



National College for
Teaching & Leadership

Qualitative Research with Shortage Subject Teaching Candidates: The Journey to Teacher Training

**Technical annexe: Careers fairs exit
survey**

October 2014

**Ceri Matthias & Gemma Baker - BMG
Research**

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Introduction

Background and methodology

BMG Research undertook careers fair exit surveys on behalf of the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) as part of a broader customer journey research programme which has the following overall aims:

- To explore barriers and challenges to customers on their customer journey, including those relating to Schools Direct, to ensure these can be addressed as part of NCTL's management of recruitment numbers.
- To help inform the NCTL's marketing strategy in order that it meets its targets in creating new ITT trainees.

Student fairs and other engagement events offer an excellent opportunity to explore the ways in which interest can be sparked and lead through to registration, and conversely to investigate the ways that interest can be reduced or blocked. For this reason, BMG conducted a programme of consultations with participants at careers fairs with an NCTL presence during autumn term, specifically October and November 2013. Our engagement explored the impact of these events and decision-making among delegates, based on a range of factors impacting people at this stage.

These events allowed us to target particular shortage subject audiences, as well as consulting at one non-subject-specific event. BMG consulted with participants at the following events, covering a range of geographies and types of event:

	University	Event Name	Date
1	University of Reading	Autumn Careers & Placements Fair	30-Oct
2	University of Leicester	Engineering, Science and IT	07-Nov
3	University of Salford	Computing, Science & Engineering Recruitment Fair	20-Nov
4	University of Sheffield	Science Careers Fair	21-Nov

University of Reading – Autumn Careers & Placements Fair

The Careers & Placements Fair is the largest careers event at the University of Reading, attracting approximately 2,500 students from all disciplines. It is the main opportunity to advertise graduate schemes and placements to all students, in one venue.

University of Leicester – Engineering, Science and IT

Part of a 4 day 'Festival of Careers', the Engineering, Science and IT careers fair is specifically aimed at those looking to pursue a career in these areas.

University of Salford – Computing, Science & Engineering Recruitment Fair

The fair targets students from both the School of Computing, Science and Engineering and the School of Environment and Life Sciences. Recruiters from Computing, Science and Engineering are present to promote their graduate opportunities, industrial placements, vacation placements and work experience opportunities to students and graduates.

University of Sheffield – Science Careers Fair

The fair is aimed at all students and graduates with science as an interest, degree choice or career path. The combined student population at the University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University is around 4,000 students.

Exit interviews were conducted with 73 careers fair participants who had just visited the NCTL stand, using a structured questionnaire (administered by a CAPI (computer-assisted personal interviewing) device), which lasted 5-10 minutes. Where possible, a systematic recruitment process was applied whereby interviewers approached every person who had spent time at the NCTL stand.

In order to qualify, participants needed to be a current student looking at career options. Quotas were also in place to ensure enough people were interested in the shortage subjects.

The following report provides a summary of the key findings derived from the survey data.

Understanding the report

The data used in this report is rounded up or down to the nearest whole percentage point. It is for this reason that, on occasions, tables or charts may add up to 99% or 101%. Where tables and graphics do not match exactly to the text in the report this occurs due to the way in which figures are rounded up (or down) when responses are combined. Results that differ in this way should not have a variance that is any larger than 1%.

All data used within this report takes the valid response (unless specified). This is where the results are based on all respondents giving a valid answer to a question, thus excluding those where an answer was not provided or where an answer of don't know was supplied.

Key findings

The majority of students who visited the NCTL stand at the careers fairs were still considering a number of professions alongside teaching. The most important factors in deciding on a profession were being in a job that is enjoyable, rewarding and offers opportunities for progression. Focusing on these aspects of the teaching profession in communications with students may increase interest and encourage registration.

As most students had not decided on their future profession, many had not yet taken any steps to enter teaching; however those that had had mostly either requested or undertaken work experience placements. Providing information and support on how to gain experience is important, particularly given that it was listed as one of the barriers preventing people from entering teaching.

More than two thirds of students were interested in teaching one of the shortage subjects, with chemistry being by far the most popular choice. The shortage subjects were equally popular among males and females, and there were no significant differences by any other subgroups analysed.

When asked what students wanted to gain from the NCTL stand, most wanted general information, as well as specific advice and support on the application process, qualifications, funding, etc. The vast majority were able to find the information they were looking for, and it was found to be very helpful. For those that could only partially find the information they wanted, this was mainly due to the specific nature of their queries.

Three quarters of students registered their interest in teaching at the NCTL stand, and many others intended to at another point. For those that did not register (and did not plan to at another time), this was largely due to uncertainty around which profession to pursue or simply that they were not at the right stage in the process.

Overall, the NCTL stand appears to be very successful; almost two thirds of students claimed that visiting the stand had made them more likely to enter teaching. Many students said that the help and support offered by the advisors played a significant role in this. In order to try and persuade even more students to register their interest, advisors could seek ways to tackle some of the specific barriers mentioned (e.g. lack of experience, behaviour of children/lack of respect, salary, concerns over government policy changes) as this may persuade those that are unsure to more strongly consider teaching as a future profession.

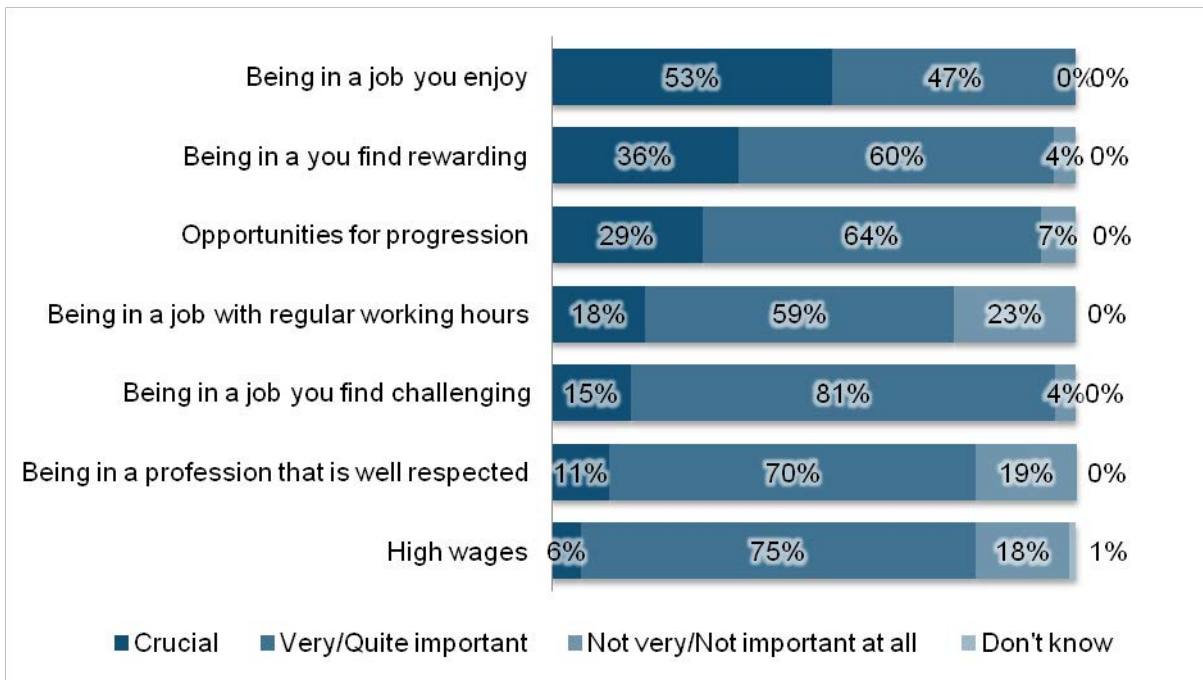
Profile of students

Motivation when deciding which profession to pursue

When making a decision about which profession to pursue, students claimed the most important factor was finding a job that would be enjoyed; 53% rated this as crucial. This is followed by being in a job that is rewarding (36% crucial) and offers opportunities for progression (29% crucial). Focusing on these areas in future communications with students is likely to have the most influence on increasing the level of interest in teaching as a profession.

High wages were seen as the least important factor in the decision making process (6% crucial). Almost a quarter (23%) claimed that being in a job with regular working hours was not very/not important at all, and being in a profession that is well respected was also seen as a less influential factor (19% not very/not at all important).

Figure 1: Q15. Please could you tell us how important the following factors are to you when making your decisions about the profession you would like to pursue.



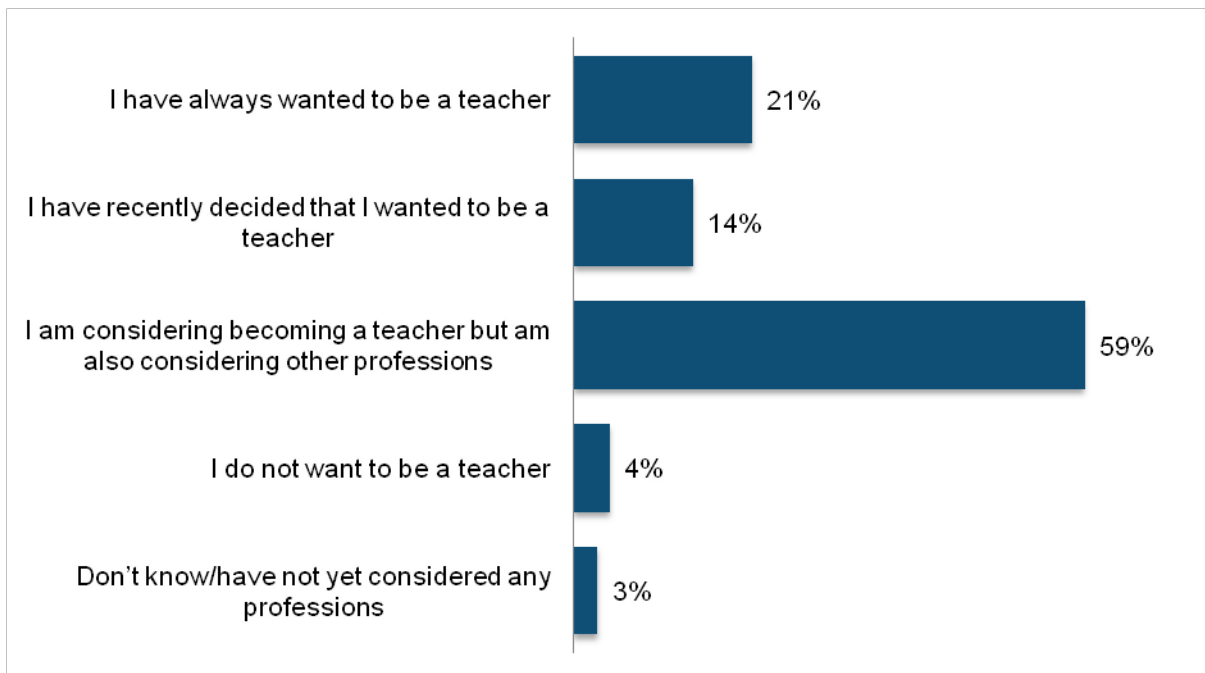
Sample base: 73

Decision making stage

Of those that visited the NCTL stand, the majority (59%) were considering other professions alongside teaching. This highlights the importance of the stand providing all the necessary support and information to students in order to encourage registration, as many are undecided at this stage. Males were more likely to be considering other professions than females (91% cf. 64%).

Around one in five (21%) had always wanted to be a teacher, while 14% had only recently decided that they wanted to be a teacher. A small proportion (7%) did not want to be a teacher or had not yet considered any professions.

Figure 2: Q1a. Which of the following responses best describes you? (Interest in teaching)

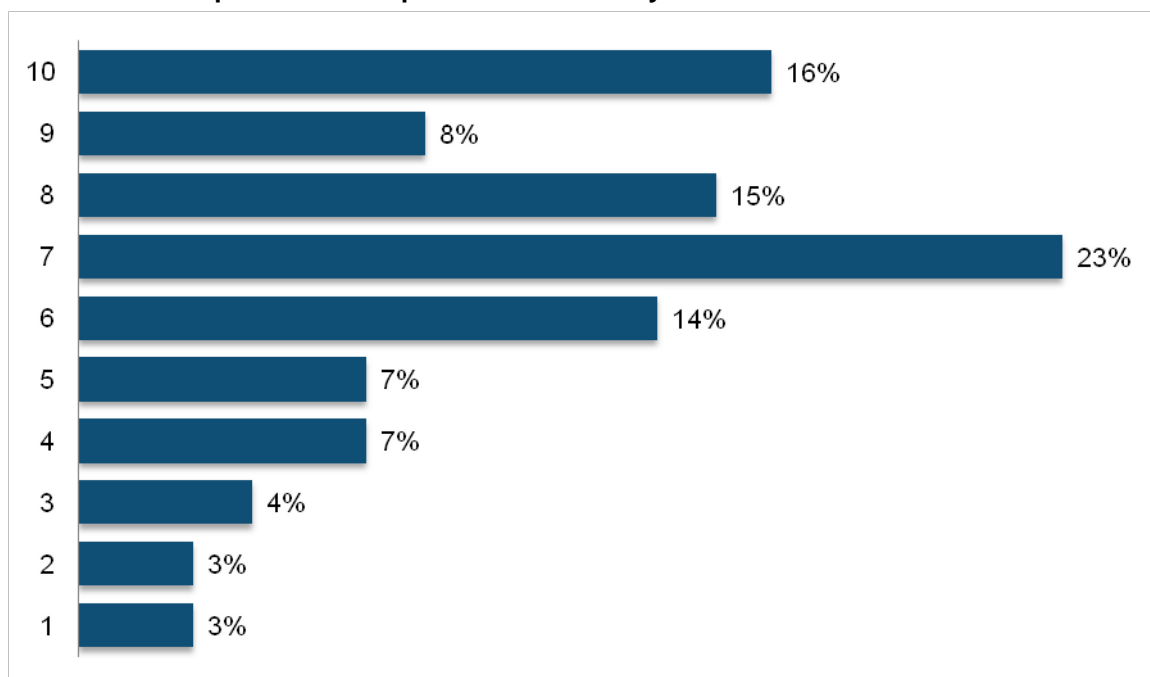


Sample base: 73

Interest in teaching

Before visiting the NCTL stand, 40% of students described their level of interest in entering the teaching profession (compared to other professions) as between 8 to 10 out of 10. This is reflective of the fact that many of the students (59%) were also considering other professions at the time of interview. Almost a quarter (23%) scored 1-5 out of 10 on this measure; however, interest may have subsequently increased as a result of visiting the NCTL stand.

Figure 3: Q4. How would you describe your level of interest in entering the teaching profession compared to other professions before you visited the NCTL stand?



Please answer on a scale of 1-10 where 1 is 'teaching is your least preferred career' and 10 is 'teaching is your most preferred career'.

Sample base: 73

Steps taken so far

When students were asked whether they had taken any initial steps to entering the teaching profession, around 2 in 5 had not yet taken any steps. For those that had, the most common response was that they had either requested or undertaken work experience placements (c. 1 in 4). A selection of responses is below:

- *"Looked into obtaining work experience, was told that experience is vital, something to differentiate me on my CV"*
- *"Looked at placements in schools, planned for the summer. I thought it would be good idea."*
- *"Booked a meeting with Schools Direct with a view of arranging placements."*

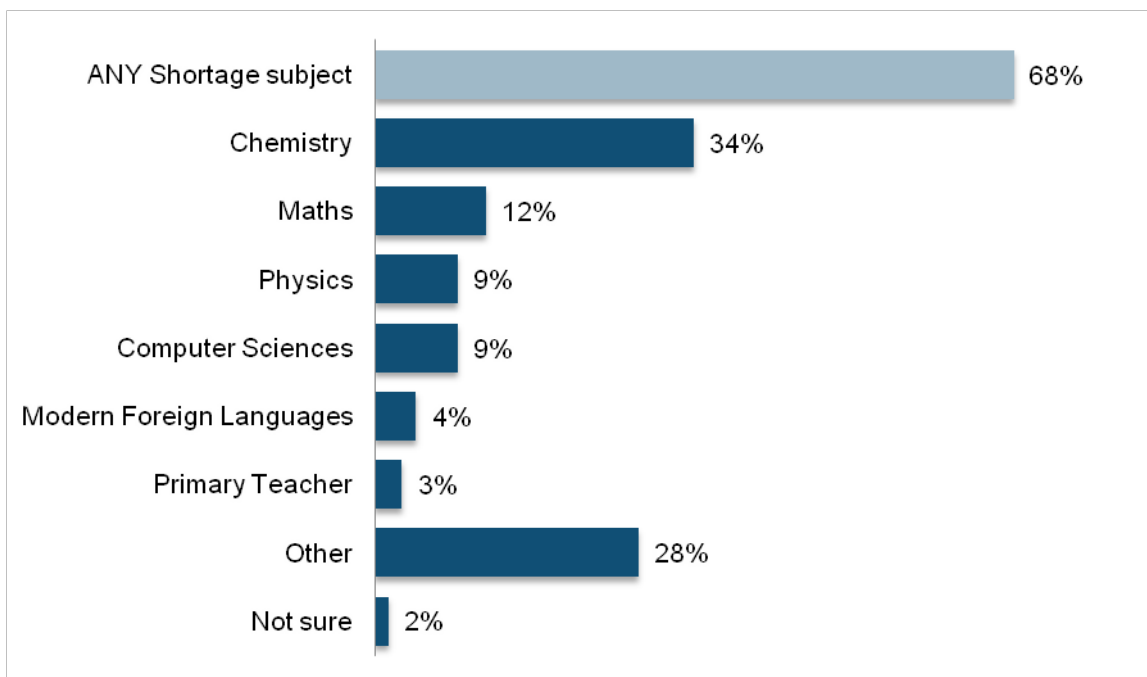
None of the students said what initially prompted them to take the action (aside from advice from the university); there were no specific mentions of adverts playing any role here suggesting that NCTL communications/campaigns were not 'front-of-mind' for those attending the stand.

Subject interested in

Of the students interviewed, more than two thirds (68%) wanted to teach one of the shortage subjects, highlighting strong potential to attract students to these subjects in future. Of the shortage subjects, by far the most popular was chemistry (34%), followed by maths (12%), physics (9%), computer sciences (9%) and modern foreign languages (MFL) (3%). The shortage subjects were equally popular among both males and females.

Almost a third (31%) said another (non shortage) subject, or that they wanted to become a primary school teacher.

Figure 4: Q2a. What subject do you want to teach?



Sample base: 68

NCTL Stand

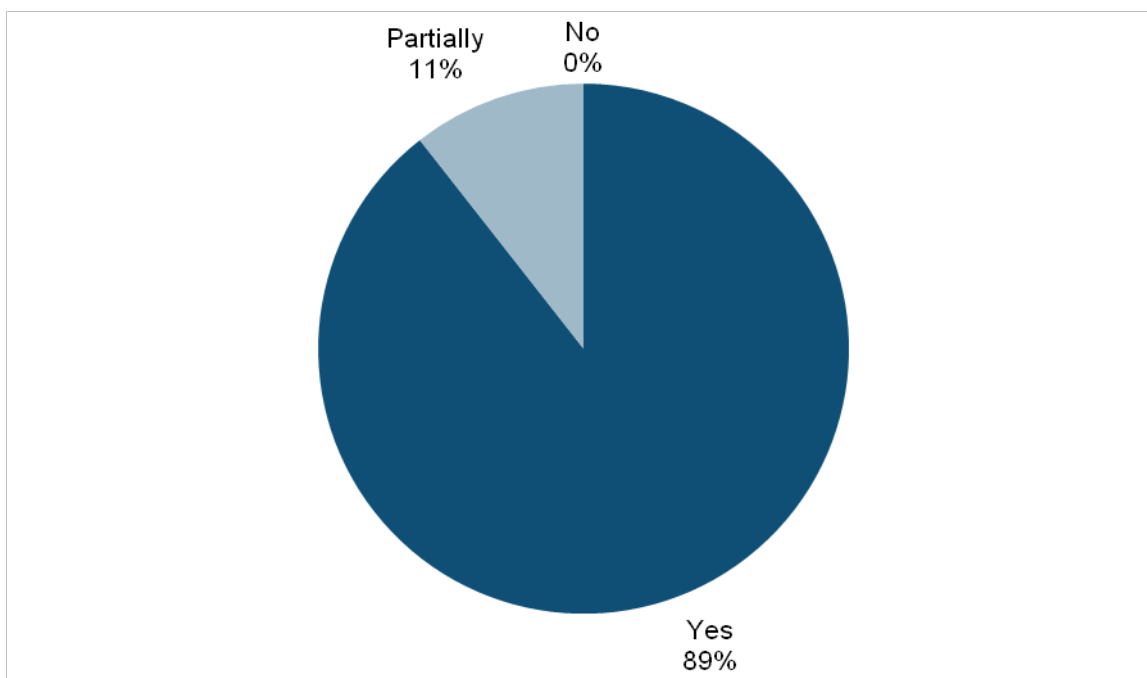
Information accessed

When asked what information or advice students wanted to access from the NCTL stand, responses were varied but generally fell into the following categories:

- General information
- Application process
- Qualification requirements
- Routes into teaching
- Funding/bursary information
- Job availability/opportunities

The vast majority (89%) were able to find the information they were looking for, while 11% said 'partially'. None of the students said they were not able to find the information they were looking for.

Figure 5: Q6. What subject do you want to teach?



Sample base: 68

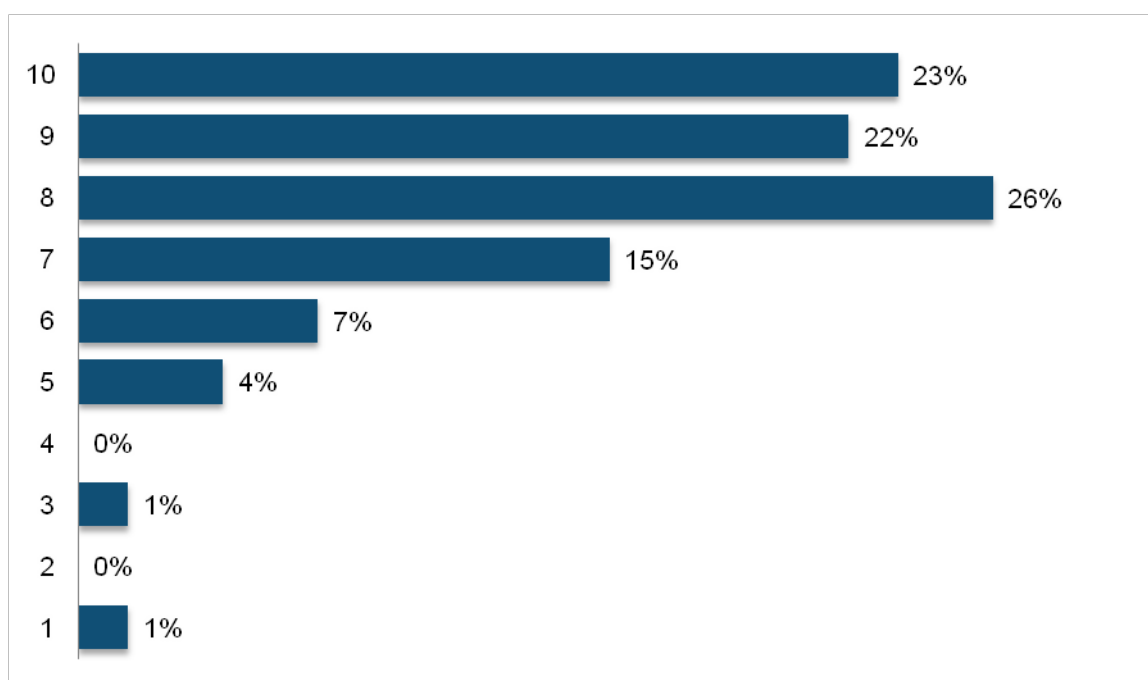
Of the 11% that said they only 'partially' found the information and advice they were looking for, the responses often related to specific queries:

- "Special needs and abroad"
- "Funding for international students"

- “Specific information about chemistry”
- “Not many routes into the sports science teaching”
- “Policies”
- “Didn’t feel the responses were relevant to my interest”

However, most students did find the information they were looking for and 71% rated the information at the NCTL stand between 8 to 10 out of 10 in terms of helpfulness, while very few (7%) scored between 1 to 5 out of 10.

Figure 6: Q14a. Overall, how helpful was the information you received from the NCTL stand on a scale of 1-10 where 1 is ‘not helpful at all’ and 10 is ‘very helpful’?



Sample base: 73

Those rating the NCTL stand as less than 8 out of 10 in terms of helpfulness were asked why. Again, some found the stand less helpful largely due to the specific queries they had which were not able to be answered by staff on the NCTL stand on the day. A selection of responses is below:

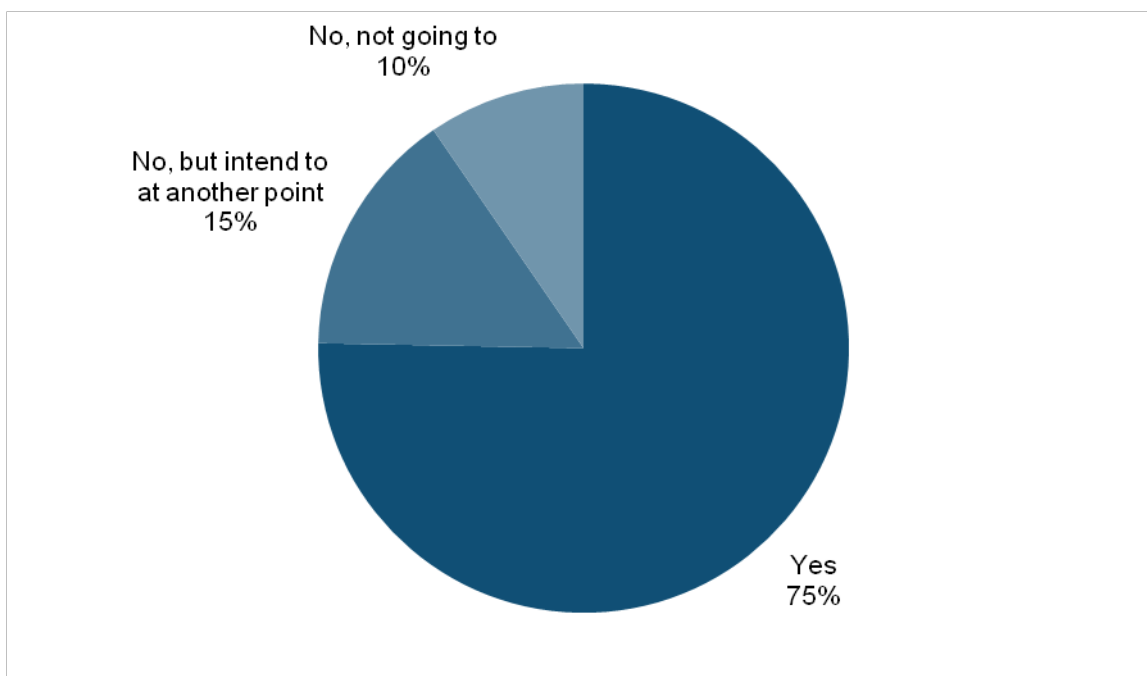
- *“Science-based information”*
- *“Specific questions about international students”*
- *“Just clarified information I already knew”*
- *“Already had basic info”*
- *“I didn't get to find out all I wanted”*
- *“I think if they had some literature detailing different entry routes that would be good”*

- *“I could’ve been given more concrete information but they were helpful”*
- *“Lots of information but not everything I was looking for”*
- *“Just given too much information, loads of leaflets”*
- *“Unable to explain different methodologies involved in training”*
- *“Specifics about my particular subject”*

Registration

The vast majority, three quarters (75%) registered their interest in teaching while at the NCTL stand. For those that did not, 15% claimed they intended to register at another point, while 10% said they were not going to register their interest.

Figure 7: Q7b. Have you registered your interest in teaching while at the NCTL stand?



Sample base: 73

When asked what the students were hoping to get from registering their interest, the majority said ‘more information’. Some specifically mentioned help and support with the application process and funding.

For those that did not register their interest on the day, responses generally fell into two categories:

- Those who were unsure about teaching and/or were considering other options, or were not at the right stage in the process:
 - “Don’t want to teach”*
 - “Not sure about teaching right now”*

“Considering other options”
“Brochures enough at moment”
“Was told to wait until next year”
“Only in first year”

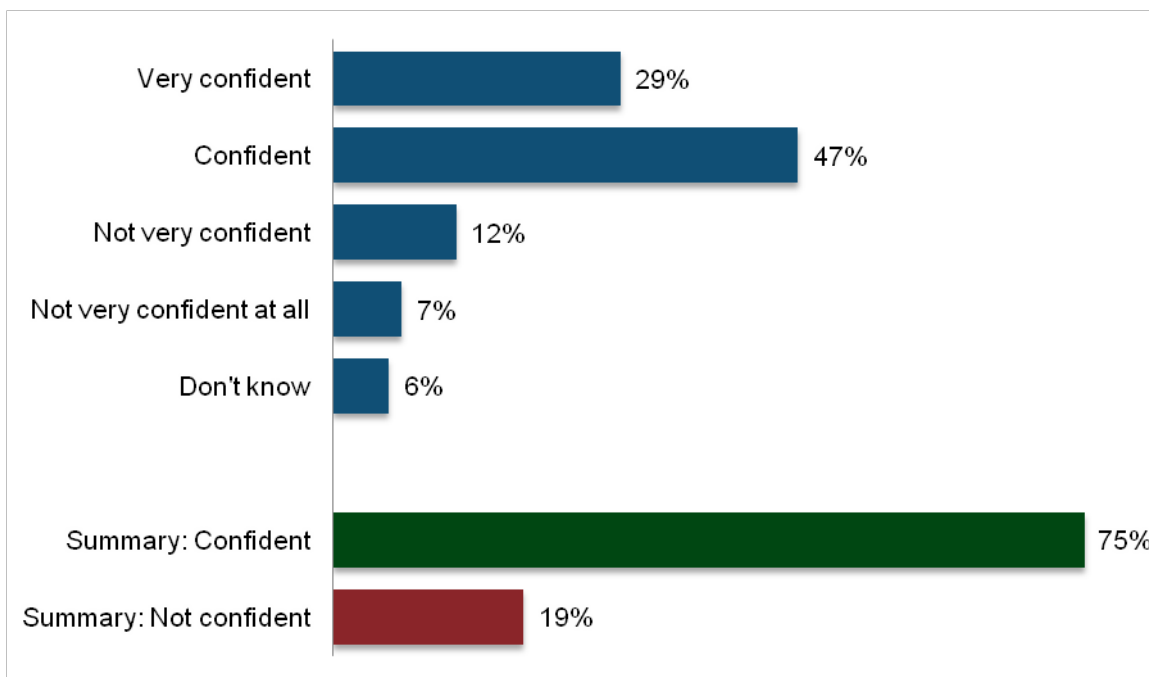
- Those who had only just arrived at the fair and/or planned to register at another time:

“Because I wanted to look around first”
“Haven’t had the chance yet”
“I’m going to do it online”
“Only just got here”
“I’m going to based on recommendations”

Confidence in next steps

75% of students claimed they were confident (very confident/confident) they knew what the next steps were to enter the teaching profession. A small but notable proportion (19%) was, however, not confident in terms of next steps despite having visited the NCTL stand. Given that most claimed to find the information helpful, this is likely to be due to uncertainty about which profession to pursue rather than the NCTL stand lacking any particular information.

Figure 8: Q8. To what extent are you confident you know what the next steps are for you to enter the teaching profession?



Sample base: 73

When asked what further information, if any, was needed at this stage, students' responses fell into several categories:

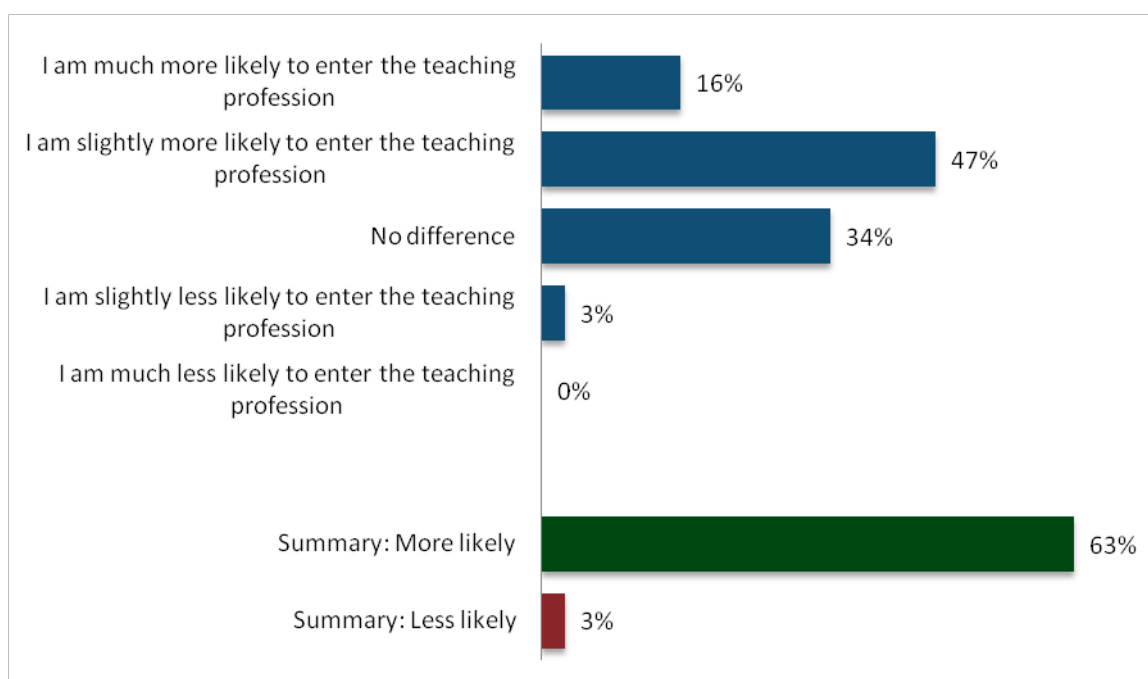
- How to improve applications (gaining experience, specific application and qualification queries)
 - "More teaching experience"*
 - "To better my position to become a better applicant and better use my time"*
 - "Proof reading the application"*
 - "How easy the application process is, what schools have placements"*
 - "More school experience, contacts"*
 - "How I can use my placement to advantage myself going forward"*
 - "A list of schools locally for shadowing purposes"*
 - "How to secure classroom experience"*
 - "More experience"*
 - "Look on websites for routes and dates"*
 - Qualifications for teaching"*
 - "How to proceed towards qualifications"*
 - "What to do next, who to contact"*
- PGCE/alternative routes into teaching:
 - "Looking at other options including PGCE"*
 - "Where to apply for the PGCE"*
 - "More information on the nature of the PGCE and alternative routes"*
 - "Where to apply to PGCEs and the alternative entry routes into teaching"*
 - "Direction, knowing more about routes into teaching"*
 - "What exact schemes are available for entry into profession"*
- Other specific queries:
 - "How easy it would be for transition from student to teacher"*
 - "Training, how to deal with students, basic teacher training"*
 - "Information on different teaching styles and methodologies"*
 - "Money information"*
 - "See if the government funds higher education as opposed to secondary"*

Impact of the NCTL stand

After visiting the NCTL stand, almost two thirds (63%) said they were more likely to enter the teaching profession, proving it had a positive impact for many. Time spent at other stands was less likely to have an influence than the NCTL stand, with fewer (30% cf. 63%) claiming it would make them more likely to enter teaching.

Only 3% said they were any less likely to enter the teaching profession after visiting the NCTL stand.

Figure 9: Q10. Did your time at the NCTL stand influence your likelihood to enter the teaching profession in any of the following ways?



Sample base: 73

When asked in what way the time at the NCTL stand influenced students' likelihood to enter the teaching profession, many stated that help and support offered by the advisors played a significant role. A selection of responses is shown below:

- *"Passion from people on the stand"*
- *"Helpful, positive and informative. Apprehension removed. Strong positive impact"*
- *"People were nice and gave me good insight"*
- *"More information given confirmed my knowledge"*
- *"Advice and friendly advisors and the help offered"*
- *"A lot of opportunities and support for physics"*
- *"She made me more confident to apply"*
- *"It made me consider more as a viable option rather than just a back-up plan"*
- *"It has shown that even with my background teaching is an option"*

- *“The enthusiasm of the advisors, encouragement”*
- *“They motivated you and made you feel valued”*

Potential barriers

Students listed a number of concerns that have or would dissuade them from becoming a teacher or entering training to become a teacher:

- Behaviour of children in school/lack of respect for teacher
- Lack of experience
- Salary
- Government policy changes on teaching

If staff at the NCTL stand can identify and tackle these barriers directly in future, this could lead to an increase in interest in teaching and registration.

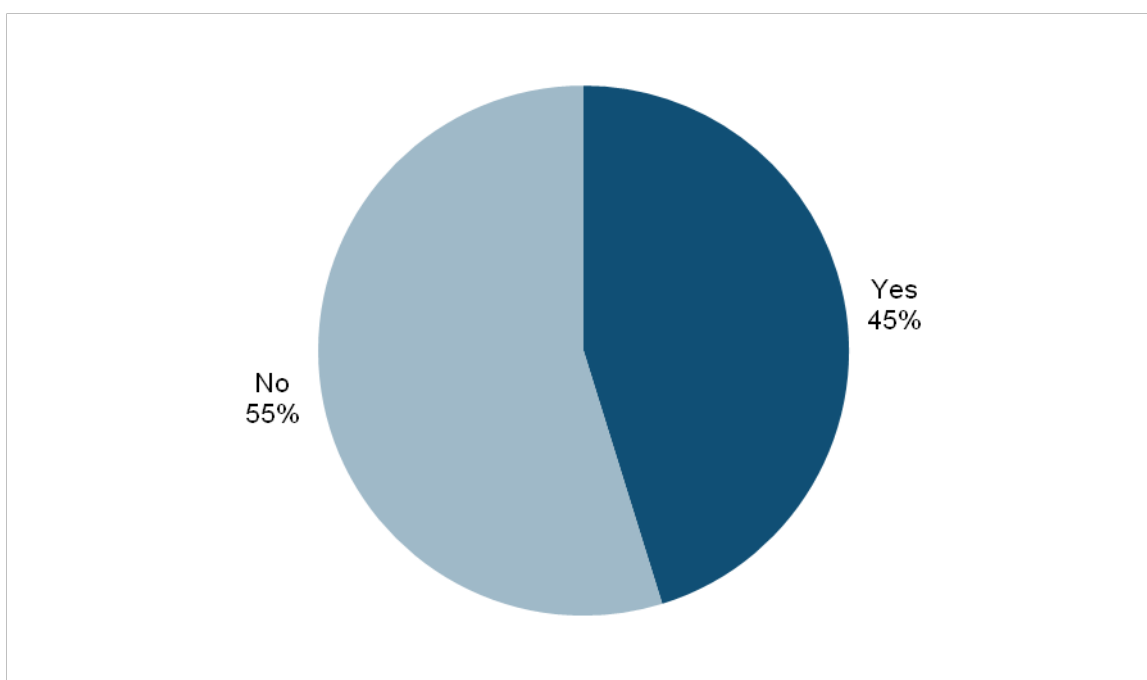
Re-contact

Re-contact

Just under half (45%) of students would be willing to take part in future research, and all (34 students) have had their details recorded (telephone number and email address) in case required for follow-up depth interviews.

Respondents were informed that 'This is likely to take the form of a depth interview over the phone. For longer interviews you would be paid an incentive payment for your time.'

Figure 10: Q20. Would you be willing to take part in further research into people's views/experiences of entering the teaching profession?



Sample base: 73

Appendix: Questionnaire

Careers Fair – exit survey National College for Teaching and Leadership

Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is and I am from BMG Research, an independent research company carrying out a survey on behalf of the National College for Teaching and Leadership (or NCTL).

The survey will take 5-10 minutes to complete and all of the answers you give me will be treated in the strictest confidence. Your own responses will not be passed back to the National College for Teaching and Leadership; they will only receive the overall responses from this survey grouped together.

S1. Can you confirm that you are currently a student looking at career options?

1 - CONTINUE
2 – THANK AND CLOSE

INTERVIEWER TO RECORD RESPONDENT GENDER F/M
INTERVIEWER TO RECORD RESPONDENTS AGE

ASK ALL, SINGLE RESPONSE

Q1a. Which of the following statements best describes you?

I have always wanted to be a teacher	1
I have recently decided that I wanted to be a teacher	2
I am considering becoming a teacher but am also considering other professions	3
I do not want to be a teacher	4
Don't know/have not yet considered any professions	5

ASK if Q1A=1/2/3, SINGLE RESPONSE

Q2a. What subject do you want to teach?

Maths	1
Physics	2
Chemistry	3
Modern Foreign Languages	4
Computer Sciences	5
Other (please specify)	6
Primary teacher	7
Not sure	8

ASK IF Q2A=6/7/8, DO NOT READ OUT,

INTERVIEWER NOTE, INTERVIEWER TO DETERMINE IF RESPONDENT CANNOT BE INTERVIEWED DUE TO HAVING REACHED QUOTAS OF 'OTHER' AND 'PRIMARY'

Q2b. Proceed with interview?

Yes	1
No	2

IF Q2B=2, READ OUT THE FOLLOWING AND THEN GO TO Q20

Thank you for your time, the focus of this research is the shortage subjects and we have reached our quota of interviews with people interested in teaching other subjects.

ASK IF Q1A=1/2/3, OPEN RESPONSE

Q2c. What is your degree subject?

ASK IF Q1A=1/2/3, OPEN RESPONSE, DK=99

Q2d. Have you taken any initial steps to enter training to become a teacher so far (e.g. registered for more information (who with), applied for courses)? What prompted you to take this action (e.g. saw an advert)?

ASK ALL, SINGLE RESPONSE

Q3a. Are you considering entering any other professions (apart from teaching)?

Yes	1
No	2

ASK If Q3A=1, OPEN RESPONSE, DK=99

Q3b. Can you tell me what other professions you are considering?

ASK ALL, SINGLE RESPONSE, (SCALE 1-10, DK=99)

Q4. How would you describe your level of interest in entering the teaching profession compared to other professions before you visited the NCTL stand? Please answer on a scale of 1-10 where 1 is 'teaching is your least preferred career' and 10 is 'teaching is your most preferred career'.

ASK ALL, OPEN RESPONSE, DK=99 NONE/NOTHING=98

Q5. What information or advice about the teaching profession or training to enter the profession did you want to access from the NCTL stand?

ASK ALL (UNLESS Q5=98/99), SINGLE RESPONSE

Q6. Were you able to find the information and advice you were looking for from the NCTL stand?

Yes	1
No	2
Partially	3

ASK IF Q6=2/3, OPEN RESPONSE, DK=99

Q7a. What information or advice about the teaching profession or training to enter the profession were you not able to access from the NCTL stand?

ASK ALL, SINGLE RESPONSE

Q7b. Have you registered your interest in teaching while at the NCTL stand?

Yes	1
No, but intend to at another point	2
No, not going to	3

ASK IF Q7B=2/3, OPEN RESPONSE, DK=99

Q7c. Can you tell me why you haven't registered your interest today?

ASK IF Q7B=1, OPEN RESPONSE, DK=99

Q7d. Can you tell me what you hope to get from registering your interest today?

ASK ALL, SINGLE RESPONSE

Q8. To what extent are you confident you know what the next steps are for you to enter the teaching profession?

Not confident at all	1
Not very confident	2
Confident	3
Very confident	4
Don't know	5

ASK ALL, OPEN RESPONSE, DK=99 NONE=98

Q9. What further information, if any, would you need at this stage?

ASK ALL, SINGLE RESPONSE

Q10. Did your time at the NCTL stand influence your likelihood to enter the teaching profession in any of the following ways?

I am much more likely to enter the teaching profession	1
I am slightly more likely to enter the teaching profession	2
I am slightly less likely to enter the teaching profession	3
I am much less likely to enter the teaching profession	4
No difference	5

ASK IF Q10=1/2/3/4, OPEN RESPONSE, DK=99

Q11. In what ways did it have this impact?

ASK ALL, SINGLE RESPONSE

Q12. Did your time at any of the other stands today influence your likelihood to enter the teaching profession in any of the following ways?

I am much more likely to enter the teaching profession	1
I am slightly more likely to enter the teaching profession	2
I am slightly less likely to enter the teaching profession	3
I am much less likely to enter the teaching profession	4
No difference	5

ASK IF Q12=1/2/3/4, OPEN RESPONSE, DK=99

Q13. In what ways did it have this impact?

ASK ALL, SINGLE RESPONSE, (SCALE 1-10, DK=99)

Q14a. Overall, how helpful was the information you received from the NCTL stand on a scale of 1-10 where 1 is 'not helpful at all' and 10 is 'very helpful'?

ASK IF Q14A IS LESS THAN 8, OPEN RESPONSE, DK=99

Q14b. Why was this?

ASK ALL, SINGLE RESPONSE

Q15. Please could you tell us how important the following factors are to you when making your decisions about the profession you would like to pursue.

	Crucial	Very important	Quite important	Not very important	Not important at all	Don't know
Being in a job you enjoy						
Being in a job you find rewarding						
Being in a job you find challenging						
High wages						
Opportunities for progression						
Being in a profession that is well respected						
Being in a job with regular working hours						

ASK IF RESPONDENT HAS SELECTED MORE THAN 1 RESPONSE AS 'CRUCIAL' AT Q15, RANKING QUESTION, DK=99

Q16. Please can you rate the following factors which you rated as crucial in order of their importance to you? *Interviewer to read out options as relevant.*

ASK ALL, OPEN RESPONSE, DK=99 NONE=98

Q17. What, if any, other factors would consider 'crucial' to your decision when choosing a profession?

ASK ALL, OPEN RESPONSE, DK=99 NONE=98

Q18. Are there any barriers/challenges/concerns that have or would put you off becoming a teacher or entering training to become a teacher? What are these?

ASK ALL, OPEN RESPONSE, DK=99 NONE=98

Q19. Would you like to make any further comments about any of the things we have discussed today?

ASK ALL, SINGLE RESPONSE

Q20. Would you be willing to take part in further research into people's views/experiences of entering the teaching profession? This is likely to take the form of a depth interview over the phone. For longer interviews you would be paid an incentive payment for your time.

Yes	1
No	2

IF WILLING TO TAKE PART IN FUTURE RESEARCH RECORD:

NAME:

TELEPHONE NUMBER:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

Thank and close

Appendix: Statement of Compliance

Compliance with International Standards

BMG complies with the International Standard for Quality Management Systems requirements (ISO 9001:2008) and the International Standard for Market, opinion and social research service requirements (ISO 20252:2012).

Interpretation and publication of results

The interpretation of the results as reported in this document pertain to the research problem and are supported by the empirical findings of this research project and, where applicable, by other data. These interpretations and recommendations are based on empirical findings and are distinguishable from personal views and opinions.

BMG will not be publish any part of these results without the written and informed consent of the client.

Ethical practice

BMG promotes ethical practice in research: We conduct our work responsibly and in light of the legal and moral codes of society.

We have a responsibility to maintain high scientific standards in the methods employed in the collection and dissemination of data, in the impartial assessment and dissemination of findings and in the maintenance of standards commensurate with professional integrity.

We recognise we have a duty of care to all those undertaking and participating in research and strive to protect subjects from undue harm arising as a consequence of their participation in research. This requires that subjects' participation should be as fully informed as possible and no group should be disadvantaged by routinely being excluded from consideration. All adequate steps shall be taken by both agency and client to ensure that the identity of each respondent participating in the research is protected.



National College for
Teaching & Leadership

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