



Research Project
Teachers Registered through the Exceptional Admissions Process

Research Report 1

1 Background

Over the last two years there has been a significant increase in the number of teachers registered through the Exceptional Admissions to the Register (EAR) process. Council has agreed that a research project focussed on teachers registered through this route in the last two years should be undertaken to ascertain:

- (i) the reasons why they want to teach in Scotland;
- (ii) their perceptions of the registration process;
- (iii) the challenges they face now they are working in the Scottish Education system.

The research plan consists of two main phases:

Phase 1 : A questionnaire survey to all teachers registered via EAR processes during the two year period from August 2003 to July 2005;

Phase 2 : A series of case studies to provide more in-depth information about teachers from different countries, from different sectors and subjects working in different areas of Scotland. The nature and structure of the case studies would be agreed in the light of the data gathered during Phase 1.

This report presents the findings gathered from **Phase 1** of the research.

2 Research Methodology

Two members of staff, Lisa Taylor and Mark Paxton, were seconded on a part-time basis from their normal departments at the Council to assist the Professional Officer in progressing this phase of the research project.

A structured questionnaire consisting of a series of closed and open response questions was developed and piloted. The finalised questionnaire is presented in Appendix I. The questionnaire was split into five sections enabling the following data to be gathered from each respondent :

- (i) personal and career details ;
- (ii) perceptions of the registration process ;
- (iii) experiences of the employment process ;
- (iv) details of support provision / professional development opportunities ;
- (v) career development aspirations.

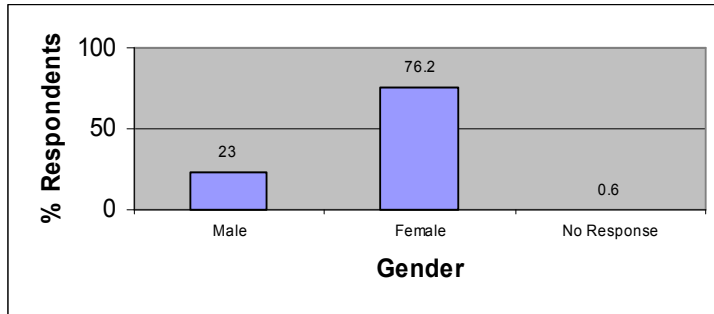
The GTC Registration database was accessed to provide a list of those teachers registering via EAR processes between August 2003 and July 2005. In total, the questionnaire was sent to the 1755 identified teachers, who were given a four week period to respond. In addition, those contacted were given the option of expressing interest in being involved in the second phase of the research.

A structured Excel spreadsheet was developed to enable the response data to be collated and subsequently analysed and interpreted.

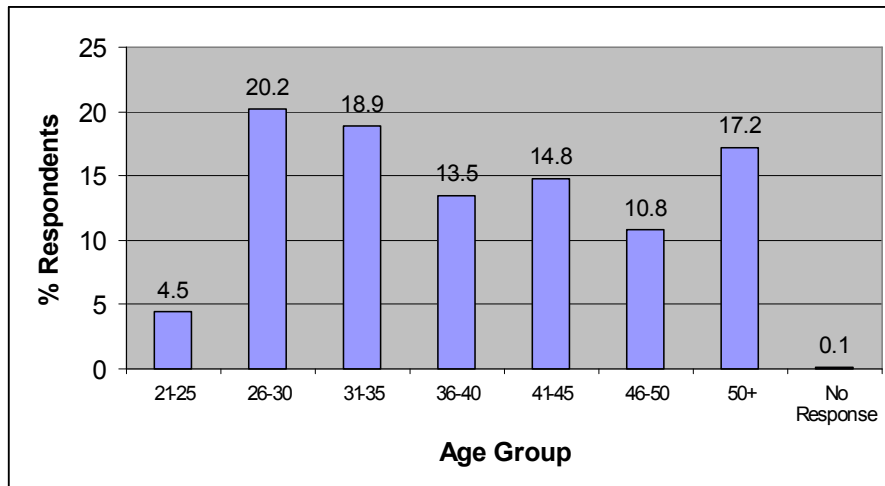
3 Response Rate and Respondent Population Demography

In total, 508 responses (29% response rate) were received by the Council, by the closing date for responses. Of these, by studying responses to question 10 of the questionnaire, it was noted that 43 respondents initially registered via EAR before 2003, and re-registered during the period covered by this survey. These respondents were omitted from the analysis and the remaining 465 responses were analysed.

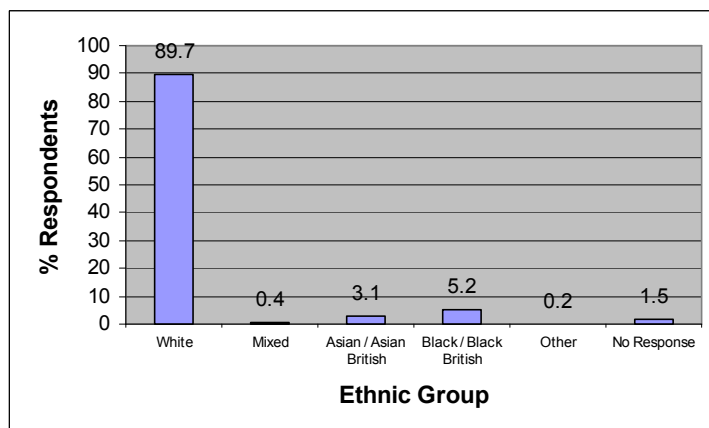
The demographics of the response population are shown in Graphs 1-5.



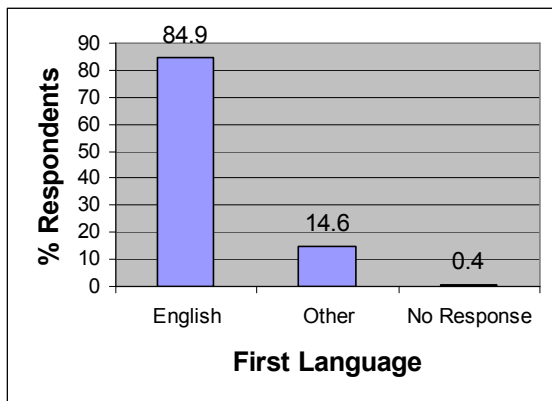
Graph 1 : Respondent Gender



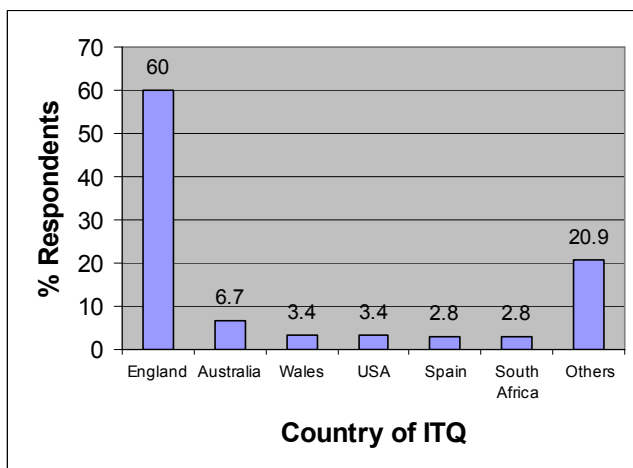
Graph 2 : Respondent Age Group



Graph 3 : Respondent Ethnic Grouping



Graph 4 : Respondent First Language



Graph 5 : Respondent Country of Initial Teaching Qualification

In general terms, the demography of the response population would appear to be broadly representative of the population of teachers experiencing the EAR process in the last two years.

Specific aspects of the data presented in Graphs 4 and 5 may be of particular interest however. An important component of the *White* ethnicity grouping is *Scottish* which defines the ethnicity of 16.3% of the total respondent population. Interestingly, of that group, 80.3% obtained their initial teacher training qualification in England or Wales, before subsequently returning to teach in Scotland. It is perhaps also worth noting that of the respondents, only 7.3% gained their initial qualification in European Union countries (outwith the UK). As a result of recent initiatives, it is expected that this figure would be higher if the survey was repeated, say, within the next couple of years.

For the purposes of this report, no detailed subdivisions (eg, by ethnic grouping or gender) of the response population have been made.

4 Results and Discussion

4.1 Teaching in Scotland

Respondents were asked to identify from a list the (up to) three main factors influencing their decision to teach in Scotland and to rank them in order of importance. Results are presented in Table 1.

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A number of respondents identified two or three factors as being of equal importance, a response characteristic reflected in the cumulative figures for Rank 1. Overall Rank Score (ORS) is calculated using the formula:

$$\text{ORS} = \Sigma \{(3 \times \text{Number of Rank 1 scores}) + (2 \times \text{Number of rank 2 scores}) + (\text{Number of Rank 3 scores})\}$$

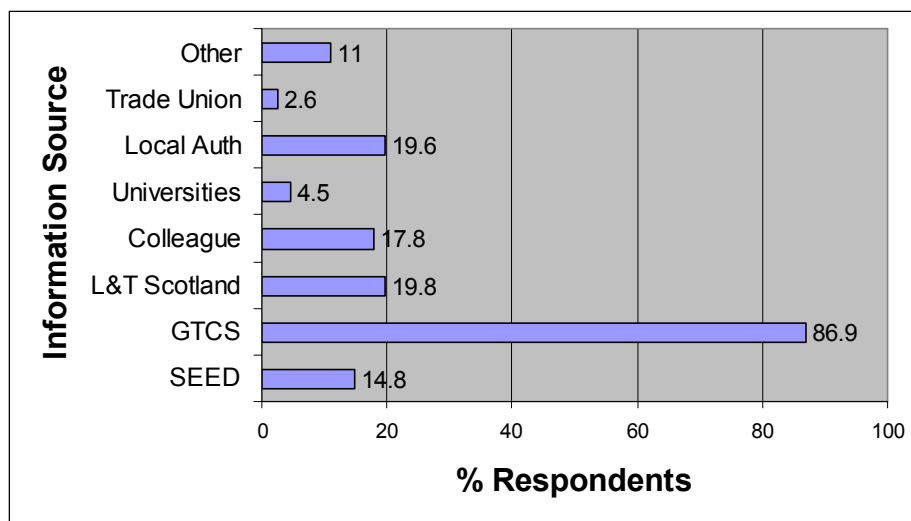
Clearly the two factors which appear to most strongly influence the decision to come to Scotland to teach are (in order of importance): *Family Connections* and *Attractions of the Country*, factors which do not directly relate to educational matters. The *Other* category is heavily populated with responses linked specifically to partner circumstances, lifestyle attractions, Scottish roots and dissatisfaction with (teaching) experiences elsewhere.

Factor	Number of Respondents At Each Rank			Overall Rank Score
	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	
Family Connections	243	33	13	808
Job Opportunities	47	48	34	271
Attractions of Country	117	94	43	582
Conditions of Work	21	38	49	188
Reputation of Education System	27	52	47	232
Career Development Opportunities	23	21	18	129
Other	69	8	18	241

Table 1 : Factors influencing Decision to Teach in Scotland

4.2 Information

85.6% of respondents thought that information about teaching in Scotland was readily available. Graph 6 shows the percentage of respondents using information about teaching in Scotland from various sources. Clearly the GTCS is the major, and therefore most influential, source of information for this grouping of prospective teachers.



Graph 6 : Sources of Information

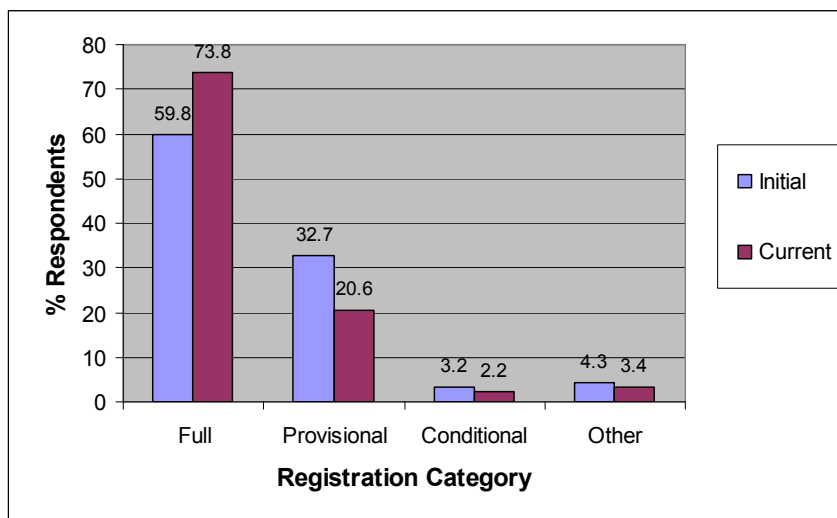
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4.3 Registration Aspects

40.9% of the respondent population did not apply for registration prior to coming to Scotland. The Council should consider, via appropriate information gateways, informing all prospective applicants of likely registration timescales and encouraging early applications.

99.1% of respondents are currently registered to teach in Scotland. Of these 42.6% and 50.1% were solely Primary and Secondary registered respectively. Almost 60% of respondents were initially given Full registration.

Since initial registration, proportions of respondents have changed their registration category as shown in Graph 7. It is encouraging to note that a significant proportion of respondents have made the transition to full registration within a tight timeframe, since initial registration with the Council.



Graph 7 : Registration Categories

4.4 The Registration Process

Experiences of the Registration Process

Respondents were asked to indicate, from their experiences of the process, their degree of agreement with a set of statements focussed on specific aspects of the registration process. Responses are overviewed in Table 2.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Specified
S1 Information about the registration process with GTCS was easily accessible.	33.5%	55.5%	8.2%	2.2%	0.6%
S2 The application information provided by GTCS was clear.	32.3%	53.1%	12.0%	1.5%	1.1%
S3 The information received from GTCS was helpful in relation to the application process.	32.9%	52.0%	10.3%	3.2%	1.5%
S4 The application form was easy to complete.	27.4%	55.7%	13.8%	2.4%	0.6%
S5 Clear advice was given as to how long it would take to process your application for registration.	19.4%	40.9%	26.5%	12.3%	0.9%

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Specified
S6 The time taken to process your application met the timescale advised by GTCS.	17.2%	41.1%	22.8%	13.8%	5.2%
S7 Your application for registration was dealt with efficiently.	25.2%	44.3%	17.4%	12.0%	1.1%
S8 The GTCS staff were helpful and friendly.	36.0%	52.3%	6.3%	3.5%	2.0%
S9 Advice given by the GTCS staff was accurate.	30.9%	51.0%	11.9%	3.5%	2.8%
S10 You feel that you got value for money in terms of the fees paid for the assessment and registration with the GTCS.	19.2%	43.8%	23.1%	10.4%	3.5%

Table 2 : Responses to Statements on Aspects of the Registration Process

In general terms, respondents appeared positive about their experiences of the GTCS registration process. However, more than 25% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with each of statements s5, s6, s7 and s10. Respondents were given the opportunity to add comments to support their disagreement with any of the statements, and many took the opportunity to do so.

An *initial* qualitative analysis of the comments has highlighted the following overview points:

- lack of understanding and/or criticism of timescales required (particularly in relation to police checks);
- criticism of processes for updating progress of applications;
- perceived obstructions to registration at time of teacher shortages;
- perceived unnecessary processes for those trained and/or with experience in other parts of UK;
- lack of understanding of the benefits of fees payment.

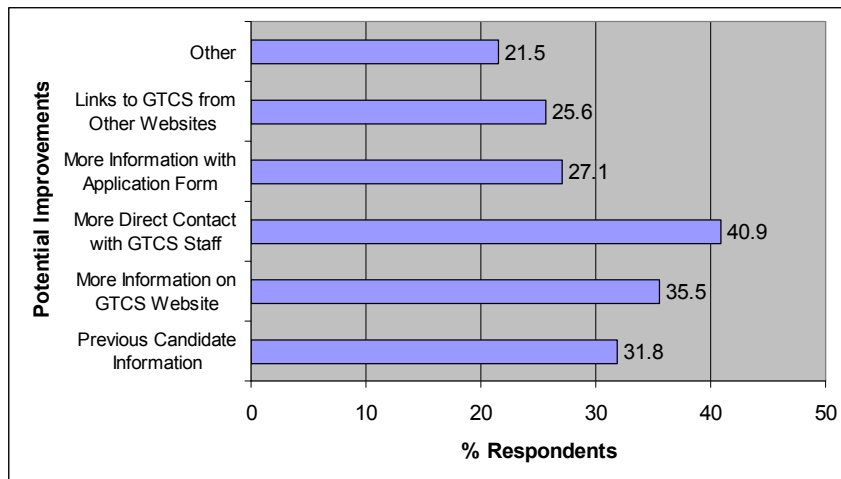
It is however recommended that a more detailed analysis of comments pertaining to specific statements should be carried out to enable any weaknesses in current processes to be identified and addressed.

Improving the Registration Process

In terms of improving the registration process, respondents were asked to select, from a list of options, ways in which the registration process might be improved.

Graph 8 shows that increased opportunities for more contact with GTCS staff and improvements to the registration information presented on the Council website were considered to be the most important future improvements.

Graph 8/...



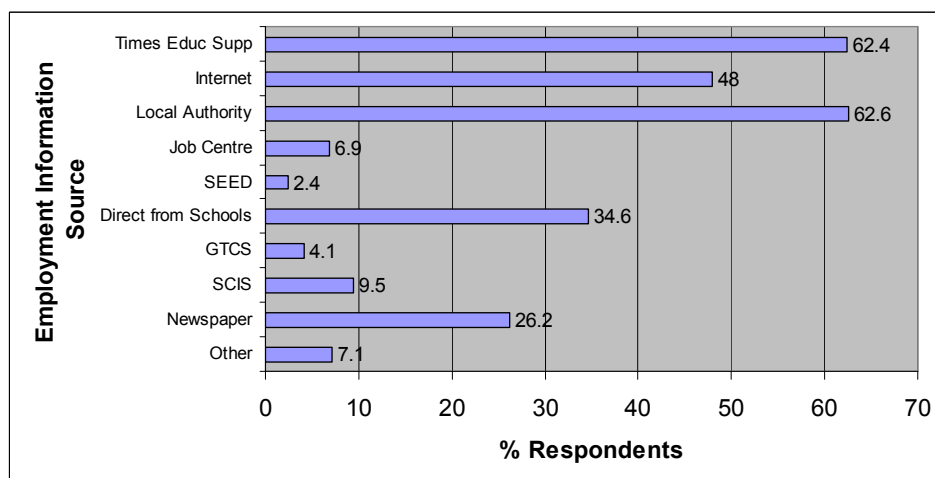
Graph 8 : Potential Improvements to Registration Process

18.3% of respondents identified the staff contact factor as the single most important factor. Comments made regarding the registration process (see section above) indicated that respondents would welcome contact with a *single* member of staff during the process. Just over a fifth of respondents suggested *other* specific improvements that might be made to improve the process, many of these appearing to focus on the themes of improving the provision of information and developing improved communications and partnerships with organisations with a stake in the GTCS registration process. Again, it is recommended that a thorough qualitative analysis of these suggestions is carried out.

4.5 Employment Process

Although not specifically falling within the locus of Council work, anecdotal evidence has suggested that the employment process post-registration has presented some difficulties for those registering through EAR. In this section of the survey, specific information regarding the employment process was gathered.

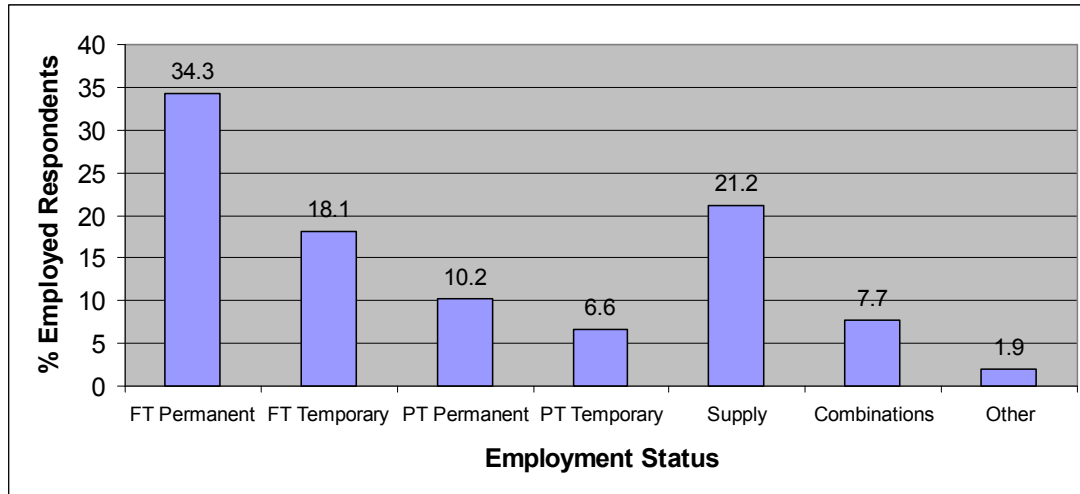
Respondents indicated that a broad range of sources of information were used when seeking employment (see Graph 9). As might have been expected, TES and the local authorities were most commonly used. Only a small proportion used the Council for this purpose, perhaps reflecting an understanding of the Council's limited role in this area.



Graph 9 : Sources of Employment Information

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In terms of employment position, 78.3% of respondents indicated that they are currently teaching in Scotland. The employment status of this group is shown in Graph 10. Less than 45% of respondents are in permanent posts which may be a cause for concern but may to some extent reflect the demography of the respondent population, many of whom may prefer more flexible contract options. The figure also reflects the fact that a proportion of respondents only have Provisional registration and are unable to take up permanent teaching posts.



Graph 10 : Employment Status

87.4% of those currently teaching in Scotland are employed within the local authorities. The data in Table 3 shows those authorities employing the largest proportions of this group. It may be interesting to note that many of the local authorities highlighted are in typically rural areas or cultural centres.

Local Authority	% Employed
Highland	10.2
Edinburgh City	8.2
Aberdeenshire	7.1
Dumfries & Galloway	5.8
Fife	4.7
Moray	4.1
Scottish Borders	4.1

Table 3 : Local Authority Employers

Of those not currently teaching in Scotland, 24.7% indicated that they were teaching elsewhere. Only 6.9% specifically indicated that they had taken up employment outside teaching.

4.6 Introduction into Scottish Education

In this section, respondents were asked a series of questions focused on the provision of support and professional development opportunities during their early experiences of teaching in Scotland.

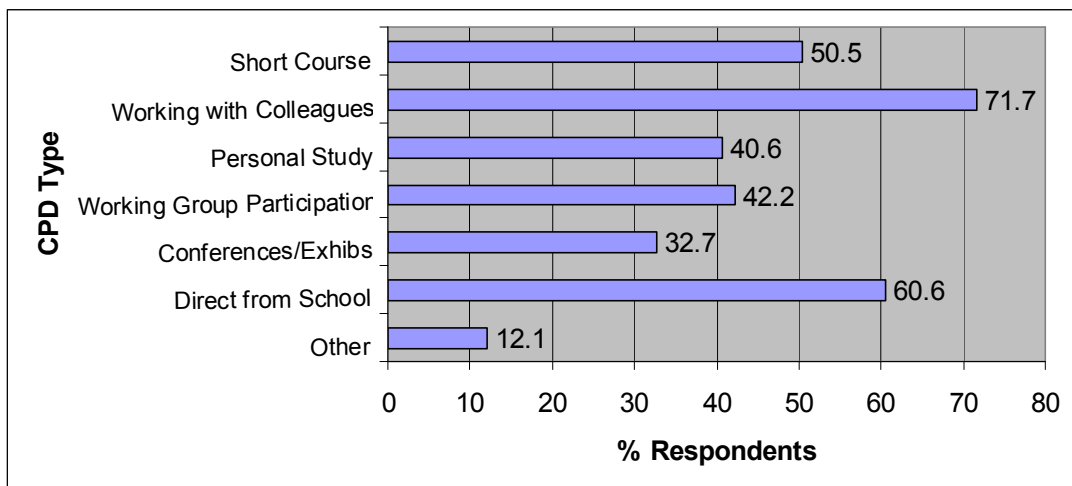
Only 11.4% of respondents followed a specific orientation (induction) programme when commencing teaching in Scotland. Of those, only 8.8% of orientation programmes (ie. 5 teachers) were specifically for teachers qualified outside Scotland. 47.4% of the small number of programmes offered were general in nature. In addition, only 18.9% of respondents had a designated supporter (mentor) appointed to provide individualised support. Of those, 84.4% were appointed by the school and 91.1% were based in the school.

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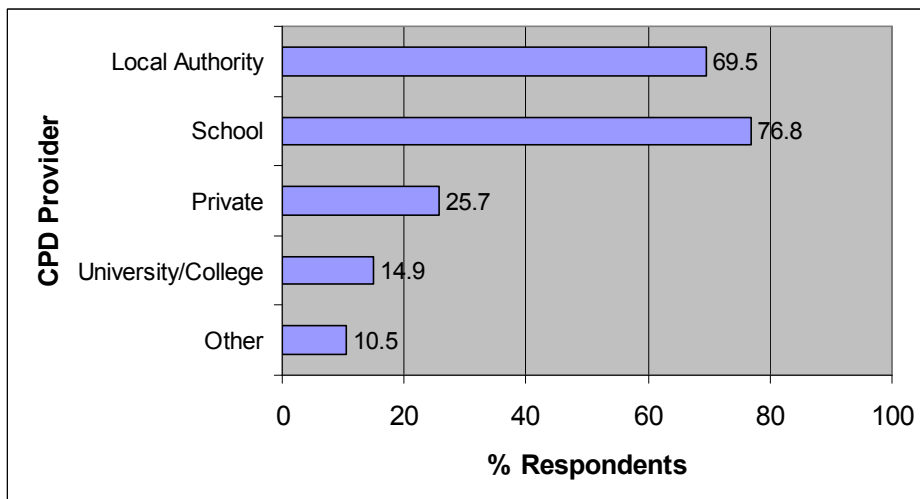
These figures would suggest that serious consideration must be given to the development of suitable, tailored orientation programmes for this group of teachers and the implementation of a support infrastructure enabling each teacher to be provided with a designated supporter to generally ensure a smoother path into teaching in a new environment / context.

67.7% of respondents had access to CPD opportunities. A range of CPD types, delivered by different provider groupings have been experienced (see Graphs 11 and 12). As may have been expected, most CPD is provided by the local authority or the schools. It is encouraging to note that the CPD type undertaken by most respondents (71.7%) is *Working with Colleagues*, a CPD mode encouraging active, reflective interaction within the peer group.

Only 5.7% of respondents rated their CPD experiences (in terms of developing their knowledge and skills as a teacher) as poor or very poor.



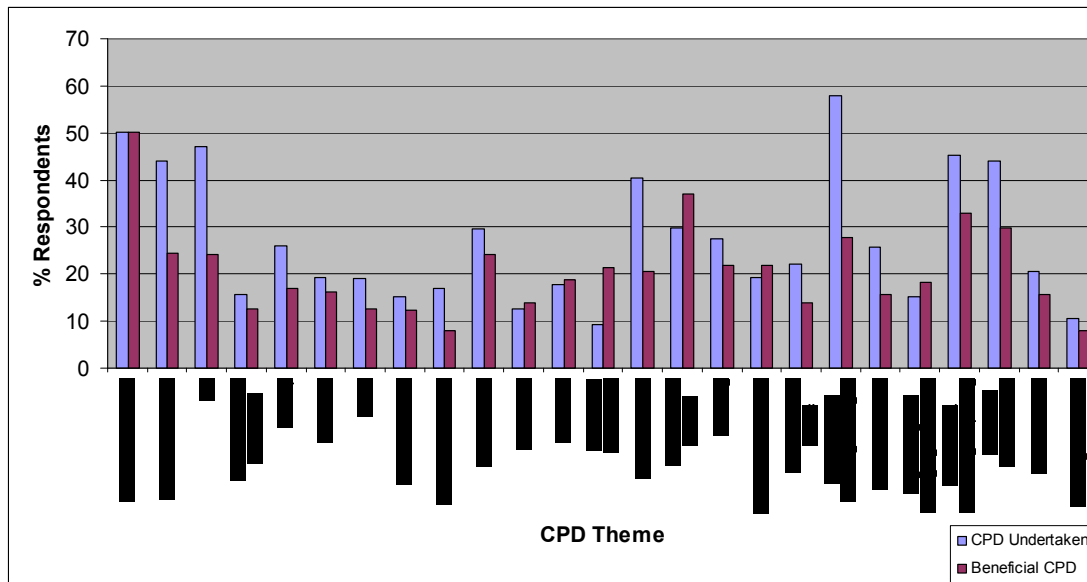
Graph 11 : Types of CPD Experienced



Graph 12 : CPD Providers

To establish a profile of specific themes commonly covered in CPD activities, respondents were asked to identify (from a list of 26 themes linked to specific aspects of the Standard for Full Registration (SFR)), the themes of their CPD activities. In addition, respondents were asked to identify which of these themes, in their view, would be of particular benefit to them in their development as a teacher in Scotland. The results are shown in Graph 13.

Graph 13/...



Graph 13 : CPD Themes

Clearly, respondents have experienced CPD focussed on a broad range of themes spanning the SFR. In descending order, the most commonly encountered CPD themes are:

- (i) *Teaching & Learning Strategies;*
- (ii) *Curriculum Content;*
- (iii) *ICT;*
- (iv) *Assessment/Recording/Reporting;*
- (v) *Behaviour Management;* and (vi) *Subject Knowledge.*

Themes (ii), (iv) and (v) are amongst the top four considered to be of most benefit in relation to the future development of this teacher grouping. The other important theme is *National/Local Policies*. It is also worth noting that in the view of this grouping, whilst remaining in the top half of themes considered of benefit, many have lesser importance than is currently in the make-up of current CPD programmes.

To conclude, some consideration needs to be given to the balance of themes focussed on in the development of CPD programmes for this group of teachers.

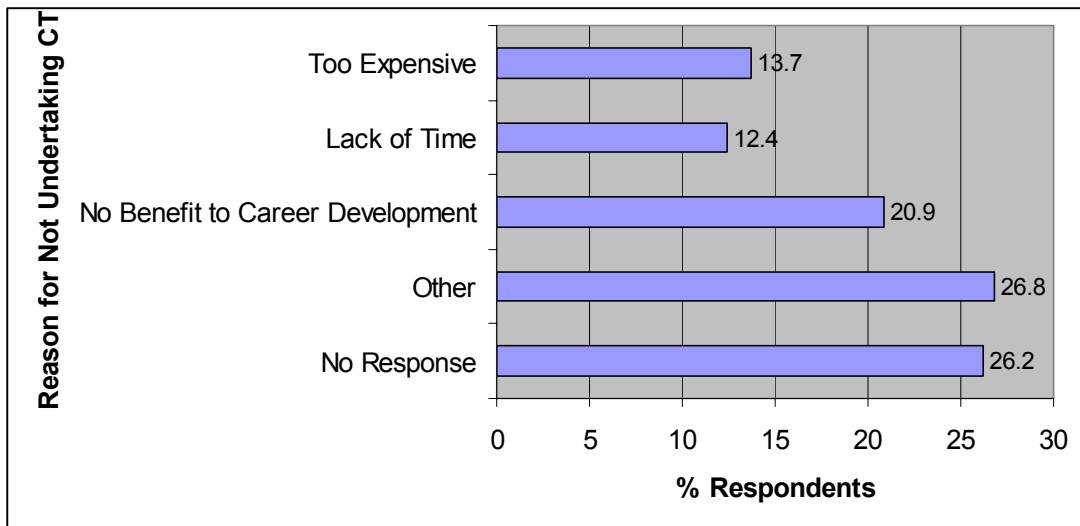
4.7 Career Development

Questions in this section of the survey were focussed on career development opportunities for respondents.

Encouragingly, at a time of an ageing teaching population and potential future teacher shortages, 65.2% of respondents intend teaching in Scotland for 5+ years.

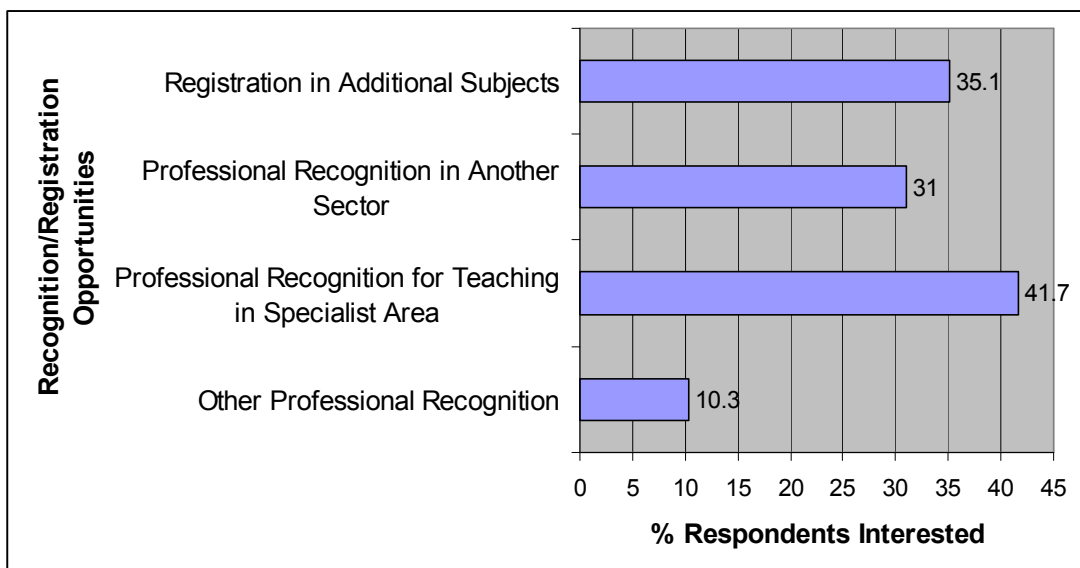
62.8% of the respondent population are aware of the Chartered Teacher Programme (CTP), although only a very small number (6) of respondents are undertaking the programme as may have been expected. Of those aware of, but not currently undertaking, the programme, 51.3% indicated that they would not consider undertaking it in future, citing a number of reasons (Graph 14). The *Other* category included a number comments relating specifically to demographic characteristics such as age, to current position and to previous qualifications.

Graph 14/...



Graph 14 : Reasons for Not Considering CT Programme

Only 8.6% of respondents were aware of the new Professional Development Framework. However, significant proportions expressed interest in additional registration or recognition opportunities (see Graph 15).



Graph 15 : Registration/Recognition Opportunities

It would appear that, given the provision of appropriate information about the Chartered Teacher Programme and Professional Development Framework and appropriate support, this group of teachers would be interested in professional and personal development via these routes.

5 Conclusions

Analysis of the survey responses has provided a wide ranging insight into many aspects of the experiences of those teachers registering to teach in Scotland through the EAR route from pre-registration through initial teaching aspects and onto future career development. A range of stakeholders including specific departments within the GTCS, the Scottish Executive, the local authorities and prospective teachers would be interested in specific findings emerging from the analysis.

The/...

The initial project plan defined a second research phase focussed on a series of case studies to enable some of the key issues highlighted in the analysis of survey responses to be explored in more detail. Issues which may merit further exploration are:

- (i) the enhancement of specific aspects of the registration process;
- (ii) the development of partnerships to ease the transition from registration to employment and provide a range of appropriate employment opportunities;
- (iii) the development of appropriate orientation programmes and support mechanisms;
- (iv) the development of appropriate CPD programmes;
- (v) the enhancement of awareness of career development opportunities.

A large number of respondents (254) expressed an interest in being involved in the second phase of the research via structured interview procedures, further surveys or participation in focus groups.

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