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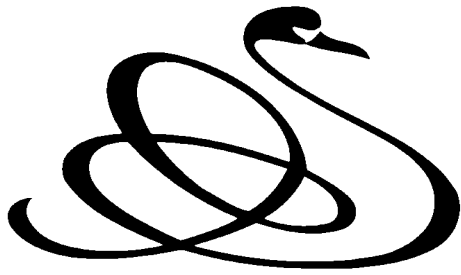
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**TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY  
FOR SCHOOLS**

**EVALUATION OF THE IMPACT OF THE  
STUDENTS ASSOCIATES SCHEME:  
FINAL REPORT**

**October 2005**

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**York Consulting**

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## **APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY**

## GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS

| Term              | Definition  |
|-------------------|---|
| Additionality     | The overall benefit resulting from an activity, after taking into account any deadweight (that which would have happened anyway) or any negative effects of the activity  |
| Capacity Building | The development of awareness, knowledge, skills and operational capability by the community   |
| Deadweight        | Effects that would have arisen even if the activity being evaluated had not taken place   |
| Displacement      | Where the effects of an activity on a group of beneficiaries are only experienced at the expense of others  |
| ITT Provider      | Throughout the report, this term is used to refer to providers of Initial Teacher Training  |
| Provider          | The term 'provider' is used to refer to providing organisations delivering the SA Scheme  |
| Soft Outcomes     | Soft outcomes are outcomes that cannot be measured directly or tangibly. They are often subjective and are a matter of degree, not absolutes. They are personal, often depending on an individual's needs and are usually intermediate – they measure progress towards the achievement of hard outcomes such as attainment scores or qualifications |
| Students          | The term 'students' is used to refer to higher education students who participated in the Scheme  |
| TTA/ TDA          | The TTA became the TDA on the 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2005. Therefore, throughout this report we refer to the 'TTA' when referring to historical decisions, information etc but refer to the 'TDA' when looking forward to the future direction of the Scheme.  |
| Young People      | Throughout this report, the term 'young people' is used to refer to pupils with schools with whom Student Associates came into contact  |

## Abbreviations

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| CPD   | Continuing Professional Development          |
| DfES  | Department for Education and Skills          |
| DRB   | Designated Recommending Body                 |
| FE    | Further Education                            |
| GTP   | Graduate Teacher Programme                   |
| GTTR  | Graduate Teacher Training Registry           |
| HE    | Higher Education                             |
| HEFCE | Higher Education Funding Council for England |
| HEI   | Higher Education Institution                 |
| HND   | Higher National Diploma                      |
| IAG   | Information Advice and Guidance              |
| ITT   | Initial Teacher Training                     |
| LEA   | Local Education Authority                    |
| LSA   | Learning Support Assistant                   |
| MFL   | Modern Foreign Languages                     |
| NQT   | Newly Qualified Teacher                      |
| PDP   | Personal Development Profile                 |
| PGCE  | Postgraduate Certificate in Education        |
| QTS   | Qualified Teacher Status                     |
| SAS   | Student Associate Scheme                     |
| SCITT | School Centred Initial Teacher Training      |
| TDA   | Training and Development Agency for Schools  |
| TEFL  | Teaching English as a Foreign Language       |
| TEP   | Training Entry Profile                       |
| TTA   | Teacher Training Agency                      |

## WEBLINKS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

| Activity/ Programme          | Website  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Teacher Associates Scheme    | <a href="http://www.tda.gov.uk/SAS">www.tda.gov.uk/SAS</a>       |
| Undergraduate Credit Scheme  | <a href="http://www.tda.gov.uk/SAS">www.tda.gov.uk/SAS</a>       |
| Teach First                  | <a href="http://www.teachfirst.org.uk">www.teachfirst.org.uk</a> |
| Training Entry Profile (TEP) | <a href="http://www.tda.gov.uk/tep">www.tda.gov.uk/tep</a>       |

## Executive Summary

### Introduction and Background

- 1) The Training and Development Agency for Schools' (formerly, the Teacher Training Agency) Student Associates Scheme (SAS) commenced in September 2003. The Scheme evolved from two predecessor Schemes - the Teacher Associates and Undergraduate Credit Scheme pilots. Under the Student Associates Scheme, students in higher education (HE) can progress to different levels of training and development with schools and colleges according to their pre-existing commitments and levels of interest in teaching as a career.
- 2) Findings are presented from the evaluation of the impact of the Student Associates Scheme undertaken by York Consulting Limited (YCL) in 2005. The evaluation was commissioned by the Training and Development Agency for Schools, with the Department for Education and Skills. Methods of data collection included: postal surveys of providers, schools and university students; six case studies; and telephone consultations with providers of initial teacher training (ITT) not involved in delivering the Scheme.
- 3) Overall, the Student Associates Scheme is meeting its core aims. The Scheme is considered of high quality and is felt to be an extremely valuable tool for recruiting quality higher education students into ITT.

### Key Findings: Strengths

- 4) The Scheme is increasing students' level of interest in teaching as a career and may be contributing to increased interest in some priority subject areas. It is also stimulating some interest amongst groups currently under-represented in teaching such as minority ethnic groups and males into primary education.
- 5) There is evidence that the Scheme is increasing interest in teaching amongst those who were not already showing a firm commitment to this career path. Over a quarter (28%) of those participating in the Scheme had 'some', 'little' or 'no interest' prior to involvement and had shifted their level of interest to 'strong' or 'very strong' following participation.
- 6) Interest in teaching has translated into applications for ITT amongst almost a third of students who have taken part. In addition, almost a third of those who have not yet applied, indicate that they have firm intentions to apply for ITT in the future once they complete their degree.
- 7) The Scheme is attracting students with the degrees, qualifications and calibre required for ITT and teaching.
- 8) A key strength of the Scheme is that it enables HE students to make better informed decisions about a career in teaching because it enables them to gain practical experience to decide whether teaching is right for them and to determine which subject area or phase of education they wish to teach.

- 9) Through participation, stakeholders and students feel they are better prepared for the realities of teaching and ITT.
- 10) Through better preparation, the Scheme is potentially contributing to reducing drop out and wastage from ITT programmes. Almost one in ten students indicated that participation had dissuaded them from teaching, with a similar proportion (9%) indicating that if they had gone directly into ITT without participating they would probably have dropped out.
- 11) The Scheme is enabling students to gain knowledge and experience of the Standards for the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). Most students are recording the experience gained through participation. Seventy-four percent are recording their experience on a training and entry profile (TEP) which is a marked improvement on the figure of a quarter reported in the NfER Survey on the quality of the Scheme, nearly a year ago. In addition, 82% are collating a portfolio of evidence.
- 12) Benefits of the Scheme for participants are wide-ranging. Positive benefits for young people include increased motivation, subject focus and contact with a HE student who can talk to them about higher education. This has positive implications for increasing the achievement and aspirations of young people with whom the HE students come into contact.
- 13) Providers feel the Scheme is beneficial to boosting recruitment to ITT and helps to raise the employability of the students.
- 14) Schools value the extra assistance in the classroom. Involvement is prompting some schools, or departments, to consider involvement in ITT.
- 15) Participation is considered to contribute to the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of staff through developing mentoring skills.
- 16) Some students are being employed in after-school clubs or enrichment classes in the school post-participation.
- 17) By contributing to staff CPD and by employing Student Associates in other roles in the schools, the Scheme is also contributing positively to the wider workforce agenda.
- 18) The Scheme is helping to develop and strengthen partnerships between providers and schools and, in some cases, between providers and subject departments in their organisations.

#### **Key Findings: Development Areas**

- 19) Inevitably, there are some areas of the Scheme that could be improved or developed further.
- 20) Despite the fact that students state they are gaining experience and knowledge of the Standards for QTS, the evidence suggests that the extent and quality of the experience against the Standards at Level 2 is variable

across providers. There is evidence that some students are not gaining structured, practical experiences of the Standards for QTS during their placement. Moreover, some teachers were not aware that this was a requirement for those on Level 2 of the Scheme.

- 21) A lack of standardisation and consistency in terms of expectations relating to experience of the Standards for QTS is causing some difficulties in terms of how and to what extent experience on the Scheme can be recognised and taken into account when progressing to ITT.
- 22) There is a low level of awareness of the Scheme amongst providers of ITT that are not participating. This is limiting the extent to which students' SAS experience is being taken into account when they apply for ITT or commence courses. This, together with the fact that some (although not all) providers are operating the Scheme discretely, is limiting the potential wider impact of the Scheme on regional and national strategies to boost recruitment to initial teacher training.
- 23) Although several providers are developing the strategic context of the Scheme to impact on other areas (for example, to increase motivation to study national priority subjects or to enhance the curriculum), this is not a development that is happening wholesale. This is limiting the potential wider impact of the Scheme.
- 24) Most students are receiving information, advice and guidance (IAG) on the routes into teaching, and are being offered support to enter ITT (e.g. support to complete Graduate Teacher Training Registry (GTTR) application forms, interview guidance, a guaranteed interview for ITT on successful completion of the SAS). However, to capitalise on increased interest in teaching resulting from participation, there is scope to improve the effectiveness of how and when IAG is delivered.
- 25) There is evidence of some 'deadweight' in the Scheme. This is in the sense that some students had high levels of prior interest in teaching, that some had already secured a place on ITT before involvement, and that a significant number indicate that they would have been likely to apply for ITT anyway. Nevertheless, such 'deadweight' should be assessed within the context of the Scheme's other objectives, and in the future, wider TDA provision given its expanded remit.

### **Conclusions**

- 26) Overall, there is little doubt that the Scheme is successfully meeting its core objectives to increase the number and quality of recruits into the teaching profession by enabling them to make better informed decisions about career options in education and, where they enter ITT, better prepared to meet the demands of teacher training.
- 27) In addition, although it is variable across delivering organisations, the Scheme is positively impacting on a range of other areas. This includes strengthening partnerships between providers and schools, between

providers and subject departments and/or ITT departments; and contributing to staff CPD and the wider workforce agenda.

### **Recommendations**

28) To improve the Scheme further and maximise its potential impact, it is recommended that:

- students who have already secured a place for ITT are not recruited to the Scheme;
- the provision of IAG is further improved and more innovatively delivered to capitalise on interest shown and translate this to entry onto ITT, especially amongst those whose participation in the Scheme is too late for them to apply for ITT for a further academic year;
- the experiences afforded at Level 1 and Level 2 are made transparently distinct, both within the Scheme and compared to other schemes that might be being offered in the local area that involve HE students going into school classrooms e.g. university student tutoring schemes;
- opportunities to demonstrate achievements against the Standards for the award of QTS are more consistent within and across providers;
- steps are taken to improve wider awareness of the Scheme among ITT providers and to provide clarity concerning how experience gained might be taken into account;
- to encourage a strategic focus on the wider impacts of the Scheme, targets should be set to build capacity (by encouraging a strategic focus on widening participation for example) rather than the numbers recruited;
- consideration should be given as to how the Scheme can be used positively to contribute to the TDA's responsibility for the wider workforce. given its expanded remit.

## 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

### Introduction

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of research undertaken by York Consulting Limited (YCL) to evaluate the impact of the Student Associates Scheme. The evaluation was conducted on behalf of the Training and Development Agency for Schools (formerly, Teacher Training Agency, TTA) in partnership with the Department for Education and Skills.

### The Student Associates Scheme: Background and Context

- 1.2 The Student Associates Scheme (SAS) is a three year programme running from September 2003 to August 2006. The Scheme has evolved from two pilot programmes – the Teacher Associates Scheme and the Undergraduate Credit Scheme<sup>1</sup>. The Student Associate Scheme enables students in higher education to progress to different levels of training and involvement with schools and colleges according to their varying pre-existing commitments and levels of interest in teaching as a career.
- 1.3 The Scheme is delivered by 46 organisations (providers) in England, including HEIs, LEAs, schools, a subject association and one corporate company. The content of the Scheme varies according to the provider to take account of varying needs. Students can be in full or part-time education and may be studying for their first or postgraduate degree. Higher National Diploma (HND) and Foundation Degree students can also access the Scheme. Students can join the Scheme at Level 1, where they can work in the school environment for up to ten days, or at Level 2, subject to certain requirements, where they can work for between 10 and 20 days in the school against the Standards for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)<sup>2</sup>. All students are expected to undergo a general induction to the Scheme, the education system and working in schools.

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<sup>1</sup> For further information see [www.tda.gov.uk/SAS](http://www.tda.gov.uk/SAS)

<sup>2</sup> For further information see <http://www.tda.gov.uk/partners/ittstandards.aspx>

## Wider Context

- 1.4 The findings from this report should be situated within the context of previous research findings of the two predecessor Schemes (Teacher Associates Scheme and the Undergraduate Credit Scheme), the evaluation of the Student Associates Scheme: Aimhigher pilot and the light touch evaluation of the quality of the Student Associates Scheme<sup>3</sup>. These reports have demonstrated that the Scheme is viewed very positively both in terms of the quality of delivery and its outcomes on those who take part.
- 1.5 The Students Associates Scheme has now being running (albeit in various guises) for a number of years. Hence, this report aims to go a stage further by taking a critical look at the impact of the Scheme against its core objectives most notably, its impact on increasing the **number** and **quality** of recruits into teaching.

## Scheme Aims and Objectives

- 1.6 The Student Associates Scheme supports the TTA's Strategic Aim of **increasing the number and quality of recruits into teaching** by enabling Higher Education (HE) students to make better informed decisions about career options in education, to enter Initial Teacher Training (ITT) (where they wish to do so), and to better prepare them to meet the demands of teaching.
- 1.7 The objectives of the pilot are six-fold, to:
- provide high quality training experiences, closely aligned to the Standards for QTS, that prepare students in HE to work in classrooms;
  - increase the number of students considering a career in teaching, particularly those on award-bearing schemes in secondary priority subject areas, and from under-represented groups in teaching, e.g. males in primary education and minority ethnic groups;
  - enable students who show an aptitude for, and commitment to, working in schools to progress through the Scheme building up knowledge and experience against the Standards for QTS and taking these into ITT should they choose teaching as a career;
  - complement and strengthen partnerships between schools and organisations participating in the Scheme;
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<sup>3</sup> See [www.tda.gov.uk/SAS](http://www.tda.gov.uk/SAS)

strengthen relationships between university/college subject departments and initial teacher training partnerships by participation of their students within the Scheme;

- enable students participating to make a contribution to attainment levels in the schools in which they are placed.

## Evaluation Aims and Objectives

1.8 The aim of the evaluation, as set out in the Invitation to Tender, is to:

- evaluate the **impact** the Scheme is having on its major objectives i.e. to increase the number and quality of new recruits into the teaching profession by enabling students in Higher Education to:
  - make better informed decisions about career options in education;
  - enter Initial Teacher Training (for those who wish to do so), better prepared to meet the demands of teacher training.

## Methodology

1.9 The methodology for this evaluation comprised three main elements:

- three tailored postal surveys for providers, schools and students;
- six in-depth case studies based around the providing organisation that included interviews with providers, school staff, young people, Student Associates and partners<sup>4</sup>;
- telephone consultations with ITT providers who are not involved in delivering the Scheme.

1.10 Further details of the methodology employed can be found at **Appendix A**.

## Profile of Survey Respondents

1.11 The following sub-sections demonstrate the profile of those who took part in the survey.

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<sup>4</sup> Throughout this report, we use the term partners to refer to other stakeholders, e.g. Initial Teacher Training Providers, LEA Officers, Careers Advisers.

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### Student Associates

- 1.12 The Student Associates survey sample was drawn from the TDA's Student Associates Scheme database containing 3,091 records at the time the survey was due to be distributed. The figure of 3,091 records included Student Associates whose details had been entered onto the TDA database at the time of the survey and who had given permission for their information to be used for the purposes of evaluation. The 3,091 records supplied by the TDA had already been cleansed to ensure that students who had taken part in both Level 1 and Level 2 only occurred once on the database.
- 1.13 Completed survey responses were received from 1,157 students, constituting a 37% response rate. These figures allow high levels of confidence in the figures reported for the cohort as a whole, but also provide reliable data for the analysis of subgroups<sup>5</sup>.

### Providers

- 1.14 The Student Associates Scheme is delivered by 46 providers across England. Surveys were distributed to all 46 organisations delivering the Scheme. Completed survey responses were received from 36 providers constituting a 78% response rate. Survey responses were received across the five provider types delivering the Scheme (HEI, LEA, school, subject association and private company).
- 1.15 There is a high level of confidence that respondents' views are likely to reflect those of providing organisations. However, some caution should be exerted in interpreting the figures cited, given that the overall population of providing organisations is small.

### Schools

- 1.16 Each of the 46 providers work with a varying number of schools and colleges to deliver the Scheme. Each providing organisation was asked to nominate two schools (one primary and one secondary) to be surveyed in order to minimise potential burdens on schools. In the event, 34 providers offered contact details for schools.

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<sup>5</sup> Further details of statistical reliability are provided in Appendix A outlining the methodology in more detail. For analysis of the figures for the whole cohort, we can be 95% confident that the figures reported are within 2.5% points of the true results, had the whole population returned their survey. For analysis of subgroups, for example of minority ethnic groups, we can be 95% confident that the figures reported are within 5.2% points of the true results, had the whole population returned the survey.

1.17 Surveys were distributed to 77 schools from which 48 completed responses were received (62% response rate). School responses were received across 33 providers and four out of the five provider types.

1.18 The total population of schools involved in delivering the Scheme is not known. This, together with the small sample size has limitations for confidence levels of the findings in statistical terms.

## Report Structure

1.19 In this report the impact of the Scheme is explored in relation to its core aims and objectives.

1.20 The remainder of this report is therefore set out as follows:

- **Section Two** examines the impact of the Scheme on recruitment to ITT;
- **Section Three** explores the extent to which the Scheme is preparing students for entry to ITT;
- the impact of the Scheme on the motivation and achievement of young people in schools is considered in **Section Four** together with other benefits for young people, Student Associates, providers, schools and staff;
- **Section Five** assesses the extent to which partnerships have been developed and strengthened as a result of the Scheme;
- **Section Six** explores aspects of delivery and design in terms of the implications for maximising impact;
- Finally, **Section Seven** presents the conclusions and recommendations.

## 2 IMPACT ON RECRUITMENT TO ITT

### Summary of Key Points

- The Scheme is showing increased levels of interest amongst students who had an existing interest in teaching as a career.
- Over a quarter of those participating in the Scheme had 'some', 'little' or 'no interest' prior to involvement and had shifted their level of interest to 'strong' or 'very strong' following participation.
- The Scheme is stimulating interest in teaching amongst groups currently under-represented in teaching such as minority ethnic groups and males into primary education. It may also be making a small contribution to stimulating interest in some priority subjects.
- Almost a third of students have already applied for ITT which is a fourfold increase on previous figures reported. A further 29% of those who have not yet applied indicate that they intend to apply when they have completed their degree. The figures indicate that to date, 45% of those who have participated have already applied, or will apply for ITT. Although it may take time for the further effects of the Scheme on recruitment to ITT to be felt, the initial indications are positive.
- The Scheme is attracting students with the degrees and qualifications necessary for entry into ITT and those who take part are considered of high calibre.
- There is some evidence of deadweight within the Scheme in terms of recruitment to ITT but this should be assessed in the light of the Scheme's other objectives since there will be a trade off between competing objectives.

2.1 The Student Associates Scheme supports the TTA's strategic aim of increasing the number and quality of recruits into teaching. A core objective of the Scheme therefore is to **increase the number of students considering teaching as a career.**

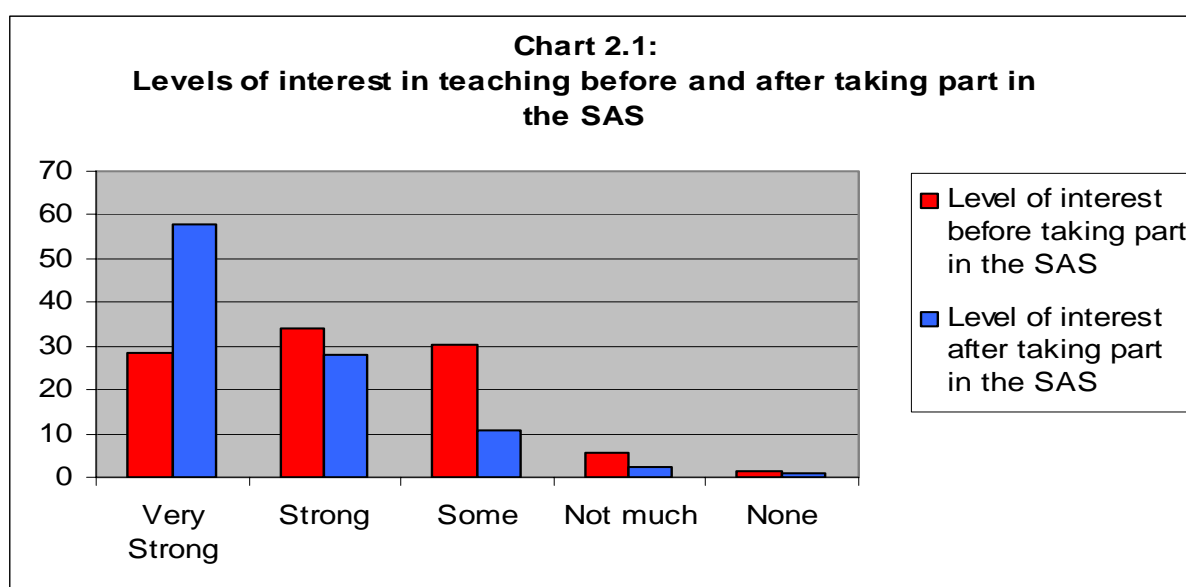
2.2 This section explores the extent to which the Scheme has stimulated increased interest in teaching, over and above those who were showing commitment to this career path considering teaching as a career and particularly in priority subject areas and among groups under-represented in teaching. It also reports on the extent to which participation in the Scheme has resulted in progression onto ITT programmes and the extent to which it is attracting those with the qualifications and calibre necessary for entry into ITT.

## Interest in Teaching

- 2.3 The Scheme is clearly increasing existing levels of interest in teaching as a career. It is also evidencing interest in teaching amongst some students who had not already made a firm choice to teach.

### Is Interest in Teaching Increasing?

- 2.4 The survey evidence shows that most of the students responding to the survey had a prior interest in teaching as a career. Nevertheless, **levels of interest in teaching amongst these students are increasing as a result of the Scheme** – whilst 63% of students had a very strong or strong interest in teaching before taking part, 86% had a very strong or strong interest after involvement. The number of those who had a very strong or strong interest in teaching overall increased by 37% after participation (see **Chart 2.1**).



Base = all survey respondents = 1157

### Additionality and Deadweight

- 2.5 Within these figures there is a potential for levels of interest to shift in either direction i.e. a positive shift in interest in an upward direction (increase), or a negative shift in interest in a downward direction (reduction).

2.6 The survey results show that:

- 28% of the whole cohort responding to the survey had increased from 'some', 'not much' or 'no' interest prior to participation to having a 'strong' or 'very strong' interest in teaching post participation. This can be considered as the **additionality** of the Scheme in terms of stimulating increased interest in teaching;
- 2% of the whole cohort went from having 'not much' or 'no' interest to having 'some' interest in teaching. This can be considered as the **partial additionality** of the Scheme;
- 20% of the whole cohort went from a 'strong' interest to a 'very strong' interest. In other words, the Scheme is not evidencing additionality in terms of interest in teaching since these students could be considered to have a firm interest in teaching prior to involvement. However, the Scheme is giving them an even stronger interest in teaching as a career;
- 40% of the whole cohort reported no change in their level of interest. This may be considered as the **deadweight** of the Scheme in terms of stimulating increased interest in teaching;
- 9% of the whole cohort indicated a negative shift in interest following participation i.e. their levels of interest were **displaced**. Reduced interest in teaching as a result of participation is explored further in **Section Three** when considering the extent to which students have been dissuaded from entering ITT and teaching.

2.7 Although a range of other external factors could be contributing to increased levels of interest amongst students, figures from the survey show that 82% of students with 'some', 'not much' or 'no' interest in teaching before involvement indicated that their interest in teaching had increased as a **direct result** of participating in the Student Associates Scheme.

2.8 The fact that the Scheme is primarily increasing existing levels of interest amongst most students is supported by qualitative feedback. This is demonstrated in the following quotes:

| <b>Interest in Teaching</b>   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Already Interested Prior to the Scheme</b>   | <b>Not Interested Prior to the Scheme</b>  |
| <p><i>"I was already interested in pursuing a career in teaching before the Scheme."</i></p> <p><i>"I've always wanted to teach."</i></p> <p><i>"Teaching is something I have been thinking about for a while."</i></p> <p><i>"I was already thinking I would apply for teacher training."</i></p> <p><i>"I was always going to go into teaching anyway."</i></p> <p><i>"I've always been curious about teaching and thought it was something I would do."</i></p> <p><i>"I was already interested in teaching. I think I would have done it [ITT] anyway."</i></p> | <p><i>"The Scheme was the key factor that influenced my decision to teach. I hadn't really considered it before."</i></p> <p><i>"I didn't think I would like teaching until I tried it. My parents are both teachers and hoped that I would follow in their footsteps but I resisted until this Scheme."</i></p> |

### Deadweight by Implication

- 2.9 There is some evidence to imply a further element of "deadweight" in the Scheme in relation to stimulating interest in teaching. This is in the sense that some students already had some experience of working in schools on which to base their decisions about teaching as a career.
- 2.10 In the student survey, 61% of the students responding had experience of working in schools prior to their involvement in SAS. This is to be expected given that students undertaking Level 2 have to have some experience of working in schools to qualify for involvement. However, over half (56%) of those who had only completed Level 1 of the Scheme had experience of working in schools prior to involvement. In other words, students have been able to obtain experience of working in school from which to base their interest in teaching via other routes.
- 2.11 However, this finding should be considered alongside the impact of the Scheme against its other objectives since, attempts to maximise the impact on one area of the Scheme may have negative implications for the extent of impact on other objectives.

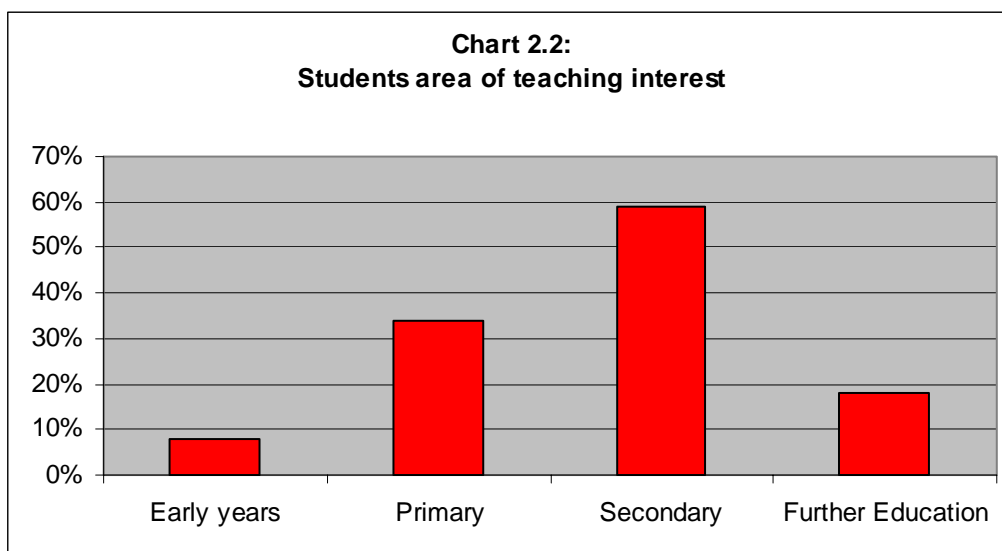
2.12 The evidence suggests that in terms of interest, the main value of the Scheme is in **helping students to make their mind up about teaching as a career by sharpening their interest**. This is in a range of ways, for example, by helping them to determine whether teaching is really for them. This issue is explored in detail in **Section Three**.

### Is Interest Increasing in Priority Areas?

2.13 The survey evidence from students shows the Scheme is stimulating some interest in key strategic priority areas including attracting those in priority subject areas, and those from groups traditionally under-represented into the profession.

### Education Phase and Priority Subjects

2.14 Survey respondents were asked to indicate which phase of teaching they were interested in. The data indicates that not all students had made a final decision, as some highlighted more than one option. The results are presented in **Chart 2.2**, illustrating that 58% of participants are interested in secondary teaching and over a third are interested in teaching in the primary phase.



Base = all survey respondents = 1157

2.15 Sixty-one per cent of the students who wish to teach in the secondary phase are interested in teaching a priority subject area. Students interested in secondary teaching were interested in teaching the following priority subject areas:

- Maths -19%;

- Science – 16%;
- Modern Foreign Languages – 10%;
- ICT – 9%;
- Design and Technology – 7%;
- Other – 39%.

2.16 These figures are similar to the national proportions of applications to ITT in 2005, except for Modern Foreign Languages, (10% of SAS survey respondents, compared to 5% of national applications in 2005<sup>6</sup>) and Design Technology (7% of SAS survey respondents, compared to 3% of national applications in 2005<sup>7</sup>). Therefore, whilst the Scheme is attracting students in some priority subjects areas, the extent to which it is stimulating increased interest is not clear<sup>8</sup>.

### Minority Ethnic Groups

2.17 Analysis of participants by ethnicity indicates that students from traditionally under-represented groups in teaching are getting involved in the Scheme. The Scheme has attracted a higher proportion of students from minority ethnic groups (26% of the survey sample, 23% of the SAS database sample) than the 9% who accepted a place on an ITT course in 2004<sup>9</sup>. This is illustrated in **Chart 2.3**.

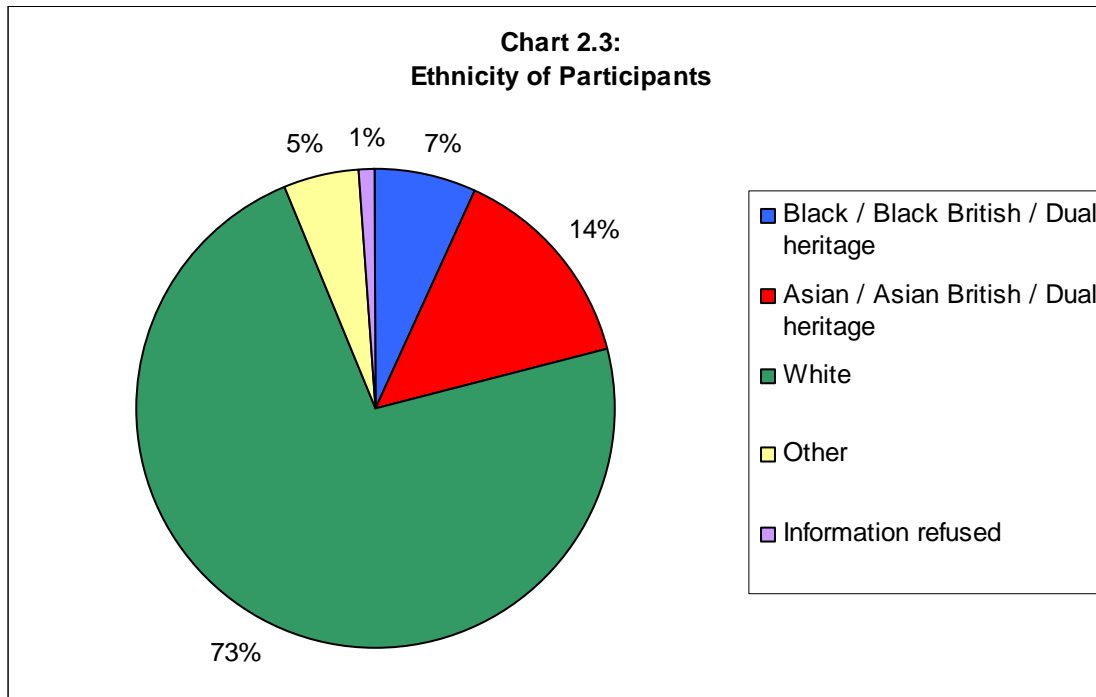
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<sup>6</sup> Source = GTTR, <http://www.gttr.ac.uk/stats05/index.html>

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> It is not possible to say for certain whether or not the Scheme is stimulating increased interest in teaching in priority subject areas. This is because the national figures on applications to ITT may well include some of those who took part in the Scheme and because recruitment targets were set for students studying priority subject areas.

<sup>9</sup> Source = GTTR, <http://www.gttr.ac.uk/pdf/statsreport04.pdf> (Based on those whose ethnicity was known)



Base = all minority ethnic groups = 246

2.18 The survey evidence shows that prior to participation in the Scheme, 56% of minority ethnic groups had a strong or very strong interest in teaching. Following participation, this increased to 86%. The number of minority ethnic students who had a strong or very strong interest in teaching increased by 54% after participation.

2.19 This demonstrates positively that the Scheme is generating interest in teaching amongst minority ethnic groups.

#### Males into Primary Education

2.20 A strategic priority of the Scheme is to stimulate the number of males entering primary teaching. Analysis of participation by gender indicates that more females are participating in the Scheme than males (21% of the survey sample and 27% of the SAS database sample are male).

2.21 Survey figures show that 24% of the males participating in the Scheme were interested in teaching primary. The current national figures for applications to ITT in 2005 show 15%<sup>10</sup> of applicants for primary teaching are males. This suggests there is a positive difference in levels of interest in primary teaching among males taking part in the Scheme and the national picture.<sup>11</sup>

## Translating Interest to Recruitment: Entering ITT

2.22 Interest in teaching is already translating to entry into ITT for some students and there is evidence to suggest that this is likely to increase over time.

### Are Student Associates Applying for ITT?

2.23 The figures indicate that around a third of students are applying for ITT following participation in the Scheme. A total of 31% of participants responding to the survey who did not have a place prior to participation indicated that they had applied for ITT following participation in the Scheme.

2.24 The proportions that have applied for ITT are similar for minority ethnic groups and males into primary education. A total of 28% (n=234) of minority ethnic students have applied for ITT post involvement, as have 21% (n=12) of the males who indicated an interest in primary teaching. Caution should be exerted with regards to males into primary education due to the small numbers available on which to base subgroup analysis.

2.25 The evidence also suggests that further students intend to apply for ITT in the future but have not yet done so because they have not completed their degree course or, because they have just completed Level 1 and wish to progress onto Level 2. Qualitative feedback included in survey responses show that of those who indicate they have not yet applied, **29% have definite intentions to apply for ITT in the future**. Combining the numbers of those who have already applied for ITT with those who have a firm intention to apply suggests an approximate **conversion rate of 45% into applications for ITT** to date.

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<sup>10</sup> Source = GTTR, <http://www.gttr.ac.uk/stats05/index.html>

<sup>11</sup> Some caution needs to be exerted as the national figures on males applying to primary may include some of those who have taken part in SAS.

### Are Students Successfully Gaining a Place on ITT?

2.26 Of the 31% of students who have applied for ITT, 74% indicated that they have successfully gained a place. Thus, around a fifth (21%) of all students responding to the survey have successfully gained a place on an ITT course. This is a fourfold increase on the 5% reported in the NfER survey last year, although caution should be exerted here due to differing sample sizes in the two surveys.

2.27 This suggests it may take time for the experience on the Scheme to be translated to places on ITT programmes and thus for the full impact of the Scheme to be felt.

### Deadweight

2.28 The evidence suggests that there is a level of 'deadweight' in this objective of the Scheme:

- 10% of the students responding to the survey already had a place on an ITT course prior to taking part in SAS. Hence, there is some evidence of deadweight against the objective to increase the number of students considering teaching as a career. For one in ten, the Scheme is having no effect on their initial decision to enter teaching training;
- 67% of those who have applied to ITT indicated that they would have applied anyway regardless of their involvement in the SAS. This again indicates that there is deadweight in the Scheme in terms of the extent to which it results in additional numbers to ITT. Nevertheless, 11% of those that had applied indicated that they would not have applied for initial teacher training if they had not been involved in the Scheme.

2.29 The fact that a significant proportion of students say they would have applied for ITT anyway is not surprising given the finding presented above that most students had an existing level of interest in teaching prior to participation. It is important that these findings are situated within the context of other impacts of the Scheme, such as the extent to which it is better preparing students for ITT and dissuading those who would otherwise have started an ITT course and dropped out. Such issues are explored in **Section Three**, whilst the implications for delivery and design are explored in **Section Six**.

### Why are some students not opting for ITT?

2.30 Reasons why students have been dissuaded from a career in teaching or have decided not to apply for ITT have varied:

- **weighing up their options** – some students are still deciding which career direction to pursue after completing their degree. Some are still weighing up the option of teaching against other career opportunities and are gaining work experience in a variety of areas;
- **a later option** – others are very much interested in teaching but see this as something they may do later after having experienced a career in another area first or after having taken a year out. Some students do not want to go straight onto another year of study straight after completing their degree;
- **financial constraints** – some students indicated that they needed to undertake paid work straight after their degree in order to service their debts. This was particularly pertinent among, although not exclusive to, mature students. There is some evidence that greater awareness of other paid routes into teaching (e.g. Graduate Teacher Programme - GTP) stimulated by advice and guidance received during the Scheme has encouraged students to explore alternative routes into teaching. There is some, albeit limited, qualitative feedback that students have struggled to obtain information on or find a place on School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) and have been deterred from teaching because they need to secure some income on completion of their degree;
- **discipline** – several students commented that they were deterred from teaching because of behaviour problems they had experienced in schools;
- **lack of a relevant degree subject** – some students are undertaking degree courses which they perceive only qualify them to work at the primary phase of education, yet their preference is to work with older pupils. Some are therefore considering Further or Higher education as a more flexible entry route into teaching with a wider scope of subject areas;
- **unable to secure a place** – there is some limited evidence that students recruited from non-priority areas have found it hard to obtain a place on ITT because of competition for places in subject areas such as physical education (PE).

## Attracting Students with the Prerequisite Skills and Calibre for ITT

### Qualifications for ITT

- 2.31 Students applying for ITT are required to have achieved Grade C or above in GCSE English, Maths and Science<sup>12</sup>, and have successfully obtained a degree.
- 2.32 The Scheme is clearly attracting HE students with the degrees and qualifications required for entry onto ITT programmes.
- 2.33 The vast majority of students participating in the Scheme meet the prerequisite criteria:
- 98% have Grade C or above in English;
  - 95% have Grade C or above in Maths;
  - 80% have Grade C or above in Science.
- 2.34 A total of 90% of students responding to the survey were studying for an undergraduate degree when they participated in the Scheme, 7% were undertaking postgraduate studies, 2% were undertaking foundation degrees and 1% were studying for an HND.
- 2.35 Eighteen providers stated they had students who currently do not have the qualifications required for ITT entry at either level 1 or 2. This amounted to just 87 students without the required qualifications at level 1 and 58 students involved at level 2. Figures from the SAS database sample suggest this equates to 4% at Level 1 and 4% participating at Level 2 without the required qualifications.

### Providing High Quality Recruits

- 2.36 Quantitative and qualitative feedback shows that the Scheme is attracting high calibre students.
- 2.37 Findings from the provider and schools surveys show that the calibre of Student Associates is considered to be very high. Ratings from providers and schools in relation to the calibre of Student Associates show that:

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<sup>12</sup> Individuals born on or after 1 September 1979 wanting to teach primary or Key Stages 2/3 (ages 11-14), also need a GCSE at grade C or above (or an equivalent qualification) in a science subject.

- 34 out of 36 providers and 46 out of 48 schools consider the **attitude** of students to be good or very good;
- 34 out of 36 providers and 41 out of 48 schools rate **student reliability** as good or very good;
- 33 out of 36 providers and 41 out of 48 schools rate **students' ability to engage young people** as good or very good;
- 33 out of 36 providers and 43 out of 48 schools rate students' **levels of professionalism** as good or very good;
- 33 out of 36 providers and 43 out of 48 schools rate student **enthusiasm** as good or very good;
- 32 out of 36 providers and 38 out of 48 schools rate student **subject experience** good or very good.

2.38 Three-quarters of schools (37/48) felt that the Student Associates they had provided placements for had the abilities required to become a teacher. Indeed, 10 out of 48 schools had offered Student Associates a placement for ITT.

2.39 As one provider commented:

***“Our external assessor has looked at some of the information students have gathered on the Standards for QTS and has said that some of the Student Associates are providing better quality work in two weeks than ITT students produce in 6 months.”***

2.40 Qualitative case study feedback suggests that the calibre of students is related to a range of factors such as:

- providers' recruitment processes;
- the fact that the Scheme is well structured, designed and delivered;
- the opportunity to gain experience of the Standards for QTS;
- the opportunity to build up knowledge and experience of working in schools through progression through a range of schemes (SAS Levels and locally run schemes such as Students into Schools).

### 3 BETTER INFORMED AND BETTER PREPARED

#### Summary of Key Points

- Through participation, students overwhelmingly feel better prepared for teaching and better informed about the phase of education and subject area they wish to teach.
- The Scheme is enabling students to gain knowledge and experience of the Standards for QTS and to record these. However, there is evidence of differential experience relating to the Standards for QTS at Level 2. This is causing tension in terms of the extent to which students' experiences can be taken into account when progressing to ITT. This is compounded by a lack of general awareness of the Scheme among ITT providers who are not directly delivering it. Similarly, there is not always a clear distinction between the experience that students are gaining at Level 1 and at Level 2 across providers. Whilst this may imply a need for greater prescription to enable ITT providers to take account of students' experience, there is also evidence that the Scheme needs to retain its flexibility in order to encourage schools to take part.
- Some students have been dissuaded by their participation in the Scheme. By being better informed and prepared for the realities of teaching the Scheme can make a contribution to reducing drop out and wastage from ITT.
- Students have received information, advice and guidance on the routes into teaching. There is some scope to improve how this is offered to capitalise on interest shown and translate this to recruitment into ITT.

3.1 The Student Associates Scheme aims to increase the quality of recruits into teaching by enabling students from higher education **to make better informed decisions about career options in education and by better preparing them to meet the demands of teacher training**. It aims to do this through the following objectives:

- to provide high quality training experiences, closely aligned to the Standards for QTS;
- to enable students to progress through the Scheme, building up knowledge and experience against the Standards for QTS and take these into account should they choose teaching as a career.

3.2 This section explores the impact of the Scheme against these aims and objectives. It also reports on how differential aspects of delivery contribute towards meeting these intended outcomes.

## Better Informed and Better Prepared for Teaching

3.3 The Scheme is clearly enabling students to make better informed decisions about a career in teaching and is better preparing them for entry to ITT and teaching.

### Does the Scheme Better Inform and Prepare Students for Teaching?

3.4 Survey figures<sup>13</sup> show that:

- 47 out of 48 schools and 35 out of 36 of providers feel that the Scheme enables students to make better informed decisions about a career in teaching;
- 52% of students, 44 out of 48 schools and 35 out of 36 providers feel that the Scheme provides effective preparation for ITT;
- 60% of students, 41 out of 48 schools and 31 out of 36 providers consider the Scheme has improved students' knowledge of the progression routes into teaching;
- 92% of students, 47 out of 48 schools and all providers consider the Scheme has improved students' understanding of the realities of teaching;
- 71% of students, 30 out of 48 schools and 33 out of 36 of providers consider the Scheme has improved students' understanding and knowledge of the Standards for QTS.

3.5 Indeed when asked to highlight what they considered to be the single most important benefit from participation in the Scheme:

- 39% of students cited 'improved understanding of the realities of teaching';
- 30% of students cited 'effective preparation for ITT';
- 20% cited 'improved knowledge of progression routes into ITT.'

3.6 This is further supported by qualitative evidence.

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<sup>13</sup> The figures cited are based on responses to a multiple choice question which explains some of the variations in percentages and figures cited.

### **Informed and Prepared for ITT and Teaching**

*"Students are better prepared for ITT entry. As most have achieved some of the Standards for QTS they feel informed about their choice of career and the specific focus of it."* Provider

*"Experience on the Scheme exposes students to the realities of teaching which observation alone (required by all PGCE<sup>14</sup> students) cannot provide. Standing up in front of a class and 'smelling the classroom' benefits students enormously."* Teacher

*"The Scheme allows you to really get involved and teach. This is different to other Schemes where you just tend to help out or observe."* Student

*"Students gain an idea of teaching, are more articulate during interviews, are more aware of the demands of teaching and can make better use of the PGCE year as they can shape their placements based on the prior knowledge they have."* Provider

*"Students are better prepared for the first term of a PGCE course."* Provider

*"It has opened my eyes to what teachers do and that it's a very difficult but worthwhile profession. It [the Scheme] makes you realise that it's a real option for the future."* Student

*"I've spent two weeks in a primary school before but spent most of the time doing wall displays and watching the class rather than getting involved. This Scheme was totally structured in terms of what you had to do and how the teacher had to support you. Level 2 was hard work ... but I understood how teachers were structuring the class and how they were tailoring the lesson to different ability levels. It's great for learning what teaching is really about rather than just watching."* Student

*"It filters out those who are not appropriate for teaching, but for those that are it gives them a much better idea about it to encourage them forward."* Provider

- 3.7 This demonstrates clearly that participants see the main value of the Scheme as better understanding of and preparation for the realities of teaching.

### **How does the Scheme Help to Better Inform and Prepare Students for Teaching?**

- 3.8 By providing practical experience of the classroom, the Student Associates Scheme helps students to decide if teaching is really what they want to do and, in particular, to focus their interest. As evidence from qualitative comments shows, this is in a range of ways, for example, by helping them to determine:

- whether teaching is really for them and they can 'cut it';
- what subject area they want to teach;

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<sup>14</sup> PGCE = Postgraduate Certificate in Education.

- what age-range they want to teach;
- whether teaching is really like the 'bad press' it receives;
- whether it is worth getting into further debt for.

| <b>Increasing Interest in Teaching Through Informed Decisions</b>   |
|---|
| <b>Is it really for me – Can I do it?</b>   |
| <p><i>"The Scheme is good because it helps redirect people who are not appropriate for teaching."</i> Provider</p> <p><i>"I know I can do it now which has fully confirmed my decision to be a teacher."</i> Student</p> <p><i>"It sorts out the dross and filters out those who are not suited to teaching."</i> Provider</p> <p><i>"The Scheme enables you to try it without any real commitment. It enables you to get some experience. Since the Scheme my curiosity about teaching has changed to a serious option."</i> Student</p> <p><i>"I think it helped me answer a few questions because there were some uncertainties on what it would be like and whether I would be able to do it and it certainly gave me a lot more confidence and answered the questions that I had."</i> Student</p> |
| <b>Subject Area Taught</b>  |
| <p><i>"I didn't know what to do after uni and saw the Scheme advertised in the refectory. After I did my first placement I looked into what I could teach with my degree. I decided on maths because I know there is a shortage and I think it will make it easier to get a job."</i> Student</p> <p><i>"When I decided secondary I wasn't sure if I wanted to do Maths or Design and Technology and by going into school for ten days in a row, you're in school non-stop and it convinced me that I want to do secondary and I do want to do Design and Technology."</i> Student</p>  |
| <b>Age-range Taught</b>   |
| <p><i>"I was originally leaning towards primary school teaching, but the programme gave me an opportunity to review that decision, and I decided on secondary instead – this [the Scheme] was critical to me."</i> Student</p> <p><i>"Without the Scheme I would have gone into primary without understanding about what it's like at secondary. I have always wanted to be a teacher but thought I would go into primary but the Scheme may me rethink that and I now think I would prefer secondary teaching."</i> Student</p> <p><i>"From my personal point of view, I didn't know whether I wanted to teach in secondary or primary."</i> Student</p>   |
| <b>Reality v Perceptions</b>  |
| <p><i>"I did have reservations about doing teaching but doing this Scheme helped to tip the balance, seeing the pupils helped and the environment you work in."</i> Student</p> <p><i>"There is a lot of bad press about teaching and the lack of discipline among pupils. The Scheme enabled me to see for myself and see if teaching was what I thought it would be."</i> Student</p>   |

### **Increasing Interest in Teaching Through Informed Decisions**

*"Many students haven't made their minds up when they join the Scheme. Most have heard lots of bad things about teaching and want to give it a go and see if it's for them."* Provider

### **Debt Issues**

*"I had a lot of debt when finishing my degree. I didn't want to get into more debt without being sure that teaching was right for me. The Scheme gave me a good experience of what it's like to be in school and to experience some training."* Student

*"I have got debts from my studies. I was already thinking about teaching but wasn't sure. I can't afford to get into anymore debt if teaching isn't right for me. That's why I wanted to do the Scheme. I also found out that there are other routes to teaching where you can get paid while you train so I might go down that route."* Student

- 3.9 Thus the Scheme helps students decide whether teaching is really for them and helps them to make informed decisions about the phase and subject area of education they wish to teach.

## **Experience of the QTS Standards**

### **Gaining Knowledge and Understanding of the Standards for QTS**

- 3.10 As stated above, the Scheme intends to contribute to improving the quality of recruits into teaching by enabling students to build up knowledge and experience of the Standards for QTS. It is also intended that this knowledge can be taken into account should students choose to apply for, or commence ITT.
- 3.11 The findings from the evaluation show clearly that the SAS is enabling students to gain knowledge and experience of the Standards for QTS and that they consider this is helpful for ITT.
- 3.12 Survey figures from the student survey show that students were able to gain experience of QTS and record their experiences of the Scheme. They also considered the Scheme was effective in enabling them to do this:
- almost all students (91%) were able to gain knowledge and experience of the QTS Standards;
  - 90% considered that SAS was effective in helping them to gain experience relating to QTS;
  - 74% recorded their experiences on a Training Entry Profile (TEP) – this is a marked improvement on the figure of a quarter presented in the previous NfER survey;

- 82% were able to collate a portfolio of evidence.

3.13 Thus the Scheme is clearly providing opportunities for students to gain knowledge and understanding of the Standards for QTS and to record these, which should enable them to make better informed decisions about teaching and prepare them for entry to ITT.

### **Using the Knowledge and Experience Gained**

3.14 In terms of using the knowledge and experience gained, most felt that it was helpful for ITT as the following survey figures demonstrate:

- 70% of those who had applied for ITT since completing the Scheme felt that the skills and experience they gained from SAS was taken into account during the application process;
- 68% also felt that their experience had been taken into account during the interview process. Both these figures are an improvement on those reported in the NfER survey last year, where only a third of students felt that ITT providers had taken their experience into account;
- almost half (49%) felt that the skills gained on SAS had influenced whether they had got a place or not;
- 53% felt the TEP was useful in applying for ITT;
- 57% felt the portfolio of evidence was useful in applying for a place on ITT.

3.15 These findings are supported by qualitative feedback.

### Using Knowledge and Experience Gained

*"The greatest benefit of the Scheme is that it prepares students for ITT entry."* Provider

*"Students can discover what they are good at and identify their weaknesses, which facilitates better decision-making during their PGCE year."* Provider

*"I had my ITT interview during my placement. I felt very confident and drew on a lot of my SAS experience to discuss class teaching during my presentation. The Scheme enabled me to learn lots of teaching terms which in themselves can make you sound more knowledgeable in an interview. For example, knowing what SEN and ICT is."* Student

*"It provides students with experience they can draw on for interview."* Provider

*"The Scheme helped me to get onto a GTP course [Graduate Teacher Programme]. The hands on experience gave me confidence in the interview and the portfolio showed the commitment I have to teaching."* Student

*"I am doing a GTP now and I can't imagine going into that cold. The Scheme prepares you because there were no big hurdles to climb – it eases you in but gives you a taste for what ITT will be really like."* Student

*"I doubt I would have got an interview without the Scheme. I would not have had the confidence or the skills to make it though the interview. I was able to talk with confidence about what teaching was about, how to recognise different approaches in class. I was able to talk about the issues I had come across and demonstrate how I dealt with them. I would not have been able to do this without the Scheme. The references helped as they verified what I had achieved."* Student

*"I used the whole experience to support my application for PGCE. I was able to talk confidently in the interview and show I really understood what it was like. I had good practical, verified witnesses of what I had achieved."* Student

### Issues Regarding the Experience of QTS: Qualitative Feedback

3.16 Despite the positive findings presented above, qualitative feedback suggests there are a range of issues emerging in relation to the Standards for QTS that merit further exploration. These relate to:

- **varying definitions of what constitutes 'experience and knowledge against the Standards for QTS'** – whilst most students are gaining 'theoretical' experience of the Standards through 'lecture-based' training sessions or group work, not all are getting a 'structured, practical' experience during their school placement. This means that students experience and understanding of the Standards of QTS is variable;

- **the fact that there is not always a clear distinction between Level 1 and Level 2 of the Scheme** – at Level 2 of the Scheme it is expected that students should be provided with school-based training that is aligned to the Standards for QTS and that provide opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement against these Standards. At Level 1 there is no formal expectation that this will happen other than via an introduction through initial induction and training. In practice, the evidence suggests that there is not always a clear delineation regarding experience of the Standards between Level 1 and Level 2. In some cases, students are provided with theoretical and practical knowledge and experience of the Standards at both Levels 1 and 2;
- **the fact that there is a great deal of variation in the extent to which students are afforded structured opportunities to gain experience and demonstrate achievement against the Standards at Level 2.** For example, some providers and schools are providing pre-arranged and well thought-out opportunities to experience the Standards. In other cases, students are expected to be proactive in identifying ways in which they have experienced the standards via their placement which they record in a retrospective way;
- **evidence that school teachers in whose classrooms students are based are not always aware of the need to provide experiences of QTS (at Level 2)** – discussions with teachers as part of the case studies revealed that not all teachers working with Level 2 students are aware of the Scheme’s intention to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement against the Standards. Moreover, even if they were aware, not all teachers have a detailed knowledge of the Standards for QTS themselves. This varies depending on the teacher’s prior experience and involvement with ITT programmes. This affects the extent to which teachers are equipped to provide structured opportunities for students to experience the QTS Standards;
- **the fact that there is wide variation between what is collected and recorded and how this is used** - the level of information collected by students on the Standards for QTS varies widely as does the extent to which this is audited or verified by providers and schools. At one end of the spectrum some providers are expecting Level 2 students to work towards a common core of Standards for QTS which are then externally moderated. In other cases, students are simply informed of the Standards and expected to be proactive in examining how they have experienced these during their placement.

3.17 Taken together these issues mean that:

- there is no general distinction between Level 1 and Level 2 across providing organisations through which the differential success on outcomes at these levels can be explored;

- it is not clear how and to what extent experience on the Scheme can be taken into account and used on application and entry to ITT;
- there is a tension between greater **prescription** in the Scheme (to enable students to gain a standardised experience against the Standards for QTS that they can take into ITT) and **flexibility** (to encourage schools to take part).

Taking Account of Students' Experience: Implications from the Lack of Standardisation

- 3.18 The lack of prescription and consistency in what experience should be gained at each level has implications for the extent to which ITT providers **can take account of students' experience**, for example when selecting which students to recruit or by exempting students from elements of ITT courses.
- 3.19 Findings from the provider survey show that although three-quarters of providers (26/36) were taking SAS experience into account when students applied to them for ITT, much smaller proportions (11/36) were taking it into account once students commenced ITT courses.
- 3.20 Case study work also shows that differing definitions of what constitutes experience and knowledge against the Standards is leading to a lack of clarity in terms of expectations of how students' experience can or should be used for ITT. This is illustrated below using qualitative feedback.

### Using Experience Gained: Issues for Qualitative Feedback

#### Clear on Using Experience Gained

Some providers delivering the Scheme are exempting students from elements of their PGCE courses (e.g. exemptions from observation weeks at the beginning of the course or activities at the end of the course to free students' time for job interviews). This is because they are confident that students have gained comparable experience on their Student Associate Scheme.

However, some providers are not clear of the extent to which they can do this for students on other providers' SA Schemes because they are not confident of the evidence that is provided.

#### Unclear on Using Experience Gained

Feedback from students suggests that they are not clear on how the evidence they have recorded on their Personal Development Profile (PDP) or TEP will be used by ITT providers. There is some evidence that this causes negative perceptions amongst students who invest a great deal of time and effort in formally recording their experiences without any clarity or assurances about how that evidence can be used to their benefit.

*"They [ITT provider] didn't ask to see any of the evidence I had of prior teaching. I think the Scheme goes overboard in what they expect – presentations, essays, TEPs. It doesn't get recognised".*

Feedback from ITT providers not involved in delivering the Scheme shows that there is a lack of general awareness of the detail of the Scheme. This affects the extent to which ITT providers take account of the experience gained during recruitment and commencement of ITT courses.

Several ITT providers stated that they did not feel comfortable in counting evidence of achievements against the Standards for QTS gained from the SAS on ITT programmes because they were not clear whether or not the necessary standards had been adhered to. Moreover, providers of SCITT and GTP programmes highlighted that all potential recruits were expected to have a significant amount of prior experience of working in schools to be accepted onto the programme. For example:

- one SCITT provider did not feel that the SAS provided anything significantly different from what potential recruits would have to do anyway but was not aware that Level 2 allowed students to work towards the Standards for QTS;
- one ITT provider from a GTP consortium had a detailed awareness of the Scheme and had unsuccessfully tried to secure agreement that Student Associates completing Level 1 and 2 would be guaranteed an interview. This was not considered feasible since students applying for GTP would be expected to have spent more time in school than the SAS offers.

3.21 These findings suggest that there is a need to improve awareness of the SAS among ITT providers, and provide greater guidance on how providers could, or should, take account of experience gained through the Scheme. This implies the need for greater prescription in this element of the Scheme.

Taking Account of Students' Experience: Implications from Greater Prescription

- 3.22 Qualitative feedback suggests that greater prescription in the Scheme may have a negative effect on **the extent to which schools will be willing to take part**. Schools and providers are clear that flexibility is a key selling point of the Scheme. Views as to whether schools would be willing to take part if they had to offer a more structured experience are mixed. Whilst some schools feel they are equipped and able to offer experience against a common core of Standards for QTS, others feel that this would add a significant burden for already busy teaching staff that would make them reluctant to take part.
- 3.23 This suggests that to encourage schools to offer the placements needed for the volumes of students going through, the Scheme would need to retain its flexibility. Without the buy-in from schools, the Scheme would not be able to run in the first place.

### **Dissuading Students and Drop Out from ITT**

- 3.24 There is some evidence that the Scheme may be dissuading some students from entering teaching which may be positively contributing to reduced drop out and wastage from ITT courses.
- 3.25 In the student survey, 9% of respondents indicated a lower level of interest following participation in the Scheme. Of those who had a very strong, strong or some interest, 3% had reduced their level of interest to either not much or no interest after participation.
- 3.26 Survey evidence also shows that:
- 8% of students responding to the survey indicated that participation in the Scheme had made them realise they did not want to be a teacher;
  - 9% of students responding felt that if they had gone straight onto an ITT course without being involved in the Scheme they would likely have dropped out.

- 3.27 These figures are slightly higher than the 2005 national statistics which show that 6% of students drop out from their postgraduate ITT programme, usually at or around the time of school placement<sup>15</sup>. Therefore, if the Scheme is dissuading some students who would otherwise have entered an ITT course and dropped out, then this has positive implications for reducing wastage from ITT programmes.
- 3.28 Qualitative feedback from providers also suggests that the value of the Scheme is the fact that it 'weeds out' those students that are not committed and that it helps retention on ITT courses by virtue of the fact that students are better informed about the realities of teaching.

### Information, Advice and Guidance

- 3.29 A further way in which the Scheme can enable students to make better informed decisions about career options in education is by providing them with information, advice and guidance (IAG). Quantitative and qualitative evidence from the evaluation shows that students are being afforded a range of IAG opportunities through varying sources.

### IAG on the Routes into Teaching

- 3.30 Evidence from the school survey shows that almost all schools responding (46 out of 48) are providing students with advice about teaching as a career.
- 3.31 In the Student Associates survey students were asked to rank the effectiveness of any information, advice and guidance provided from different sources. The findings show that:
- most students received information, advice and guidance from different sources, from the TTA, their providing organisation and from the school in which they were placed;
  - information, advice and guidance from the provider was ranked as the most effective source of information by students (49% ranking them first), whilst information, advice and guidance from the TTA was ranked the least effective (see **Table 3.1**).

---

<sup>15</sup> TDA performance Profiles, 2005

| <b>Table 3.1</b>  |                              |                              |                              |                           |
|---|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Students views of the effectiveness of information sources</b> |                              |                              |                              |                           |
|   | <b>Ranked 1<sup>st</sup></b> | <b>Ranked 2<sup>nd</sup></b> | <b>Ranked 3<sup>rd</sup></b> | <b>No advice received</b> |
| Provider  | 49%                          | 36%                          | 12%                          | 3%                        |
| School  | 31%                          | 36%                          | 24%                          | 10%                       |
| TTA   | 24%                          | 26%                          | 32%                          | 18%                       |

3.32 Qualitative feedback shows that students are being given information and advice about the different routes into teaching which is enabling them to make better informed decisions about career options in teaching. This is as part of initial training sessions or via exit interviews that are undertaken at the end of participation in the Scheme. In particular, students are being given advice and information about alternative routes into teaching such as GTP and SCITT that many weren't previously aware of.

### **IAG on Applying for ITT**

3.33 In addition, providers and schools are giving students information and advice to support them in applying for ITT. This includes providing references and helping students develop their personal statements for GTTR applications.

| <b>IAG on Applying for ITT</b>  |
|---|
| <i>"We encourage students who have interviews for ITT places to come to us for advice and preparation. School staff have acted as referees for Student's applications for ITT."</i> Provider                                  |
| <i>"I talked to the teachers and asked them their opinions and discussed how I should go about applying for ITT. I asked one of the teachers to read all my personal statements and they added some suggestions."</i> Student |

3.34 A number of providers are also supporting students 'behind the scenes' by:

- working with ITT providers to ensure that students who successfully complete the Scheme are guaranteed an interview for ITT at the university;
- directing SAS students to places on other ITT providers' Schemes where there are insufficient places on their own programmes;
- raising awareness of the Scheme to other providers of ITT via regional networks or meetings with ITT tutors and GTP managers in an attempt to secure positive outcomes for students;
- telephoning external providers for feedback where SAS students have been unsuccessful in obtaining a place.

### **IAG: Issues for Consideration**

3.35 There is some scope for improvement in terms of the IAG that is provided:

- there is qualitative evidence that some students with a clear interest in applying for ITT were not clear of the different routes into teaching or where to go to for advice. This suggests there is differential practice on the provision of IAG for students across providers;
- the timing of the Scheme in some areas makes it difficult to provide advice and guidance in time to support applications for ITT depending on the year of study in which students are taking part. This has implications for the extent to which increased interest in teaching can be capitalised, in terms of encouraging entry to ITT programmes;
- whilst some providers are working more strategically to capitalise on interest shown, others are not. More could be done to boost recruitment by improving the strategic focus of the Scheme within and across providers of ITT.

3.36 These issues are explored further in **Section Five** where we explore partnerships and **Section Six** which explores issues of delivery.

## 4 OTHER IMPACTS

### Summary of Key Points

- The Scheme is contributing to improving the motivation and subject knowledge of young people which has positive implications for contributing to achievement. Student Associates are also acting as positive role models for Higher Education, thereby contributing to the widening participation agenda.
- The main benefits for students reflect the core aims of the Scheme, to get a better understanding and preparation for a career in teaching. Nevertheless, students are benefiting in other ways by developing job-related and academic skills.
- Benefits for providers have largely centred on boosting the recruitment and quality of students for ITT. The Scheme is also considered a valuable tool for developing partnerships with schools and for students to develop employability. The extent of benefits for providers differs depending on the wider strategic approach to delivering the Scheme.
- Schools cite benefits such as an extra pair of hands in the classroom and bringing subject knowledge into the classroom. Teachers feel the Scheme provides a valuable means of promoting staff CPD and teacher reflective practice.
- A range of additional impacts were evidenced such as contribution to the wider workforce and extended schools agendas. The Scheme is also considered a valuable vehicle to raise the status of teaching and to develop new partnerships for ITT.
- Few negative impacts were identified. Where cited, these related to issues of delivery and the time investment required for delivery to be effective.

4.1 This section presents the views from all respondents on the benefits of the Student Associates Scheme for the young people with whom students came into contact, for the Student Associates themselves, for the provider and for the school. It also reports on the impact of the Scheme in other areas such as the contribution of the Scheme towards the wider workforce and extended schools agendas.

## Impact on Young People: Benefits from Participation

4.2 A key objective of the Scheme is to enable students participating to make a contribution to attainment levels in the schools and colleges in which they are placed. In this sub-section we explore the extent to which the Scheme is having an impact on young people's motivation and achievement, as well as highlighting the range of other benefits that result.

### Survey Evidence

4.3 Contact with Student Associates has brought a range of benefits for the young people with whom they come into contact.

4.4 In the schools survey teachers were asked a multiple choice question on the benefits emerging for young people. Survey evidence from teachers (see **Table 4.1**) shows that the main benefits to young people were linked to soft outcomes (such as boosting confidence or work focus) that help to support increased attainment (hard outcomes):

- 22 respondents felt the Scheme was helping to develop pupils' study skills;
- 19 felt pupils' self-esteem and confidence had been boosted;
- 16 indicated improved pupil attainment;
- 14 felt the students had inspired more positive attitudes in priority subject areas among the pupils with whom they came into contact.

**Table 4.1:**  
**Perceived Benefits for Young People cited by School Staff**  
**Base = 48**

| Type of Benefit   | No. of Schools Responding |
|---|---------------------------|
| Helped pupils to develop study skills                                 | 22                        |
| Increased pupil self-esteem/confidence                                | 19                        |
| Improved pupil attainment   | 16                        |
| Inspired more positive attitudes towards subjects e.g. maths, science | 14                        |
| Improved pupil behaviour  | 12                        |
| Improved aspirations towards FE and HE                                | 12                        |
| Improved pupil attendance   | 0                         |

## Qualitative Evidence

4.5 Qualitative feedback from interviews with **young people in schools** and their teachers revealed three main benefits:

- **delivery of lesson concepts in a way they could relate to** – young people commented that students explained things in a different or innovative way that they could better relate to. In part, this was allied to the fact that students were close in age and thus young people didn't feel scared to ask them questions when they lacked understanding;

### Delivery of Concepts

*"They explained things simply because they are learning too."* Pupil

*"When the teacher explains something, sometimes it doesn't go in and I don't remember it after class. The student explained it to me in stages and I remembered how to do it after class which I liked."* Pupil

*"We did a physics lesson and did a role play with the student and our teacher about how molecules react together – you know CO<sub>2</sub>, you need 1 carbon and two oxygens. That was really good and helps you remember. Chemical equations are hard. The student explained to me how he learnt it and explained it in a different way. That helped me understand it better."* Pupil

*"Sometimes the student would explain things in a different way which made it easier to understand. The student did interpret a poem we were doing differently which is refreshing and offered a different viewpoint."* Pupil

- **improved focus on/enjoyment of a particular subject area** – several of the young people interviewed and their teachers commented that pupil attitudes towards some subject areas had positively changed;

### Perceived Benefits on Attitudes to Subjects

*"It's amazing how well the kids respond to having someone young and cool in the class. You hear them asking some of the Student Associates why they're interested in teaching maths, and they think twice about their previous view that it is just for old geeks. The students bring different skills too. One of the lads was a brilliant mathematician. He taught the top set the Chinese approach to how they learnt. I'm sure his enthusiasm and skills has had an impact on their levels of attainment."* Teacher

*"I do think I actually enjoy history a bit more now. They made it seem interesting and exciting."* Pupil

- **having a positive role model who can talk to young people about higher education** – feedback suggests that Student Associates are also prompting pupils to think about higher education.

### **A Role Model for Higher Education**

*“Although there is a gap in age, you can still understand what they are going through because you reminisce of when you were their age and things that you used to do. I try to say “what are your future options?” and “what do you want to do?” and give them bits and pieces of advice on university and how they should go about applying for a university place.” Student Associate*

*“The students talk to them about university life too. They ask them questions about university life and what they are studying. I do think this Scheme prompts some of our kids to start thinking about higher education.” Teacher*

*“While I was there I spoke to some of the sixth formers about uni-life.” Student Associate*

*“He told us about what it’s like to go to university. I wanted to know what he was doing because I’d like to study to be a doctor.” Pupil*

*“Pupils are identifying with students who are going through higher education.” Teacher*

- 4.6 These findings suggest that the Scheme can make a positive contribution to improving young people’s motivation, confidence and understanding of key concepts which should make an important contribution to their achievement.
- 4.7 It also emerges that the Scheme can make a positive contribution to the widening participation agenda through pupils having contact with a student from higher education.

### **Impact on Student Associates: Benefits from Participation**

- 4.8 In the student survey, students were given a multiple response question, asking for the main benefits from involvement in the Scheme.
- 4.9 A wide range of benefits **for students** from involvement in the Scheme were highlighted by students who responded to the survey (see **Table 4.2**).

| <b>Table 4.2</b><br><b>Perceived Benefits for University Students</b><br><b>Base = 1157</b> |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| Type of Benefit   | % of Students Responding |
| Improved understanding of the realities of teaching   | 93                       |
| Employment in a school  | 74                       |
| Understanding and knowledge of the Standards for QTS  | 71                       |
| Developed interpersonal skills  | 69                       |
| Improved knowledge of progression routes into teaching                                      | 60                       |
| Developed transferable skills   | 59                       |
| Increased employability   | 53                       |
| Effective preparation for ITT   | 52                       |
| Improved personal organisation  | 47                       |
| Ability to use degree subject in another setting  | 44                       |
| Improved presentation skills  | 44                       |
| Improved subject knowledge  | 40                       |
| Volunteering opportunities in a school  | 34                       |
| Involvement in widening participation   | 31                       |
| Increased self-confidence   | 26                       |
| Improved academic attainment on University course   | 13                       |

- 4.10 When asked to indicate the **single most important benefit** from their involvement in the Scheme (see **Table 4.3**) survey responses reflected benefits that relate the core aims of the Scheme as reported in the previous section. The main benefits related to better preparing students for ITT and the realities of teaching, and increasing their awareness of the routes into teaching.
- 4.11 Interestingly, while 71% of students reported ‘understanding and knowledge of the Standards for QTS’ as a benefit, only 3% of students cited this as the single most important benefit. This is likely to be a reflection of differential experience in relation to the Standards as reported in **Section Three**.

| <b>Type of Benefit</b>                                 | <b>% of Students Responding</b> |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Improved understanding of the realities of teaching    | 39                              |
| Effective preparation for ITT                          | 30                              |
| Improved knowledge of progression routes into teaching | 20                              |
| Increased self-confidence                              | 4                               |
| Understanding and knowledge of the standards for QTS   | 3                               |
| Ability to use degree subject in another setting       | 2                               |
| Increased employability                                | 1                               |
| Improved subject knowledge                             | 1                               |

4.12 It is clear from the figures shown in **Table 4.2** that students have also benefited from the Scheme in a range of other ways. This includes:

- **benefits in terms of job-related skills:**
  - 69% cited they had developed interpersonal skills;
  - 59% indicated developed transferable skills;
  - 53% indicated their employability had been increased;
  - 47% cited improved personal organisation; and
  - 44% felt their presentation skills had improved;
  - 26% felt that their self-confidence had increased;
- **and academic benefits;**
  - 44% felt they had benefited from being able to use their degree subject in a different setting;
  - 44% felt they had improved their subject knowledge;
  - 13% cited improved academic attainment on their university course.

### **Impact on Providers: Benefits from Participation**

4.13 Qualitative feedback shows that the benefits for providers include:

- **a structured programme to effect better recruitment into ITT** – this was the main benefit cited by most providers. Not only was the Scheme felt to help boost recruitment onto their own ITT programmes but also improved the quality of applicants as well;
- **a programme to assist the regional strategy** – this was particularly pertinent where providers have set up the Scheme to address specific recruitment shortages in their local area;

- **better retention on ITT programmes** – by virtue of the fact that students have made an informed decision and are better prepared for the realities of teaching;
- **a vehicle for creating links with partners** - such as university subject departments and schools to secure participation in SAS, ITT and other initiatives;
- **opportunities for students to develop work-related skills** which helps the university to have better employment outcomes for their students;
- **potential longer term impacts on recruitment to the university** in key subject areas - Student Associates are seen as a ‘good advert’.

4.14 Qualitative feedback suggests that the extent of benefits for providers differ depending on how strategic they have been in their approach to delivering the Scheme – whether the Scheme is seen as a discrete programme or whether it is offered within a wider strategic context to boost university admissions or facilitate links between schools and university subject departments for example.

## **Impact on Schools and School Staff: Benefits from Participation**

### **Benefits for the School**

#### Survey Evidence

- 4.15 Evidence from schools responding to the survey (see **Table 4.4**) shows that the main benefits perceived for **schools** were:
- having an extra pair of hands in the classroom;
  - increasing the number of teachers involved in mentoring;
  - improving the relationship between the school and the provider.

| <b>Table 4.4:<br/>Perceived Benefits for Schools<br/>Base = 48</b>  |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Type of Benefit</b>  | <b>No. of Schools<br/>Responding</b> |
| An extra pair of hands to support learning  | 40                                   |
| More teachers are mentoring   | 34                                   |
| Relationship between school/college and the provider of the Scheme has been enhanced  | 33                                   |
| Positive impact on approaches to teaching and learning  | 15                                   |
| Curriculum enhancement or enrichment  | 15                                   |
| Links between the school/college and university subject departments have been enhanced  | 14                                   |
| Contribution to the school improvement agenda   | 12                                   |
| Contribution to raising attainment  | 11                                   |
| Development of subject materials for use in schools   | 11                                   |
| Assisted schools' wider development in other areas (e.g. to become a specialist, extended school, Training School, Initial Teacher Training placement provider) | 11                                   |
| Encouraged non-teaching staff to consider teacher training  | 10                                   |
| Contribution to improved behaviour  | 4                                    |

4.16 An additional benefit included the opportunity to employ Student Associates in other roles in the school:

- 7 out of 48 schools had employed a Student Associate in the school on a paid basis and;
- 9 out of 48 on an unpaid basis.

#### Qualitative Evidence

4.17 Qualitative evidence supports this and also highlights other benefits such as:

- developing the school's skills and experience in offering ITT;
- students bringing new ideas to support teaching and learning.

4.18 These are demonstrated in the following case study examples.

| <b>Qualitative Evidence Collected During Case Study Visits<br/>Demonstrating Benefits for Schools</b>  |
|--|
| <b>Example One: Developing Skills and Experience for ITT</b>   |
| <p>Through involvement in the Scheme, several schools indicated the Scheme contributes to developing and improving their skills to provide ITT. This was not only through the practical experience of providing placements for students, but also through the supporting materials and handbooks that providers have been producing to support delivery of the Scheme.</p> <p><i>“The Scheme contributes to our PGCE and GTP development – the Student Associates also like it because our ITT trainees offer good support. They can bounce ideas off each other.”</i> Provider</p> <p><i>“Our Head has now been invited to help interview PGCE students at the university.”</i> Teacher</p> <p><i>“Working towards the QTS helps us as it gives a framework to use when students join the class.”</i> Teacher</p> <p><i>“The handbook offers a good insight into teaching methods which is useful not only for the Associates but the teachers as well.”</i> Provider</p> |
| <b>Example Two: Supporting Teaching and Learning and Bringing New Ideas to Curriculum Delivery</b>   |
| <p>Several examples were cited of students bringing new ideas to teaching and learning, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• teaching top set maths students the Chinese way of learning maths;</li><li>• using role play to explore science concepts such as how molecules react;</li><li>• developing web-based materials and resources for use with the interactive whiteboard;</li><li>• producing a video outlining what it is like to study science at university.</li></ul>   |

## **Benefits for School Staff**

### Survey Evidence

- 4.19 Evidence from schools surveyed shows that participation in the Scheme has given rise to **a range of benefits for school staff** (see **Table 4.5**).
- 4.20 The main benefits related to continuing the professional development of teachers, improving mentoring skills and promoting reflective practice.

| <b>Table 4.5:<br/>Perceived Benefits for School Staff<br/>Base = 48</b>         |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Type of Benefit</b>  | <b>No. of Schools<br/>Responding</b> |
| It developed/improved teachers' mentoring skills                                | 41                                   |
| It contributed to teachers' Continuing Professional Development                 | 33                                   |
| It promoted teacher reflective practice   | 28                                   |
| It developed/improved teachers' contact with tutors from the university         | 17                                   |
| It improved teachers' awareness of the routes into Further and Higher Education | 7                                    |
| It opened up promotion opportunities for staff                                  | 2                                    |

### Qualitative Evidence

4.21 Qualitative evidence from teaching staff shows that:

- **a major benefit for teachers is having an 'extra pair of hands' in the classroom** - the Student Associates could help to 'share the load' in terms of giving pupils more individual or small group attention;
- **the Scheme is contributing to staff development** - this is in a range of ways, for example, by improving staff mentoring skills and by promoting reflective practice. There is also evidence that staff are benefiting from HE students' skills and knowledge in subject areas.

| <b>Qualitative Evidence Collected During Case Study Visits<br/>Demonstrating Benefits for Staff</b>   |
|---|
| <b>Example One: An extra pair of hands</b>  |
| <p>A key benefit cited was that of having an extra pair of hands in the classroom.</p> <p><i>“I was able to use the Associate to help those students who were struggling, leaving me to push on with the rest of the class. The SAs have also helped by providing catch up lessons for pupils who missed previous sessions.”</i></p> <p><i>“Students have a positive impact on lesser able pupils because they provide an extra resource to provide more individual attention.”</i></p>   |
| <b>Example Two: Staff Development</b>   |
| <p><i>“The Scheme has a good impact on CPD and improves the mentoring skills of staff.”</i></p> <p><i>“SAS can be used to motivate good teachers to stay because it contributes to the development of skills which are useful when it comes to promotion. Its good CPD”</i></p> <p><i>“One member of staff has been involved in assisting the maths enrichment course and became involved with SAS based on her experience of this. Involvement in SAS has helped her further her development and link the Scheme into what she is doing via maths enrichment classes.”</i></p> <p><i>“Staff are exposed as to how they teach which actually forces them to improve as they have someone else watching them.”</i></p> <p><i>“You do benefit yourself too as a teacher. It makes you think back to when you started teaching and makes you reflect more on how you’re teaching.”</i></p> <p><i>“In one lesson I was doing some work with the graphics calculator which I was a bit unsure about. Because the Student Associate has used them a lot for his degree, he was able to support me in the lesson and help the pupils.”</i></p> <p>In one lesson on genetics the teacher used the students’ subject specialism on genetic engineering to develop his own and pupils’ knowledge.</p> |

## **Additional Impacts**

4.22 As is evidenced in the preceding sub-sections on benefits by type of participant, the Scheme is resulting in a range of additional impacts. These are reiterated below in order to summarise the additional contribution the Scheme is making in linked policy areas.

### Developing Opportunities to become Involved in Delivering ITT

4.23 There is evidence that school's participation in the Student Associates Scheme is increasing the potential for schools, or particular departments, to become involved in providing initial teacher training. This is in two ways:

- **by helping schools to gain experience that will assist their bids to become a training school** – qualitative evidence from two schools suggests that they had previously been unsuccessful in bidding to become a training school. This was because their prior experience of having and supporting higher education students in schools was considered insufficient. In this way, schools feel that the experience they are gaining from delivering the SAS by providing students with structured experiences of the Standards for QTS will contribute positively to training bids submitted in the future;

*"The Scheme is helping our bid to become a training school."*

- **by encouraging schools to consider offering ITT placements** – feedback from one school shows that the experience of SAS has encouraged them to think about offering ITT placements for students in departments that have not been involved in offering PGCE placements for some time. For example, one school had an established history of providing PGCE placements in science subjects, but had not provided placements in the area of modern foreign languages for over four years. This is because it was felt that this would involve significant commitment from staff that would result in additional burdens. However, through providing placements to Student Associates, the MFL department now feel that providing PGCE placement is something that they would like to consider. This is because they feel that offering placements not only has benefits for higher education students but also pupils and the school.

*"Now we have done the Scheme and seen the quality of students, we are very interested in them coming back as PGCE students – we would welcome this."*

*"We have been so impressed with the Scheme, that we are now considering taking on ITT students."*

### Contribution to Staff CPD

4.24 As highlighted in the section of benefits for staff, the Scheme is considered to offer benefits to teaching staff as part of their continuing professional development (CPD). This is by providing opportunities for them to develop mentoring skills. Qualitative feedback suggests the Scheme contributes to staff CPD in two ways:

- **by providing opportunities for newly qualified teachers (NQTs)** – several schools are using NQTs as placement providers and mentors for Student Associates. This is based on the rationale that NQTs can help students understand the realities of teaching and teacher training based on their own recent experiences. Since NQTs are not permitted to mentor PGCE students, the Student Associates Scheme is seen as a valuable means of enabling NQTs to develop their mentoring skills thereby contributing to their continuing professional development;
- **by developing the skills of existing staff** – similarly, the Scheme is considered an important vehicle for developing the skills (co-ordination, mentoring, support and leadership) of more experienced staff.

4.25 Since the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2005, the TDA has an expanded remit to improve the training and development of the whole school workforce. The evidence suggests that there is clear potential for the TDA to use the Student Associates Scheme as a vehicle to contribute towards this remit.

### Contribution to the Wider Workforce

4.26 Qualitative feedback suggests that the SAS has implications for development of the wider workforce in schools in two ways:

- **encouraging Learning Support Assistants to consider a career in teaching** - evidence from three schools shows that the Scheme is encouraging some Learning Support Assistants to consider progression into ITT programmes. This is because they have experienced first hand what ITT is about and how the school can support them through being involved in the Student Associates Scheme;

### Teacher Training Among LSAs

*“The Scheme has contributed, in part, to encouraging two of our LSAs into teacher training as they have seen the support the school can offer to help them through it”*

‘Sylvia’ worked as an LSA in a primary school for several years. She had always wanted to teach but lacked the confidence to do the training. She decided on a career change and opted to undertake a degree in Art where she heard about the Student Associates Scheme. She went on the Scheme to gain experience of what its really like to stand up in front of a class as a teacher rather than supporting pupils as she did in her role as an LSA. Sylvia felt that the Scheme really helped boost her confidence levels. The Scheme assisted her to make ‘the leap’ into teacher training that she wanted.

- **Extended Schools remit** – as was evidenced in the section on benefits for schools, some Student Associates are being offered paid or voluntary work in schools following their SAS placement. This includes work in After School schemes or breakfast clubs. In this way the Scheme can help contribute to the extended school agenda by providing opportunities to employ ‘trained’ higher education students with experience of the Standards for QTS in wider roles within the school, thereby contributing to the quality agenda. However, this is not without some constraints. For example, as one teacher highlighted:
  - Higher Education students have other academic commitments during the day which means that they are not always available during hours when schools are operating extended provision;
  - some types of extended school provision require skills and experience that are different to those gained through the SA Scheme - for example, pastoral skills, knowledge of early years provision and the importance of language development and play opportunities. Hence it cannot be assumed *a priori* that skills gained on the Scheme adequately equip students for other wider roles within the school. Nevertheless it provides a useful starting point and a wider base of prospective quality recruits.

### Raising the Status of Teaching

4.27 Several providers highlighted that an additional impact of the Scheme is raising the status of teaching as a profession.

*“the Scheme has opened the eyes of many as to the realities of what teachers do. This is building the profession’s credibility.”*

### Stimulating Interest in Other Areas

4.28 Participation in the Student Associates Scheme can also stimulate interest in other areas of teaching or for other teaching initiatives as is demonstrated below.

### Stimulating Other Forms of Teaching

One provider suggested that the Scheme has ignited interest in other areas related to teaching. For example, as a result of participation, some students have decided to undertake a TEFL course and spend time abroad teaching English as a foreign language. It was felt that these individuals may return to teaching further into their careers.

Similarly, other students have been motivated to enter the 'Teach First'<sup>16</sup> initiative whereby graduates receive intensive training to teach in London for two years sponsored by a company who may subsequently employ them.

## Negative Implications From Involvement

4.29 Views of the Scheme were overwhelmingly positive:

***"This is a fantastic Scheme."***

***"This Scheme is excellent and this view is shared by students and schools."***

4.30 As a result, few negative implications of involvement were cited:

- only 5 out of 36 providers indicated negative impacts which were associated with aspects of delivery. Much of this related to time constraints to deliver the Scheme effectively and the view that, to do so, requires considerable investment of time and resources. It was also highlighted that some schools had not totally bought into the main aims of the Scheme which had negative implications for the quality of delivery and the student experience;
- 6 out of 48 schools cited negative implications. These were again largely related to issues of delivery. For example, one school indicated it was hard to find time to provide effective induction when students were entering the school at different times of the year. One school felt that the timing of the Scheme close to the examination period compromised staff's willingness to be involved. Several teachers felt that imposing obligations to provide more structured experience to enable students to evidence achievements against the Standards for QTS would create additional burdens on staff and make them reluctant to take part.

4.31 Eighty-five per cent of students felt that there were no negative implications from involvement of the Scheme. Where negative aspects were identified by students, these generally related to issues mentioned in previous sections such as:

- limitations in the level of IAG provided;

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<sup>16</sup> For further information see [www.teachfirst.org.uk](http://www.teachfirst.org.uk)

- burdens over paperwork – several students felt that completing the TEP and PDP introduced unnecessary burdens especially, when it was not clear how these could be used effectively for ITT;
- lack of a structured experience to gain knowledge and experience of the Standards for QTS.

4.32 In addition, one student experienced difficulties in finding a placement in a school. Despite attending training sessions, the student had been unable to gain any practical experience in a school which was the main motivation for participation.

## 5 PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

### Summary of Key Points

- The Scheme is evidencing a range of outcomes in relation to developing and strengthening partnerships. Most providers are working in partnership to operate the Scheme and several are working strategically to target recruitment to ITT in priority areas.
- There is scope to improve strategic partnership working, particularly at the regional and national level. This is in order to maximise the impact of the Scheme by capitalising on interest shown and to link the SAS in with similar schemes to stimulate interest in teaching, promote priority subjects and widen participation. There is evidence that a number of providers are operating the Scheme in relative isolation.

5.1 Two of the Scheme's objectives relate to developing and strengthening partnerships:

- between schools and organisations participating in the Scheme;
- between university/college subject departments and initial teacher training partnerships.

5.2 The impact of the Scheme on partnership development is explored below.

### Developing Partnership

5.3 In the provider survey, providers were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements on partnership development. The results are presented in **Table 5.1** and show that:

- the majority of providers feel the Scheme has strengthened their relationship with partner schools;
- most feel that they have strengthened their relationship with other providers delivering SAS;
- over two-thirds of providers believe SAS has strengthened their relationship with ITT and subject departments in their own organisation.

5.4 Lesser effects on partnership development are reported in relation to the strategic recruitment of Student Associates and with other linked schemes:

- half of providers responding reported developing partnerships with other organisations to recruit and access students most needed in ITT;
- around a third felt that the Scheme has resulted in an improved relationship with providers of similar schemes such as the SAS: Aimhigher pilot or the Undergraduate Ambassador Scheme.

| <b>Table 5.1 – Developing Partnerships<br/>Base = 36</b>   |    |
|--|----|
| Strengthened relationship with partnership schools   | 35 |
| Strengthened relationship with other Providers delivering SAS  | 32 |
| Strengthened relationship with own ITT department  | 25 |
| Strengthened relationship with subject departments in own organisation                                 | 24 |
| Strengthened relationship with other organisations from whom we can access students most needed in ITT | 18 |
| Strengthened relationship with providers of Aimhigher pilot or Undergraduate Ambassadors Scheme        | 13 |

5.5 The extent and effect of partnerships working is explored further below using qualitative evidence from case study areas. This shows that although there are lots of positives from involvement, there are some areas for development.

### **Relationships Between Providers of the SA Scheme and Linked Schemes**

5.6 There is evidence that relationships between providers delivering the Scheme are developing in terms of sharing resources and materials (such as handbooks) and disseminating good practice. However, it emerged that there are tensions in some areas over competition for numbers between providers delivering SAS.

| <b>Competition for Places</b>   |
|---|
| One provider reported concern over competition for places in the sub-region where a number of providers are operating the SA Scheme. Although providers have collaborated to determine which schools in the area to target, there are still some difficulties. This is because the number of secondary schools in the area is falling and some schools are classed as 'failing' which makes it difficult to secure placements due to the schools having other priorities. |

- 5.7 Providers are also collaborating with other providers delivering similar schemes. Several SAS providers are linking with other local organisations delivering the SAS: Aimhigher pilot for example, to jointly recruit students and secure a clear progression route from Level 1 through to Level 2. They are also working in partnership to try and reduce potential competition for places by agreeing parameters on the schools targeted through the differing schemes.
- 5.8 However, there is limited evidence that providers are collaborating by combining the use of differing schemes strategically across organisations as a vehicle to maximise recruitment to ITT. There is some evidence that Student Associates have participated in several schemes that enable them to work in schools and get a taste of teaching. Whilst participation in a range of schemes can benefit students by developing their skills over time and by offering them different experiences and types of placement, there is some overlap between Level 1 of the SAS and other student tutoring schemes in some areas. However, this does depend on the context for delivery and how providers are delivering the SAS at Level 1 (i.e. a means to gain basic experience of teaching through observation and supporting the teacher versus a means to develop skills against some of the QTS Standards and undertake some induction training to inform their placement).

### **Relationship between Providers and Other Sources of Students**

- 5.9 Most providers are marketing the Scheme widely across the university, and by developing links with subjects departments, careers, schools and LEAs to tap into potential sources of students. Others are using innovative marketing strategies such as advertising the Scheme externally in churches.
- 5.10 However, there is scope for improvement in this area to develop more strategic links to recruit students most needed in ITT. The extent to which providers are tapping into other sources of students is somewhat dependent on the type of provider operating the Scheme. For example, providing organisations that are not universities have to develop external links to source students and are doing so via a range of sources. However, several providers are operating the Scheme in isolation as a discrete programme and are not linking it to other programmes or regional strategies for ITT for example.

### **Relationships to Target Students Most Needed in ITT**

- 5.11 In general there is scope for greater collaboration within and across organisations delivering the Scheme to target students most needed in ITT, in order to boost recruitment to ITT amongst target groups and to stimulate interest in priority subject areas.

5.12 Some good practice examples of how providers are developing strategic or innovative approaches to target recruits most needed in ITT include the following:

- one LEA provider has developed strategic links with local universities to address a shortage of teachers within their area;
- another university provider is developing a new course module within a maths degree (funded by HEFCE) into which the SAS will be integrated. This is to address shortages of high calibre maths teachers/recruits to ITT and to help boost recruitment to the priority subject of maths in the university;
- an accredited 'preparation for teaching module' has been developed in a providing organisation as part of a 'learn through work' programme.

### **Relationships Within and Across Providers of ITT**

5.13 Several providers are using the Scheme to develop recruitment to their own ITT programmes and are taking account of the students' SAS experience during recruitment to and commencement of ITT programmes. Around three-quarters of providers (26/36) are taking account of the students SAS experience when they apply to them for ITT.

5.14 There have also been attempts to raise awareness of the Scheme more widely among other ITT providers through regional network events or presentations for example. There is also evidence that some providers are developing links with other ITT providers to provide a path to ITT for students via routes that are not operating in their own organisation or local area (for example to provide a PGCE route where GTP is currently the only available route in the locality). Similarly, as presented in Section Three, some providers are directing surplus students to other ITT providers and are trying to secure a guaranteed interview for SAS students on local ITT programmes.

5.15 Nevertheless, feedback from providers operating the Scheme and from ITT providers who are not involved with SAS, shows that there is still a lack of general awareness of the Scheme. This affects the extent to which ITT providers are recognising students' experiences and taking these into account. Moreover, as explored in Section Three, it is unclear how ITT providers can be expected to taken account of students' prior experience since there are concerns over the extent to which experience and knowledge against the Standards for QTS can be accepted and verified. In addition, there is evidence that the Scheme is not being incorporated into regional strategies for recruitment partly due to the afore-mentioned lack of awareness but also because of competition over places, regionally and nationally.

5.16 Therefore the extent to which the experience of students on the Scheme is being taken into account by ITT providers is variable and a range of barriers to recognition are emerging. These are summarised in **Table 5.2**.

| <b>Table 5.2 - Barriers to Recognition of SAS Experience</b> |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Barrier Identified</b>                                    | <b>Rationale</b>  | <b>Based on Evidenced From</b>   |
| No Barriers  | Some providers did not feel that there were any barriers to taking account of students' experience in their own institution. However, difficulties were cited in terms of recognition across providers.                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SAS Providers</li> </ul>  |
| Lack of Awareness  | There is a general lack of awareness of the detail of the Scheme across providers of ITT.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SAS Providers</li> <li>• ITT Providers not involved in SAS</li> </ul> |
| Lack of Standardisation                                      | Lack of a common core of Standards against which experience can be assessed and compared  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SAS Providers</li> </ul>  |
| Lack of Flexibility  | The PGCE course is a fixed taught programme and there is a lack of flexibility over the numbers of days spent in school on placement. It is unclear how the SAS experience can be taken account of within this context. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SAS Providers</li> <li>• ITT Providers not involved in SAS</li> </ul> |
| Diversity of Experience - QTS                                | Differential experience of the Standards for QTS across providers means that it is difficult to assess the extent to which SAS experience can be taken into account.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SAS Providers</li> <li>• ITT Providers not involved in SAS</li> </ul> |
| Lack of Clarity  | It is not clear how SAS experience should or could be used. There is considered a need for a rational and coherent approach to how ITT providers should take account of SAS experience.                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SAS Providers</li> <li>• ITT Providers not involved in SAS</li> </ul> |
| Differential Experience of School Tutors                     | Where new school tutors or mentors are being used to deliver the Scheme, it is not felt that they are fully qualified to sign off the Standards for QTS.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SAS Providers</li> <li>• Teachers</li> </ul>                          |

5.17 The evidence suggests that the extent of developments in terms of partnership working is **strongly related to the extent to which providers are delivering the Scheme strategically**. Whilst some providers are operating the Scheme within a wider strategic context (for example, to boost teacher recruitment in their area or focus on priority subject areas) others are operating within relative isolation.

## 6 DELIVERY ISSUES

### Summary of Key Points

- Flexibility is considered crucial to the effective delivery of the Scheme.
- For the objective to increase the number of students recruited to ITT to be maximised, students who have already secured a place should be ineligible to take part in the Scheme.
- There is evidence to suggest there will be a trade off between the impact of differing objectives of the Scheme. Steps taken to increase impact on one objective may be at the expense of maximising impact on another.
- There are strengths and weaknesses of recruiting Student Associates at differing points on degree programmes.
- Provision of Information, Advice and Guidance should be carefully timed to capitalise on any interest shown and translate this effectively into recruitment to ITT.
- There is varying practice in terms of what is delivered at Level 1 and Level 2. Whilst this could suggest potential to combine the two, caution should be exerted. This is because how each level is delivered can depend on the wider local context for delivery.
- Differential practice in terms of how students gain experience against the Standards for QTS suggests there may well be a need for greater prescription at Level 2. However, there will be a trade off here, as an increase in prescription may result in a decrease in participation by schools.
- There is no evidence to suggest differential performance by the type of provider delivering the Scheme against the Scheme's core aims. There were differences in terms of the extent to which providers are developing the strategic context of the Scheme across those taking part.

### Delivery Issues

- 6.1 This evaluation was not intended to explore the effectiveness of delivery as this has been covered in detail in previous evaluations (c.f. the evaluation of Student Associates Scheme: Aimhigher pilot undertaken by York Consulting Limited in 2004, and the Light-touch evaluation of the quality of the Student Associates Scheme completed by NfER in 2005)<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> For further information see [www.tda.gov.uk/SAS](http://www.tda.gov.uk/SAS)

- 6.2 However, several of the impacts presented thus far have important implications for the design and delivery of the Scheme which are explored below.

### **Flexibility**

- 6.3 The findings suggest that it is important that the Scheme retains its flexibility for providing organisations to tailor the Scheme to take into account varying local needs. This is in the light of evidence that the Scheme works more effectively when the needs of the students match the needs of the school.
- 6.4 Three-quarters of providers (27/36) and the majority of schools (29/48) indicated that the Scheme works more effectively when the needs of the students match the needs of the schools in which they are placed.
- 6.5 The majority (34/48) of schools considered that students are being placed in subject areas that are relevant to their degree subject. Three-quarters (27/36) feel that they have been able to influence delivery to meet the school and pupils needs.
- 6.6 Moreover, without this flexibility, providers feel their ability to secure the participation of schools would be limited.

### **Eligibility**

- 6.7 To maximise its objective to increase the number of recruits into ITT the Scheme should not be taking students who have already secured a place on an ITT course. This should therefore be included a part of the eligibility criteria for participation. Case study evidence from providers suggests that, in some cases, students do not have a place on an ITT course when they apply for the Scheme but may subsequently secure one, either when they start on the Scheme, or, during the period between recruitment and participation on the Scheme. Therefore, some element of 'deadweight' may be difficult to avoid. However, it should be made clear that students who have already applied or secured a place on an ITT programme should be ineligible for participation *if* the primary aim is to increase numbers to ITT.

## Trade Off Between Differing Objectives

- 6.8 The evidence suggests that there are tensions between differing objectives of the Scheme.
- 6.9 For example, strategies to maximise the impact of the Scheme on increasing the **number** of recruits to ITT may come at the expense of increasing the **quality** of and preparedness of those that apply. For the Scheme to evidence greater additionality in terms of interest to teaching, the focus would need to be on recruiting Student Associates with little or no prior interest in teaching as a career. However, the evidence suggests that part of the success of the Scheme is that it is attracting students who are of high calibre with a commitment to become better prepared for ITT. There will therefore be an element of trade-off between these two objectives of the Scheme – quantity versus quality.
- 6.10 Similarly, the evidence is demonstrating the potential for new school-based tutors to be created as a result of the Scheme because teachers and NQTs are able to gain experience of mentoring through their involvement. In this way the Scheme is contributing to the continuing professional development of staff.
- 6.11 Whilst this is a positive finding, there is an element of trade off between maximising the impact in this area and the Scheme's objective to provide high quality training experiences closely aligned to the Standards for QTS. This is in the light of evidence that some teachers and NQTs are not adequately equipped to 'sign off' students experience against the Standards for QTS.
- 6.12 It must be acknowledged therefore that any attempts to maximise the impact of the Scheme in one area may have negative consequences for the range of other benefits that result.

## Students' Year of Study During Participation

- 6.13 The ability to translate interest in teaching to a place on an ITT course may well be linked to the student's year of study. Quantitative and qualitative feedback on this issue was mixed.
- 6.14 Provider views on whether students' year of study affects the extent to which they are likely to progress to ITT were divided. Whilst 14 felt it did, 17 did not and five did not know.

6.15 Feedback from students indicates that often they are not thinking about a future career until their final year of study and therefore valued the opportunity to obtain experience in their concluding year.

6.16 However, other students and some providers felt that it was better to offer the Scheme to second year students. The reasons for this were twofold:

- firstly, it was felt that there was less potential for second year students as opposed to final year students to drop out on the basis of academic commitments;
- secondly, it was felt that there was a greater opportunity to influence decisions to teach since the timing of final year students' participation in the Scheme can be too late for them to apply for an ITT place the following year. Any interest in the Scheme may therefore decrease whilst they are waiting to apply for the following year and perhaps working in a different field.

6.17 There are strengths and weaknesses for recruiting Student Associates at differing points on degree programmes which are summarised in **Table 6.1**.

| <b>Table 6.1 – Student Associates: Year of Study</b> |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Year of Study</b>                                 | <b>Strengths</b>  | <b>Weaknesses</b>   |
| <b>First Year</b>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to build experience through progression from Level 1 to Level 2.</li> <li>• Able to capitalise on interest gained through supporting application to ITT while student is still present at University.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of career focus in first year.</li> <li>• Limited life and university experience to take into school and to influence and act as role model for young people.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Second Year</b>                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to capitalise on interest by supporting application to ITT.</li> <li>• Greater likelihood of having gained experience of ITT in time to support application for ITT.</li> <li>• Time to support re-application if early attempts to gain place are unsuccessful.</li> <li>• Less likelihood of drop out due to pressures of final year.</li> <li>• Able to progress from Level 1 and 2 and use experience for ITT.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less commitment to profession of teaching – ‘testing the water’ in a range of careers.</li> <li>• If on Level 2 in second year - time delay between participation and commencement of ITT may result in reduced interest and potential drop out.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Final Year</b>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focussed on future career path</li> <li>• Able to go straight onto ITT. course to build on experience straight away.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timing of participation may mean placement is not in time to support application for ITT.</li> <li>• May become involved too late to apply for ITT in following year.</li> <li>• Interest may be reduced between participation in Scheme (in final year) and waiting to apply or gain a place on ITT 2 years hence.</li> </ul> |

## Provision of Information, Advice and Guidance

6.18 Given the issue raised above, it is important not only for advice and guidance on the routes to ITT to be provided, but also that this is timely. This is in order to capitalise on levels of interest shown through participation and translate this to recruitment onto ITT. Qualitative feedback from students suggests that, although most received advice and guidance, some felt that this would have been more effective if it were delivered in time to feed into their applications for ITT places. Moreover, as the evidence from the survey suggests that applications to ITT are likely to increase over time, it may well be more prudent to follow up students, and offer advice and guidance some time after they have completed the Scheme, linked to the timescales for ITT recruitment. This is more difficult where the student has left the university and therefore may require more innovative approaches to follow up post participation.

## Level 1 Versus Level 2

6.19 Given that in practice, there is a lack of distinction and some overlap between Levels 1 and 2 of the Scheme, it could be argued that there is potential for rationalisation by combining the two. This is particularly pertinent given that 61% of students had experience of working in schools prior to their involvement in SAS and therefore could have gained Level 1-type experience in other ways. However, 27/36 (75%) of providers consider that Level 1 of the Scheme is different from, or additional to, other opportunities students may have had to get this kind of experience. Moreover, qualitative feedback suggests that it is the accumulation of differing types of experience over time that is contributing to increasing the calibre of students and better preparing them for entry to ITT.

6.20 Whether or not there is a case for rationalising the two levels of the Student Associates Scheme is a complex issue. This is because the situation is likely to differ depending on the wider context for delivery in different areas. In some areas, providers have developed a clear distinction between various levels of the Scheme that allow students to progress from one level to another, building their experience and informing their decision-making along the way. In other areas, there are other schemes running that allow students to get experience that is similar to what is provided at Level 1 which is affecting the design of what is provided through different levels of the SAS.

## Standards for QTS

6.21 Differential practice in terms of how students gain experience of the Standards for QTS suggests that there may be a requirement for greater prescription at Level 2 of the Scheme. It raises questions about whether the Scheme needs to be more structured to:

- provide consistency of experience across providers;
- enable ITT providers to have clear expectations on what Student Associates can be expected to have achieved and thereby how this can be taken into account.

6.22 Nevertheless, there may be a trade off here, since greater prescription may mean schools are more reluctant to take part.

## Delivery Across Providers

6.23 There is no evidence to suggest differential performance of the Scheme by type of provider against its core objectives to increase the number and quality of recruits into teaching.

6.24 However, there is evidence to suggest that attempts to implement the Scheme within a wider strategic context differ across providers. Whilst several providers have worked strategically to generate additional impacts (such as developing links with university subjects departments to boost student recruitment in priority subject areas, links to the Widening Participation agenda, links to regional strategies to address recruitment shortages within ITT), others have delivered the scheme as a discrete programme.

## 7 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusions

- 7.1 Overall, the Student Associates Scheme is considered a high quality, valuable Scheme by all those who take part. There is little doubt from evidence provided by the independent evaluation, that it is successfully meeting its core objectives.
- 7.2 The Scheme is increasing levels of interest in teaching, and may be contributing to stimulating interest in priority subject areas (for those interested in the secondary phase of education), and amongst groups currently under-represented in teaching. There is evidence that the Scheme is increasing the number of higher education students considering teaching as a career over and above those who were already showing a commitment to this career path by over a quarter (28%).
- 7.3 Interest in teaching is translating into applications for ITT amongst a third of students who take part. This looks set to increase with almost a further third of those who have not yet applied indicating firm intentions to apply for ITT in the future.
- 7.4 The Scheme is attracting HE students with the degrees and qualifications necessary for entry into initial teacher training. Students who take part are considered of high calibre.
- 7.5 Inevitably, there is some deadweight in the Scheme in terms of recruitment given that some participating students had high levels of prior interest in teaching and would therefore have applied for ITT anyway. However, this should be assessed in the light of the Scheme's other objectives for example to better prepare them for entry to ITT and teaching.
- 7.6 The key value of the Scheme is that it enables students to make better informed decisions about a career in teaching. It enables students to decide whether teaching is right for them, and to determine which subject and which phase of education they wish to teach in.

- 7.7 Through participation, students are better prepared for the realities of teaching and entry into ITT. This has positive implications for reducing drop out and wastage from initial teacher training programmes.
- 7.8 The Scheme is enabling students to gain knowledge and experience of the Standards for the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). However, the extent and quality of this experience at Level 2 is variable across providers and schools. There is varying practice in terms of what is delivered at Level 1 and Level 2. Such issues are affecting how, and the extent to which, ITT providers are recognising the experiences gained on the Scheme.
- 7.9 Benefits of the Scheme are wide-ranging for young people, providers, the school and its staff. There are positive benefits for young people in terms of increased motivation, subject interest and awareness of higher education. For providers, the Scheme helps to boost recruitment to ITT and provides them with a vehicle to improve the employability of their students. Schools value the extra assistance in school and the opportunity to reflect on their practice. Involvement is positively viewed as beneficial for the continuing professional development of teachers and NQTs by gaining mentoring experience.
- 7.10 A range of additional impacts are emerging. The Scheme is contributing to the wider workforce agenda (by providing opportunities for trained higher education students to take on other roles within the school) and is raising the status of the teaching profession.
- 7.11 The Scheme is complementing and strengthening partnerships between schools, or departments within schools, and providers. This is considered beneficial in schools' bids to become a training school and in encouraging schools or departments within schools to provide placements for ITT.
- 7.12 In some cases, the Scheme is strengthening relationships between different parts of the organisation running the Scheme for example, by developing links with subjects departments. However, there is evidence that some providers are operating the Scheme in relative isolation. There is scope to improve strategic partnership working within and across providing organisations to capitalise on the benefits accruing, both in terms of recruitment for ITT and in wider areas such as admissions to university.

## Recommendations

7.13 As it stands, the Scheme is clearly meeting its major objectives. There are inevitably some areas that could be improved and, some areas that could be developed further, in order that the Scheme continues to maximise its potential impact.

### Eligibility

7.14 Providers should seek not to recruit those who have already secured a place on an ITT course unless there are clear reasons to suggest that participation at Level 2 will enable students to be better prepared for their ITT experience.

### Advice and Guidance

7.15 More effective strategies to provide IAG for students should be developed that seek to translate interest shown, to progression onto initial teacher training. This is likely to mean providing IAG at times that directly coincide with applications to ITT (rather than at the end of participation). This may well mean targeted mailshots to past participants or targeted workshop activities.

### Level 1 and Level 2

7.16 Attempts should be made to demonstrate more consistent and distinct experiences at the differing levels of the Scheme (1 versus 2).

7.17 Questions could be asked about the value of Level 1 when there are a range of other Schemes in existence that enable students to get a 'taste' of teaching. Nevertheless, it is clear that the Student Associates Scheme is held in high esteem and considered high quality. It is also clear that other Level 1 - type schemes are not operating in all areas where the Scheme is in place.

7.18 Therefore, to reduce potential deadweight at Level 1 it is recommended that:

- all Level 1 students be given an informal introduction to the Standards for QTS (since this is considered to be one area in which the Scheme adds value over and above similar initiatives);

- providers evidence a clear rationale to support the added value gained by running a Level 1 Scheme within their area. In some areas there is considered to be nothing similar to the Scheme, whereas in others, a range of student tutoring schemes are in place which may, or may not add value to what is being delivered at Level 1.

### **Standards for QTS**

7.19 Participants at Level 2 should be afforded structured opportunities to demonstrate achievements against the Standards for QTS that are consistent across providers. This is to ensure students can more effectively utilise the experience gained and that other providers of ITT clearly recognise. Undoubtedly, steps are already in place to do this through the introduction of a common core of Standards for QTS within the Scheme.

### **Recognition**

7.20 The TDA should take steps to raise awareness of the Scheme at the national level and provide greater clarity to ITT providers around the expectations of how SAS experiences can be taken into account within initial needs assessments of students' prior experience.

### **Build Capacity**

7.21 To encourage a strategic focus on other impacts of the Scheme, 'targets' should be set to build providers' capacity to deliver the Scheme within a wider strategic framework rather than simply for numbers recruited. This could include targets to:

- develop local, regional and national strategies to recruit and retain groups particularly needed within teaching;
- link the Scheme with other initiatives related to ITT and widening participation (e.g. Undergraduate Ambassadors Scheme, Aimhigher pilot);
- link the Scheme with wider strategies to boost uptake and admissions in priority subject areas.

7.22 This could be achieved by requesting providers to develop strategic plans outlining the fit of the Scheme with other strategic plans (e.g. outreach plans, regional plans) and activities.

### **CPD and Wider Workforce**

- 7.23 Given that the remit of the TDA has recently expanded, consideration should be given as to how the Scheme can be developed further to increase its added value for the wider workforce. This is in the light of the Scheme's emerging impacts on the continuing professional development of teachers and NQTs, and contribution to the Extended Schools Agenda.

# Appendices

## **APPENDIX A:**

### **METHODOLOGY EMPLOYED IN EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF THE STUDENT ASSOCIATES SCHEME**

#### **Methodology**

The methodology for this evaluation comprised three main elements:

- three tailored postal surveys for providers, schools and university students;
- six in-depth case studies based around the provider;
- telephone consultations with ITT providers from universities that were not involved in delivering the Scheme.

#### **Postal Surveys**

Three surveys were distributed as part of the evaluation. All three surveys were piloted before use. As a result of the pilot a small number of minor changes were made to the questionnaires. Where changes were made these mostly entailed changing the wording to reduce potential ambiguity and misunderstanding. Each of the three surveys was distributed as outlined below.

##### **Provider Survey**

###### **Sample and Response Rate**

Surveys were distributed to all 46 providing organisations to which a 78% response rate was achieved. Survey responses were received from across the five different types of provider delivering the Scheme (i.e. responses were received from HEIs, LEAs, schools, a subject association and a private company).

##### **School/College Survey**

###### **Sample**

Each provider was requested to nominate two schools/colleges to be surveyed. In order to learn from both positive and less positive experiences, providers were asked to nominate one school where the experience of the Scheme had been positive and one where there had been some difficulties or issues. Providers were also given the option to distribute surveys more widely if they found that a larger number of their schools/colleges wished to volunteer to complete the survey and did not feel that this would be a burden.

###### **Response Rate**

Surveys were formerly distributed to 77 schools. Forty eight survey responses were received which equates to a response rate of 62%. The schools responding to the survey were linked to 33 different Scheme providers thereby reflecting schools' experience across providing organisations. School responses were also linked to four out of the five types of providing organisation.

## **Student Associates Survey**

### **Sample**

The Student Associate sample was drawn from the TDA Student Associate database which contained 3,091 records at the time at which the sample was drawn. The 3,091 records supplied by the TDA:

- **had already been cleansed** to ensure that students who had participated at Level 1 *and* Level 2 of the Scheme were only included on the database once;
- **only included those Student Associates who had given permission** to be contacted for evaluation purposes.

The initial intention was for YCL to distribute surveys to a stratified random sample of all university students who had participated in the Scheme over its lifetime using contact details from the TTA's Student monitoring form. However, it emerged that not all information on current and past students would be available via the database within the timescale available for the research.

It was therefore agreed with the TDA that the surveys would be distributed in two batches to all students that the TDA held data for, by distribution date deadlines. In doing so there may be some bias in the sample as some providers had not passed data to the TDA regarding their 2004-05 cohorts by the distribution dates as their Schemes were running later in the academic year. This means students who took part on the Scheme later this current academic year have not been included. However, since all students listed on the database were surveyed it has been possible to assess impact of the Scheme over time since some students responded who had taken part in the Scheme in previous years.

### **Response Rate**

Surveys were distributed to 3,091 university students who had taken part in the Scheme. 1,157 survey responses were received, which constitutes a 37% response rate.

### **Presentation and interpretation of the data**

When interpreting the findings, it is important to recognise that results are not based on the entire population, and therefore it is not possible to be certain that the figures obtained are those that would be realised were the full population interviewed (the 'true' values).

It is possible however, to predict the variation between the sample sizes and the 'true' values from a knowledge of the size of the samples on which the results are based and the number of times that a particular answer is given. The confidence with which we can make this prediction is usually chosen to be 95% - that is, the chances are 19 in 20 that the 'true' value will fall within a specified range. Thus, the confidence interval (or margin of error) is the amount by which the survey

result could increase or decrease and still be considered to reflect the 'true' result that would have been recorded if everyone in the population had been surveyed.

The 1,157 responses to the Student Associate survey allow high levels of confidence in the figures reported for the cohort as a whole, but also provide reliable data for the analysis of subgroups. For analysis of the figures for the whole cohort, we can be 95% confident that the figures reported are within 2.5% points of the true results, had the whole population returned their survey. For analysis of sub groups, for example of minority ethnic groups, we can be 95% confident that the figures reported are within 5.2% points of the true results, had the whole population returned the survey.

In tables where percentages do not add up to 100% this is due to multiple answers, to computer rounding, or to the exclusion of 'Don't know' or 'No response' categories.

## Case Studies

Six providing organisations were selected for more detailed case study work. The case studies selected reflected a broad mix by:

- geographical area (region);
- coverage of organisational type (university provider, school-based provider, commercial provider, LEA provider).

The case studies involved visits to two schools in each providing area; hence, 12 schools were visited in total. To minimise the burden on school staff, these were the same schools as those nominated for the survey. The case studies included interviews with:

- **Providers** - for example, staff responsible for co-ordinating and operating the Scheme and Scheme Administrators;
- **Students** - both students who were registered on the Scheme during this academic year and those who had taken part in previous years;
- **School staff** - for example, school co-ordinators responsible for co-ordinating the Scheme in the school and teachers in whose classrooms students were placed;
- **Young people**;
- **Partners** - for example, Initial Teacher Training providers within the University; LEA staff.

The majority of fieldwork occurred between June 2005 and September 2005.

## **External ITT Provider Telephone Consultations**

Qualitative telephone consultations using a semi-structured topic guide were undertaken with 8 ITT providers who were not involved in delivering the Scheme.

Details of ITT providers not involved in delivering the scheme were provided by the TDA. No attempt was made to undertake interviews with a representative sample of ITT providers not involved in delivering the scheme. Securing interviews with ITT providers was 'opportunistic' and based on who was available within the timescale for the research and willing to take part.

The aim of this strand of activity was to understand what ITT providers not directly involved knew about the Scheme and whether or not they are taking account of students' experience of SAS when they apply for teacher training.