



National College for
Teaching & Leadership

The role scholarships play in graduate recruitment for Initial Teacher Training

Research report

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Leadership**

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Summary of findings

Previous research conducted on behalf of the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL)¹ indicated that, for some, scholarships were described as ‘critical’ to training, and that hearing what funding was available was the main initial trigger to explore teacher training.

This study was conducted by NCTL to provide a more detailed understanding of the role that Initial Teacher Training (ITT) scholarships, awarded by professional bodies (the Royal Society of Chemistry; BCS, the Chartered Institute for IT; Institute of Mathematics and its Application, and Institute of Physics), play in recruiting graduates to teaching in shortage subjects. An online survey was conducted with past applicants for scholarships.

The findings suggest that the availability and awareness of scholarships can turn an interest in teaching into an application for teacher training. Just over a quarter (26%) of respondents responded that they had decided to apply because of the availability of scholarships, and just under a third agreed that scholarships were an important, although not deciding, factor in applying. One applicant commented that “*they [scholarships] are a very powerful incentive for teacher training*”. Slightly more than 1 in 4 (26%) of respondents agreed with the statement “*I decided to apply for teacher training because of the availability of scholarships*”. Additionally approximately 30% of applicants from this sample identified that the availability of scholarships was an important, although not deciding, factor in applying for teacher training. Across all scholarship subjects within this sample, 19% agreed that they would not have applied for teacher training if scholarships were not offered in their chosen subject.

Only 16% of all respondents had not been influenced to apply for teacher training because of the availability of the scholarships.

For some, the availability of scholarships is a ‘hook’ into application for initial teacher training. Of those who responded that they had been unsuccessful in their scholarship application (23%), the majority (82%) continued with their application for initial teacher training. Almost 1 in 5 of the unsuccessful scholarship applicants who went on to apply for teacher training agreed with the statement that they ‘decided to apply for teacher training because of the availability of scholarships’.

There was also some evidence that some respondents cited the additional benefits offered by the professional bodies as the reason for applying for a scholarship, as opposed to the financial award. These benefits include membership of the professional bodies and early career support.

¹ Qualitative Research with Shortage Subject Teaching Candidates: The Journey to Teacher Training; BMG Research; DfE; April 2014; published October 2014

Some respondents provided un-prompted comments suggesting areas where information and processes could be improved. For instance, some scholarship applicants' comments indicated the need for greater clarity over the various options for training and funding, and some expressed dissatisfaction with the process of applying for scholarships, in terms of the timing of interviews and communication, and need for feedback from professional bodies. While these views were provided by a minority of applicants, they nonetheless provide areas where NCTL and/or the professional bodies may benefit from consideration of where improvements could be made.

Background and aim

Funding for initial teacher training (ITT), provided by the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL), is available for eligible graduates on post-graduate routes. As part of this funding, a limited number of scholarships are available for trainees. Scholarships are awarded by the relevant professional subject bodies through a competitive process. These awards are aimed at high quality graduates with a 2:1 or first-class degree.

Scholars are selected through an application and assessment process. Each scholarship also comes with a package of non-financial benefits, such as early career support and membership of the appropriate professional body. Scholarships are awarded by professional bodies for these subjects:

- Chemistry (Royal Society of Chemistry)
- Computing (British Computer Society - The Chartered Institute for IT) (BCS)
- Mathematics (Institute of Mathematics and its Applications (IMA), in collaboration with the London Mathematical Society (LMS), the Mathematical Association (MA), Maths in Education and Industry (MEI) and the Royal Statistical Society (RSS))
- Physics (Institute of Physics)

Trainees awarded a scholarship are not eligible for a standard bursary² from the NCTL. However, trainees who are not awarded the scholarship will continue to be eligible for a standard bursary.

Customer journey research³, undertaken recently on behalf of NCTL identified that bursaries, School Direct salaries and scholarships provided by government are widely described as 'critical' to training. In some cases, hearing what funding was available to train had been the main initial trigger to explore teacher training. The research also identified that this was particularly the case for career changers and finders, although it was also rare to find students who agreed with that statement that they 'would have trained to be a teacher anyway' without the funding available.

A small number of the 118 respondents involved in the customer journey research reported that they gained a scholarship from one of the four professional bodies to support their training. Scholarships were reported to enable candidates to take the step into teaching which would not have been possible without funding.

² <http://www.education.gov.uk/get-into-teaching/funding/postgraduate-funding>

³ Qualitative Research with Shortage Subject Teaching Candidates: The Journey to Teacher Training; BMG Research; DfE; April 2014; Published October 2014

The customer journey research identified that scholarships are not widely available and, therefore, they are not as common a trigger to train as either bursaries, or indeed School Direct salaries. Some see them as too 'restrictive' or were unclear on what a scholarship was, or who offers them. Some respondents reported being invited to interview but finding the distance to the interview, or timing prohibitive.

A direct cross reference between the findings of the customer journey research and this research is difficult due to the different classifications used within the two studies; however where similarities emerge they are identified in this report.

This report aims to provide a greater understanding of the role that scholarships play in recruiting graduates to teaching in shortage subjects.

Approach

Participants were identified via data provided from the four professional bodies.

Questions for an online survey were developed collaboratively between the NCTL research and scholarship teams and the professional bodies. The link to the survey was sent, via the four respective professional bodies⁴, to applicants for scholarships for academic years 2012/13; 2013/14; and, in the case of the Institute of Physics, 2011/12. In total the scholarship survey was sent to 3118 applicants, and there were 676 responses (22% response rate).

Table 1 provides information of the scholarships applied for by those 676 scholarship applicants who responded to the survey.

⁴ Royal Society of Chemistry, Institute of Physics, BCS – The Chartered Institute of IT, Institute of Mathematics and its Applications

Table 1: Scholarship surveys sent and received

Scholarship applied for	Surveys sent (n)	Responses received (n)	% response rate	Academic year applied for		
				2011/12 (n)	2012/13 (n)	2013/14 (n)
Chemistry	753	168	22	0	21	147
Computing	621	159	26	0	31	128
Mathematics	618	171	28	0	39	132
Physics	1126	178	16	29	48	101
Total	3118	676	22%	29	139	508

Survey results were analysed descriptively, and where comparisons in the report are made between key subgroups, it is indicated whether the differences described were statistically significant, at $p < 0.05$.

The scholarship applicants were given the opportunity to give open feedback about any aspect of the scholarship process. We received 267 individual comments from the 676 applicants who responded. This qualitative data was reviewed in detail to identify key themes, based on the language used by the applicants and our own knowledge of scholarships. This analysis of themes was used to find clear example comments from within the dataset which help illuminate the various responses to the quantitative questions.

Limitations

The results presented here reflect the views of the 22% of scholarship applicants who self-selected into the online survey.⁵ We do not know if the sample is representative of the wider population of applicants, on key variables such as age, gender, career stage, geographical location, degree classification; subject choice or the number of successful and unsuccessful applicants.

⁵ A sample is self-selected when the inclusion or exclusion of sampling units is determined by whether the units themselves agree or decline to participate in the sample, either explicitly or implicitly. (Sterba; Sonya K. & Foster; E. Michael; 2008; Encyclopaedia of Survey research Methods; SAGE)

Additionally, some of the results presented here are based on small sub-groups, which may not be reliable indicators of the wider population, and in some cases the sample sizes may be too small to detect differences which may actually exist.

Sample characteristics

Degree classification

Applicants were asked to identify their degree class; across all those who responded 88% held a 2:1 or equivalent classification and above. Across the individual subjects this appears to vary from 82% to 92%.

A total of 20 applicants identified their degree classification as “other”; eleven of these individuals commented that they are awaiting their degree classifications or had not, at the time of completing the survey, finished their degree. Two applicants had 3rd class degrees and two had not provided enough information to determine degree classification. Four chose not to identify what ‘other’ meant to them and one applicant stated that they had an overseas degree qualification.

Table 2: Subject applications by degree class

Degree classification	Chemistry		Computing		Mathematics		Physics		All subjects	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
First class or equivalent (including PhD)	70	42	43	27	70	41	69	39	252	37
2:1 or equivalent (including Masters)	79	47	90	57	84	49	95	53	348	52
2:2 or equivalent	9	5	24	15	10	6	13	7	56	8
Other	10	6	2	1	7	4	1	1	20	3
Total	168	100	159	100	171	100	178	100	676	100

Age of applicants

Applicants identified themselves as being in one of five age-ranges: Under 21; 21-25; 26-30 and over 35. It is perhaps unsurprising that the smallest group is also the youngest (5 % of respondents identified themselves as aged under twenty-one). Although questions were not asked to identify at what stage of their student career they applied for the scholarship, students who follow the trajectory of school then university, are generally 21 during their 3rd year of studies. Very few scholars would therefore be expected to apply before the final year of their undergraduate degree.

Table 3: Application to each scholarship by age

Age at application	Chemistry		Computing		Mathematics		Physics		All subjects	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Under 21	8	5	4	3	19	11	3	2	34	5
21 - 25	66	39	34	21	66	39	52	29	218	32
26 - 30	28	17	12	8	23	13	33	19	96	14
31 - 35	21	13	22	14	17	10	21	12	81	12
Over 35	45	27	87	55	46	27	69	39	247	37
Total	168	100	159	100	171	100	178	100	676	100

Over half of applicants (55%) for a computing scholarship appeared in the over 35 category with only 39% of physics applicants 27% for both mathematics and chemistry in this category.

There was no statistically significant difference between the proportion of those aged over 35 applying for chemistry and mathematics however there was a statistically significant difference between the proportion of computing applicants over 35 and all other subjects. There was also a statistical difference between physics applicants aged over 35 and those applying for chemistry and maths.

Results

Awareness/importance of the availability of scholarships

All respondents were asked if they were aware of the existence of scholarships before they considered applying for ITT. Across the individual subjects this proportion ranges from 41% to 51% (Table 4) although these differences were not statistically significant.

Table 4: Number of applicants aware of scholarships before considering applying for ITT

	Chemistry		Computing		Mathematics		Physics		All subjects	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
No	87	52	89	56	101	59	87	49	364	54
Yes	79	47	69	43	70	41	91	51	309	45
No answer given - left blank	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	3	1
Total	168	100	159	100	171	100	178	100	676	100

According to some respondents, information on the Get into Teaching website and relevant professional body websites could be confusing “*I received conflicting information from multiple sources*” and the wider benefits of receiving a scholarship were often underplayed.

I think more could be made of the professional benefits on the [G]et [I]nto [T]eaching website.

Alternatively, one respondent noted that having

all the information clearly explained and laid out on the Get into Teaching website was extremely helpful for my understanding of the scholarship and necessary requirements.

These responses mirror similar comments from the customer journey research; ensuring that details are clear on all relevant websites may support an awareness of the availability of scholarships. As one respondent noted

It should be advertised more ..., as I only happened to find out about it by talking to another teacher training applicant.

All 676 who responded to the survey were asked to what extent the availability of scholarships affected their interest in teaching (Table 5). Almost half of all applicants agreed that the availability of scholarships either increased their interest or encouraged them to consider teaching as a career for the first time. There were no significant

differences in the proportion of applicants from any subject who were aware of scholarships before considering applying for ITT.

Table 5: How did availability of scholarships affect your interest in teaching?

	Chemistry		Computing		Mathematics		Physics		All subjects	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
I already had an interest in teaching and planned to apply for teacher training.	100	60	60	38	103	60	86	48	349	52
I was considering teaching as a profession but the scholarships increased my interest in applying for teacher training.	62	37	84	53	66	39	88	49	300	44
I had not considered teaching as a profession before becoming aware of the scholarships.	4	2	14	9	2	1	3	2	23	3
No answer given - left blank	2	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	4	1
Total	168	100	159	100	171	100	178	100	676	100

Fifty-two per cent of respondents recorded that they already had an interest in teaching; 47%, or almost 1:2 applicants noted that either their interest in application increased because of the availability of scholarships, or, they had not considered teaching as a profession before becoming aware of the scholarships.

There was a statistically significant difference between the proportion of computing scholarship applicants who had not considered teaching as a profession before becoming aware of the scholarships (9%) from all of the other subject applicants (Table 5). There were no significant differences between the other subjects in this respect.

When asked how important the availability of a scholarship award was in their decision to apply for teacher training, fewer than one in five, only 16% of applicants, identified that the availability of scholarships was not an important consideration or deciding factor in their application (Table 6). Twenty-six per cent of respondents agreed with the statement “*I decided to apply for teacher training because of the availability of scholarships*”, and an additional 57% of respondents agreed that, although not a deciding factor, it was ‘*important*’ to them when making a decision in applying for teacher training.

Table 6: How important was the availability of a scholarship award in your decision to apply for teaching training?

	Chemistry		Computing		Mathematics		Physics		All subjects	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
I decided to apply for teacher training because of the availability of scholarships.	30	18	57	36	31	18	60	34	178	26
It was important to me but not a deciding factor in applying for teacher training.	100	60	87	55	106	62	92	52	385	57
It was not important to me.	37	22	14	9	34	20	26	15	111	17
No answer given - left blank	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	0
Total	168	100	159	100	171	100	178	100	676	100

Of those who agreed with the statement that they already had an interest in teaching and planned to apply for teacher training (52%), 30% (103) agreed that the availability of the scholarship was not important to them (Table 7). Sixty per cent (209) agreed that the availability of a scholarship an important but not deciding factor in applying for teacher training, and a further 11% agreed that they decided to apply because of the availability of scholarships.

In contrast, of the respondents who had not considered teaching as a profession before becoming aware of scholarships (23 respondents, 3%), more than half (13 respondents, 57%) agreed that they decided to apply because of the availability of scholarships. Among those who agreed that they were considering teaching but scholarships increased their interest in applying for teacher training (43%), 42% agreed with the statement that the scholarship was the deciding factor, and 55% agreed with the statement that it was an important, but not a deciding factor in applying for teacher training.

Table 7: How did the availability affect your interest in teaching and your decision to apply?

	I had not considered teaching as a profession before becoming aware of the scholarships.		I was considering teaching as a profession but the scholarships increased my interest in applying for teacher training.		I already had an interest in teaching and planned to apply for teacher training.		No answer given - left blank		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
I decided to apply for teacher training because of the availability of scholarships.	13	57	127	43	37	11	1	25	178	26
It was important to me but not a deciding factor in applying for teacher training.	10	43	166	55	209	60	0	0	385	57
It was not important to me.	0	0	7	2	103	29	1	25	111	16
No answer given - left blank	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	50	2	<1
Total	23	100	300	100	349	100	4	100	676	100

The various aspects of scholarships

Across all respondents, 66% identified the financial incentive of a scholarship as being ‘important’ or ‘very important’ when they considered application to ITT. There was no statistically significant difference in the importance of a scholarship as a financial incentive between the subjects. These findings were substantiated by respondents who commented in the free-text.

At the time I was pretty certain I would have started my PGCE even if I had not received a scholarship. As things turned out, it is possible that I may not have been able to without this extra funding.

As mentioned above the funding attached to the scholarship, particularly for those who may have an established career in industry, academia or other occupation, was

considered critical to many of the scholarship applicants. Several mentioned that it meant they '*no longer needed to worry about [their] financial situation while training*' and for some it would have been impossible to take the step to teaching without the scholarship:

The scholarship is vitally important for me to move into a career in teaching. As a mature applicant I have a mortgage and a family and cannot afford the pay cut associated with going back to being a student

Chemistry

Without a scholarship, as a married adult ... I would not have been able to afford to support myself through the PGCE year on the standard/loans/grants/etc. The scholarship fed me, kept a roof over my head, and essentially has functioned as working salary for the ITT year. Without the scholarship, I would not have been able to bring my industry knowledge and experiences to teaching.

Computing

The scholarship is crucial for me because it gives additional financial support for my family while I am training. I am taking a large pay cut to become a teacher and the scholarship makes it financially possible.

Physics

In addition to the financial importance scholars from all four subject areas mentioned the importance and status they felt from being acquainted with their respective professional body.

... the main benefit was that, had [I] missed a first and got a 2:1, I would still have got the higher level of finance. In actuality, I discovered that I had got a first during the selection process but decided to continue with the process in order to access the additional benefits, such as magazines, membership of academic bodies and the status of being a scholar.

Maths

I am really pleased to be part of the scholarship scheme and am looking forward to receiving advice and support from the Royal Society of Chemistry

Chemistry

Being successful in getting BCS Scholarship is not only a financial support but also very much an effective psychological boost and support ... It will also encourage me to undertake leadership roles ...

Computing

It was a fantastic award. It boosted my confidence in teacher training tremendously and gave me a sense of belonging to a community of like-minded individuals that provided me with amazing and invaluable support.

Physics

These comments are supported by the evidence that respondents selected financial incentive, being part of a professional community and support from the professional body as the three most important aspects of a scholarship (Table 8). However at least 1:3 (34%) respondents identified each of the options available as 'very important'

Reasons given by respondents for 'other' include support for an overseas application; for professional development; to increase confidence and to support an application for teaching training.

Table 8: The importance of various aspects of the scholarship

	Very Important		Fairly Important		Important		Slightly important		Not at all Important		No response		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Financial Incentive	364	54	160	24	78	12	42	6	16	2	16	2	676	100
To be part of a professional community	297	44	183	27	101	15	57	8	27	4	11	2	676	100
Support provided by the professional body	333	49	175	26	81	12	45	7	25	4	17	3	676	100
To support my application for teacher training	232	34	135	20	98	14	82	12	106	16	23	3	676	100
Status attached to a scholarship	235	35	168	25	103	15	81	12	76	11	13	2	676	100
Other	74	11	36	5	67	10	28	4	135	20	336	50	676	100

The influence of an unsuccessful scholarship application on application to teacher training

From the sample of 676 respondents 88% per cent (596) identified that they had submitted both a teacher training application and had applied for a scholarship.

Table 9: Applications for a scholarship and teacher training

Was your application for scholarship successful?		
	n	%
Yes	316	53
No	136	23
Don't Know	141	24
No answer given - left blank	3	<1
Total	596	100

Of the 136 who declared they had been unsuccessful in their scholarship application 82% (111) stated they had continued with their application for ITT; we do not have any evidence to identify how many of this group were later accepted onto ITT courses.

The remaining 18% (25) who had been unsuccessful in their scholarship application, did not progress their application for teacher training. Where reasons have been given for not progressing they include:

- **Financial:** *“The main barrier for me making this change was financial”*; another who lives outside the UK commented that the time and cost of travel was a huge issue and *“flight and general travel costs became too much for me to afford”* and one person noted that they had to support a dependent so *“could not go to the training without the scholarship”*;
- **Poor Process:** *“It was a very long and slow process, with little communication at times. Would have liked to been informed of decisions quicker”*.
- **Flexibility:** *“I withdrew my application as the advertised flexible [ITT] courses were not available”*

Of this group of 136 unsuccessful scholarship applicants who had continued with their application to teacher training only one had agreed with the statement that they had not considered teaching as a profession before becoming aware of the scholarships.

However, 41 (37%) of this group, had agreed with the statement that the availability of scholarships had increased their interest in applying for teacher training. One noted that

the “*scholarship is a very effective incentive to attract quality graduates into the teaching profession*”.

Seventeen per cent (19) of those 136 unsuccessful scholarship applicants who then applied for teacher training reported that they ‘decided to apply for teacher training because of the availability of scholarships’. This may indicate that the availability of the scholarships is a ‘hook’ into application for initial teacher training for some, for example, one of these applicants commented that “*they [scholarships] are a very powerful incentive for teacher training*”; another noted that “*scholarships [are] a very good idea*”.

Three from this group of 19 provided comments noting that, since their unsuccessful scholarship applications, they had received funding from other sources; one had secured a School Direct (salaried) place and the other two had received bursaries. One commented that:

The funding associated with teacher training was not clear. I thought the only funding that was not salaried was through a scholarship. As it happens I was awarded a bursary to the same level as the scholarship

53% (316) of respondents identified that they had been successful in their scholarship application; this group were then asked if they had been unsuccessful in [their] application for a scholarship, would [they] have continued with [their] teacher training application. 82% of this group agreed that they would.⁶

Of those 136 applicants who knew they had been unsuccessful in gaining a scholarship, 82% did continue with application to teacher training. It seems likely that, based on this evidence, the majority of applicants would be likely to progress to ITT application regardless of their success in achieving this scholarship.

At the time of completing the survey 24% (141) of respondents who answered this question had submitted a scholarship application and were not aware of the outcome. This group were asked a subsequent question to identify if they would proceed to teacher training application if their scholarship application was unsuccessful. 76% said yes; 16% didn’t know and 5% said no⁷.

⁶ Caution must be used when interpreting this data since it is unwise to use hindsight to predict that “x” would happen if “y” happened. The same caution must be applied to the 16% who said they would not proceed with their application to teacher training.

⁷ Again these responses should not be used to predict what would happen since any response can only be based on how an individual felt at the time the question was asked of him/her and is not evidence of how he/she would actually react.

The influence of scholarships on choice of subject

When looking at the views of applicants by subject, 19% (127 applicants) noted that they did not know and another 19% (131 applicants) definitely would not have applied for teacher training if scholarships had not been available in their chosen subject.

Table 10: Would you have applied for teacher training if scholarships were not offered in your chosen subject?

	Chemistry		Computing		Mathematics		Physics		All subjects	
	n	%	n	%	n	100	n	100	n	100
Don't know	27	16	31	19	32	19	37	21	127	19
No	29	17	46	29	22	13	34	19	131	19
Yes	110	65	81	51	116	67	99	56	406	60
No answer given - left blank	2	1	1	1	1	1	8	4	12	2
No	168	100	159	100	171	100	178	100	676	100

There were some statistical differences between the subjects in response to this question; mathematics and chemistry applicants were more likely to apply for teacher training if scholarships were not available in their subject than computing scholars. Additionally Mathematic trainees were also more likely to apply than physics scholars if scholarships were not available.

This would suggest that the availability of subject-based scholarships was most important in attracting computing trainees followed by those training to teach physics. Because of the underlying differences in the groups we cannot be sure if this is down to subject choice or the characteristics of those applying for the scholarships.

Having been asked whether they were influenced by scholarships in deciding to apply for teacher training, respondents were asked if the scholarships influenced which subject they then chose to teach. The question was asked to individual professional groups although the data is provided here in one table (Table 10).

Across all professions 107 of the 669 (16%) respondents who answered this question noted that they either changed their chosen subject because of the possibility of gaining a scholarship or the possibility of gaining a scholarship helped them to decide which subject to train in.

Some candidates were very clear that the availability of scholarships was the deciding factor in choosing their subject. Five per cent changed their chosen subject because of the possibility of gaining a scholarship in from a different professional body. A further 11% reported that the possibility of scholarship in a specific subject helped them to decide which subject to teach.

Table 11: To what extent did the availability of a scholarship in your professional subject influence your decision to teach?

	Chemistry		Computing		Mathematics		Physics		All subjects	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
I changed my chosen subject because of the possibility of gaining a scholarship in (my professional subject).	7	4	15	9	6	4	8	4	36	5
I was unsure which subject to apply for. The possibility of gaining a scholarship helped me to decide to train to teach (my professional subject).	21	13	21	13	12	7	17	10	71	11
It did not influence my decision at all. I was already interested in training to teach (my professional subject).	138	82	121	76	150	88	153	86	562	83
No answer given - left blank	2	1	2	1	3	2	0	0	7	1
Total	168	100	159	100	171	100	178	100	676	100

Scholarship applicants who commented in the free-text boxes reported that awareness of, and availability of, the scholarships helped them decide which subject to specialise in and even whether teaching was a suitable career for them.

I was unsure whether to go into secondary physics/mathematics or primary ... so the scholarship helped me decide

... the bursary (sic) is a great way of promoting subject specialism in teaching, and the calibre of candidate that this scheme attracted made teaching [subject] seem like a good career path. As an ambitious post-graduate, I was struggling to see teaching as a career in which my career ambitions could be fulfilled, but knowledge of support from [professional body], along with a great experience meeting other [professionals] at the scholarship interview helped to change my perception

Some individuals (34, 5% of 676 respondents) across all professions agreed that they did not apply for teacher training because they were unsuccessful in their scholarship applications or did not complete their scholarship application because they were unsuccessful in their teacher training application.

Table 12: Teacher training application in relation to application for a scholarship

	Chemistry		Computing		Mathematics		Physics		All subjects	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
I did not apply for teacher training because I was unsuccessful in my scholarship application.	8	5	12	8	5	3	5	3	30	4
I did not complete my scholarship application because I was unsuccessful in my teacher training application.	1	1	1	1	2	1	0	0	4	1
I have not yet submitted my teacher training application.	9	5	14	9	5	3	16	9	44	7
I submitted my teacher training application after applying for a scholarship but before I received the outcome of my scholarship application.	12	7	18	11	16	9	26	15	72	11
I submitted my teacher training application after receiving the outcome of my scholarship application.	8	5	13	8	8	5	16	9	45	7
I submitted my teacher training application at the same time as applying for a scholarship.	35	21	39	25	38	22	55	31	167	25
I submitted my teacher training application before applying for a scholarship.	71	42	39	25	68	40	43	24	221	33
I submitted my teacher training application before I became aware of the scholarships.	24	14	21	13	29	17	17	10	91	13
No answer given - left blank	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	2	0
Total	168	100	159	100	171	100	178	100	676	100

The application process

Respondents were not asked explicitly to rate their experience of the application process, however some, both successful and unsuccessful, provided unprompted comments in the free text boxes about the process and the availability of information at all stages of application. The comments tended to focus on what was missing from their training rather than what was good about it. This is a reflection of these comments being un-prompted, rather than reflecting the broader views of respondents.

While these comments may not reflect the overall views on the process, and it is not possible to state the degree to which applicants on the whole were satisfied or dissatisfied, these comments nonetheless provide the opportunity to reflect on where aspects of the process may be improved.

Funding options

As discussed above, and in line with the findings of the customer journey research, respondents to this research reported that greater clarity is required on all of the funding options available for those interested in teacher training including scholarships. Comments from unsuccessful scholarship applicants indicated that some of them also overcame concerns relating to finance by finding other funding routes;

The funding associated with teacher training was not clear. I thought the only funding that was not salaried was through a scholarship. As it happens I was awarded a bursary to the same level as the scholarship.

Others secured School Direct (salaried) places.

Also in line with findings from the customer journey research, scholarships were reported to enable candidates to take the step into teaching which would not have been possible without funding.

I believe scholarships are very important in the sense that it enables individuals who are passionate about their subject and teaching the opportunity to teach who might not be in a position to do so because of the lack of finances. On the other hand, it may also prompt some graduates to apply because of the scholarship funding, hopefully, this will be observed during the interview process or at the latest when on teacher training.

Knowledge of scholarships

Some respondents also felt that there were gaps in the information available about the scholarships themselves. Others felt that the large amount of information available was confusing and/or contradictory.

Although the comment below does not reflect the actual process (scholarships are not awarded on a 'first come first serve' process), it does serve to highlight the confusion, or lack of understanding, some applicants commented on with regards to their application process:

A lot of scholarships were handed out before I had even been given opportunity for an interview so it was essentially first come first serve which wasn't made clear!

Some respondents were frustrated by what they considered to be a confusing process:

The whole process was confused and miss managed. I received conflicting information from multiple sources, finally just before my in school interview I was told my degree did not qualify me. A complete waste of effort.

Whilst other respondents commented that they felt the whole process was straightforward:

The scholarship process was a very structured and well thought out process.

Applications

Other respondents, both successful and unsuccessful offered suggestions for changes which would, in their opinion, have improved clarity and therefore the number of applications.

I feel that the application for the scholarship was disjointed with the application for ITT and I was confused by the myriad of registrations and applications to different bodies. Can I suggest that the scholarship application is more effectively dovetailed with the ITT application as it is inevitable that one is an element of the other?

Whereas others felt the scholarship application process had actually helped them decide if teaching was right for them:

I enjoyed going through the different stages of the application process especially delivering a lesson in a school. I had been on a school experience programme and was feeling a bit frustrated because the school did not have resources to give me hands on experience at

teaching. Whereas the scholarship offered me more of an assessment of my potential teaching skills it boosted my confidence and enabled me to make up my mind to get into teaching.

A number of respondents were unhappy with the way their application was handled. The reasons given included specific issues with the way the professional body handled the application:

my scholarship application was handled in an unprofessional way by the [professional body]. I made an appeal. It took the [professional body] three months to get back to me about my appeal. The result of my appeal [was] in my favour. Unfortunately, during the processing of my appeal, the training programmes I applied to, ran out of training places and I could not get into a teacher training programme.

Other respondents commented on the length of the time the process, including application for scholarship and ITT took:

It's great that scholarships are offered, but I feel the application and interview process is quite long winded.

Assessment and interviews

Within the free-text box some respondents reported that they would have found it helpful if more information had been available to prepare for the assessment by the individual professional bodies:

It would have been helpful to have more precise guidance as to what the [professional body] was looking for in a candidate. There were only a few sentences of guidance, and this made it difficult to prepare for the assessment day.

Having made it through to the last stage of the scholarship interviews, I wish it was made clearer what was expected of me at each stage and I was given useful feedback as to where I should have improved.

Of particular concern to some respondents were arrangements for, and locations of, interviews. These included difficulties in arranging time off from their current employment to attend separate interview and assessment sessions. Additionally some respondents stated that the lack of regional interviews was a barrier to application

Would have perhaps been better if we had had an assessment day where we had done interview, group interview and exam etc. as I felt I had to take quite a few separate days off work which wasn't popular at the school I work at.

I enjoyed the experience of the interview day, but perhaps in the future there could be an assessment day or two further north, rather than having everyone come to London.

Although at least one respondent had the opportunity to attend an interview outside of the capital this did not seem to have been the understanding of some of the applicants who responded to the survey.

The lack of flexibility in interview dates and locations was of particular concern for international candidates and English candidates who lived outside of England:

Before I applied for the scholarship, I contacted the [professional body] I was told that this shouldn't be an issue but that I should make it know when I applied for the scholarship, as they would try to offer me a later assessment day date. When I subsequently applied, I was invited to an assessment day. The [professional body] were not able to accommodate my being abroad (and so not being able to attend a physical assessment day) and subsequently my application was not processed any further. I was told that it was not possible to wait for a later assessment date as I'd previously been told. I have been successful in applying for PGCE [postgraduate certificate in education] courses at [three universities] - all of these institutions were able to make accommodations for my being abroad at the time of interview. Why then were [the professional body] not able to do the same?

Professional bodies

Other comments related specifically to the different professional bodies, all of which were criticised as well as praised. For example:

my scholarship application was handled in an unprofessional way by the [professional body]

The whole experience put me off seeking help from the [professional body] and putting myself in the situation again.

However other applicants felt very positive about the process:

The process of applying for the scholarship motivated me to get back up to speed with [my subject] and gave me the confidence to move forward with my teaching application.

Great experience really enjoyed the whole process especially the second phase, teaching in the classroom!

Feedback to applicants

One of the biggest areas of criticism from respondents related to a lack of feedback during and after the application process. Examples of the wide-ranging comments are given below

Applied for the scholarship months ago still not heard a word back.
Tried to contact many times but with no response! Worthless offering a scholarship if you don't respond to applicants.

As for the reason why, I have had no response to two requests for feedback despite one outcome letter offering to let me know if I asked; and without such feedback it would in any case be difficult to know how to prepare successfully for any hypothetical Apply 2 round.

The largest numbers of comments relating to feedback were about the lack of it and the negative impression of the process that this had left applicants with. One respondent suggested, this means that it makes it difficult to apply again.

However one respondent noted that:

Progressing through the various stages of the scholarship process was extremely encouraging as the feedback I got at each stage was positive and reaffirmed my desire to get into teaching.

This indicates that where timely feedback is given it can support the drive towards application for initial teacher training.

Age versus experience

Potential career changers commented on a number of issues which they considered to be barriers to a successful application. Some of these are mentioned above (interview/assessment days requiring time off work, issues with the tests) whilst other issues seem to be specific to older candidates/career changes.

Some felt that their wider experience was not taken in to account:

For older applicants such as myself I feel it would benefit the process if the option to provide a full CV was available, as an alternative to a personal statement. Personal statements suit those with little experience and allow a focus on the engagement with education and any activities where the applicant has been involved with children or youths via school observation etc. But it does not allow for someone with extensive industry experience does not get to highlight this.

Whilst the scholarship appeals for the young and brilliant minds, I believed the criteria is too rigid and excludes mature students like myself with work and life experience. As my degree result at the time does not represent my capabilities [I] feel [I] still deserve this scholarship base on my work experience and continued professional development. Being a Science technician has broadened my understanding over the years and [I] felt [I] could do more in terms of imparting knowledge and help learners to develop technical skills.

Other respondents felt that their subject knowledge was an issue.

I've chosen to return to work in the field of teaching and I wanted to use my degree as a starting point. Unfortunately I have been too long out of the field of [subject] for the written exam to be anything but pointless - especially as some of the ... graduates present on the day (including several Masters degrees) found it tough because of the level at which it was set (A level?). I am now undertaking a Subject Knowledge Enhancement [SKE] course before joining my SCITT in September, and I think it would have been much more fair if I could have sat the written exam part of the interview after I have successfully completed my SKE."

One respondent, who understood that '*recent knowledge of one's subject is essential*', believed that '*skill fade*' would be '*directly addressed through subject knowledge enhancement courses*'

And finally, some older respondents felt that the process was biased towards younger candidates.

As an older applicant I found the process bias towards a certain demographic that concentrated upon new graduates working to the academic year.

Conversely one respondent felt that age was an issue because they were too young:

I was told that I was too young for the application after being successful [in] the final stages and [having] passed the test

There is a suggestion from at least one respondent that, for a whole range of reasons, there were fewer higher degree classifications awarded in the past. This was seen as a barrier by some applicants who have built upon their degree with experience from a number of years in industry or academia. As one commented:

... there is a large pool of experienced professionals who didn't get good undergraduate degrees (or even good A-level results) but have worked in industry for 15 to 20 years who would make excellent teachers.

Conclusions/implications

Previous research identified that scholarships were not widely available and, therefore, they were not as common a trigger to train as either bursaries, or indeed School Direct salaries. Some applicants saw them as too '*restrictive*' or were unclear about what a scholarship was, or who offered them. Some respondents in the customer journey research reported being invited to interview but finding the distance to the interview, or timing prohibitive.

The evidence analysed here suggests that the availability and awareness of scholarships can turn an interest in teaching into an application for teacher training. There is also some evidence to suggest that, for some, awareness of scholarships can trigger an interest in applying for teacher training. Additionally, the evidence suggests that scholarship applicants would be likely to progress to ITT application regardless of their success in achieving this scholarship, and that the availability of the scholarships is a 'hook' into application for initial teacher training for some

Some applicants expressed dissatisfaction with the process; in particular timing of interviews and communication, and the lack of feedback, from professional bodies. There is some evidence to suggest that this may discourage applicants from continuing with their teacher training application or applying for a scholarship a second time.

Respondents also mentioned that the opportunity to have had recent classroom experience appears to support a successful scholarship application and presents a barrier if not available.

Finance appeared to be a critical reason for some applying for scholarships although some, who had identified similar levels of funding because of holding a relevant degree classification, appeared to choose the scholarship funding over bursary for the additional benefits gained from belonging to a professional body.

There is some evidence, from both this research and the customer journey research, to suggest that greater clarity and transparency over the increasingly diverse options for ITT and for funding is needed.

A range of responses from both successful and unsuccessful applicants provide opportunities for both NCTL and the professional bodies to reflect upon the process and in particular how the scholarships are marketed.

Annex 1: Teacher Training Scholarship Survey

Thank you for taking a few minutes to complete this short survey. We are seeking the views of scholarship applicants to better understand the impact scholarships have had in recruiting the best graduates to teaching.

Please remember that this survey refers to teacher training scholarships offered on a competitive basis by professional bodies in chemistry, computing, mathematics and physics. Scholarships differ from training bursaries which are paid by the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL). Visit Get into Teaching for further information about scholarships and bursaries.

The survey will run between 9 June and 22 June 2014 and all responses will be confidential.

About you

1. ASK ALL

In which academic year did you submit your application for a scholarship?

- a 2011/12 (physics scholarships only)
- b 2012/13
- c 2013/14

2. ASK ALL

How old were you when you applied for a scholarship?

- a Under 21
- b 21 - 25
- c 26 - 30
- d 31 - 35
- e Over 35

3. ASK ALL

What is your degree class?

For the purpose of this survey, degree equivalences follow bursary classifications. Further information is available in the Initial Teacher Training (ITT) training bursary guide.

- a First class or equivalent (including PhD)
- b 2:1 or equivalent (including Masters)
- c 2:2 or equivalent
- d Other

Please give details below

4. ASK IF Q1 = b OR c
Which teacher training scholarship did you apply for?
- a Chemistry (Royal Society of Chemistry)
 - b Computing (BCS - The Chartered Institute for IT)
 - c Mathematics (Institute of Mathematics and its Application, in collaboration with the London Mathematical Society, the Royal Statistical Society and Mathematics in Education and Industry)
 - d Physics (Institute of Physics)

5. ASK IF Q4 = a
Where did you first hear about the scholarship awards?
- a Royal Society of Chemistry
 - b Train to Teach event
 - c Get into Teaching website
 - d Teaching Line
 - e Other
- Please specify
-

6. ASK IF Q4 = b
Where did you first hear about the scholarship awards?
- a BCS - The Chartered Institute for IT
 - b Train to Teach event
 - c Get into Teaching website
 - d Teaching Line
 - e Other
- Please specify
-

7. ASK IF Q4 = c
Where did you first hear about the scholarship awards?
- a Institute of Mathematics and its Application, in collaboration with the London Mathematical Society, the Royal Statistical Society and Mathematics in Education and Industry
 - b Train to Teach event
 - c Get into Teaching website
 - d Teaching Line
 - e Other
- Please specify
-

8. ASK IF Q4 = d OR IF Q1 = a

Where did you first hear about the scholarship awards?

- a Institute of Physics
- b Train to Teach event
- c Get into Teaching website
- d Teaching Line
- e Other

Please specify

9. ASK IF Q4 = a

Did you know that scholarships were available for chemistry before you considered applying for teacher training?

- Yes
- No

10. ASK IF Q4 = b

Did you know that scholarships were available for computing before you considered applying for teacher training?

- Yes
- No

11. ASK IF Q4 = c

Did you know that scholarships were available for mathematics before you considered applying for teacher training?

- Yes
- No

12. ASK IF Q4 = d

Did you know that scholarships were available for physics before you considered applying for teacher training?

- Yes
- No

13. ASK ALL

To what extent did the availability of a scholarship award affect your interest in teaching?

Please select the response below which best describes your situation.

- a I already had an interest in teaching and planned to apply for teacher training.
- b I was considering teaching as a profession but the scholarships increased my interest in applying for teacher training.
- c I had not considered teaching as a profession before becoming aware of the scholarships.

14. ASK ALL

How important was the availability of a scholarship award in your decision to apply for teacher training?

Please select the response below which best describes your situation.

- a It was not important to me.
- b It was important to me but not a deciding factor in applying for teacher training.
- c I decided to apply for teacher training because of the availability of scholarships.

15. ASK IF Q4 = a

To what extent did the availability of scholarships influence your decision to apply for teacher training in chemistry?

Please select the response below which best describes your situation.

- a It did not influence my decision at all. I was already interested in training to teach chemistry.
- b I was unsure which subject to apply for. The possibility of gaining a scholarship helped me to decide to train to teach chemistry.
- c I changed my chosen subject because of the possibility of gaining a scholarship in chemistry.

16. ASK IF Q4 = b

To what extent did the availability of scholarships influence your decision to apply for teacher training in computing?

Please select the response below which best describes your situation.

- a It did not influence my decision at all. I was already interested in training to teach computing.
- b I was unsure which subject to apply for. The possibility of gaining a scholarship helped me to decide to train to teach computing.
- c I changed my chosen subject because of the possibility of gaining a scholarship in computing.

17. ASK IF Q4 = c

To what extent did the availability of scholarships influence your decision to apply for teacher training in mathematics?

Please select the response below which best describes your situation.

- a It did not influence my decision at all. I was already interested in training to teach mathematics.
- b I was unsure which subject to apply for. The possibility of gaining a scholarship helped me to decide to train to teach mathematics.
- c I changed my chosen subject because of the possibility of gaining a scholarship in mathematics.

18. ASK IF Q4 = d

To what extent did the availability of scholarships influence your decision to apply for teacher training in physics?

Please select the response below which best describes your situation.

- a It did not influence my decision at all. I was already interested in training to teach physics.
- b I was unsure which subject to apply for. The possibility of gaining a scholarship helped me to decide to train to teach physics.
- c I changed my chosen subject because of the possibility of gaining a scholarship in physics.

19. ASK ALL

Would you have applied for teacher training if scholarships were not offered in your chosen subject?

Yes

No

Don't know

20. ASK ALL

Please indicate the importance to you of each of the following aspects of the scholarship.

	Very important	Fairly important	Important	Slightly important	Not at all important
Financial incentive	<input type="checkbox"/>				
To be part of a professional community	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Support provided by professional body	<input type="checkbox"/>				
To support my application for teacher training	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Status attached to a scholarship	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Please specify below

21. ASK ALL

Which of the following statements best describes when you applied for teacher training?

- a I submitted my teacher training application before I became aware of the scholarships.
- b I submitted my teacher training application before applying for a scholarship.
- c I submitted my teacher training application at the same time as applying for a scholarship.
- d I submitted my teacher training application after applying for a scholarship but before I received the outcome of my scholarship application.
- e I submitted my teacher training application after receiving the outcome of my scholarship application.
- f I did not apply for teacher training because I was unsuccessful in my scholarship application.
- g I did not complete my scholarship application because I was unsuccessful in my teacher training application.
- h I have not yet submitted my teacher training application.

22. ASK IF Q21 = a, b, c, d or e

Was your application for a scholarship successful?

- a Yes
- b No
- c Do not yet know the outcome

23. ASK IF Q22 = a

If you had been unsuccessful in your application for a scholarship, would you have continued with your teacher training application?

- Yes
- No

24. ASK IF Q22 = b

Did you continue with your teacher training application?

- Yes
- No

25. ASK IF Q22 = c

If your application for a scholarship is unsuccessful, will you continue with your teacher training application?

Yes

No

Don't know

26. ASK ALL

If you have any other comments you would like to make about scholarships, please enter them below.

Thank you for completing this survey. Once you are happy with your responses, please click Submit below to send your answers to us.



National College for
Teaching & Leadership

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