST1 and AST2, or AST outreach and AST inreach.

## 6 Suggestions for future development of the ET Scheme

It was also argued that there is considerable overlap between the TLR and the ET role, in that both roles have some responsibility for teaching and learning. One suggestion was that the definition of the TLR should be broadened to offer schools more flexibility in creating roles that meet their needs.

Some interviewees suggested that the ETS should be replaced with a scheme that involves studying, more like the Scottish and Welsh Chartered Teacher schemes. It was argued that this would reinvigorate teachers who might have become stale after twelve years or so of classroom teaching.

## 7 Discussion and implications for policy and practice

A number of different, and often conflicting, ideas inform pay structures; these are not unique to teachers' pay, though that is the focus here. The most important factors have generally been:

- experience: rewarded by annual increments;
- responsibility: rewarded by additional payments such as management allowances or TLRs, or being placed in a higher pay scale such as the leadership scale<sup>23</sup>;
- performance, which was central to payment by results, but has more recently been made a central factor with the introduction of performance management and the pay threshold, and the creation of professional standards linked to pay, such that Post-Threshold, Advanced Skills and Excellent teacher are both pay structures and standards, designed to ensure that those whose performance was poor did not simply progress up the incremental scale:

The Modernising Government White Paper made clear that a person's pay should reflect their output, results and performance. This means that those who contribute most ... should be best rewarded, and that systems which give automatic pay increases to poor or inefficient performers should be challenged. (DfEE 1999, para. 30, p.8)

The current arrangements for teachers' pay take into account all three factors. For example, a teacher normally has to have six years experience to be assessed for the performance threshold. Taking on additional responsibilities is rewarded by specific payments (TLRs) or by a move to the leadership scale. But pay is also related to assessment against the Professional Standards for Teachers, and schools are urged to consider performance in making decisions about awarding pay increments, though the evidence to date suggests that increments are rarely withheld (e.g. Ofsted, 2002; Hodgson et al., 2007)

The ETS brings together these notions of experience, performance and responsibility. A teacher must normally have at least 12 years' experience to apply for assessment against the ET standards. The title Excellent Teacher, together with the STRB's description of the as a 'gold standard', and 'the pinnacle of a classroom teacher's role' (2005, p. xii) implies that skills and performance are the key aspect. But the Guidance (DCSF, 2007) makes it quite clear that the ET role involves taking on additional responsibilities such as coaching, mentoring, induction, and helping teachers to improve their practice.

The ETS is unique in requiring experience, performance and role responsibilities. Other grades emphasise only on or two of these: for example, post-threshold teachers have to have a certain level of experience and have reached specific standards; ASTs have to have reached specific standards and undertake a specific role; while TLRs and those on the leadership scale have to carry out a role, but do not have to achieve any specific standards or length of experience.

---

<sup>23</sup> Other factors have included educational attainment; skill shortages; differences in cost of living and the graduate job market in different parts of the country; and the specific challenge in some schools (generally relating to the pupil intake).

This combination of experience, performance and responsibilities is what seems to be most problematic with the ETS. Many interviewees liked the idea of having a scheme that recognised and rewarded excellence. However, they repeatedly pointed out that many teachers who are excellent are not eligible for this scheme because they do not have enough years of experience, or because they have TLRs. Moreover, some argued that the highest levels of excellence in teaching do not necessarily go with the skills (or the desire) to mentor other teachers.

They also pointed out that it is accepted that a teacher can achieve the AST standard before reaching the performance threshold (let alone gaining another six years post-threshold experience). Similarly, there are no requirements about the length of experience a teacher should acquire before gaining a TLR or moving onto the leadership scale. It therefore seems illogical to stipulate that teachers have to gain so much experience before they can be assessed as ETs, or can undertake the role set out for ETs.

Clearly the centrality of experience to the ETS arose because of the way in which it was created, as a substitute for the fourth and fifth points on the Upper (post threshold) pay scale. But as many interviewees were not even aware of this aspect of the origin of the scheme, it now seems largely irrelevant.

The ETS in its present form is little used, and is clearly not meeting the needs of the majority of schools or the aspirations of the majority of teachers. However, the case studies of schools that have appointed ETs show that the ETs themselves welcomed the reward and recognition, and the ET mentoring role is beneficial, and can impact on standards – though perhaps not in the immediate way that the current emphasis on league tables demands. The fact that ET is not a management role was identified as a crucially important aspect of the success of the role. Many of the headteachers that have created ET posts argued that the role of their ET does not fit clearly anywhere else in the pay structure; unlike the AST it involves inreach work, and unlike the TLR, it does not involve line managing other staff.

Of course, it should not be assumed that other schools do not have equally effective mentoring arrangements; the crucial point here is that they this activity is carried out without the creation of ET posts. In an increasing number of schools it appears to be done by ASTs who have no outreach function. In others, post-threshold teachers are deployed in this way, following the revision to the Professional Standards. And in many schools, this is part of the role of those with TLRs.

The question remains as to whether a revised scheme may prove more attractive to schools and teachers. Chapter 6 discussed various ways in which are relatively straightforward, while others would involve a more far-reaching review of other aspects of teachers' pay structure.

If only a 'light touch' revision is to be undertaken, the two key issues emerging from this review are changing the title and increasing publicity for the scheme. There is substantial evidence that the majority of ETs find the title embarrassing, and that it had given rise to teasing, and, in some schools, cynicism, negativity and ill-feeling among the ETs' colleagues. Other teachers have ruled out applying to become ETs because of the title. However, there was no consensus about alternative possibilities. The STRB suggestion of Senior Teacher and Principal Teacher were generally rejected because of possible confusion with other roles. Some supported suggestions such as Lead Teacher or Leading Practitioner. However, there were also suggestions for titles that reflected the role rather than the status, such as Lead Mentor or Leading Learning Teacher. In that the ETs were not all carrying out the same roles, this would perhaps need to be flexible. A precedent for decoupling pay and role would be head of department; a HoD has a TLR but is known as a head of department.

The data presented shows very clearly that the ETS is not well known or understood, particularly among teachers. Yet there is evidence that publicity does have an impact. The teachers who featured in *Primary Teachers* and *Secondary Teachers* magazines both said that they had received enquiries from prospective ETs, and one teacher had become an ET because she had read one of these articles. The most useful form of publicity, however, may be presentations at conferences and other events, and running workshops for prospective ETs and for schools to enable them to consider the potential benefits.

Another change that was supported by the majority of interviewees was to enable teachers to apply for assessment against the ET standards at an earlier stage in their career. Interviewees suggested that this would be appropriate because it is possible to apply to become an AST or to have a TLR or to move onto the leadership scale at a much earlier stage, and so many teachers have already taken on other roles before they reach the point in their careers when ET would be a possibility. Some interviewees suggested the pay threshold as an appropriate level to set. Others suggested no experience limit, because there is none for AST which is most regarded as a similar role. However, this change obviously removes part of the original rationale for the ETS, as a way in which teachers on U3 could progress after U4 and U5 were abolished.

Other straightforward changes would include changing the pay arrangements to either an incremental scale (perhaps the lower part of the AST scale) or to the same arrangement as TLRs. The current pay arrangement (spot pay within a range) is not well understood, and in that the ETs are the only teachers paid in this way, seems to them to make their lives more difficult.

It would also be helpful to clarify the requirement to provide a specific example of searching analysis carried out in the last two years as part of the ET assessment, providing exemplification of how it can be met, and showing explicitly that ETs are not being asked to do something that is not required of ASTs.

We asked interviewees about other specific STRB recommendations:

- There was some support for enabling teachers to apply for assessment against the ET standards in order that they could apply for posts in other schools.
- There was little support for allowing teachers to apply for ET assessment and gain ET status even if there was no post available. Most interviewees said there was little point in teachers undergoing a challenging assessment just to gain status, if this was not accompanied by pay. Some referred to Higher Level Teaching Assistant, where the separation of status and pay has resulted in a large number of teaching assistants who have the status but are not employed as HLTAs.
- While it was agreed that ETs should have a sustained record of CPD, the ETs themselves and their headteachers argued that it was not necessary to make this an additional criterion because they had in any case demonstrated this through the evidence they put forward for their assessments. It was felt that to add such a requirement would not act to increase the number of ETs.

While changing the ETS in the ways indicated above might create a slightly greater take-up, it does not address the issues raised about the overlaps between ET and AST, TLR, and the expectations of post-threshold teachers. The review of the ETS showed that there are overlaps between:

- ET and AST: many schools now employ ASTs who undertake only inreach work. In such contexts, the difference between ET and AST is not clear-cut;

- ET and TLR: in that many TLR roles involve improving teaching and learning through mentoring and coaching, the distinction is not clear-cut. moreover, the title 'teaching and learning responsibility' is actually an accurate description of the role of the ET;
- ET and post-threshold teacher: both sets of standards include coaching and mentoring. Thus the ET standards are now less distinct from post-threshold teachers than it originally was, and there is less incentive for schools to employ ETs if post-threshold teachers can be asked to do the same work.

A number of courses of action could be considered here. Perhaps the most attractive to interviewees would be to combine the AST and ET routes, creating a scheme which included AST outreach and AST inreach. This would resolve the problem posed by the ET title by substituting a title which is now accepted and respected (though shares some of the same problems as the ET title). It would also solve the obvious overlap created by the increasing use of ASTs for inreach activity.

Alternatively, the TLR could be revised to remove the necessity for line management, so that the ET role could be seen as a Teaching and Learning Responsibility (which it is).

Another possibility would be to design a scheme which would enable progression for those on U3 that was linked to undertaking some study leading to a qualification, as in the Scottish Chartered Teacher. This might be a useful way forward, enabling people to take up the revamped ET role at an earlier stage in their careers, but still offering potential for those reaching U3 without to refresh their knowledge and gain new motivation.

## References

- Acker, S. (ed.) (1989) *Teachers, gender and careers*, London: Falmer.
- Adonis, Lord (2008) Written Statement: School Teachers' Review Body, Lords Hansard text, 15 January 2008, Volume 697, Column WS134, available online at <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200708/ldhansrd/text/80115-wms0002.htm>, accessed February 2008.
- ATL, DfES, GMB, NAHT, NASUWT, NEOST, PAT, SHA, TGWU, UNISON, WAG (2003) *Raising Standards and Tackling Workload: A National Agreement*, available online at [www.tda.gov.uk/upload/resources/na\\_standards\\_workload.pdf](http://www.tda.gov.uk/upload/resources/na_standards_workload.pdf)
- Berry, B. and King, T. (2005) *Recruiting and retaining National Board Certified Teachers for Hard-to-staff, Low-Performing Schools. Silver bullets or smart solutions*. Hillsborough, NC: Center for Teaching Quality.
- Blake, D., Hanley, V., Jennings, M. and Lloyd, M. (2000) Superteachers: the views of teachers and head teachers on the Advanced Skills Teacher grade, *Research in Education*, 63, 48-59.
- Boulton, P. and Coldron, J. (1998) Why teachers say 'stuff it' to promotion: a failure of equal opportunities? *Gender and Education*, 10, 2 149-161.
- Cavalluzzo, L. (2004) *Is National Board Certification an effective sign of teacher quality?* Virginia: CAN Corporation, available online at [www.cna.org/documents/cavaluzzostudy.pdf](http://www.cna.org/documents/cavaluzzostudy.pdf) accessed January 2009.
- CEA (2001) *Threshold Assessment Arrangements: Overview of Round One*, 19 October 2001.
- Cheshire County Council (2006) News release: Cheshire teacher is marked 'excellent', available online at <http://www.cheshire.gov.uk/PR/2006/july06/277-06.htm>, accessed 13.02.08.
- Coleman, M. (1996) Management styles and the female secondary head, *Educational Management and Administration*, 24, 2 163-174.
- Coleman, M. (2002) *Women as Headteachers, striking a balance*, Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham.
- Collinson, D. and Hearn, J. (1996) Breaking the silence: on men, masculinities and managements, in D. Collinson and J. Hearn (eds) *Men as Managers, Managers as Men: critical perspectives on men, masculinities and managements*, London: Sage.
- Connelly, G. & McMahon, M. (2007) 'Chartered Teacher: accrediting professionalism for Scotland's teachers – a view from the inside', *Journal of In-service Education*, Volume 33, No, 1, March 2007, pp 91-105
- DCSF (2007a) *Excellent Teachers: Guidance for teachers, headteachers and local authorities* (England). Nottingham: DCSF, available online at <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=9670> , accessed February 2008.

- DCSF (2007b) *School Teachers Pay and Condition Document 2007 and Guidance on School Teachers' Pay and Conditions*. London: The Stationery Office.
- DCSF (2007c) *Achievement and attainment tables, 2007*, available online at <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/performance/tables/>, accessed December 2008.
- DCSF (2008a) *School Teachers Pay and Condition Document 2008 and Guidance on School Teachers' Pay and Conditions*. London: The Stationery Office.
- DCSF (2008b) Premier Class, in *Primary Teachers*, 55, March 2008, p.15.
- DCSF (2008c) Premier Class, in *Secondary Teachers*, 55, March 2008, p.21.
- DCSF (2008d) *School Workforce in England* (including Local Authority level figures) January 2008 revised September 2008, available online at [http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/cgi-bin/rsgateway/search.pl?cat=1&subcat=1\\_2\\_5&q1=Search](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/cgi-bin/rsgateway/search.pl?cat=1&subcat=1_2_5&q1=Search), accessed January 2009.
- DCSF (2008e) *Being the best for our children: releasing talent for teaching and learning*, DCSF-00246-2008, Nottingham: DCSF.
- DCSF/National Statistics (2008) *Education and Training Statistics for the United Kingdom, 2008 edition*, available online at <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/VOL/v000823/index.shtml> , accessed December 2008.
- DCSF (2009) *Statistics of Education: School Workforce in England* (including pupil: teacher ratios and pupil: adult ratios), January 2009 (Provisional), available online at <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000844/index.shtml>, accessed May 2009.
- DfEE (1998) Green Paper *Teachers: Meeting the challenge of change*. London: The Stationery Office.
- DfEE (1999) *Teachers meeting the challenge of change: technical consultation document on pay and performance management*, London: DfEE.
- DfES (2003) *Written Evidence from the Department for Education and Skills*, STRB, July 2003, available online at <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=4658>, accessed February 2008.
- DfES (2004a) *The Agreement on rewards and incentives for post-threshold teachers and members of the school leadership group*, Written evidence to the School Teachers' Review Body from the Department for Education and Skills, available online at <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=6075> , accessed February 2008.
- DfES (2004b) *Statistics of Education: School Workforce in England*, 2003 edition, London: TSO.
- DfES (2005a) *Review of the school staffing structure: Guidance for Schools in England*, 27 May 2005. available online at <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=8477>, accessed February 2008.
- DfES (2005b) *Excellent Teachers Scheme: Explanatory Notes for Schools*, 27 May 2005, available online at [www.teachernet.gov.uk/doc/12300/publication\\_ExcellentTeacherSchemeForSchools.pdf](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/doc/12300/publication_ExcellentTeacherSchemeForSchools.pdf), accessed February 2008.



DfES (2005c) *School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document*, available online at [http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/payandperformance/pay/2005/School\\_Teachers\\_Pay\\_and\\_Conditions\\_Document\\_2005/](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/payandperformance/pay/2005/School_Teachers_Pay_and_Conditions_Document_2005/), accessed January 2009.

Education (Review of Staffing Structure) (England) Regulations 2005 (SI 2005 No. 1032), available online at <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2005/20051032.htm> accessed January 2009).

Gillies, D. (2007) Excellence and education: rhetoric and reality, *Education, Knowledge and Economy*, 1,1, 19-35.

GisaJob (2009) Advertisement for mathematics teacher who may wish to work towards ET status, Slough, available online at [http://www.gisajob.com/show\\_job.cgi?j=5096194&cat=14&k=mathematics%20teacher&lo=Slough%2C%20Berkshire](http://www.gisajob.com/show_job.cgi?j=5096194&cat=14&k=mathematics%20teacher&lo=Slough%2C%20Berkshire), accessed January 2009.

Goldhaber, D. and Anthony, E. (2007). 'Can teacher quality be effectively assessed? National Board Certification as a signal of effective teaching', *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, February 2007, 89 (1); 134-150

Government of South Australia (no date) *Advanced Skills Teachers*, available online at <http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/HR1/pages/AST/asthome/?reFlag=1>, accessed January 2009

GTC (2007) *Making CPD Better: bring together research about CPD*, TPLF07, Birmingham: GTC.

GTC (2008) *GTC Survey of Teachers, 2007, Report one: Teachers' Careers and Views on Professional Development*, London: GTC, available on line at <http://www.gtc.org.uk>, accessed October 2008.

GTC Scotland (2008) *Chartered Teacher Update. Statistics as at 11 September 2008*.

GTC Wales (2006) *A Professional development framework for teachers in Wales: professional development, recognition and accreditation (Strand 2)*. Advice to the Welsh Assembly Government. Online at [www.gtcw.org.uk/documents/framework/Strand\\_2\\_advice\\_E.pdf](http://www.gtcw.org.uk/documents/framework/Strand_2_advice_E.pdf) , accessed January 2009.

GTC Wales (no date) *Chartered Teacher Pilots*, available online at [www.gtcw.org.uk/charteredteacherpilot.html](http://www.gtcw.org.uk/charteredteacherpilot.html), accessed January 2009.

GTC Wales (2007) *The Chartered Teacher Standards*, available online at <http://www.gtcw.org.uk/charteredteacherstandards.html>, accessed January 2009.

Guardian (2005) Bad reviews: Do we know enough to tackle the staff review? (Janette Owen) *Education Guardian*, 22 November 2005, available online at <http://education.guardian.co.uk>, accessed February 2008.

Guardian Jobs in Education (2008) Excellent Job for Excellent Teacher, available online at <http://jobs.guardian.co.uk>, accessed February 2008.

Gumtree (2008) Excellent Teacher of English required, available online at <http://guildford.gumtree.com/guidfor/36/18238736.html>, accessed February 2008..  
 Headspace (unpublished) Key findings from the Headspace survey of leaders of state schools in England Wave 6, April 2007.

- Hepburn, H. (2009) Chartered teachers with a twist, *Times Educational Supplement Scotland*, 9 January 2009.
- Hodgson, A., Minor, R., Pickett, M. and Morgan, D. (2007) *Survey of Teachers' Pay 2007*, London: ORC International.
- Hutchings, M., James, K., Smart, S. and Williams, K. (2006) *GTC Survey of Teachers, 2006*, London: GTC, available on line at <http://www.gtc.org.uk>, accessed February 2008.
- Hutchings, M. (2002) A representative profession? Gender issues, in M. Johnson and J. Hallgarten (eds) *From victims of change to agents of change: the future of the teaching profession*, London: ippr.
- Ingvarson, L. (2008) *Recognising Advanced Teaching: What's Working? Why?* Teaching Australia and Business Council of Australia Symposium, 15 October 2008, available online at [www.acer.ac.uk](http://www.acer.ac.uk) accessed January 2009.
- Ingvarson, L. and Chadbourne, R. (1997) Reforming teachers' pay systems: the Advanced Skills teacher in Australia, *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education*, 11, 7-30.
- Kleinhenz, E. and Ingvarson, L. (2004) Teacher accountability in Australia: current policies and practices and their relation to the improvement of teaching and learning, *Research Papers in Education*, 19,1, 31-49.
- Labour Party (1997) *New Labour because Britain deserves better*, Labour Party Manifesto, available online at <http://www.labour-party.org.uk/manifestos/1997/1997-labour-manifesto.shtml>, accessed January 2009.
- McMahon, M. & Reeves, J. (2007) *Evaluating the impact of Chartered Teachers in Scotland: the views of Chartered Teachers*, available online at [http://www.gtcs.org.uk/Research/\\_publishedresearch\\_/CharteredTeacherResearch/research\\_chartered\\_teacher.aspx](http://www.gtcs.org.uk/Research/_publishedresearch_/CharteredTeacherResearch/research_chartered_teacher.aspx), accessed January 2009.
- Mahony, P., Menter, I., and Hextall, I. (2004a) The emotional impact of performance related pay on teachers in England, *British Educational Research Journal*, 30, 3, 435-456.
- Mahony, P., Hextall, I. and Menter, I. (2004b) Threshold assessment and performance management: modernizing or masculinizing teaching in England? *Gender and Education*, 16, 2, 131-149.
- McCormack, S. (2003) Have super-teachers really taken off? *The Independent*, 19 June 2003.
- Moreau, M., Osgood, J. and Halsall, A. (2005) *The Career Progression of Women Teachers in England: a study of the barriers to promotion and career development*, London: IPSE.
- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (2007) *A research guide on National Board Certification of Teachers*, Arlington VA: NBPTS.
- NBPTS (no date) Why should I become a National Board Certified Teacher? available online at [http://www.nbpts.org/become\\_a\\_candidate/the\\_benefits](http://www.nbpts.org/become_a_candidate/the_benefits), accessed January 2009.
- NUT (2001) *Women and senior management: an NUT survey*, National Union of Teachers.

- Ofsted (2001) *Advanced Skills Teachers: appointment, deployment and impact*, HMI 273, available online at <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/>, accessed December 2008.
- Ofsted (2002) *Performance Management of Teachers* HMI 502, available online at <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/>, accessed December 2008.
- Ofsted (2003) *Advanced Skills Teachers: a survey*, HMI 1767, available online at <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/>, accessed December 2008.
- Ofsted (2008) *The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills*, 2007/08, Norwich: TSO.
- Owen, S. (2005) 'Career stage PD and the Nation Teacher Quality Agenda', *AARE*, available online at . <http://www.aare.edu.au/05pap/owe05069.pdf>, accessed February 2009.
- Pedder, D., Storey, A. and Opfer, V.D. (2008) *Schools and continuing professional development (CPD) in England - State of the Nation research project, Synthesis report*, TDA, available online at [http://www.tda.gov.uk/upload/resources/pdf/s/stateofthenation\\_report.pdf](http://www.tda.gov.uk/upload/resources/pdf/s/stateofthenation_report.pdf), accessed March 2009.
- Porter, N. (2009) Chartered scheme open to 'leaders', *TES Cymru*, 16 January 2009
- PriceWaterhouseCoopers (2003) *Report into Allowances and Pay Progression*, available online at <http://www.ome.uk.com/review.cfm?body=7&page=2&all#documents>, accessed February 2008.
- RIG (Rewards and Incentives Group) (2004a) Evidence from the Rewards and Incentives Group: September 2004, Agreement on Teachers' pay, available online at <http://74.125.77.132/search?q=cache:HMMhdSdo6B4J:www.teachernet.gov.uk/doc/7415/full%2520joint%2520evidence%2520FINAL%252027%2520September%25202004.doc+%22evidence+from+the+rewards+and+incentives+group:+September+2004+Agreement+on+teachers%27+pay%22&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=uk>, accessed February 2008.
- RIG (Rewards and Incentives Group) (2004b) Supplementary evidence from the Rewards and Incentives Group: October 2004, available online at <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=7506>, accessed February 2008.
- RIG (Rewards and Incentives Group) (2006) *Rewarding Teachers and Raising Standards - Implementing the National Agreement on Rewards and Incentives: Teaching and learning responsibility (TLR) payments*, RIG Note 4, February 2006, DfES, available online at <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=9643>, accessed January 2009.
- Scottish Government (2008a) *Report of the Chartered Teacher Review Group*, available online at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/06/04102833/5>, accessed January 2009.
- Scottish Government (2008b) *Chartered Teachers News Release*, 7 June 2008, available online at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2008/06/09082339>, accessed January 2009.
- Scottish Executive (2000) *A Teaching Profession for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The report of the Committee of Inquiry into professional conditions of service for teachers*. Edinburgh: The Scottish Executive.

- SEED (2003) *Continuing Professional Development*, available online at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2003/01/18713/31242>, accessed January 2009.
- Smyth, J., Shacklock, G. and Hattam, R. (1997) Teacher development in difficult times: lessons from a policy initiative in Australia, *Teacher Development*, 1, 1, 11-20.
- Smyth, J. and Shacklock, G. (1998) *Remaking Teaching: ideology, policy and practice*, London: Routledge.
- STRB (2000) *School Teachers' Review Body Ninth Report 2000*, Cm4568, available online at <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=4034>, accessed February 2008.
- STRB (2001) *School Teachers' Review Body Tenth Report 2001*, Cm4990, available online at <http://www.ome.uk.com/review.cfm?body=7&page=2&all#documents>, accessed February 2008.
- STRB (2002) *School Teachers' Review Body Eleventh Report 2002*, Cm5353, available online at <http://www.ome.uk.com/review.cfm?body=7>, accessed February 2008.
- STRB (2003) *School Teachers' Review Body Twelfth Report 2003*, Cm5715, available online at <http://www.ome.uk.com/review.cfm?body=7>, accessed February 2008.
- STRB (2003) *School Teachers' Review Body Thirteenth Report Part 1: 2003*, Cm5978, available online at <http://www.ome.uk.com/review.cfm?body=7>, accessed February 2008.
- STRB (2004) *School Teachers' Review Body Thirteenth Report Part 2: 2004*, Cm6164, available online at <http://www.ome.uk.com/review.cfm?body=7>, accessed February 2008.
- STRB (2005) *School Teachers' Review Body Fourteenth Report: 2005*, Cm6430, available online at <http://www.ome.uk.com/review.cfm?body=7>, accessed February 2008.
- STRB (2005) *School Teachers' Review Body Fifteenth Report: 2005*, Cm6663, available online at <http://www.ome.uk.com/review.cfm?body=7>, accessed February 2008.
- STRB (2007) *School Teachers' Review Body Sixteenth Report: 2007*, Cm7007, available online at <http://www.ome.uk.com/review.cfm?body=7>, , accessed February 2008.
- STRB (2008) *School Teachers' Review Body Seventeenth Report Part One: 2008*, Cm 7252, available online at <http://www.ome.uk.com/review.cfm?body=7>, accessed February 2008.
- Sutton, A., Wortley, A., Harrison, J. and Wise, C. (2000) Superteachers: from policy towards practice, *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 48, 4, 413-428.
- Taylor, C. and Jennings, S. (2004) *The Work of Advanced Skills Teachers*, Reading: CfBT.
- TDA (2007) *Professional Standards for Teachers*, available online at <http://www.tda.gov.uk/teachers/professionalstandards.aspx>, accessed February 2008.
- TDA (2008) *Continuing Professional Development Guidance*, London: TDA.
- TeacherNet (no date) Case studies of Excellent Teachers at Ripley St Thomas CE High School and Springhill High School, available online at [http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/payandperformance/pay/excellent\\_teacher\\_sche me/Case\\_studies/](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/payandperformance/pay/excellent_teacher_sche me/Case_studies/), accessed February 2008.

TeacherNet (no date) Frequently asked questions: Advanced Skills Teachers, available online at <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/professionaldevelopment/ast/faqs/role/>, accessed January 2009.

TeacherNet (2006) *Advanced Skills Teachers working in primary learning networks: evaluation report*, available online at <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=10820>, accessed January 2009.

TeacherNet (2008) Excellent Teacher guidance and publications, available online at [http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/payandperformance/pay/excellent\\_teacher\\_scheme/](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/payandperformance/pay/excellent_teacher_scheme/), accessed February 2008.

TeacherNet (2008) Professional and Career Development, available online at <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/development/>, accessed February 2008

TES (1997) Heads reject superteacher idea, *Times Educational Supplement*, 10 October, available online at [www.tes.co.uk](http://www.tes.co.uk), accessed February 2008.

TES (1998) Superteacher, super pay ... and super problems, *Times Educational Supplement*, 6 March, available online at [www.tes.co.uk](http://www.tes.co.uk), accessed February 2008.

TES (2006) Meet Mr Excellence, *Times Educational Supplement*, 7 July 2006, available online at [www.tes.co.uk](http://www.tes.co.uk), accessed February 2008.

TES (2007a) Not in it for the money, *Times Educational Supplement*, 9 February 2007, available online at [www.tes.co.uk](http://www.tes.co.uk), accessed February 2008.

TES (2007b) Low take-up for excellent status, *Times Educational Supplement*, 18 May, 2007, available online at [www.tes.co.uk](http://www.tes.co.uk), accessed February 2008.

TES Jobs (2008) Excellent Teacher of Mathematics, available online at <https://jobs.tes.co.uk.aspx?jobId=454525>, accessed February 2008.

Thornton, M. and Bricheno, P. (2000) Primary school teachers' careers in England and Wales: the relationship between gender, role, position and promotion aspirations, *Pedagogy, Culture and Society*, 8. 2.

Vandevoort, L. G., Amrein-Beardsley, A. & Berliner, D. C. (2004). 'National Board Certified Teachers and their students achievement', *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, Volume 12, No. 46, September 8 2004.

VT Education and Skills (unpublished) Findings from the Excellent Teachers Survey 2007.

## Appendix A: Information about the Excellent Teacher Scheme

The Excellent Teacher Scheme was created following considerable debate about progression on the Upper Pay Scale. It replaces U4 and U5.

The STRB developed a vision of the ET as the pinnacle of the classroom teacher's role and a distinctive part of the teaching career structure, and sees the role primarily as a resource for other teachers, requiring length, breadth and depth of experience, pedagogic excellence and coaching and mentoring skills of a high order. Such a role would be particularly suitable for teachers who are motivated by supporting and helping their colleagues to improve their effectiveness, address their developmental needs and other issues arising out of the performance management process.

The scheme is aimed at the very best classroom practitioners and widens the opportunity for career advancement in the classroom, enabling experienced teachers to make a distinctive contribution to improving teaching and learning by sharing their skills with other classroom teachers. Unlike ASTs, ET posts do not have an outreach function. The ETS applies in schools in England and Wales where teachers are employed under the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.

### Pay

- During 2007-8, ETs are paid a fixed 'spot salary' as follows: Inner London, £43,860; Outer London, £39,747; London Fringe, £37,809; and the rest of England and Wales, £36,771.
- From September 2008, schools can decide a spot salary within a range from £37,672 to £48,437 (extending to £53,819 in Inner London).

ETs are not eligible for TLR payments. This is because they should not be accountable for leading, managing and developing a subject or curriculum area, nor should they have line management responsibility for a significant number of people.

### Excellent Teacher posts

The decision to create ET posts rests with schools. *Teachers can only apply for assessment against the ET standards in relation to a vacancy for an ET post in their own school.* To be eligible to apply for an ET post, teachers must have been paid on scale point U3 for not less than two years when they take up post. When applying for an ET post, a teacher who has not already met the Excellent Teacher standards must submit a completed ET Application Form (ETS1) to their headteacher:

- summarising the evidence that shows they meet all of the Excellent Teacher standards;
- demonstrating that they meet the prerequisites and assessment criteria; and
- providing any other information requested in the job vacancy notice.;

They then undergo an external assessment against the Excellent Teacher standards.

### **The role of Excellent Teachers**

In addition to their normal classroom duties the specific expectations of an ET should include:

- induction of newly qualified teachers;
- professional mentoring of other teachers;
- sharing good practice through demonstration lessons;
- helping teachers to develop their expertise in planning, preparation and assessment;
- helping other teachers to evaluate the impact of their teaching on pupils;
- undertaking classroom observations to assist and support the performance management process; and
- helping teachers improve their teaching practice including those on capability procedures.

The ET should have a substantial involvement and specific responsibilities in each of these areas. In practice, the extent of this should be determined by local circumstances and be set out in the ET's job description.

## Appendix B: Questionnaire

### Excellent Teacher Scheme: Your views

#### About your career

1. What year did you become a teacher? .....
2. Have you had any breaks of service?      yes no (*please circle*)  
If yes, please indicate how many years in total ..... (to nearest whole year)
3. Please indicate the proportion of the week you work (please circle full-time or the appropriate figure)  
full-time    0.9 0.8 0.7 0.6 0.5 0.4 0.3 0.2 0.1
4. Please indicate which pay scale you are currently on (tick one box only)

Unqualified		Excellent Teacher	
Main Pay Scale		Advanced Skills Teacher	
Upper Pay Scale point 1 or 2		Leadership Scale	
Upper Pay Scale point 3		Other (please write in)	

5. Do you have a TLR?      yes    no (*please circle*)
6. In which of the following directions do you expect your career to develop in the long-term?

	most likely direction (tick one only)	other possibilities you would consider (tick all that apply)
no further development anticipated (e.g. stay in same role or retire)		
gain a TLR (but do not anticipate moving into a leadership post)		
promotion in school leadership		
promotion as a classroom teacher (e.g. as an AST or Excellent Teacher)		
Move to a career other than teaching or school leadership		

#### Please add any comments

7. How seriously have you considered becoming an Excellent Teacher? Please answer the questions below by ticking in the appropriate columns

	yes, seriously	yes, in passing	no
Have you previously considered the possibility of becoming an Excellent Teacher?			
Have you ever discussed this possibility with your headteacher			

#### About the Excellent Teacher Scheme

8. From what sources have you previously heard about the ET scheme? Tick all that apply

I had not heard of the scheme		newsletters or circulars in school	
my headteacher		job advertisements	
other teachers		Internet sources (e.g. Teachernet, DCSF)	
my performance management review		don't know	
teacher unions		other (please write in)	
TES or other newspapers			



9. The DCSF are interested in how effectively the Excellent Teacher Scheme (ETS) has been communicated to teachers. Please could you indicate which aspects of the scheme you understood *before* you read the information about the Excellent Teacher Scheme in this booklet.

	I knew this	I was vaguely aware of this	I did not know this
The Excellent Teacher Scheme (ETS) is designed for experienced teachers who wish to develop careers in the classroom			
The ETS has replaced points 4 and 5 on the Upper Pay Scale			
Only those on U3 are eligible to become ETs (Excellent Teachers)			
Becoming an ET involves undergoing an external assessment against the ET standards			
Teachers can be assessed against ET standards only when an ET post is available in the school they work in			
An ET's role is to mentor and share good practice in their own school			
From September 2008, ETs receive a spot salary within a range from £37.7k to £48.4k (rising to £53.8k in Inner London)			

### Your school and the Excellent Teacher Scheme

10. Are there any Excellent Teacher posts in your school?

yes, there is an ET in post                      no                      don't know                      *(please circle)*

If YES, please write in details of the work they undertake in their role as an Excellent Teacher, and indicate whether you have benefited from the existence of this role:

If NO or DON'T KNOW, are you aware of any discussion that has taken place in your school about creating Excellent Teacher posts?

yes                      no                      don't know *(please circle)*

If YES, please give details:

11. The table below lists various duties that it is envisaged that an Excellent Teacher might carry out. Thinking of your school, please indicate whether in your view this is already being done, and whether you think it would be useful to have an ET to undertake this role.

Tick in all the boxes that apply - you might, for example, want to indicate that a specific task is already being done adequately and that it would be useful to have an ET doing it)

	already being done	it would be useful to have an Excellent Teacher to do this
induction of newly qualified teachers;		
professional mentoring of other teachers;		
sharing good practice through demonstration lessons		
helping teachers to develop their expertise in planning, preparation and assessment		
helping other teachers to evaluate the impact of their teaching on pupils		
undertaking classroom observations to assist and support the performance management process		
helping teachers improve their teaching practice including those on capability procedures.		

Please add any comments:

## Excellent Teacher or Advanced Skills Teacher

Please see the page 3 for clarification of the differences between ETs and ASTs.

### 12. Please tick to indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements

	strongly agree	agree	neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
It is beneficial for schools to be able to appoint both ETs and ASTs					
The AST and ET roles should be reviewed to create one coherent route for those looking for promotion as classroom teachers					
The ET role is welcome because it is designed for experienced teachers					
I would like to become an ET within the next three years					
I would like to become an ET in the more distant future					
I would prefer to become an AST rather than an ET					

Please add any comments:

## What motivates you to try and achieve excellence

### 13. Please indicate how far you agree or disagree with each of the statements below about what motivates you to try to achieve excellence:

	strongly agree	agree	neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
The possibility of becoming an Excellent Teacher in the future motivates me to try to achieve excellence in my teaching					
The prospect of increased pay would motivate me to try to achieve excellence in my teaching					
I would welcome a pay rise, but this would not motivate me to try harder to achieve excellence.					
Public recognition of my excellence in the classroom would increase my motivation to do even better.					
I would welcome public recognition of my excellent teaching, but this would not motivate me to try to do even better.					
My main motivation to achieve excellence in my teaching is a desire to do my best for my pupils					

Please add any comments about what might encourage you to become an Excellent Teacher, and what might deter you:

## The future of the Excellent Teacher Scheme

14. The DCSF would like to hear teachers' views on a number of issues concerning the future of the Excellent Teacher Scheme: please indicate how far you agree with each of the proposals and statements below:

	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree	don't know
The Excellent Teacher Scheme is a welcome addition to the range of career pathways open to teachers						
Excellent Teachers could make a valuable contribution to standards of teaching and learning in schools.						
Any teacher who meets ET Standards should be granted the title Excellent Teacher (whether or not they are in an ET post)						
The title Excellent Teacher is potentially confusing						
I am put off by the title Excellent Teacher						
The title 'Principal Teacher' would be preferable to 'Excellent Teacher'						
To allow teachers to apply for ET posts in other schools, any eligible teacher should be able to apply for assessment against the ET standards						
The eligibility criteria for Excellent Teacher should include a sustained record of continuing professional development throughout the teacher's career						
An Excellent Teacher should be able to hold a TLR						
There is not a clear enough distinction between the roles of AST and ET						

15. Please add any further comments about the Excellent Teacher Scheme

## About you

16. a) Your age                      b) Your gender

20-29	
30-39	
40-49	
50-59	
60 or over	

male	
female	

## c) Your ethnicity

### White

<input type="checkbox"/>	British
<input type="checkbox"/>	Irish
<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other white background

### Black, Black British

<input type="checkbox"/>	African
<input type="checkbox"/>	Caribbean
<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other

### Asian, Asian British

<input type="checkbox"/>	Indian
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pakistani
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bangladeshi
<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other

### Mixed

<input type="checkbox"/>	White and Black Caribbean
<input type="checkbox"/>	White and Black African
<input type="checkbox"/>	White and Asian
<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other

### Chinese, Chinese British or other ethnic background

<input type="checkbox"/>	Chinese
<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other background

Please tick here if you prefer not to record your ethnic group

Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire

Ref: DCSF-RR137

ISBN: 978 1 84775 498 1

© London Metropolitan University 2009

**[www.dcsf.gov.uk/research](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/research)**

Published by the Department for  
Children, Schools and Families