

An Investigation into the Supply of Classics Teachers in the Secondary Schools Sector through the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) 2011 - 12

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Peer-reviewed

Teacher shortages in Classics

I UNDERTOOK THIS study in response to concern about the perceived shortage of Classics teachers with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) to fill vacancies in secondary schools in the UK. The focus of the investigation is on the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) and how it is perceived by Classics teacher trainees who have used it to gain QTS.¹ The title of this paper refers to the academic year 2011-12 because this was the time period in which the present Government proposed that it would target funding at teacher training routes which were not based on that of the traditional Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE). However, the two studies reported here took place over a longer period - 2009-2012 - and draw on the experiences of trainees who undertook training on the GTP between 2009 and 2011 - the last date for which information about training providers is available.

There has long been concern about the shortage of trained Classics teachers in the secondary school sector, due to the perception among teachers that the number of those who retire each year exceeds the number of those who are being trained through the PGCE route (Affleck, 2003, p.167; Lister, 2007, p. 98; Jones *et al.*, 2011; Hunt, 2011, p. 2; Partington, 2011; Hunt, 2012a, p. 2). This does not, however, take into account the fact that even more Classics teachers will have to be trained for an anticipated increase in the number of posts which will need to be filled in the future: the number of state schools offering Classics, especially Latin, has considerably increased recently. For example, CSCP reported in 2010 that around 450 schools have introduced or re-introduced Latin since 2005, bringing the total to around 1050 or 25% of maintained schools (Griffiths, 2010, p. 3). Therefore, the demand for trained teachers of Classics has never perhaps been greater than when the 1988 National Curriculum had the effect of reducing the size of most school Classics departments or closing them down entirely, especially in the non-selective sector.

Government rhetoric and funding reality: training Classics teachers for state schools

PGCE and GTP training routes should offer similar provision. Both training routes used for teacher training in Classics place trainee teachers in two contrasting schools for defined periods of time and offer training either from Higher Education Institute (HEI) providers working in partnership with schools, through consortia of schools, or within the school itself where the trainee is working. Recent political developments in education have meant, however, a situation where the thinking of different parts of Government has failed to match up. On the one hand individual members of the Government and political classes have added their own rhetoric to the media discourse of the value of learning Classics by expressing the wish to see more of it, especially Latin, being taught in state secondary schools (Gove, 2012), especially in London (Johnson, 2011) and also in state primary schools (Gibb, 2011). Meanwhile, the Department of Education (DfE) has sent an encouraging message about the value of learning Latin, Ancient Greek and Ancient History by including the subjects in the English Baccalaureate, a new set of measurements which came into action in 2011 to indicate pupil achievement (DfE, 2012a). The Training and Development Agency² (TDA) itself, perhaps in belated recognition of the need for greater numbers of qualified Classics teachers, has issued a target of 1,575 funded places for modern and ancient languages together for

2012-13 - the first time that funding for Classical subjects has been specifically named in this way (DfE, 2012b). There is even a section of the DfE website for Classics (DfE, 2012c), although it contains only one article - a speech by Nick Gibb in 2011 to the political thinktank Politeia (Gibb, 2011). On the other hand the very same TDA has reduced the number of PGCE places nationally by some 40% (*Times Educational Supplement*, 2012) in response to the downward trend in pupils of secondary school age. This has included a cut in the number of placements for Classics from 29 overall in 2010-2011 to 24 in 2012-13 (Hunt, 2012a). There has been no extra allocation of places to the SCITT model. Accordingly any future increase in Classics teacher training places must, it seems, come through the GTP model.

Types of school-based teacher training

The GTP is one of several employment-based routes into teaching. At the time of writing (April 2012), a number of new employment-based programmes are being developed, such as Teach First, Troops to Teachers and Teach Direct. However, the TDA does not have any plans to include Classics in these programmes. There are at present, therefore, only two ways in which teachers of Classics might possibly be trained, apart from through the PGCE: through School-Based Initial Teacher Training (SCITT), and through Employment-Based Initial Teacher Training (EBITT). SCITTs are allocated funding for named subjects by the TDA. Classics is not at present named as a subject for funding by this route, although the DfE indicated that it would like to see more training of all sorts delivered through it in the future (DfE, 2012d). If an argument can be found and schools identified within the existing SCITTs, this might provide a small number of placements for Classics teacher trainees. For the moment, then, the GTP is the only route apart from the PGCE which is able to provide training for Classics teacher trainees.

Government preference for expansion of the GTP model

The origins of alternative methods of entering teaching lay in the teacher shortage of 1993. This was caused by the withdrawal of Higher Education Institute (HEI) providers from teacher training due to pressure put upon them by the new Ofsted inspection framework (Gillroy, 2010, p. 247). The GTP was set up by the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) in 1997 and was designed to attract mature entrants to the profession (Griffiths, 2007, p. 107) with a minimum age requirement of 24. Although the first inspection of the GTP by Ofsted showed considerable variation in quality and output success, the route has continued to be promoted. The TDA, successor to the TTA, saw the GTP route as another way to deal with teacher shortages. Schools also seemed willing to take on some of the responsibility for training themselves. The age limit of 24 was dropped and the Government began to see the GTP as a way which drew potential teacher trainees away from what they perceived as the malign influence of HEI providers (Foster, 2000). Heavy promotion of SCITTs and the GTP programme by the TDA has led to the present situation where 18% of trainees follow employment-based routes and 4% train in SCITTs (Ofsted, 2011a, p.75). The government wishes to see these routes expand yet further at the expense of the PGCE model:

'We want an ITT system that allows for the expansion of school-led training that is similar to that which the GTP can provide, through the growth of school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT)...We expect the growth of

school-led ITT to be through 'school-direct' and give priority in the allocation of places to new and existing SCITT provision. This will mean we can narrow the focus of the remaining GTP to target high quality career changers for whom a salary is particularly important as an incentive' (DfE, 2012d, p. 9).

'School-direct' is yet another training programme currently under development. It will rely on SCITTs in close geographical proximity to existing HEI providers commissioning PGCE-style training in named subjects. In Cambridgeshire, a local SCITT is currently working with the Faculty of Education at Cambridge University to develop training for teachers on this model. As, however, none of the schools in this particular SCITT has any Classics, the subject is not one of those which are going to be considered. Moreover, as there are only two HEI providers of Classics PGCEs in the country³, it is unlikely that they would be able to take on anything more than one or two trainees from very local schools – schools with whom they are already probably working anyway in their own PGCE

partnerships. This as-yet undeveloped programme is, therefore, unlikely to be able to provide much extra capacity for Classics teacher training. The thinking of the DfE now seems to be that SCITTs and 'school-direct' will attract teacher trainees straight from university, while the GTP appears to be destined to revert to its original function in recruiting committed, motivated mature career-changers into teaching – something which resonates with the government-inspired media discourse about the necessity of getting people with employment skills into the classroom.

The GTP and Classics teacher training: capacity and ability to provide training

The GTP has delivered training for Classics teachers successfully for the last six years. From 2005-6 to 2010-11 about four providers per year have trained about four teachers each year (see Table 1).

In 2010-11, the last year for which there are figures, however, the number of GTP providers increased to nine and the total number of Classics teachers trained by this route increased markedly to 19 (Hunt, 2012a). This interest in the GTP model by schools may have

Table 1: Number of GTP training providers which have trained Classics teachers, by year.

2005-6	2006-7	2007-8	2008-9	2009-10	2010-11
4	4	6	4	4	9

Sources: TDA and www.classicsteaching.com (2012)

been caused partly by their anxiety about the ability of PGCE trainees to fill the vacancies caused by teachers leaving the profession, and partly because of changes in which the GTP was funded for state schools. In the case of EBITTs, state schools and independent schools fund GTP training differently. Independent schools fund the GTP themselves. In state schools, however, the TDA funds the GTP programme. But there are two ways in which it can do this: if the teacher is already employed full or part time by the school, the TDA pays just a training grant; if, however, the teacher is taken on in a supernumerary post, the TDA pays the training grant and, more importantly, most of, but not all, the salary of the unqualified teacher, with the school making up the difference. These differences in funding are significant if the GTP route is to be developed for training yet more Classics teachers rather than merely training those already in post. For the independent school, the cost of training is mitigated by the fact that the teacher once trained is likely to be incentivised to stay within the school. The same works for those state schools which take on an unqualified teacher while the TDA provides the small training grant. In both of these cases, the GTP can be seen as a way of filling already-existing vacancies. However, it does not create extra capacity in the school system – capacity needed by the expansion of Classics teaching in the state sector. For that to take place, the supernumerary GTP route is preferable. But in this case, there are significant structural, professional and financial disincentives: structural, because there have to be two schools, close to each other, but of different types, both of which offer sufficient Classics teaching to make a training placement worthwhile; professional, because there have to be suitably qualified mentors for the trainees who have the training themselves and who are prepared to give the time necessary for the trainee; and financial, because the school has to fund part of the salary itself (varying from £3,000-£5,000 plus on-costs) to support an extra member of staff who might not take up a position within the school itself once they have qualified. The supernumerary funding can work very well because it provides trainees and the school itself to gain benefits from each other (Brookes, 2005) and because it ensures that the trainee's needs can always be prioritised (Foster,

2001). For subject areas where there are large departments with several members of staff employed, of whom one or two might retire or move on and leave a vacancy in the following year, the supernumerary trainee affords the school an opportunity to train someone for recruitment, as Foster also reports (*ibid.*). But in Classics, where departments are small, especially in the comprehensive sector, persuading the Senior Leadership Team to take on an extra member of staff who is almost sure to move on is a difficult task. Matching all these criteria and persuading state schools to fund supernumerary training is a tall order, but it is one which the Classics community might set itself if it is serious about meeting the needs of the profession. Foster (2001) and Mead (2007) also refer to the importance of mentor training as a significant factor in the success of the GTP model, while Brookes (2005), Dunne (2005) and Jones and Straker (2007) all draw attention to the importance of allowing time for mentors to fulfil the various functions expected of them while supporting a trainee. These two issues of mentor training and the allocation of time are something which is particularly pertinent for Classics training under the GTP and are one focus of attention in this and my forthcoming research.

Features of teacher training in Classics

Before I start to explore the provision of training under the GTP for Classics teacher trainees, I will briefly describe the PGCEs in Classics at Cambridge and KCL. I should mention that I have been the subject lecturer of the PGCE in Classics in Cambridge since 2008 and have been a PGCE mentor for the same HEI since 2000. In all this research I have tried to be as objective as I can about the different routes into teacher training. Although I have, of course, directed considerable amounts of my energy to making the case for the number of places on the PGCE to be increased at some of the highest levels in Government, yet I fully understand that other routes are valuable in their own right. My research was designed to investigate the GTP route into Classics teaching since information about this was very difficult to find from generally published material. Trainee experiences of the PGCE have been very well-documented since Furlong and Maynard made some of the first

contributions to the field nearly 20 years ago (Furlong and Maynard, 1995), and this is even the case in Classics where personal experiences of the PGCE have been recorded (Boyt, 2004; Holmes-Henderson, 2007). Ofsted has graded both Cambridge and King's College London PGCE courses outstanding in all criteria (Ofsted, 2010; Ofsted 2011b). Indeed, Ofsted has identified in its latest report that 'there is more outstanding provision in primary and secondary partnerships led by higher education institutions (HEI) than in school-centred partnerships or employment-based routes' and '19 employment-based routes were judged to be outstanding compared with 65 HEI-led partnerships and 19 SCITTs' (Ofsted, 2011a, p8). Nevertheless the DfE wishes to develop GTP routes further. With this in mind this research focuses on the GTP in Classics.

At this point, then I will summarise the situation.

- There are clear shortages in the supply of qualified Classics teachers in the UK. There is a renaissance in the teaching of Latin in state schools.

- The Government will not fund more training placements through the PGCE, but wishes to make up the shortfall and even address future capacity through the GTP.

- There are concerns about the ability of the GTP to provide the numbers of trained teachers required in the state sector. These concerns have arisen from state schools' lack of capacity to provide sufficient teacher training experience in Classics, their lack of finances to pay the difference between training grant and the unqualified teacher's salary, and their lack of mentor expertise to provide the school-based training required.

How do non-PGCE routes to QTS for Classics teacher trainees work in practice?

The DfE carries out surveys about and holds detailed statistics on all the National Curriculum subjects which are held in the public

domain. Indeed, the difficulty in accessing information about Classics teacher training outside the PGCE is truly remarkable and perhaps indicates most keenly the peripheral status of Classics in schools today, and also in the eyes of the DfE. The information for this next section of this article derives from two inter-related research projects partly funded by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) (precursor to the DfE) and the Classical Association (CA). It derives firstly from the award of a grant from the DCSF to establish a website which gave potential Classics teacher trainees information. Secondly, I was able to use these new records to conduct a survey, funded by the CA, to investigate the experiences of as many of the trainees we could who had undertaken the GTP in Classics over the last three years. A third area of research is still under way - a series of face-to-face interviews with a small cohort of Classics teacher trainees, who had had experiences representative of the different GTP models available, with a specific focus on the nature of the support and subject-specific training they received during their training. Respondents to the surveys were assured of their anonymity and I made it clear to them that I although I was the subject lecturer for the PGCE in Classics at Cambridge, they should not hesitate to express any opinions about that course, nor would I intentionally let my knowledge of running it interfere with my judgement about what they said.

Stage 1: Creation of a data base of GTP providers of teacher training in Classics 2005-2011

The rationale for creating this website was occasioned by the award of a grant from the DCSF in 2009 to Aisha Khan-Evans, subject lecturer of the PGCE in Classics at KCL, Bob Lister, retired subject lecturer for the PGCE in Classics at Cambridge, and me. In the process of establishing the website we have been able to identify the providers of GTP training for Classics in the UK by asking contacts within the DfE to supply us with the material which was not otherwise readily available through the normal TDA channels. The GTP providers which have trained Classics teachers since 2005-6 are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: GTP providers which have trained Classics teachers, by year.

2005-6	2006-7	2007-8	2008-9	2009-10	2010-11
Canterbury Christ Church University College	Canterbury Christ Church University College	Canterbury Christ Church University College		Canterbury Christ Church University	Canterbury Christ Church University
Hertfordshire Regional Partnership				Hertfordshire Regional Partnership	
West London Partnership	West London Partnership	West London Partnership			West London Partnership
	e-Qualitas	e-Qualitas	e-Qualitas	e-Qualitas	e-Qualitas
		Northumbria University EBR	Northumbria University EBR		
Suffolk and Norfolk GTP Provider					
	University of Sunderland EBR				
		Isle of Wight Partnership			
		STTORMM (Manchester Metropolitan University)			
			Mid Somerset Consortium		Mid Somerset Consortium
			Dorset Teacher Education Partnership		
				Bradford and Northern Employment Based Teacher Training	
					King Edward's Consortium (Birmingham)
					Nottingham Trent University
					The Cambridge Partnership
					The Slough Partnership
					University of Worcester

Sources: TDA and www.classicsteaching.com

From this simple collection of data I have been able to draw some interesting conclusions. Some GTP providers seem to have been more regularly engaged with the training of teachers of Classics than others. Canterbury Christ Church University College (now renamed Canterbury Christ Church University), the West London Partnership (based in Kingston University, London) and e-Qualitas (a distance-learning GTP based in the South of England) have offered Classics GTPs for four out of the last six years, while Northumbria University EBR (based in Newcastle), the Hertfordshire Partnership (based in Hatfield) and the Mid-Somerset Consortium (based in Street) have offered them twice in the same period. The remaining 11 have offered just one each. Initially there are two points worth making: firstly, that none of the providers are based in Wales or Scotland – a situation which continues to restrict training places to England and the South East in particular – and none of the universities which validate the GTPs have Classics departments of their own – a situation which is of concern with regard to observation and subject training. Despite these inconveniences, some of the providers might be considered to be more favourable to offering the GTP for Classics teachers than others, and if the Classical organisations were to consider what sort of support they might provide for trainees on the GTP, they might direct more of their attention to these regular providers rather than to the irregular ones.

Stage 2: Survey of GTP trainees in Classics 2008-11

Methodology

The next stage of the research was to investigate GTP Classics trainees' experiences. As the number completing the GTP in Classics was likely to be small compared to other subjects, I felt that in order to obtain as large and representative a response as I could, I should survey the entire GTP Classics population of the last three years for which I had records – a total of a mere 27 persons. As the trainees had taken up positions all over the UK a postal survey seemed the most appropriate course of action. A prototype questionnaire was trialled and changes made before it was sent out to all respondents. It consisted of a mixture of 31 detailed tick-box and semi-extended written responses, designed to elicit answers to the following research questions:

1. What reasons did trainees report for undertaking a GTP?
2. How did trainees report their experiences in finding suitable GTP training?
3. How did trainees report on the professional training they received on the GTP?
4. What recommendations did trainees make for improvement to the GTP for Classics trainees?

The creation of that list of 27 trainees was not without its own difficulties and expresses in its purest form something which is a constant refrain amongst applicants to the GTP: access to information about the courses is extremely poor. This is something the DfE is itself very much aware of and it plans to streamline the process of application through a new website in which all the teacher training routes are combined. For now, it was only through contacting the administrators of all the GTP providers who had trained Classics teachers from my classicsteaching.com list that I was able to track down most of the schools where the training had taken place. Most providers were happy to tell me the names of the schools. A few failed to return calls. A small number refused to tell me the information, presumably out of commercial confidentiality. One provider was (somewhat alarmingly) unaware that they had trained someone in Classics at all. I was not able to identify any of the names of the individuals who had undertaken the training and had to send the questionnaires to the Head of Classics of the school where a trainee had been with the hope that they would pass it on to the trainee concerned. It is perhaps a mark of the close-knit nature of the Classics subject community that I received back 12 of the 27

questionnaires, a fairly respectable 44% response rate, bearing in mind the circumstances. One of these respondents had decided not to follow the GTP through and so has been discounted from the data which follows. With such a small sample, I have to be tentative about any conclusions which I might draw from these responses. Nevertheless, they do represent nearly one half of all teachers of Classics who trained on the GTP model over the last three years.

Results

Teachers from six state grammar schools, one state comprehensive and four independent secondary schools fully responded: a total of 11 out of a possible 27. I have anonymised all responses. The types of experiences reported by the trainees do not seem to correlate with the type of school where they undertook their training. Accordingly, when I have quoted particular trainee responses, I have chosen not to indicate whether that trainee was from the state or independent sector.

1. What reasons did trainees report for undertaking a GTP?

Nine of the respondents reported that they were already employed by their schools as unqualified teachers and that they wanted to gain QTS. Three explicitly reported that they were attracted to the GTP model as a way of getting paid a salary while training on the job and sought schools in which to accomplish this:

Trainee B: *'I had previous teaching experience in TEFL and wanted to learn on the job and get paid.'*

Trainee G: *'It came as a requisite for a job, plus being paid while training meant that I could afford to do it.'*

Trainee I: *'I had already started teaching [...] and did not want to lose a year' salary by going to do the PGCE. I wanted a properly recognised qualification in teaching.'*

Another trainee attached importance to the element of immediate classroom experience:

Trainee J: *'Because it gave me first hand teaching experience straight away and more time in the classroom and I was 29 years old. Also I missed out on a place at [an HEI PGCE provider] and didn't want to wait.'*

These views accord with most findings about the reasons why the GTP was the most suitable course for teacher trainees in these situations: they are already employed as unqualified teachers in their schools and the opportunity to gain qualifications without having to give up job and salary is very attractive. One respondent was employed by the school as a temporary teacher covering for the school's (only) Classics teacher's absence. Exploitation of this kind is fortunately rare, as noted by Foster (2002), but is something to be guarded against. It forms a focus in the ongoing third stage of this research.

2. How did trainees report their experiences in finding suitable GTP training?

The process of finding a GTP provider for Classics seemed to be polarised between respondents with some finding it straightforward and others very difficult.

In answer to the questions 'How straightforward was it to find and be accepted onto a GTP?' and the connected 'How were you assisted in finding a GTP provider?' those who found the process the most straightforward had used e-Qualitas, a distance-learning GTP which has trained by far the most GTP Classics teachers over the last six years. Five respondents (45%) had used this provider, of which the first three were uniform in their praise about the ease with which they had been accepted onto the GTP:

Trainee D: *'Very [straightforward]. It seemed like a formality. [...] School found it.'*

Trainee E: *'Very [straightforward]. The school had used them before. [...] The school provided the GTP provider.'*

Trainee G: *'[It was] sorted by the school and they took care of all the registration.'*

A fourth (Trainee A) was in a school which was less familiar with the process and so reported that it had taken some time to arrange funding. Indeed, it seems that some schools have 'cracked' the application process with this provider and use it regularly for gaining QTS in other subject areas. The fifth trainee also reported the painless application process and, like the others, commented on how the school itself had been able to set the training up. This trainee, however, mixed praise with concern about the quality of the subject-specific training offered, saying:

Trainee I: *'Finding a GTP provider for Classics is almost impossible. My school is considering switching from e-Qualitas which would be catastrophic for Classics teachers as they are one of the few providers. Not a great deal of subject specialists at e-Qualitas.'*

The trainee is focused here, as the question demands, on the ease with which they were able to access a GTP course. Almost as an afterthought, however, the trainee tags on a negative comment about the lack of subject-specific knowledge of the course provider. In the same questionnaire this trainee did not identify any subject-specific training that they received beyond their classroom practice and their meetings with their school mentor – an issue we will come back to later.

The experiences of the other trainees were much less positive. Whereas the process of application to the GTP via e-Qualitas had taken respondents no time at all, those who had applied to other GTP providers had taken much longer. Two respondents had taken three months to find a provider, one sixth months, one seven months and one an amazing 18 months. Only one of the respondents had been accepted onto a GTP immediately that was not e-Qualitas – and that was at a school consortium which comprised of their own school.

The length of time reported in finding a provider is of course partly indicative of the dearth of providers who have the experience and personnel for training a Classics trainee. In its simplest form this manifests itself in the inconvenience for the potential trainee. But there is a deeper issue here in that the longer a trainee spends on the job without training, the more likely it is that training through the GTP is more about *certification* of already-existing practice rather than *process of qualification* to teach gained by access to research, reflection and theoretical frameworks about how pupils learn.

Finding a second placement school is considered essential for teacher trainees as it affords them the opportunity to reflect upon their own developing professional values. Eight respondents said that it was easy or relatively easy to find a suitable second placement, although the importance of personal contacts made it easier than it might have been:

Trainee F: *'As there were 2 Latin / Classics GTP students at [the] Uni[versity...] we did a straight swap.'*

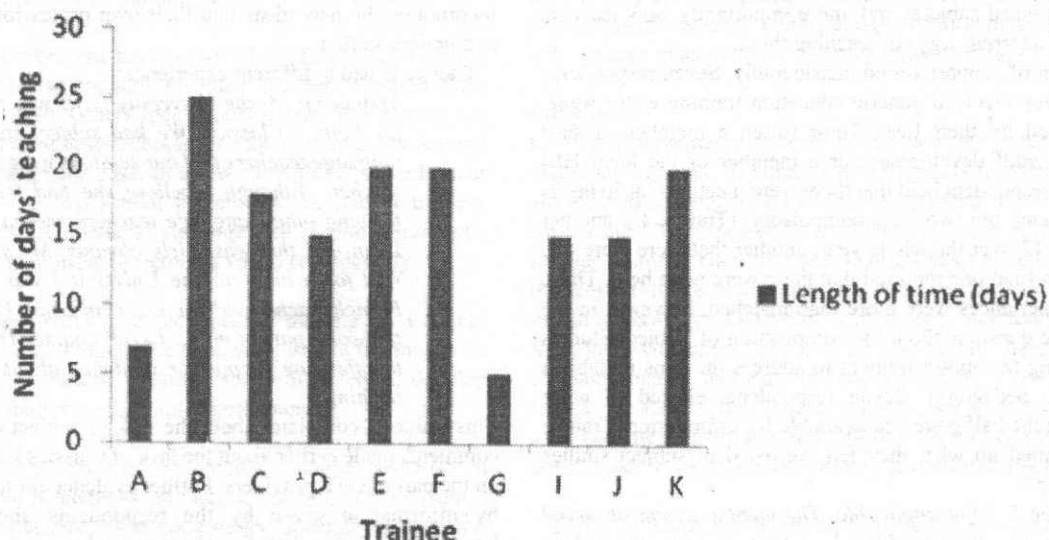
Trainee J: *'It was straightforward, but only because one of my colleagues was able to put me in touch with somebody. I would have struggled without this initial contact.'*

Trainee K: *'[It was] fairly straightforward. I organised it through a friend who was an MFL teacher there.'*

The two school placements are supposed to be contrasting. In two cases this was not achieved and one has to wonder whether in these cases the training had complied with legal requirements.

Chart 1 shows how much time the trainee spent in their second placement school (Trainee H had not found a second placement at the time of the survey and so has been removed from the data set). The length of time varied considerably from seven to 25 teaching days.

Chart 1: Length of time trainees spent in second placement school (days)



The TDA allows some variation, according to the previous teaching experience of the trainee. However, Trainee G, who had had no experience of working in a school at all, was only in the second placement for 5 days – the least of any. For this trainee, the experience of finding a school was also problematic because the school did not want to cover the cost of the trainee's absence.

Trainee G: *'[Finding a second placement was] hard, since my main school did not want to pay a lot for cover teachers and the rule about cover had just come into place. The second school was very good at making arrangements.'*

Finding a second placement was therefore not too difficult. Finding suitable Classics teaching experience and a suitable mentor with knowledge of Classics within that school was much more problematic.

3. How did trainees report on the professional training they received on the GTP?

The most important part of all teacher training is, of course, the input of generic educational and subject-specific instruction carried out formally in the lecture room by specialist teacher educators and more informally in the school itself. Training on the GTP usually takes

place either wholly within the school itself or through a mixture of school-based training and day release or weekend conferences at the HEI provider. Respondents were asked about the subject knowledge

of their mentors at both the first and second school placements and the length of time in the second placement schools. Table 3 shows their responses:

Table 3: Subject specialism of trainees' 1st and 2nd school placement mentors.

Trainee	1 st school placement (employing school)	2 nd school placement (contrasting school)	Length of time spent in the 2 nd placement school (days)
A	Classics	English	7
B	History and Classics	History	25
C	Classics	English	18
D	Modern Foreign Languages	Classics	15
E	Classics	History	20
F	Classics	History	20
G	Classics	Classics	5
H	Geography	Not allocated at the time of the survey	Not allocated at the time of the survey
I	Classics	Classics	15
J	Classics	Classics	15
K	Maths	Classics	20

All the respondents received mentor support at some time during the school placements by mentors with a subject specialism in Classics. Three trainees were mentored by Classics specialists in both of their school placements. Half of the trainees had mentors in the second placement school who were not Classics specialists. The trainees who had did not have mentors who were not Classics specialists in the first school placement did have mentors who were Classics specialists in the second. However, these trainees received guidance for only 20 days with a Classics specialist for their whole period of training. The picture is slightly concerning, therefore, as the paucity of placements where trainees on the GTP can be mentored on *both* occasions by Classics specialists means that some trainees may have little opportunity to observe and reflect on good practice in the classroom and to engage in *wider* debate about how pupils learn Classical subjects and, more importantly, how teachers might consider *different* ways of teaching them.

The provision of support varied considerably. Seven respondents reported that they received generic education training every week, usually delivered by their Lead Tutor (often a member of staff responsible for staff development or a member of the local HEI provider). One respondent held that there were meetings 'as many as you wish to attend, but two were compulsory' (Trainee F); another that there were 12 over the whole year; another that there were one or two a term; a final one reported that there were none held. These rather bleak experiences were more than matched, however, in the responses to the question about the composition of Subject Studies sessions (training to support trainees to address the gaps in subject knowledge and pedagogy). Seven respondents elected to write nothing at all in the half-page box available for information. Trainee F perhaps summed up what they felt consisted of subject studies when they wrote:

Trainee F: *'Not applicable. The mentor lesson observed me 1x a week and subject knowledge lesson observed me 1x a month and feedback / discussion ensued on that basis.'*

This respondent has shown that they considered that the subject knowledge and subject pedagogy took place as a natural part of discussions arising from lesson observations rather than as part of a coherent and developing training plan.

Other respondents, however, had made better use of the training grant to purchase suitable training:

Trainee D: *'I went to a general CLC⁴ course to look at development in the course. We looked at methods to teach the stories, online access and development.'*

Trainee K: *'[I went to an] AQA⁵ standardisation meeting on Controlled assessment learning in Leading Classics - course organised through Keynote, led by Julie Wilkinson. My second placement was also an opportunity to observe various Classics teachers in action + address my gaps in subject knowledge + pedagogy. Throughout my training I was constantly revising or learning material in order to deliver lessons and increase my subject knowledge.'*

Both of these respondents had joined conferences and courses designed for practising Classics teachers which had showcased good practice and developments in Classics pedagogy. Trainee D was able to recall two of the activities which they engaged with on the CSCP course, while Trainee K, although conflating what were probably two separate courses into one, showed their willingness to incorporate the new ideas into their own professional development and understanding.

Trainee G had a different experience:

Trainee G: *'At the University [...] I was one of two GTPs for Latin / Classics. We had subject studies with other language teachers and our sessions were led by a German teacher. Although I believe she had lots of experience training other language teachers she had no idea about Latin and this was fairly obvious. My subject specialist visit for a tutor at [the University] was conducted by a French teacher with an A level in Latin. I felt that this was the worst part of my [...] GTP course. They weren't able to offer any support or guidance about subject specific training.'*

This trainee's complaint about the lack of subject expertise echoes comments made earlier about the lack of Classics subject knowledge on the part of GTP providers. Further evidence for this was provided by information given by the respondents about the subject knowledge of the external observers who come from the GTP providers to verify and authenticate QTS during and at the end of the GTP. Of all the external observers, only one was identified as having a Classics background, although even he was technically a Music specialist. The rest were subject specialists in Modern Foreign Languages, History, English, and even a retired primary school headmaster. To sum up this section, the lack of adequate subject knowledge of the subject mentor, lead tutor and external observer is of considerable concern in the provision of training Classics teachers on the GTP. My current research is engaged in examining more closely trainee experiences of subject pedagogy training on the GTP.

4. What recommendations did trainees make for improvement to the GTP for Classics trainees?

Several respondents had ideas of ways to improve the GTP. Two recommended a central website holding information for applicants. Three advised that GTP providers themselves should be made aware of the existence of Classics as an option which they might offer. One commented that GTP providers should not be concerned that they might not have Classics specialists in their team, a proposal which was countered by the anxiety of another that the heads of GTP providers did not have 'a real understanding of what Classics involves (i.e. three subjects)' (Trainee I). Lest it all seem too negative, six respondents made no response at all – which may suggest that they did not feel that any improvements were necessary – and one replied 'The GTP is an EXCELLENT course for those in teacher training. Both of us have since secured Head of Department jobs of Classics straight out of our training' (Trainee K).

Summary

The results of these two projects have shed considerable light upon the GTP for Classics teachers. Nearly every teacher trained through this model has been already employed by the school. But that is not to say that the model is ineffective: it delivers training for Classics teachers and accreditation which they might not otherwise be able to get. QTS brings the teacher greater employability and it is possible that some of these teachers might move into the state sector.

There are four major areas to comment upon: information about and access to the providers, the organisation of the two placement schools, subject-specific training for the trainee teachers, and subject-specific training for the mentor and the external observer.

•I have identified that there are four frequent providers of training for Classics: e-Qualitas, the Hertfordshire Regional Partnership, West London Partnership and Canterbury Christ Church University, as well as a host of one-off providers. The 'Big Four' have amassed some expertise in delivering training for Classics and can perhaps be considered reliable future providers. It would be valuable to develop at least one other provider of training further north in the UK.

•Schools which have become familiar with the GTP in other subjects know how to organise training for their teachers through their preferred GTP provider. Others spend considerable time finding out for themselves. In most cases schools are able to arrange the second placement with reasonable ease. In a few cases there is insufficient contrast between the two school placements. Individual trainees sometimes use personal contacts to arrange their second placements. The amount of time in these placements varies considerably.

•Few of the trainees receive subject specific training on a formal level outside their own school. The ones who use the training grant to access external providers' training use it effectively to develop their professional understanding and development.

•Only three of the trainees were mentored by subject specialists in both of their school placements. In three cases their subject mentor in their first, main placement was not a subject specialist of Classics. None of the trainees was observed by an external observer who was a subject specialist in Classics.

Future developments

Short term

a. Information has been difficult to get about the GTP as a means of training Classics teachers. In the short term the information I have found about the GTP and Classics will be reported on the website www.classicsteaching.com with a links through to the Joint Association of Classics Teachers (JACT) website and other interested parties' websites.

b. I have identified that there are four frequent providers of training

for Classics: e-Qualitas, the Hertfordshire Regional Partnership, West London Partnership and Canterbury Christ Church University. The subject associations ought to work together with these providers to develop training resources for Classics trainees.

c. The training salary attached to the GTP is a major incentive for trainees to apply for this route into teacher training. However, supernumerary routes are rare. The subject associations should consider if they might subsidise a small number of the additional salary requirements for state schools to take on supernumerary Classics trainees.

Medium term

d. State schools which are not already involved in partnership with the KCL or Cambridge PGCE but which have provided training for Classics teachers in the past, or are involved in training in other subject areas at present and would like to take on a Classics trainee should be identified. A nearby school – state or independent – should also be identified to provide the second placement. Such pairs of schools could be incentivised to take on a Classics trainee as a supernumerary. In reverse, state schools could be encouraged to offer themselves as a second placement for GTP trainees in nearby independent schools. Information about these pairs of schools could be made available centrally by the Joint Association of Classics Teachers (JACT).

e. The subject associations should develop a package of training for PGCE and GTP trainees and mentors to be held at each of the INSET training days they hold. There should be training for PGCE and GTP trainees held at each of the Summer Schools and at such events as the Cambridge Schools Classics Conference and the Association of Latin Teaching annual conferences.

f. There should be training materials and information encouraging wider debate about the development of Classics teaching pedagogy given in the pages of the *Journal of Classics Teaching (JCT)* and on the JACT website.

g. The subject associations must pay people to carry out the research and training that is necessary – or they must identify opportunities provided by the government to fund them. It must recognise that the production of websites, writing and publication of text and resources will not take place without significant investment.

Long term

h. The Government is keen to develop the scheme known as 'Teaching Schools'. It hopes that in the years to come there will be around 500 schools across the phases offering training by teachers for teachers. They expect some of these teaching schools to provide teacher training. There is one teaching school already accredited in the West Midlands with which I have become associated. It is unique in that it has a remit to develop continuing professional development for Classics teachers. There is an opportunity here to develop a centrally-located national teaching school for Classics, funded at least at the start by the Classics subject associations, until such time as it become self-funding through the offering of training courses, consultancy work and even possibly teacher training itself.

I wish to thank the DCSF, the CA and the Roman Society for the funding which has allowed me to carry out and to continue to carry out this research. The third stage of this research consists of in-depth one-to-one interviews with a representative sample of GTP Classics trainees who undertook training with the most popular providers. The main focus of the research is on the subject specificity of the training itself and I hope to publish the findings in the near future.

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Notes

¹The Department for Education announced at the end of June 2012 that from September 2013 the GTP will be replaced by a new training route called School Direct. It is unclear at present how this model will work, but the DfE says that it will incorporate the best practice of the GTP and that schools will be able to deliver training through their own staff and through partnerships with HEIs. Accordingly, I do not see that the experiences of the trainees mentioned in this article should be much different from those who undertake the School Direct route.

²The TDA has, since April 1st 2012 been replaced by the Teaching Agency. All references to the TDA reflect the period when it was active.

³Since writing this article I have been informed that the private Buckingham University has recently been offering a PGCE in Classics to around 7-10 trainees. This PGCE used to be accessible only to independent HMC schools (a federation of independent, fee-paying schools), but now advertises itself as also being accessible to schools in the state sector. Close reading of the website does not reveal whether the training places are allocated or funded by the TDA, or the extent of the teaching of subject pedagogy provided by the course. Buckingham does not have a Classics department, however, and funding for all its other courses is privately financed. The website states that trainees should already be employed in schools. Therefore, in my mind, it resembles more the GTP model than the traditional HEI PGCE. I would welcome any information from those who teach on or who have studied on this course.

⁴CLC: *Cambridge Latin Course* (actually Cambridge Schools Classics Project) annual conference held in June.

⁵AQA: Assessment and Qualifications Agency: an English examination board which offers in-service training for teachers of its examinations in Classical Civilisation.

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