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Diversity and complexity: becoming a teacher in England in 2015-16

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Abstract

This paper is based on a profile of Initial Teacher Training (ITT) provision in England, which was developed as part of a wider research programme on Diversity in Teacher Education (DiTE) based at Bath Spa University (Whiting et al, 2016). It provides a new topography of routes to qualified teacher status (QTS) in England for the academic year 2015-16, along similar lines to an exercise undertaken for an earlier research programme, the ESRC funded Modes of Teacher Education (MOTE) projects conducted in the 1990s (Barrett et al, 1992; Whiting et al, 1996; Furlong et al, 2000). The allocations and census data published by the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) provide the basis for this new topography, with additional material from a range of sources, mostly online. Reflections on further changes in policy discourse since the year of analysis hint at an acknowledgement of the role of Higher Education (HE) and a reduced emphasis on the much vaunted focus on 'school-led' routes. However, there is little to reassure either ITT providers, or potential candidates, of a long term plan aimed at halting the trajectory towards over-complexity and incoherence. The analysis raises important questions about the quality of such diverse teacher education provision, the nature of partnership between higher education institutions and schools, and the impact of reform on the identities of those training to teach.

Key words: Initial Teacher Training; England; Qualified Teacher Status; school-led; HE-led.

INTRODUCTION

In many parts of the world, teacher education has been in a state of continuous reform over several decades (Darling-Hammond and Lieberman, 2012; Cochran-Smith, 2016). The processes of reform have perhaps been more dramatic and prolonged in England than in most other countries. In this paper, we examine how the English approach to 'Initial Teacher Training' (ITT) has led to a very complex set of arrangements and to the fragmentation of a national system, which is very different from what has been happening elsewhere in the UK (Teacher Education Group, 2016). The paper provides a snapshot of the situation in 2015-16 in the form of a topography of provision, which may be seen in part as a successor to an earlier topography compiled in the 1990s by a team that included two of the present authors (Barrett et al, 1992).

We start by providing an historical background to the present situation, which includes a brief account of the earlier work mentioned above. The methodology adopted for the present study is then outlined before we offer an account of the extremely complex picture that emerged in 2015-16. In particular we offer an overview of the different routes into teaching which were available and also an account of how training places were allocated by the government and its agency, the National College for Teaching and Learning (NCTL). This is followed by a section where the available demographic data is used to illustrate how different routes into teaching may serve different sub-groups of the population. In the discussion that follows some implications of this complex picture are drawn out, with particular foci on complexity and the nature of partnership, on issues around the evaluation of quality in ITT and finally on the nature of teacher identity and the 'branding' of different approaches. The paper concludes

with a postscript that offers some consideration of how things may have started to change since this topography was produced.

BACKGROUND

Questioning the quality of the new teachers entering the work force, and the training programmes that prepare them, is not a new phenomenon. From the 1970s onwards, as most teacher training colleges were incorporated into broader higher education institutions (HEIs), the message was that better qualified students should be recruited to teacher training courses, that the length of time spent in both higher education (HE) and schools should be increased, and that teacher training courses should be more academically rigorous

England pursued this model until a report from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Schools (HMI) in 1983 was followed by a White Paper (DES, 1983a,b), which pointed out wide variations within teacher training and suggested that there should be national guidelines, 'albeit within a framework of institutional freedom in professional matters' (p 3). As a result, in 1984 the Conservative government established a Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (CATE). This body was to review all initial teacher training providers and recommend whether they should receive accreditation to provide courses leading to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS[1]) (DES, 1984). HMI was charged with reporting to CATE on the quality of provision and whether courses met set criteria in terms of their content. The role originally assigned to CATE was significantly expanded and consolidated over subsequent years through the setting up of the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) in 1994 and, from 1992

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[1] QTS is the initial stage of qualifying as a teacher in England; for the DiTE cohort discussed in this paper (2015-16) trainees had to pass skills tests before they started their course and qualified when assessed as meeting nationally set Teacher's Standards. A Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) year follows and an Appropriate Body (AB) has to recommend fully qualified status. ABs, historically, were local authorities but more recently this role has broadened and includes Teaching Schools, as well as National and Independent Schools Induction Panels. The analysis in this paper does not include the new Early Years Initial Teacher Training (EYITT) qualification.

onwards, the issuing of a succession of sets of competences and standards for trainees to meet (DfE, 1992; DfE, 1993a; DfEE 1998). HMI was incorporated into the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) in 1992. Described as an independent body reporting directly to parliament, it nevertheless was set up as a central regulatory mechanism that operated on behalf of government and the outcomes of its inspections had (and continue to have) a very direct influence on both schools and HE providers of Initial Teacher Training. Later developments were foreshadowed in the White Paper by a focus on the school based aspects of courses and an expectation of 'the active participation of experienced practising school teachers' (p 33). Subsequently, there was growing emphasis on partnerships between HE and schools and an increase in the time all trainees needed to spend in school.

Meanwhile, new routes to QTS were introduced during the 1990s, alongside the well-established HE-led undergraduate and the one year postgraduate routes. These included a two year post graduate Articled Teacher scheme based in participating schools, an employment based Licensed Teacher scheme and a distance learning programme offered by the Open University. These routes for relatively small numbers of trainees were short lived, although they were to be precursors of some later developments. However, one new route announced in 1993 was to grow into a significant challenge to HE provision: this was School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) (DfE 1993b, Ofsted1995). This heralded a change in emphasis from 'active participation' by teachers to a significant role for schools in not only the provision but also the leadership of ITT. Consortia of schools were encouraged to set up their own programmes through their accreditation as ITT 'providers', seeking their own links to HE to provide the academic underpinning, and validation of the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). Nevertheless, throughout the 1990s, and indeed beyond, most prospective teachers still sought to gain QTS through an HE-led one year PGCE route or, in

lesser and declining numbers (especially for the secondary phase), a three or four year undergraduate route (Furlong et al, 2000).

Despite these various developments at the margins, a combination of teaching standards and Ofsted inspection criteria were sufficient to ensure that all routes were, to a significant extent, preparing teachers for a standardised concept of professionalism. In subsequent years, as can be seen later in this paper, this degree of standardisation has been challenged through significant diversification of ITT provision and change in the roles of schools and HE within in the system.

The Modes of Teacher Education (MOTE) projects carried out during the 1990s by staff at the London Institute of Education, the Universities of Bristol and Sheffield and Homerton College Cambridge, and funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC grant nos. R000234185, R000232810: 1991-6), explored the impact of the developments described above under the Conservative governments of Margaret Thatcher and John Major (Furlong et al, 2000). Among the project outputs most relevant to the current paper were a topography of initial teacher education in England and Wales (Barrett et al, 1992) and an account of the state of partnerships between HE and schools (Whiting et al, 1996).

During the period of the New Labour government from 1997 to 2010, led first by Tony Blair and then Gordon Brown, there were further attempts to enhance the professionalism of school teachers, alongside the encouragement of greater school autonomy by the establishment of significant numbers of academy schools outside the purview of local authorities (Adonis, 2012). Among the developments in ITT under New Labour were the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP), which was developed out of the Licensed Teacher Scheme in the later

1990s (DfEE, 1996; Ofsted, 2002), and Teach First, a salaried route for high achieving graduates inspired by (though not directly modelled on) Teach for America. It was originally focussed on schools with disadvantaged intakes in London, but subsequently expanded to other largely urban areas.

Although there was no systematic attempt, as the MOTE projects had done, to chart the new landscape of ITT that had emerged under New Labour, a report of an inquiry by a House of Commons select committee (HOC, 2012) suggests that when the New Labour government left office in 2010, there were three main routes into school teaching in England. All of these routes led to QTS, which (with some limited exceptions) was a requirement for anyone teaching in a publicly maintained school, including at that time most academies:

- **HE-led programmes**

HEIs led undergraduate and postgraduate routes. The number of undergraduate trainees had decreased from 9,770 in 1998-99 to 7,620 in 2007-08. Most trainees, around 27,000 a year, now followed a PGCE route.

- **School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) consortia**

As conceived in 1993, SCITT consortia were arranging their own training; SCITTs themselves, as providers, awarded QTS but links to HE were maintained through validation of the PGCE.

Channelling of funding to support the school based elements of courses was through the provider, whether HEI or SCITT.

- **Employment-Based Initial Teacher Training (EBITT) routes**

These involved 'on-the-job' training and fell into three groups: the Graduate Teacher and Registered Teacher Programmes (the latter, a route for non-graduates, only began with 80 candidates in its last year of operation), the Overseas Trained Teacher Programme (180) and Teach First (710). They all led to QTS; only Teach First guaranteed the additional PGCE qualification through a HEI.

In total, in 2009-10, there were 234 providers offering routes into teaching, including 75 HEIs, 59 SCITTs and 100 EBITTs. However, some of these providers had a very small number of trainees. HEIs remained directly responsible for the vast majority of trainees: in 2009-10, for example, they trained 78.7% of the recruits to teacher training programmes, compared with 16.7% in EBITTs and 5.6% in SCITTs.

The Coalition Government 2010-15

By the time the New Labour Government was replaced in 2010 by a Conservative-led coalition government under David Cameron, Ofsted judged that 90 per cent of ITT provision was 'good' or better (Ofsted, 2011). With 49 per cent of HE-led partnerships, 36 per cent of SCITTs and 18 per cent of EBITTs judged as outstanding by Ofsted, the evidence, especially considering the greater size of HE programmes, did not suggest a comparative strength in school led provision. An earlier report from the House of Commons select committee in 2010 (HOC, 2010), although recommending a modest expansion of SCITT provision, had cautioned against increasing employment based programmes without the theoretical underpinning provided by universities. It emphasised the role that universities played in providing 'rigour and status' while at the same time remarking that within 'mainstream'

provision, 'schools are heavily involved in selecting, training and assessing trainees' (paragraph 11).

Even so, there were those who argued that standards were still not good enough and, in 2010, the incoming Secretary of State for Education in the coalition government, Michael Gove, decided that things needed to change.

Gove's White Paper in 2010 on *The Importance of Teaching* proposed to:

- Continue to raise the quality of new entrants to the teaching profession, by: ceasing to provide Department for Education funding for initial teacher training for those graduates who do not have at least a 2:2 degree; expanding Teach First; offering financial incentives to attract more of the very best graduates in shortage subjects into teaching; and enabling more talented career changers to become teachers.

- Reform initial teacher training so that more training is on the job, and it focuses on key teaching skills including teaching early reading and mathematics, managing behaviour and responding to pupils' Special Educational Needs.

- Create a new national network of Teaching Schools, on the model of teaching hospitals, giving outstanding schools the role of leading the training and professional development of teachers and head teachers.

<div align="right">DfE, 2010, p 20</div>

The government's implementation plan the following year announced:

- a significant expansion of the Teach First programme

- the launch of the School Direct programme (and increased prioritisation of ITT places on SCITTs and HE providers that were successful at involving schools in training programmes)

- a 'Troops to Teachers' programme for ex-service personnel

- the intention to establish a small number of University Training Schools, which would deliver three core functions: teaching children; training teachers; and undertaking research

- an ongoing reform of Ofsted's inspection framework for ITT providers

- the successful completion of professional skills tests (literacy and numeracy qualifications) as a prerequisite for beginning an ITT course

- the targeting of student financial support on student teachers in particular subject areas, and on those with higher pass marks for their first degrees

<div align="right">DfE, 2011</div>

The Coalition Government thus also set off on the path of increasing school-led initial teacher training, including the creation of around 500 Teaching Schools, highly rated by Ofsted for their teaching and learning, which could potentially take over leadership of teacher training from the universities. The extent to which, and the speed at which, this was likely to happen remained unclear at that time but there was no doubt that this was the direction of travel favoured by the government and that some Conservative ministers would have liked to see the majority of new teachers trained under school-led routes. As Michael Gove later explained, in a speech to the National College for School Leadership in mid-2012:

> As these programmes grow, more and more schools will be able to recruit, train and hire their own teachers….. New recruits will learn and train in schools, working with experienced teachers and putting their lessons into practice from day one. And they will be recruited with the expectation that they will be employed at the school at the end of their training - something which the traditional, university-based PGCE could never offer….. The cumulative impact of these changes on initial teacher training will

be revolutionary. By the end of this parliament well over half of all training places will be delivered by schools.

<div align="right">DfE, 2012</div>

The key policy for realising this change was School Direct, a scheme which, in simple terms, involved training places being allocated to schools who then bought in a university or another accredited teacher training provider to deliver a training package for a teacher. When the School Direct policy was first announced, it was going to be restricted to about 500 places and was designed to meet teacher supply needs that were not being met through existing mechanisms. Subsequently, it has been reinvented as the main vehicle for putting schools in the lead in teacher training and making universities more responsive to the needs of schools. Its projected share of postgraduate trainee numbers was increased to over 9,000 for 2013-14, rising to over 17,000 for 2015-16, as shown in Table 1 (Roberts and Foster, 2015).

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
HE provider	28,669	28,841	26,790	23,095	22,224
School Direct	0	772	9,586	15,254	17,609

Table 1: Growth of School Direct

Even though, in these allocations of teacher training numbers, HEI-led partnerships still had a majority of places, some individual HEIs lost virtually all their own allocated student numbers and became dependent on gaining School Direct contracts for survival. However, the overall allocation figures were loaded by government to enable School Direct to grow where it could, while allowing HEIs to maintain a presence in case the new approach failed to

meet teacher supply needs. In practice, School Direct grew rapidly in some subjects, phases and regions, but not in others.

As a result of all these changes, the landscape of initial teacher education in England has become even more varied than it was in 2010, let alone in 2000 when the final MOTE report was produced. Although there is some dispute about what constitutes a 'route', a 'course', a 'qualification' and what is merely a 'funding mechanism', the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) identified the following eight 'Routes into Teaching' available in 2015 (ASCL, 2015):

- **SCITT**

  Led by a network of schools that have been given powers to run their own training independently; course generally lasts a year

- **School Direct (Unsalaried)**

  Designed by a group of schools in partnership with a University or SCITT with the schools themselves recruiting; generally lasts a year

- **School Direct (Salaried)**

  As above; trainees earn a salary while training and school covers the cost of achieving QTS

- **Teach First**

  Trainees earn while they train and work in a challenging school in a low-income community

A two year course for those with a minimum 2.1 degree

- **Troops to Teachers**

  For Service Leavers in the two years before or the two years after leaving the Armed
  Forces

    o With a degree – one year course through SD unsalaried, salaried or university
      led PGCE

    o Without a degree – two year, school-based, salaried teacher training
      programme

- **Researchers in Schools**

  For researchers who have completed or are finishing their doctorate

  Two year salaried programme in six regions

- **Undergraduate route**

  Trainees study for a degree and teacher training at the same time.

  Requires a minimum C at General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in

  English and maths plus science for primary or Key Stage 3 and 2 A levels

  Full time 3-4 years, part time 4-6 years

- **Postgraduate route (PGCE)**

  For those with a degree, one year course at a University or College with school
  placements

In addition to these, there was an Assessment Only route aimed at unqualified teachers in post, and the independent schools' Headmasters and Headmistresses Conference (HMC) had introduced a salaried two year postgraduate route.

It is therefore not surprising that a review of ITT conducted for the Coalition Government during 2014 (Carter, 2014) had concluded that the system had become 'complex' and information about it was 'confusing' - and therefore called for clearer information about choices on official websites. The new topography described here, which was produced as part of a wider research programme on Diversity in Teacher Education (DiTE) based at Bath Spa University, resulted in an attempt to draw on all available sources to provide some clarity about the landscape of initial teacher education in England in the year 2015-16. It thus updates the topography of initial teacher education produced by the MOTE projects (Barrett et al, 1992) and demonstrates how the terrain is much more complicated than it was in the 1990s. As will be discussed below, the topography illustrates the enormous complexity of teacher education routes now available in England, and raises very serious questions concerning:

- how quality is evaluated in an increasingly diverse system of teacher education;
- the nature of partnership in teacher education provision;
- and, the identities of teachers undertaking training.

METHODOLOGY

The topography adopted a desktop approach. A considerable amount of data had now become available online, compared to the period of the original MOTE research, and the main source of this was the allocations and census data provided annually by the National College for Teaching and Leadership, which had become responsible for allocating places (NCTL, 2014; 2015a). Even these ostensibly comprehensive data were not without their

problems and some inconsistencies in the use of terms perhaps reflected the identified insistence on describing ITT as distinctly HE-led or school-led. A recurring theme when exploring the data and publications was around the difference between 'school based', 'school-led' and 'school centred' and between any of these and 'HE-led'. In fact, in terms of the published documentation, any distinction was simply to do with control and distribution of funds, rather than the nature of the training. For clarity, the report and this paper maintain the formal definition of the term 'provider': that is, the accredited entity which is accountable for the outcomes of trainees and recommends QTS. Providers, 218 of which were listed, are in two categories: 72 were HEIs, which can usually also award an academic qualification (usually the PGCE)[2]; and 146 were SCITT providers, which cannot. The term 'provider' is kept distinct from the 841 lead School Direct (SD) schools (NCTL, 2015a) that are also allocated places; they recruit and make decisions about how funds are apportioned but are not providers themselves and have to work with a named partner provider. This was the basis of a further contrast within the published databases for that year: that of 'provider-led' or 'school-led'. This was even more confusing, perhaps, as this did not sit neatly with the use of the term in other NCTL documentation (NCTL, 2015b, NCTL, 2015c), which categorised SCITT as well as SD routes as 'school-led'. Also separate was Teach First, allocated and recruiting independently; this programme is managed by eight regional offices each led by an HEI.

Additionally, provider and the University and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) websites were used to unpick some of the detail of the many providers that were allocated and registered places in the academic year 2015-16. This enabled a finer categorisation, particularly of SCITTs, the scope of which by now had moved beyond those original local school consortia of the 1990s to embrace a range of charitable and private bodies and academy chains. The range of provision offered at our own institution also gave further

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[2] Three institutions categorised as HEI: Hibernian and Bradford Colleges and Royal School of Dance, did not have this awarding power.

insight into almost of all the current routes and some other information was sought directly from those involved in Special Projects.

ENGLISH INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING 2015-16

The dispersal of places

Immediately noticeable at first sight of the allocations database was the dispersed nature of allocated places, illustrated in Figures 1 and 2. With secondary subject areas, primary age ranges, providers and lead schools for SD listed separately, 8292 individual allocations were listed (excluding the 2000 allocated to Teach First), each representing a different pathway to QTS. Well over half of these allocations were for just one or two places. Nearly 7000 of these represented discrete SD options where applications would be to the lead school, rather than to the provider. Of the 8292, 3570 were allocated just one place; all except 183 of these places were through SD and all but 11 provider-led courses of this size were run by SCITTs rather than HEIs. Just 10% of allocations were made to courses offering ten places or more.
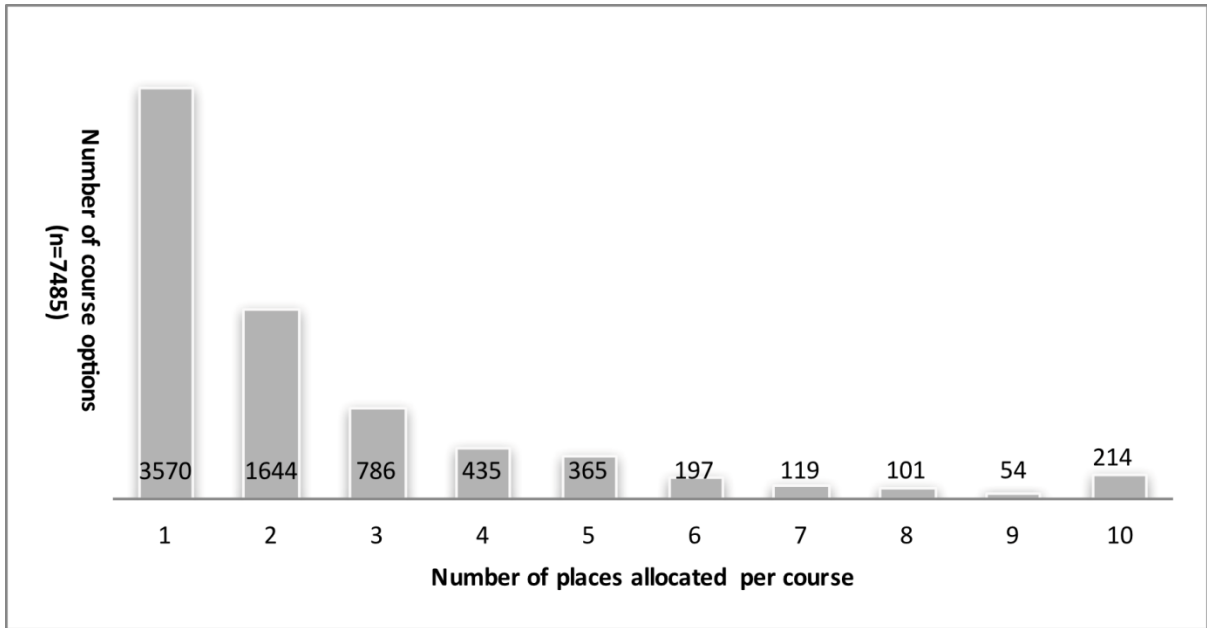
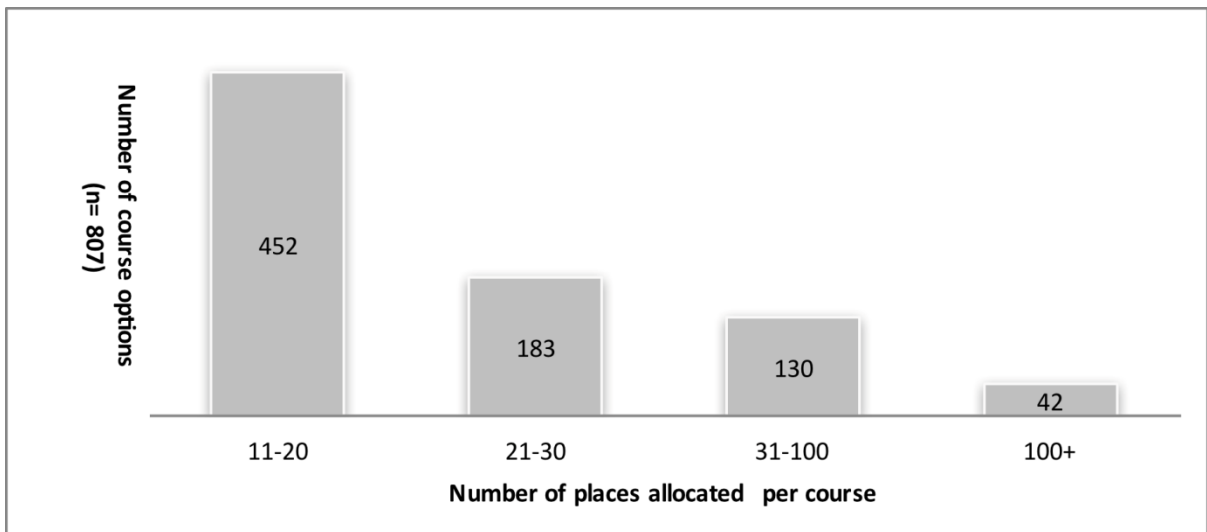Figure 1: Number of course opt ions with 10 or fewer places allocated

Figure 2: Number of course options with 11 or more places allocated

Primary course registrations ranged from 484 postgraduate trainees for the University of Cumbria, to five for the Buckingham Partnership SCITT. Many HEI providers registered more than 200 secondary trainees in 2015, with Edge Hill University registering in the mid 450s and University College London (UCL) Institute of Education more than 800. Edge Hill has over 1000 registrations altogether.

HEIs dominated the larger allocations but two institutions with large allocations were non regional: the EM Direct SCITT (now rebranded Educate and with a reach from Hartlepool to Lincolnshire and their HE partner in Leeds) for their primary course, and Hibernia College (categorised as HEI in the databases; now TES Global) for secondary mathematics and computer science.

If the majority of teaching is undertaken through E-learning, it could be argued that there are no limits on the geographical reach of any provider. Hibernia and E-Qualitas were particularly identified as making non-local provision through E-Learning, but many other providers are increasing what can be delivered in this way.

Although listed as being Surrey based for a provider led course, for 2016, E-Qualitas was allocated places to accredit QTS in the Midlands, London and the South East. However, their academic partner for the award of PGCE, where study facilities are available, is Edge Hill University, which is north of Liverpool.

Hibernia College is in Dublin, although ITT provision is now channelled through the TES Institute in London; and although its provider led courses are in Westminster, its SD reach includes central and greater London from Medway to Essex, Cheshire and Birmingham.

Route allocations and registrations: getting into the detail

Figure 3 provides a graphical representation of what is shown in the published allocations and subsequent census data (in brackets) showing the numbers of places allocated and subsequently registered to the routes as categorised. A further 2000 places were allocated to Teach First and were listed separately. In the allocations data, 272 provider led places and 335 SD places still had a provider to be confirmed.
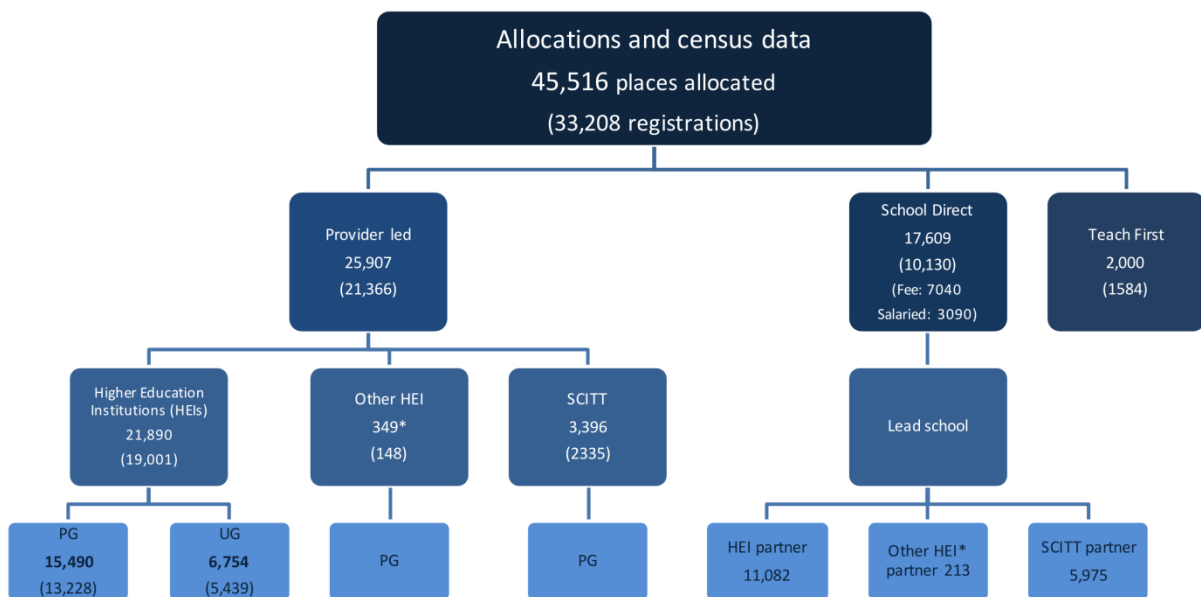
* Bradford and Hibernia Colleges and the Royal School of Dance: these three cannot award PGCE.

Figure 3: Allocations and registrations 2015-16

Figure 3 shows a limited picture, however, as it misses some important detail: firstly the new routes which are not identified discretely in the databases, and secondly, the range of providers categorised as SCITTs.

Route options

Figure 4 sets out a range of 13 routes available to those who sought QTS in 2015-16 by the two provider categories and with employment based routes including School Direct. The academic qualification which can be conferred by an HEI provider in addition to QTS is also

shown. However, where a SCITT is the provider this may not be offered, unless an additional HEI is contracted to do so. These HEIs were not identified in the databases and represent important data which are missing and difficult to discern without exploring the websites or UCAS entries for individual providers. Some SCITTs offer QTS only. As the UCAS website points out, a PGCE is not a requirement to teach in England. For entry in 2016-17, the provider Educate[3], for example, offers trainees a route to QTS for a fee of £6000, with a PGCE as an option, for which an extra £2000 must be paid. Some universities, for example Oxford Brookes and the University of East London, are promoting their PGCE courses to teachers who already hold QTS.
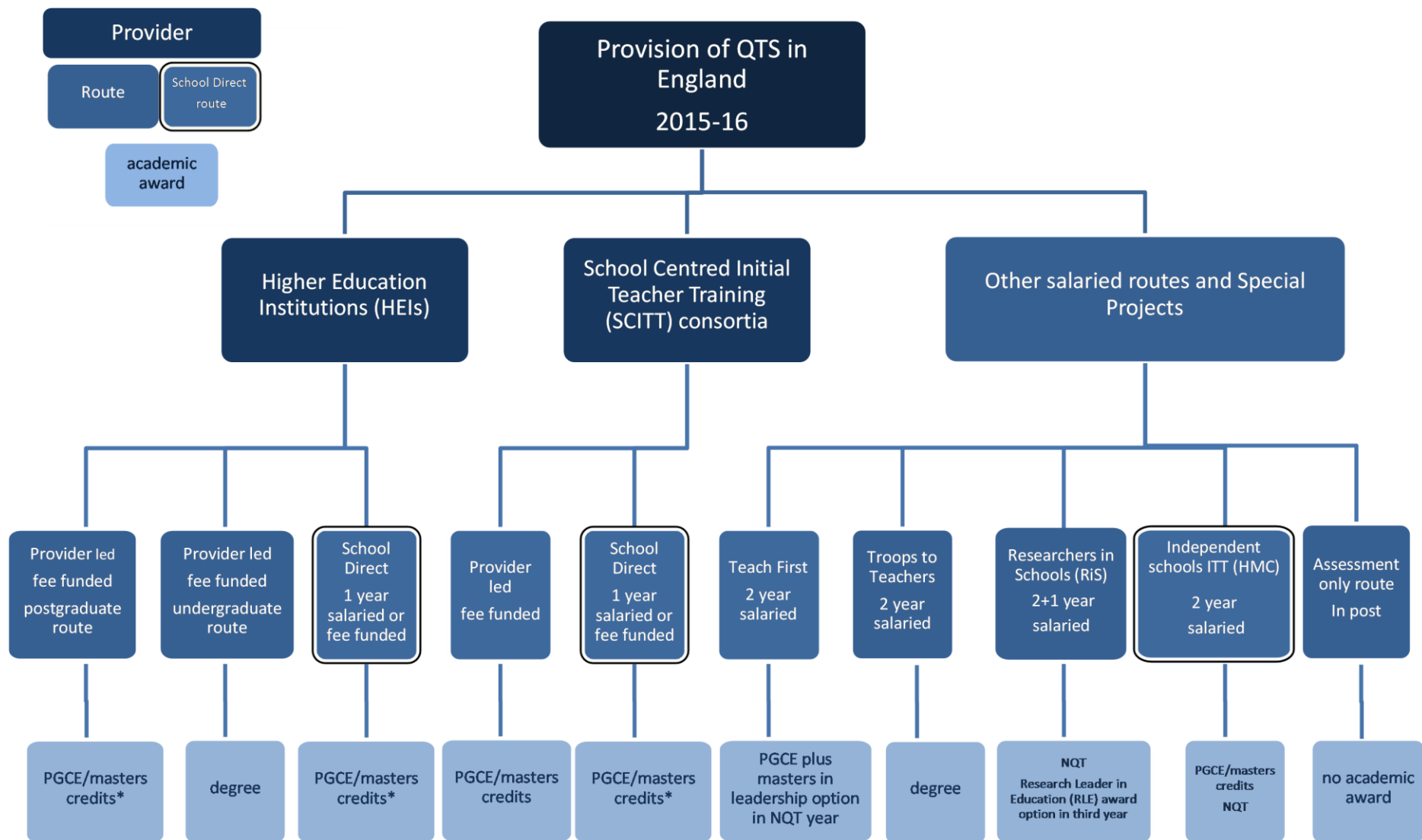
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[3] EM Direct in the 2015-16 allocations

Figure 4: Provision 2015-16: Provider-led and SD routes by provider, other salaried routes and Special Projects

Further information on the newer employment based routes was gathered mainly through web based sources, but also from providers and NCTL directly and through knowledge of provision at our own institution. Detail of the origins and characteristics of these routes are available in the full report of the topography (Whiting et al, 2016), but apart from the now well established Teach First, it seems they accounted for a relatively small number of allocated and registered places. How many exactly is more difficult to establish since their numbers are buried within the databases. Figures 5 and 6 go on to expand the HEI and SCITT sections of Figure 4: here we show how the identified non-SD salaried routes were located within the allocations database.

The cells coloured orange in Figure 6 signify the existence of an awarding body which was not named in the databases or easily found elsewhere.
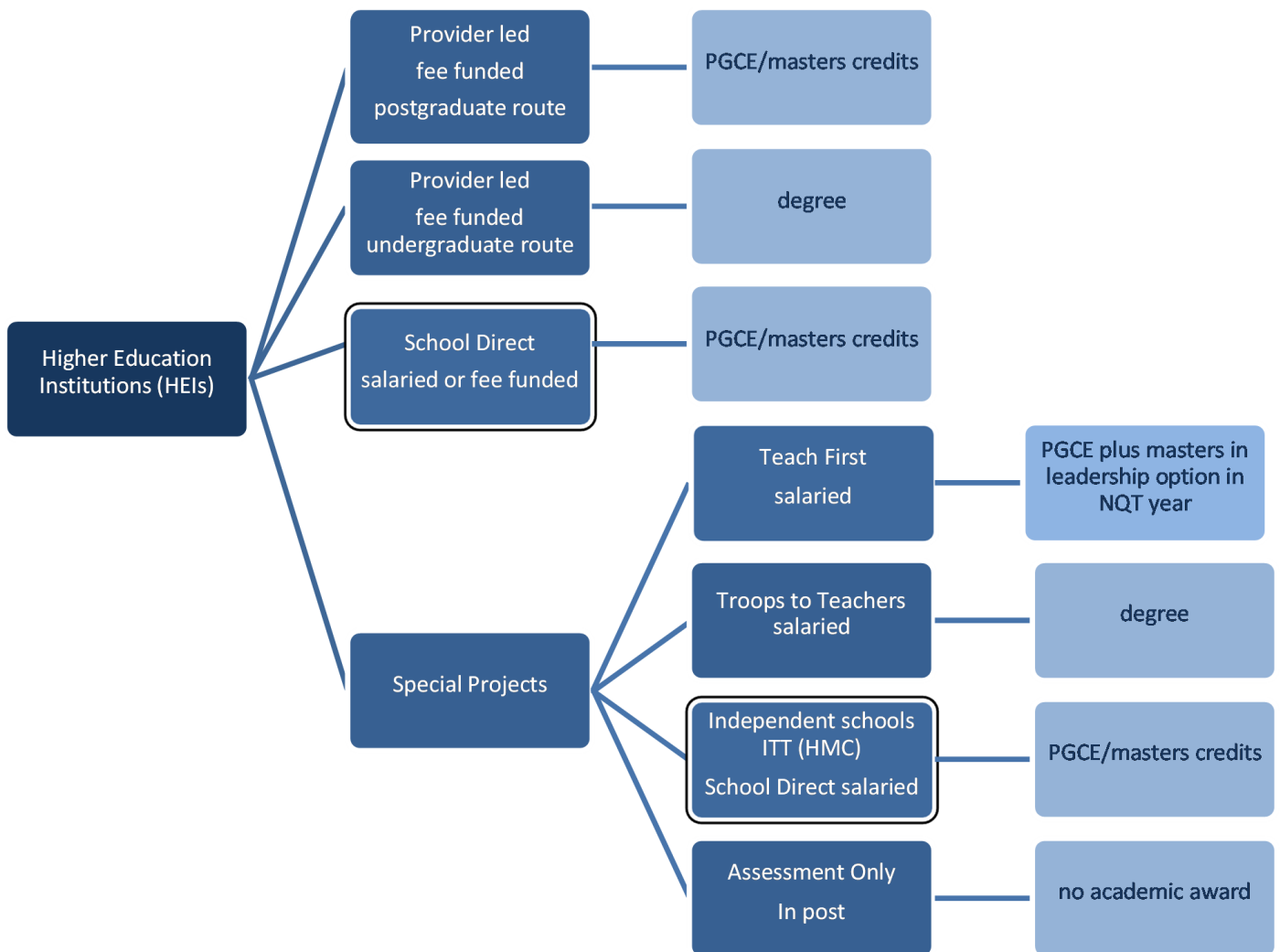

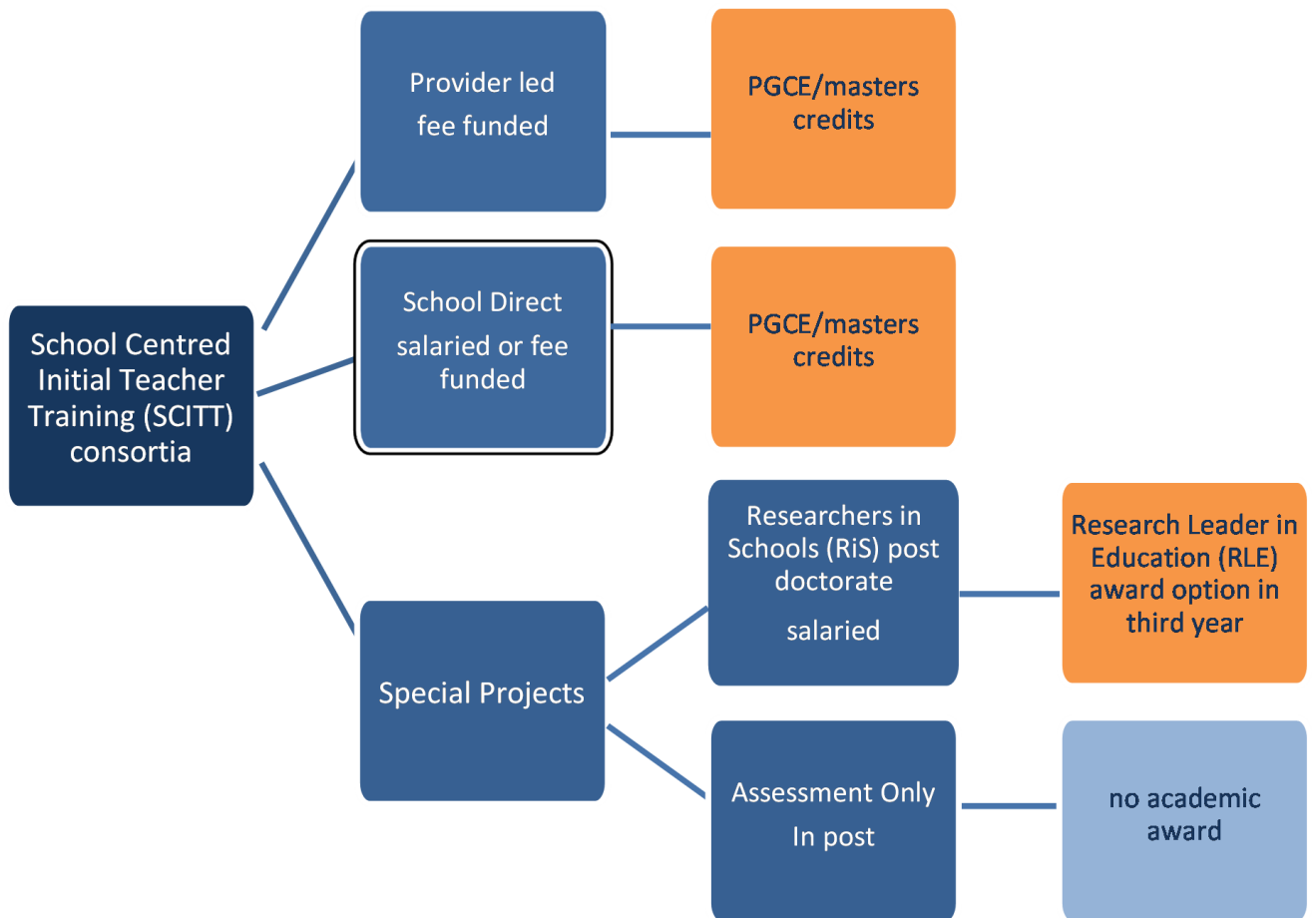Figure 5: Full range of HEI provision

Figure 6: Full range of SCITT provision

A finer provider categorisation

Assigning the category of HEI is relatively uncontroversial, with the exception of three non-awarding institutions. However, the designation 'SCITT' could be misleading, in that it fails to recognise some real differences in origins and background of these providers. Because of the great range of SCITT providers more recently accredited, any categorisation is bound to be a fairly blunt attempt to distinguish differences or similarities between some clear key features; however, it seemed important to at least acknowledge how distant some of them might be from the original locally based 'school-centred' consortia. To shine at least some light on this, we categorised these providers beyond the simple HEI/SCITT split as follows:

- **Provider category 1: Universities**

This category included all HEIs able to make graduate or post graduate academic awards.

- **Provider category 2: Other HEI**

These organisations do not hold the university designation and therefore need a partner for the award of PGCE. This category includes Bradford College, an FE institution; Hibernia College and the Royal Academy of Dance. The latter two could also be designated as charitable or private providers, and included within category 5 below. Both, with Bradford College, were classified as HEI within the allocations database.

- **Provider category 3: SCITTs led by school originated consortia**

This category attempted to include SCITTs originating in the school groups, rather than any external organisation, such as an academy chain or trust, or a charitable or private concern. This is a large and disparate group, variously supported in their origins by, for example, local authorities or developed from former EBITTs. It is possible that SCITTs included here may have assumed a status such as in category 5 below after accreditation, but this detail was not explored. The intention of including SCITTs in this group is to recognise that they were identified as essentially local, and remain committed to a relatively small group of schools that work together collaboratively without the direct influence of external agencies such as those in categories 4 and 5.

- **Provider category 4: Academy chains or multi academy trusts (MATs)**

This category identified the groups taking advantage of opportunities, not only to run schools as academy chains or trusts, but also to lead on ITT as designated providers.

- **Provider category 5: Non-exempt charities, not for profit and private organisations**

Although not counted as such in the following tables, this category also applies to Hibernia College and the Royal Academy of Dance which are included in category 2. It does include at least one SCITT which began as a school/LA originated consortium.

- **Provider category 6: Places allocated but provider to be confirmed.**

A number of places were allocated to lead schools, but with the provider not identified.

Distribution of places

Trainee registrations by provider and route

The census main text emphasises the fact that over half (51%) of postgraduate courses are 'school led' by which they mean routes with SCITT as the provider, School Direct or Teach First. We have already established just how many of the pathway options offer very small numbers of places, often just one or two. Figure 7 shows the percentage of trainees actually registered on each route, including the undergraduate route. This shows that, in 2015-16 the majority of trainees were still beginning programmes following the so called 'HE-led' routes to QTS.
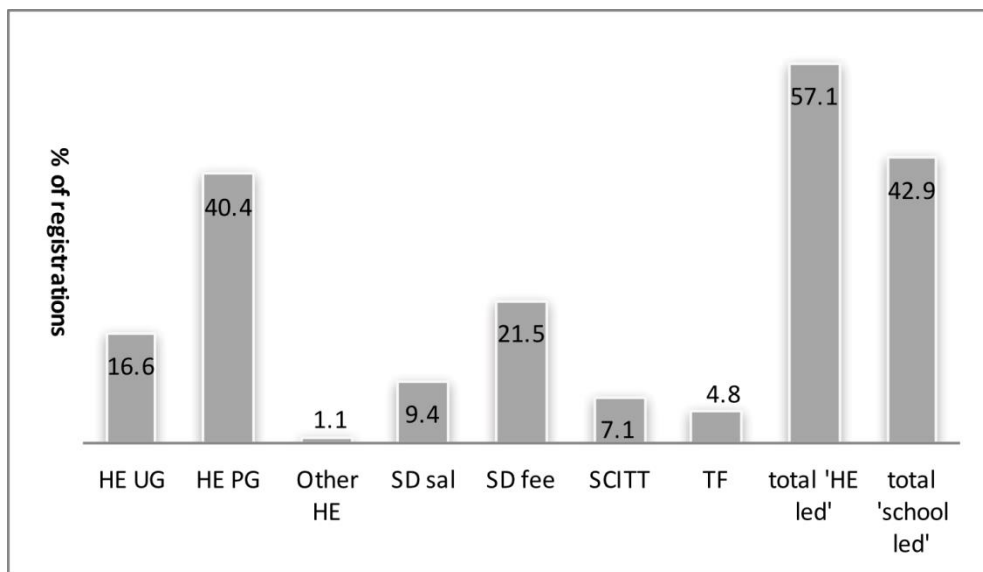

Figure 7: Percentage of trainees registered on 'HE-led' or 'school-led' routes

The following three tables show the distribution of places: the number of places initially allocated and the numbers of trainees subsequently registered on the different routes across the six categories of provider. The census tables do not cross reference primary and secondary registrations with providers and routes, so this level of analysis is only shown in Table 1.

Discrepancies between this table and Tables 2 and 3, as well as between the reported total in the database are explained by missing data: trainee registrations of fewer than five are not enumerated.

All allocations (registrations in brackets)	School Direct salaried	School Direct fee funded	Provider led	Totals
Category 1: Universities	**2357 (1495) 63%**	**8725 (4605) 53%**	**21890 (18853) 86% PG 15136 (13199) 87% UG 6754 (5439) 81%**	**32972 (24953) 76%**
Category 2: Other HEI	**32 (21) 66%**	**181 (89*) 49%**	**349 (148) 42%**	**562 (258) 46%**
Bradford College	5 (11)	102 (34)	113 (119)	220 (144)
Hibernia College (NCTL coded as HEI)	27 (10)	76 (55)	215 (10)	318 (75)
Royal Academy of Dance (NCTL coded as HEI)	0	3 (*)	21 (19)	24 (19*)
Category 3: School originated SCITT consortia	**1632 (1213) 74%**	**3527 (2173) 62%**	**3095 (2183) 71%**	**8254 (5569) 67%**
Category 4: Academy chains, trusts	**305 (214) 70%**	**288 (149) 52%**	**64 (46) 72%**	**657 (409) 62%**
Ark	68 (42)	65 (28)	0	133 (70)
CfBT	48 (28)	85 (33)	42 (34)	175 (95)
Harris	46 (63)	27 (27)	0	73 (90)
Kemnal	28 (20)	29 (15)	22 (5)	79 (40)
United Teaching National SCITT	115 (44)	68 (38)	0	183 (82)
Pimlico	0 (17)	14 (8)	0 (7)	14 (32)
Category 5: Non-exempt charities, not for profit and private	**149 (147) 99%**	**78 (24) 31%**	**237 (106) 45%**	**464 (277) 60%**
EM direct (Educate)	62 (48)	5 (*)	156 (71)	223 (139*)
E Qualitas	73 (89)	49 (18)	58 (24)	180 (131)
Titan	4 (*)	18 (6)	23 (11)	45 (17*)
Services for Education	10 (10)	6 (*)	0	16 (10*)
Category 6: Provider to be confirmed	**75**	**260**	**272**	**607**
Totals	**4550 (3090) 68%**	**13059 (7040) 54%**	**25906 (21336) 82%**	**43516 (31466)[4] 72%**

Table 2: Allocations and registrations across 6 provider categories

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[4] Teach First also recruited 1584 (79% of allocation); 65 missing data in the census (5 or fewer registered marked*) may account for a further discrepancy of 159 with a total reported figure of 33209. The TSM was 29787.

Primary phase allocations (registrations in brackets)	School Direct salaried	School Direct fee funded	Provider led	Totals
Category 1: Universities	867	3063	12069 PG 5959, UG 6110	15999 (14650) 92%
Category 2: Other HEI	4	59	56	119 (99)
Bradford College	4	43	31	78 (86)
Hibernia College (NCTL coded as HEI)	0	16	25	41 (13)
Royal Academy of Dance (NCTL coded as HEI)	0	0	0	0
Category 3: School originated SCITT consortia	808	1282	1180	3270 (2735) 84%
Category 4: Academy chains, trusts	89	44	8	141 (138) 98%
Ark	30	10	0	40 (26)
CfBT	19	14	7	40 (41)
Harris	11	5	0	16 (25)
Kemnal	9	0	1	10 (16)
United Teaching National SCITT	20	10	0	30 (25)
Pimlico	0	5	0	5 (5)
Category 5: Non-exempt charities, not for profit and private	66	25	120	211 (129) 61%
EM direct	47	5	100	152 (82)
E Qualitas	7	8	12	27 (26)
Titan	2	6	8	16 (7)
Services for Education	10	6	0	16 (14)
Category 6: Provider to be confirmed	63	149	120	332
Totals	1897	4622	13553	20072 (17751) [5] (PG 12770, UG 6754) 88%

Table 3: Allocations and registrations across 6 provider categories: primary phase

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[5] Teach First also recruited 348.

Secondary allocations (registrations in brackets)	School Direct salaried	School Direct fee funded	Provider led	Totals
Category 1: Universities	1490	5662	9821 PG 9177 UG 644	16973 (PG 14015)
Category 2: Other HEIs	28	122	293	443
Bradford College (NCTL coded as HEI)	1	59	82	142 (70)
Hibernia College (NCTL coded as HEI)	27	60	190	277 (62)
Royal Academy of Dance (NCTL coded as HEI)	0	3	21	24 (21)
Category 3: School originated SCITT consortia	824	2245	1915	4984
Category 4: Academy chains, trusts	216	244	56	516
Ark	38	55	0	93 (32)
CfBT	29	71	35	135 (46)
Harris	35	22	0	57 (62)
Kemnal	19	29	21	69 (17)
United Teaching National SCITT	95	58	0	153 (45)
Pimlico	0	9	0	9 (18)
Category 5: Non-exempt charities, not for profit and private	83	53	117	253
EM direct	15	0	56	71 (35)
E Qualitas	66	41	46	153 (93)
Titan	2	12	15	29 (9)
Services for Education	0	0	0	0
Category 6: Provider to be confirmed	12	111	152	275
Totals	2653	8437	12354	23444 (PG 21748)

Table 4: Allocations across 6 provider categories: secondary phase

Hidden data

In Figure 6, there were contributors to SCITT programmes within the allocations database, through their academic awarding powers, which were not identified. However, the categorisation of routes by funding route obscures and misleads more deeply than even this suggests. Lead schools at least are named or easily discerned in SD and many SCITT routes, but on HE-led routes no schools are identified. However, simply by examining provision offered by our own institution, the differences between SD, SCITT and provider led routes to which it contributes in terms of training are shown as not so great. This university actively encourages not only individual schools, but also clusters of schools to engage in the planning and delivery of provider led programmes which in terms of shape and balance become more similar to the so called 'school led' routes than different. PGCE content is broadly the same and delivered and assessed by the same people. Schools have trainees on different routes at the same time. The same people in both schools and university are working with trainees across routes.

Another example of missing data concerns those discrete programmes such as Teach First, Troops to Teachers and The Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference (HMC) schools which have been buried within the HEI allocations, and Researchers in Schools (RiS) in the SCITT allocations. In the case of all but HMC schools, in addition to the awarding bodies, delivery is by a number of unnamed HEI providers in partnership, along with the schools in which trainees are placed[6]. These cases of 'hidden' or 'missing' data demonstrate the challenge to researchers (and to policy makers) of being fully confident that the full picture is being described.

Returning to the structure of the allocations and census databases, the next diagram illustrates a fuller overview of absent data. The areas coloured orange in Figure 7 show partner contributors which are missing altogether but are key to developing a fuller profile of core and SD provision.

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[6] In the census data, numbers for Teach First lead HEIs are given, but partner HEIs were not named
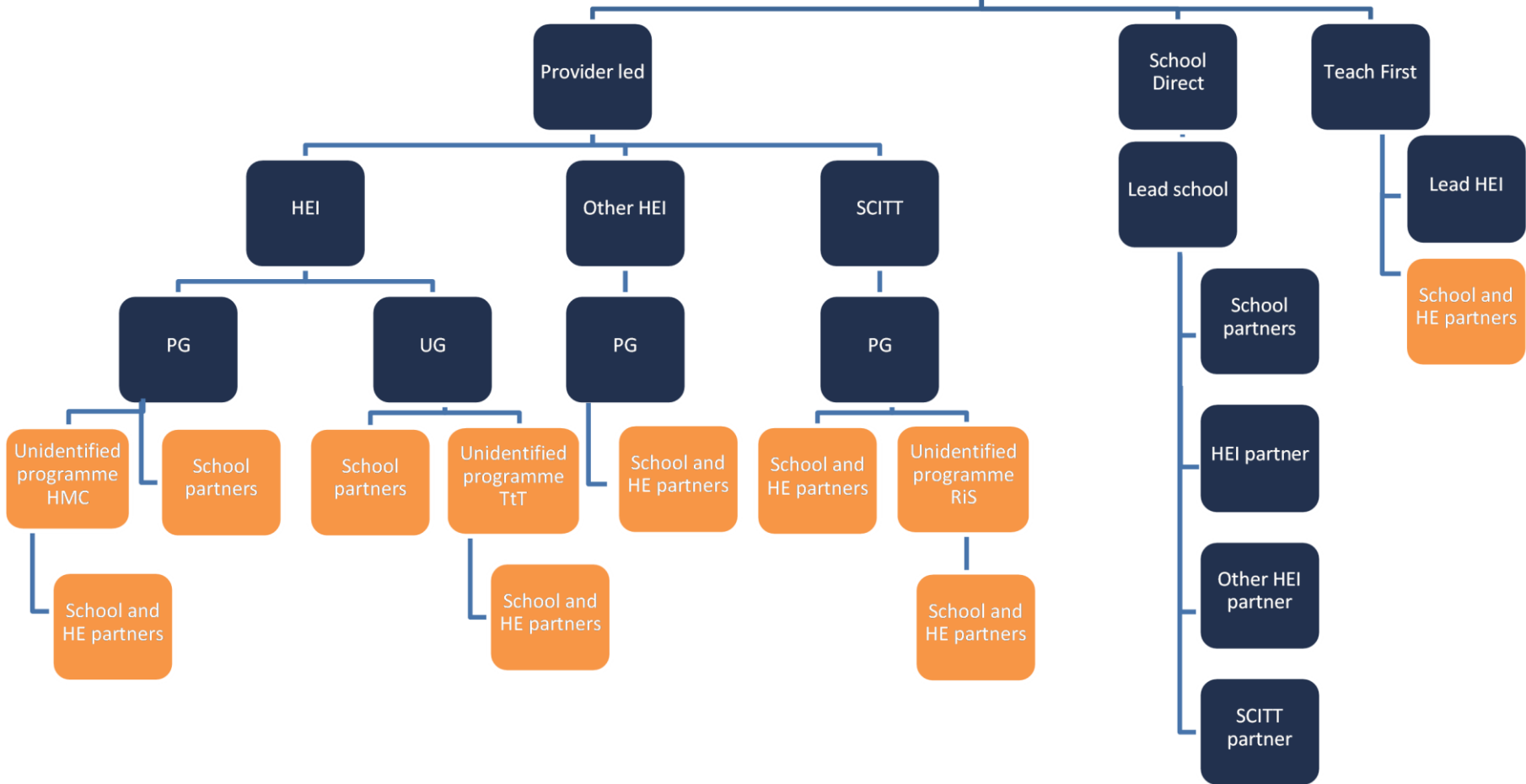
*Nearly 10000 schools were identified (incomplete list) but not the number of places in each. 100,000 school partners were identified in 2016-17

Figure 8: Allocations and census data 2015-16 showing contributors missing from data

Some providers operate through just one route, others through multiple routes. Indeed, as was suggested earlier, some providers may have seen their continued existence dependent on taking opportunities where they could. HEIs awarding PGCE may develop and adapt a core programme in collaboration with schools or school clusters. Schools also provide training through multiple routes and multiple providers (Mutton et al, 2008). How then are the various 'identities' of HEIs and schools reconciled in the delivery of ITT and what is the impact on trainees? These are among many important questions that need to be researched as a matter of urgency.

Teaching Schools

How well developed the role of Teaching Schools is in the provision of routes to QTS is not immediately discernible from the published data. In September 2015, NCTL identified 691 Teaching Schools (537 alliances) (NCTL, 2015d). School-led Initial Teacher Training is one of the six 'core areas of responsibility' (NCTL, 2015c), but this could be through School Direct or through becoming an accredited provider. An evaluation of Teaching Schools was carried out for NCTL in December 2015 (NCTL, 2015e), but although this contains qualitative material on Teaching Schools' perceptions of their involvement in ITT, it does not provide any quantitative data with regard to the extent of their role. Many Teaching Schools are represented in the SCITT provider list, and as lead schools for SD, but it is also likely that Teaching Schools are among the many partner schools for HE-led routes, both under- and post-graduate. The previous government saw one role of Teaching Schools as being 'to lead the training…. of teachers' (DfE, 2010 p9) It could be argued that Teaching Schools have the potential to support that 'schools led' as opposed to 'school led' approach through their close collaboration with, and leadership of, local school groups. The rapid expansion of this

initiative and any differences between these school groups and other SD or SCITT school clusters bears analysis in this respect but was not explored in this report.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

In addition to the numbers registered, some demographic data are available from the census data. These are briefly summarised below.

Age

The great majority of undergraduate trainees are under 25, but Teach First has the youngest cohort of the postgraduate groups with just 4% aged 30 or more. School based, and salaried routes in particular, attract the highest number of older trainees with academies and charitable and private providers attracting more over 25s than other SCITTs. 76 new post graduate trainees aged 50 or more were registered, and were represented across the routes.

Degree class (postgraduate routes)

Within the main text of the census data the degree class of newly registered trainees is cited as a measure of quality of postgraduate trainees, although it could be argued, as does a National Audit Office (NAO) report (NAO 2016), that degree class is not an effective predictor of the quality of anything other than subject knowledge. Those registering on the heavily promoted salaried SD route have a lower proportion of upper second or higher degrees; however, in this particular case, this is rationalised by a challenge as to the reliability of the measure. The greater age of trainees is suggested as leading to a combination of differences in the demographic characteristics of career changers, and growing proportions of higher classifications of degree over time. There is no further explanation of which demographic characteristics these might be and there is perhaps implicitly a suggestion that the higher degree classifications over time is due to grade inflation rather than the greater

achievement of degree candidates. Well over half of new postgraduate trainees, including virtually all on the Teach First route (with exceptions focussing on maths and science), hold an upper second or a first.

Gender

In undergraduate programmes, a significant majority of new primary trainees identified as female[7], but fewer than two thirds on secondary programmes. More than twice as many females as males registered on ITT postgraduate courses beginning in 2015 in both primary and secondary phases, across all routes and four of the six categories. There are no available data to relate the lower proportion of females for academy chains and charitable and private providers to phase, but across the categories, academies and charitable or private providers attract the highest proportion of males. However, Teach First is notable in the postgraduate routes in its proportion of females overall, due to the highest proportion of females in the secondary, as well as matching other routes in the primary phase.

Ethnicity

The vast majority of trainees, particularly undergraduates (92%) but also postgraduates (86%) do not identify as minority ethnic; these figures are both higher than that reported across the population for England and Wales in the census of 2011 (84%, with Wales being the least diverse). Although HE postgraduate success in attracting minority ethnic trainees meant that HEI routes overall attracted the highest proportion of trainees who identify as minority ethnic at 18%, Bradford College alone contributed 2% of this , also pushing the minority ethnic proportion in the 'other HEI' category up to 30%. It was SCITTs with just 9% identifying as minority ethnic that proved the least ethnically diverse although academy

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[7] Identify as male or female is the terminology of the census tables. Those trainees identifying as 'other' gender have been added to females by NCTL in the tables.

chains were the highest of these at 17%. 15% of Teach First trainees identified as minority ethnic.

Disability

Percentages of those on course declaring a disability were small; the range was between 4% and 10%. Again, however, HEI routes had the highest percentage of registrations of those declaring a disability with SCITTs training the lowest proportion. Academy chains once more registered the highest percentage within the SCITT group and Teach First recorded 8%, although, notably, 2% of these trainees did not declare their disability status.

DISCUSSION

Having given an account of the great complexity of ITT provision in England in 2015-16, we turn now to consider some of the implications that arise. In particular we discuss: first, the issue of complexity itself and how it has transformed 'partnership' in ITT; second, problems around evaluating quality; and, third, aspects of teacher identity and the branding of particular routes of entry.

Complexity and 'partnership'

Perhaps the clearest message from generating this topography is the complexity of provision and the failure of published data to reflect this. Carter (2014) saw this diversity (as opposed to complexity) as a strength, arguing that not all trainees are the same. However, as critical reports from the Institute of Fiscal Studies (IFS) (Allen et al, 2014) and the National Audit Office (NAO, 2016) endorse, it brings with it the difficulty of developing any sort of real understanding of either the process or the outcomes associated with differing models of provision. These observations do not take account of the key distinction which underpins the

current characterisation of ITT: the direction of funds between schools and HE. The effect of moving funds from providers to individual schools is the generation of a market style model in which not only the individuals who seek QTS, but also individual schools, are the customer. This could be argued as contributing to a 'school-led', rather than the 'schools-led' approach advocated by University Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET) (Noble-Rogers, 2015). The latter would perhaps better support the system-wide approach identified as lacking in the IFS and NAO reports. Secondary provision, being more heavily weighted towards School Direct than primary, carries with it the prospect of HEIs managing provision across large numbers of individual schools, each with the power vested in their status as fund holder and a commitment only to a single, often very small, cohort of trainees. This impacts on the nature and discourse of partnership, system cohesion and long term planning, and has implications for the role of these unseen players in the provision of ITT[8].

The potential for confusion and misunderstanding among staff in schools who are working on several different approaches and also the challenge for trainees of making sense of their own chosen route when it is being offered alongside others in the same school setting is considerable. The Carter Report (Carter, 2014) expressed some concern about these matters and they are also spelled out in more detail in the full report of the current research (Whiting et al, 2016).

All these routes, or courses, or pathways, have one quality in common: something that these catch-all labels of school- and HE- led diminish; and that is partnership. In nearly all cases, each prospective teacher is trained through input from universities, school clusters, and individual schools; through teams and individuals in universities and schools who conceive and deliver that training together. It is the blending of these inputs which characterise the

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[8] It may be noted that this obstacle in conceptualising ITT practice was later acknowledged by NCTL, after the publication of the topography, in a Westminster briefing in December 2016.

whole, and while this is surely influenced by the allocation and transit of funds which determines the '–led' part of the official designation, the designation is a small part of the full story.

Quality of ITT

With a prevailing emphasis on choice and diversity in ITT within the gathering momentum of a system in which the balance of control is moving from HEIs to schools, questions about quality are becoming difficult to answer. Even finding evaluations of the quality of individual providers, let alone the routes to which that provider is contributing, is problematic.   Comparison by HE or school led providers is offered widely against the standard devised at any given time by Ofsted. The NAO report assumes Ofsted reports to be the key source of data measuring quality, but points out the lack of coverage, saying it will take until 2018 to inspect all school centred providers. New providers are being added all the time, while others are falling away.   However, success in attracting candidates with the best degrees is offered as a useful measure by NCTL in the census (except, seemingly, for the older candidates on SD routes) and, with the addition of UCAS points for undergraduate entrants, also by Smithers et al (2016) in the *Good Teacher Training Guide*. This publication makes the rather grand claim that it is possible to conclude which is the 'best' by ranking providers through a summative score derived from these pre-training academic outcomes, the Ofsted grades as are available, NQT survey ratings and whether successful trainees are in post six months after qualifying. Furthermore, the authors feel able to conclude:

> The move to school-led training seems to be associated with a higher quality of provision…

> p 25

Carter's report on ITT, similarly, had relied on Ofsted inspections reported on during the small window of November 2013 to May 2014 and the NQT survey to make a judgement of the system as a whole; it seemed he was content to draw on Smithers' evidence from earlier years and the IFS report[9] to conclude that school led ITT 'has its benefits' (p3). However, not only is there a lack of any Ofsted data at all from half the SCITT providers, some reports can only be regarded as historical, since they are not written when providers were operating in the present context, nor were they inspected against the most recent two part framework. Just 36 of the 218 providers had recent inspection reports available, plus nine regional Teach First offices.

Teach First made a very strong showing across the regions, although the work of each region is not entirely discrete. It could be argued from this very small subset of data, as Ofsted did in its 2013 report, that SCITTs are doing comparatively better in terms of Ofsted inspections, and show a strength where they provide training in just one phase. But even accepting Ofsted inspections as a good indication of quality, what is being evaluated here is providers, not routes, and the judgements do not make distinctions between the different roles of the provider in the different contexts in which they operate.

Identity and branding

Certain providers, or clusters of SD schools, could be said to be developing a 'branded' (Whitty, 2014; 2017) approach to the training of their teachers where external influence is minimised by the single organisation leading, delivering training and providing school placements. Academy chains such as ARK or Harris could be seen as the more extreme examples of this since they have a contained resource in the schools they lead, but other SCITTs and even HEIs also promote a particular approach to practice and with varying levels

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[9] The benefits identified by the IFS were limited to financial, for single schools in a single recruitment year.

of control or influence over course leadership, management and content. For example, Bath

Spa University trainees are encouraged to identify themselves as 'Bath Spa Teachers'- an

identity which follows successful completion of training into the Newly Qualified Teacher

(NQT) year and perhaps beyond.[10]

Discrete routes can be seen to be adopting this approach: Teach First was seeking 'Brand

Managers' in April 2016 and providers are specifically encouraged to promote their particular

brand by the DfE. In recruitment and marketing advice it urges:

> It's important to present your offer, and your brand clearly to attract and retain
>
> interest….. Explain to your colleagues the importance of brand.

(DfE, 2014)

It may perhaps be anticipated that such distinctive branding will become increasingly

significant as the market principles underlying much of the recent policy developments across

educational provision in England take an even stronger hold.

CONCLUSION AND POSTSCRIPT: MORE CHANGE

The preceding analysis is based on just one academic year of ITT provision. This snapshot

represents the situation after a period of significant developments, which have gained pace

over the past few years, the impact of which proves difficult to capture. One might expect

and hope for a pause for consolidation. However, the continued interest of some in

government in establishing a school-led system alongside continuing shortages in recruitment

have signalled further changes and new developments. Yet the overall direction of change is

arguably now less clear than it has been for some time. Further modifications to the

allocations methodology for 2016-17 and again for 2017-18 (NCTL, 2016a) seemed to

suggest indecision around the approach which best facilitates an adequate supply and

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[10] This was noted in the Ofsted inspection of BSU ITT provision in June 2016.

effective dispersal of trainees. A White Paper (DfE, 2016), NCTL's response to the Carter review (NCTL, 2016b), and a new prime minister and education secretary in the summer of 2016 had offered no further reassurance by the turn of the year on this particular front.

It was a while into 2017 before Justine Greening, the new Secretary of State for Education, offered an update which may suggest an acknowledgement, at least, that the provision of well trained teachers at all stages in their careers is a system-wide enterprise not necessarily best served by further atomisation. Speaking on 16th February at the national conference for the new Chartered College of Teaching (seen as a new 'professional body to safeguard and develop…high standards, disseminate evidence and drive progress for the profession as a whole'), she promised the continuation of a 'strengthened QTS' from September 2019, and new, revised professional qualifications for middle, senior and executive leaders (DfE, 2017a).

Arguably, this shift in emphasis was consistent with the change of leadership in the Conservative Party. Conservative Party education policy over the past thirty years can be seen as part of the free economy and strong (but hollowed out) state identified by Gamble (1994) as the essence of Thatcherism. However, in her first speech to the Conservative Party conference as party leader in October 2016, Theresa May had signalled a subtle shift of emphasis. While previous Conservative leaders had sought to reduce state intervention, Prime Minister Theresa May indicated that her government would take action to identify injustice, find solutions and drive change (BBC News, 2016). 'Marketisation' and 'atomisation' of teacher education, particularly under Michael Gove, could be seen as encouraging the development of a 'system of small systems' (Whitty, 2016; 2017), but Justine Greening's comments seemed to herald a return to a core definition of teacher professionalism determined by the state and/or the profession as represented by the new College.

As important as any such ideological shift, however, was a looming teacher supply crisis, partly exacerbated by the fragmentation the system. The House of Commons Select Committee on Education published a report on 21st February (HOC, 2017), which corroborated the message of this paper in its highlighting of the complexity of provision, and its failure to recruit and retain an adequate teaching force, saying the government lacks a coherent and long term plan. Although there is a strong focus on retention (and it notes a lack of information gathered by government as to why teachers leave the profession), it also points to two particular areas contributing to weaknesses in recruitment:

> The number of different routes into teaching are not always well understood by applicants and can be confusing; the absence of a central application system for school-led ITT leads to inefficient application systems (paragraph 30)

and

> The Government previously set annual targets for all ITT providers using the teacher supply model, which had a destabilising effect on the system as a whole; for the most high-performing ITT providers, multi-year targets have now been introduced, but all ITT providers, universities and school-led, need to be able to plan for more than one year to be able to deliver high-quality ITT provision (paragraph 27)

A key recommendation was:

> A thorough plan for the evaluation of any initiatives and how any findings will feed into future plans for teacher recruitment. (Paragraph 31)

By March slightly different messages were beginning to emerge from the Government. On the 2nd March, an article in the Times Educational Supplement (TES) reported that Ben Ramm, the DfE's head of teacher supply, sought to rebut the suggestion that the DfE's focus

was exclusively on school-led teacher training (Ward and Hazell, 2017). Claiming a pragmatic approach, and no particular structural preference, he was said to point to the education secretary's endorsement of the importance and value of 'high quality university involvement' in ITT. He is reported as going on to say that this is a direction that could not only be sustained but increased. He also made an assurance that in any new QTS accreditation, coming after a period of teaching following initial training, universities would be 'included in the ratification'. In a further article in the TES, Ward (2017) concluded that 'the shift in policy appears to be driven by hard-headed realism about what would attract the necessary graduates into teaching, as well as a need for more coherence in training' (p.15).

Meanwhile, on 10th March Justine Greening demonstrated, in a speech to the teachers' union ASCL, some of that realism about teacher supply, but rather less concern over diversification and complexity, when she had this to say:

> I will be inviting expressions of interest from providers with innovative teacher training models - school-led, universities and partnerships between the 2 - that can ensure more high-quality new teachers reach the schools and areas that need them most.

> DfE, 2017b

She went on to assure that these new models of provision would be guaranteed the same three-year allocations already benefitting 'the best-performing ITT providers'. There have been, however, no published criteria by which this performance is judged. On the evidence available so far, a judgement of outstanding against the new Ofsted inspection framework is not 'best performing' enough.

We await further developments, and would hope that a more coherent and long term plan may come to pass. However, it seems likely that only those HEIs with the very best Ofsted outcomes, and a demonstrable willingness to engage with schools as the leaders in ITT, will stay the course.

Our analysis of English ITT in the year 2015-16 confirmed what others have suggested about the distinctiveness of policy developments here. While some similar tendencies can be detected in a few other parts of the world, including the USA and Australia (see Darling-Hammond and Lieberman, 2012), the fragmentation of the system and the dispersal of teacher training places to such a large range of providers is a phenomenon that confirms that England is an outlier even within the UK (TEG, 2016). Indeed, it is questionable, given the volatility, uncertainty and turmoil that have occurred, how far the term 'system' can still be deployed as an accurate term to describe what is now happening in English ITT.

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