

Chapter 5

Mind the Gap: Teacher Induction in Scotland



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Abstract In this chapter, we provide an overview of the national Teacher Induction Scheme and the Flexible Route to Registration as a teacher in Scotland. We highlight both the benefits and weaknesses of these two pathways into the teaching profession. The benefits of the Teacher Induction Scheme include a guaranteed post, a reduced teaching load in the induction year and an induction supporter/mentor to observe and support the induction year teacher. The main benefit of the Flexible Route is that it can be done on a part-time basis and its main weakness is the lack of a reduced teaching load and no formal supporter/mentor arrangement. Weaknesses in both pathways include the lack of a continuum in professional development from initial teacher education at tertiary level into and beyond the induction year. Another weakness in the induction scheme is the lack of compulsory training or education for those who take on the role of induction supporter/mentor. Finally, we provide some recommendations for reviewing the current pathways into teaching so that there are consistent levels of support to all beginning teachers in Scotland and clear routes into permanent employment as a teacher after the induction year.

Keywords Beginning teachers · Continuing professional development · Mentoring early career teachers · Teacher induction · Teacher probation

5.1 Introduction

Early career teachers (ECTs) often find themselves situated in a complex, dynamic contextual landscape that influences their development and practice and can dictate their professional expectations of teaching and professional learning (Kutsyuruba et al., 2019). Internationally, educational researchers and policy makers view the first

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three to four years after initial teacher education as the most crucial for a teacher's decision as to leave or remain in the profession (Jones, 2003).

In this chapter, we discuss Scotland's national Teacher Induction Scheme and the Flexible Route to Registration, which provide insights into how induction can be part of a career-long trajectory or continuum of teacher education. We argue that this continuum requires the involvement of all institutional players to ensure coherence and continuity, reduce unnecessary repetition and thereby help with the transition from student teacher to fully qualified teacher. The way that teachers are supported at the beginning and throughout their careers could be regarded as a proxy measure for how a society values education and teachers. Globally, teacher retention is a longstanding issue as substantial numbers of qualified teachers leave the profession within five years of entry (Perryman & Calvert, 2020). In the United Kingdom, data from the School Workforce Census for England shows that of those teachers who qualified in 2014, 32.6% left teaching after 5 years (UK Gov., 2020). In Scotland, the figures show that of those entering the profession in 2014/15, 21% had left the profession by December 2020 (Scottish Government, 2020). Research into this issue highlights the important role that early career support and mentoring plays in retaining beginning career teachers, with performativity, accountability and relatively poor pay for the workload being factors that drive teacher attrition (Hughes, 2012; Tran & Smith, 2020).

It could be argued that another important factor impacting on the issue of teacher retention and attrition is access to a quality, structured induction scheme that provides a secure grounding in practice for the beginning teacher and a clear orientation into the profession that sets up the early phase of the beginning teachers career trajectory.

This chapter explores teacher induction in Scotland by adopting a critical stance towards the Scottish Teacher Induction Scheme by problematising the policies that underpin both the Teacher Induction Scheme (TIS) and the Flexible Route to Registration (FRR) applying critical analysis to the operationalisation and administration of both pathways into registration as a teacher. We explore how the Scottish education system has striven to improve teacher retention by providing suitable early career support through teacher induction pathways. The chapter is structured in three sections. The first section outlines the development and implementation of the two induction pathways and describes their main features. The second section focuses on some of the unintended consequences of the TIS, and addresses critical questions of the TIS, such as whether it is appropriate that there is no mandatory education or preparation for the induction supporters/mentors.

To understand the educational context of the two induction pathways, first we need to explain the history of how both the Teacher Induction Scheme and the Flexible Route to Registration (originally called the Alternative Route to Registration) were created and secondly, we need to outline where teacher induction in Scotland sits in relation to Initial Teacher Education and registration as a teacher.

5.2 Policy background

Prior to the introduction of the Teacher Induction Scheme in 2002, there was a compulsory two-year period, called probation, which had to include 380 days' teaching. Head teachers submitted an interim report at the end of the first year of a teacher's probationary period and a final report with a recommendation on registration with the General Teaching Council of Scotland (GTCS) at the end of their second year [for details of teacher probation before 2002 see Shanks (2020)]. The probation scheme was overly dependent on the individual graduate securing a post of sufficient length to enable them to accrue the required 380 days of teaching, and there was little access to continuing profession development. Research into teacher probation in the 1990s led to calls for change (Draper et al., 1997). The Teacher Induction Project was set up by the Scottish Executive Education Department and the GTCS to consider the arrangements for beginning teachers and to draft a standard for beginning teachers to meet by the end of the probation period (Christie & O'Brien, 2005). This work developed into the Standard for Full Registration.

At the same time, the McCrone Report (*A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century*) (Scottish Executive, 2000), led to the McCrone agreement which included a simplified career structure and a guaranteed induction year for all beginning teachers (Scottish Executive Education Department, 2001). The simplification of the career structure reduced opportunities for teachers to gain leadership experience within school to support their professional development and progress their career. In the twenty years since the McCrone agreement, this has come to be seen by the profession in Scotland as a loss because the gap between the role of a classroom teacher and that of a principal teacher or Faculty Head is large. At the same time, local authorities began to consolidate the role of principal teacher, particularly in secondary schools, into the role of Faculty Head, reducing the number of principal teacher posts required in a school while at the same time increasing the responsibility and accountability placed on that role. Indeed, at the time of writing a new dispute erupted with Dundee City Council wanting to remove more principal teacher posts from schools in the city (Seith, 2022).

Key educational stakeholders felt that the new induction scheme was worth the 'trade' of a flattened career structure to better support and potentially improve the retention rates of those entering the profession.

5.3 Teacher Induction in the Scottish Context

In Scotland to be registered as a teacher, and be employed to teach in a school, it is necessary to complete a higher education programme in initial teacher education. This initial teacher education programme can be either a four-year bachelor's degree or a nine-month (18 weeks in university, 18 weeks on school placement) Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE). On successful completion of these programmes, students can meet the requirements of the Standard for Provisional

Registration (GTCS, 2021b). After initial teacher education in higher education, graduates enter either the Teacher Induction Scheme or the Flexible Route to Registration (previously called the Alternative Route). The General Teaching Council for Scotland is responsible for both the registration of teachers (including oversight of the qualifications needed to enter initial teacher education programmes and the accreditation and reaccreditation of the programmes) and the regulation of the profession, and this includes administration and oversight of the induction scheme.

From the introduction of the Teacher Induction Scheme in 2002, all beginning teachers in Scotland, with the right to live and work in Scotland, have been guaranteed a one-year teaching contract. The Flexible Route for Registration covers people who are working full-time in the private sector or working part-time and/or working as supply teachers. It is not possible to provide accurate numbers for those on the Flexible Route at any one time as it includes people who may be taking a career break or teaching abroad, who have deferred and who are working towards registration in an additional subject, and there is no annual start and end dates for this pathway to registration. However, it has been stated that in 2017, while 2470 gained Full Registration through the Teacher Induction Scheme there were approximately 619 people who gained Full Registration through the Flexible Route (General Teaching Council for Scotland, n.d.c.).

5.3.1 Structure of the Teacher Induction Scheme

During the induction year in Scotland, beginning teachers are provided with several supports to help them in their transition from student teacher to fully registered teacher including:

- reduction in classroom teaching (0.82 of a full-time teacher's teaching hours)
- remaining 0.18 time to be used for continuing professional development
- an induction supporter or mentor to oversee, guide and assess the beginning teacher against the Standard for Full Registration (GTCS, 2021a)
- observations by the induction supporter/mentor
- continuing professional development provided by the school and local authority.

Originally, the Teacher Induction Scheme guaranteed 0.3 time for continuing professional development and the beginning teacher's school was funded 0.1 of the mentor's time to support the beginning teacher. Changes were made due to financial pressures in the austerity period.

In this chapter, we are focusing on the Teacher Induction Scheme as opposed to the Flexible Route. Previous research on the Teacher Induction Scheme has found how relationships are important (McNally & Blake 2009; Shanks, 2018) and the key role of the mentor (Rippon & Martin, 2006). It is important to note that while the GTCS evaluated the Teacher Induction Scheme soon after its introduction (Pearson & Robson, 2005), there has been no comprehensive independent evaluation of TIS since it was founded.

5.3.2 *The Flexible Route to Registration*

In many respects, the revised name of ‘Alternative’ to ‘Flexible’ highlights the inflexible nature of the Teacher Induction Scheme as it is not possible to take part in the Teacher Induction Scheme on a part-time basis. New teachers with caring responsibilities or with other reasons for needing to work part-time have no alternative but to follow the Flexible Route. As well as not benefiting from the extra support of the Teacher Induction Scheme to qualify through (such as the reduced teaching load and the induction supporter/mentor), it is necessary to teach for 380 days compared to 190 days for the Teacher Induction Scheme (General Teaching Council for Scotland, n.d.b). In Scotland, 190 days is the number of days in a school year. Those on the Flexible Route do have the advantage of choosing exactly where to apply to teach unlike those on the Teacher Induction Scheme who take part in a national system of allocation where they can only state their local authority preferences.

5.3.3 *Policy Post-McCrone*

Two important reviews of education were commissioned by the Scottish Government in 2010, the McCormac review of teachers’ pay and conditions and the Donaldson Review of Teacher Education. Both reported to the Scottish Government in 2011. The McCormac Report impacted on TIS by recommending the reduction of inductees’ non-teaching time. The Donaldson Report, *Teaching Scotland’s Future* (2011), on teacher education in Scotland made several recommendations which had a direct or indirect relation to teacher induction. For example, concerns were raised in the report about the teacher education continuum. The table below sets out the recommendations in the Donaldson Report (2011) that relate to teacher induction and provides an update on the level of implementation since the report’s publication.

Donaldson Report (2011)	Recommendation number	Developments since 2011
The need for closer working between schools, local authorities, universities and national bodies	3	Achieved in some areas but not universally in place
Create new and strengthened models of partnership between schools, local authorities, universities and national bodies	15	New regional bodies have been created—Regional Improvement Collaboratives
Teacher induction non-contact time ‘should build more directly and progressively from initial teacher education’ (p. 95)	30	This is yet to be achieved across the country

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Donaldson Report (2011)	Recommendation number	Developments since 2011
Partnerships to include joint delivery of CPD including during induction	10	Not yet the norm
Dual appointments between local authorities and universities	24	Very rare
Masters level opportunities	44	Growing opportunities and some Masters level routes into teaching
'in order to improve continuity and coherence for new teachers, university-based teacher educators should have a role in the development and delivery of induction schemes' (p. 93)	25	Yet to be achieved
Quality-assured mentoring	27	Not consistently in place across the country
Mentors were to be carefully selected and have training	28	Not consistently in place across the country
The roles and responsibilities of people within the teacher induction scheme need to be made clearer, in particular that there should be a mentor who assessed and an induction supporter who supported new teachers	29	This has not been addressed and the tension in the dual role of assessing and supporting an induction year teacher was noted at the outset (Rippon & Martin, 2006)
Recommendation on workforce planning relating to its accuracy	6	Still issues with accuracy
Recommendation on how information about prospective employment in teaching should be conveyed to teacher education students	7	Not uniformly carried out in higher education
New teachers should be supported after induction with further support such as mentoring provided	31	Not implemented
Flexible Route to Registration teachers should be given access to CPD and structured support	32	Not uniform across the country
'all teachers should see themselves as teacher educators <i>and be trained in mentoring</i> ' (p. 98) (our emphasis)	39	The first part is often repeated but the second part has not been universally implemented

From the table above, it can be seen that while there were clear recommendations in the Donaldson Report (2011) on how to improve the Teacher Induction Scheme and teacher induction in general, many of those specific recommendations have not been implemented in a system-wide way. It depends on how the Teacher Induction Scheme is operated in each local authority whether the recommendations have been implemented or not. For example, while some local authorities involve higher education institutions in the provision of courses and events during the induction year, there is no formal role within the scheme (Gray & Weir, 2014).

5.4 Exploring Beginning Teachers' Experiences of Induction

As noted above, there has been no wide-scale independent review of the Teacher Induction Scheme in its 20 years of operation. Due to this and the limited amount of other recent research, a small study was conducted exploring the lived experience of beginning teachers who had participated in the Teacher Induction Scheme over the last five years. A convenience sample of beginning teachers was generated in terms of geographical location of induction, subject specialism and initial teacher education institution of origin by a putting out a call for participants on social media (Twitter and Facebook). Former students were contacted to ask them to consider participating in the study. The sample consisted of ten teachers: two primary school teachers and eight secondary school teachers. Two participants completed TIS in session 2018/19; six completed TIS in session 2019/20; and two were due to complete in session 2021/22. No one in the sample undertook the Flexible Route to Registration. In terms of geographical location for the induction year, the interviewees taught in eight different local authorities across Central and Southern Scotland, the North-East and North-West of Scotland.

Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews. The interview schedule (see [Appendix](#)) included questions designed to probe the participants' everyday experience, covering areas such as where they completed their ITE programme, when and where they did their induction year. Questions were asked about their school and local authority experiences, in terms of mentoring support, the type of school, local authority CPD sessions and activities that they undertook, and their views as to the quality of their various experiences. The interview data were thematically analysed using a constant comparative approach to generate codes and defined categories. These were then refined and sharpened in an iterative process of coding, comparing and refining (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to form a rich description of the experiences of the Teacher Induction Scheme provided by the interviewees. Throughout this process, memos and notes were generated to support reflection upon converging and diverging themes as they appeared throughout the analysis process.

In this chapter, we will only report on a small proportion of illustrative examples from the data gathered and analysed. The focus of the next section of the chapter

will be the experience of the Teacher Induction Scheme from the perspective of the beginning teachers that have, or currently are, experiencing the scheme.

5.4.1 What Do Beginning Teachers Say About Their Induction Experience?

Participants in our sample had mixed perceptions of their induction experiences: four participants suggesting their experience was ‘good’, four participants suggesting that their experience was ‘okay’ and three participants suggesting their experience was ‘poor’. Of those reporting a good experience, underpinning examples were given such as the schools tried to integrate and enculture them into the community and the life of the school, and a supportive and proactive school-based mentor. The extract below from Jacqueline’s (pseudonym) interview transcript exemplifies this:

...I was well supported by the rest of the department, and I had a mentor who was amazing. She made it clear from the get-go, anything that I needed, anything I was unsure about, go straight to her.... (Jacqueline)

Of those who had a poor experience, two interviewees described several factors that contributed to their poor experience with examples ranging from feeling unwanted, poor school-based mentoring and, in one case, no mentor for an extended period until the local authority intervened to get support, which led to an increased strain in the relationship between the beginning teacher and the school.

In my initial conversation with my head teacher, I was told that she didn’t really want a probationer that year... which actually made me incredibly nervous during the entire induction year because I felt this need to perform or to impress, to make her want to have a me. (Claire)

Victoria gave an example of poor school management of her induction as a reason for her poor experience when her initial mentor moved posts early on.

I had a good mentor for the first three weeks of the TIS [mid-August to early September]. She left the school, and I never had a mentor until January... I eventually complained to the local authority TIS support team, and they got the school to assign one, a depute head. This led to some difficulties with my relationship with the school SLT because I went outside the school to the local authority. Not a good experience at all.

When asked about the types of experiences school leadership expected inductees to engage with, we got a mixed responses with participants saying that their schools had a set programme with clear expectations through to others saying that their schools had no expectations at all.

We had regular meetings as probationers with one of the deposes, we had lunches together... we had to be part of the working groups [in the school] (Eleanor)

There was no prerequisite of doing anything to be honest. I come from quite an activist background ... and I never felt that they wanted to hone or harvest that experience. All they wanted to do was get me through the probation year and I felt as if that was their end goal. (Claire)

A key theme found in the interviews was that the beginning teachers' perceptions of their experience of TIS was driven, to a large extent, by the quality of school-based support in terms of mentoring and enculturating them into the school environment.

When asked about their experience of the local authority support and CPD sessions regarding range of topics covered, and the quality and rigour of the sessions, those from a secondary background commented that they felt that the local authority sessions were geared towards the needs of the primary inductees and that the relevance of the sessions was often questioned. In terms of quality, rigour and breadth of issues, most participants perceived the quality and breadth to be mixed, with some good sessions and some not so good. Two participants indicated that they felt that these sessions often paid little or no attention to what they had covered in ITE, with several participants questioning whether the local authority induction managers knew what ITE programmes covered, as they perceived the local authority sessions to be repetitive of ITE.

The local authority sessions were understandably focused on application to practice with some reference to theory and an emphasis on process and local authority policies but without linking back to initial teacher education. However, this point was highlighted by Donaldson (2011) in his recommendations (3, 10 and 18) and in particular he commented that that

Attempts to forge partnerships have had at best varying success. Shaping and supporting the kind of 21st century teacher which Scotland needs will require much stronger interconnections and collaboration than has been the case to date. We need much better alignment of values and purposes with a clear understanding of where and when the most effective contributions can be made if we are to achieve coherent and progressive development of professional expertise throughout a career. (page 84)

Unfortunately, we believe that not much has changed since these comments were made. If quality continuing professional development is to flourish in the early stages of a teacher's career, then the partnership model that is currently in place needs to be reformed.

In terms of the bureaucratic burden placed on inductees by the profile requirements for fulfilling the Standard for Full Registration set by the GTCS, most participants said that while there was a lot of paperwork, it was manageable if you planned your time effectively.

I knew some people complain about it [the profile paperwork] a lot but I kept right on top of it. I know that obviously for some people who left it... if you didn't keep that record in that way you might have forgotten that you've done something. So, when you were coming to interview time, we were looking at your interview questions, I found it really helpful. (Eleanor)

A few participants suggested the paperwork did not resemble anything that other teachers were expected to do, and they felt the profile requirements are a 'hoop' jumping exercise as the following exchange between Jacqueline and the interviewer illustrates. However, it should be noted that teachers in Scotland now need to engage in a 5 yearly Professional Update process so other teachers are now expected to do something similar.

It was quite annoying. There was a lot to fill in... when it came to actually going to submit it [the accumulated evidence], there's so many different boxes that had to be filled in and everything else, that take a long time to do...even still, I think it could be chopped down... there's so much on it [that] I think, is unnecessary. (Jacqueline)

Most of the participants indicated that the main benefit of the induction scheme was that it gave them the time to develop their practice within a relatively safe environment with Eleanor suggesting that 'I really think it gave me time and a safer environment to try things out'. This example highlights that for time and space to try out, new practices, tools or techniques was valued.

5.4.2 Post induction Issues

Securing a job after the induction year was difficult for four of the ten interviewees. Six participants managed to secure temporary work on a supply basis, and two participants secured a permanent post. Two participants are currently in the TIS and so have not yet reached the point of trying to secure a teaching post at the time of interview.

One participant, Jacqueline, who is in a temporary supply post indicated that she is actively considering leaving teaching because of her inability to secure a permanent teaching post. The following extract from the interview exemplifies this individual's struggle.

... I've had many breakdowns. I honestly cannot keep going... not knowing if you're going to be working a day, or a couple of weeks in a school. You can't have a life, can't have a house, you can't pay for things. (Jacqueline)

Donald suggested that an unintended consequence of the induction scheme was that local authorities take on probationers but have no jobs for them when they complete the year.

... there's been a lot of unfairness that can make you think yeah guarantee the job to everybody, guarantee the year probation...are councils only allowed to take so many probationers over their projected amount of vacancies?

These extracts indicate that for the participants in the sample there are positive and negative aspects to the Teacher Induction Scheme.

5.5 Critical Reflections on the Induction Pathways in Scotland

We now turn our discussion to the main themes to come from the interviews with current and recent participants in the Teacher Induction Scheme. We will also draw on the research literature on teacher induction to critically assess the perspectives

that inductees expressed and to draw out conclusions to stimulate further debate around teacher induction. Before we begin our discussion, there are a few things that it is important to note. Firstly, most participants in our study view this as a positive experience overall. The main benefits of the Teacher Induction Scheme being the time, space and structured support that the scheme provides for inductees to consolidate and develop pedagogical practice and to try out new ideas, therefore, what follows should be understood with this in mind. Secondly, the TIS is essentially a situated professional learning model (Kearney, 2015), therefore the learning that inductees undergo as part of TIS is in many respects unique to the school context and the department or stage in which the inductees find themselves working. Thirdly, the kinds of experiences that local authorities provide to their inductees is tailored to meet both the needs of the authority and the profession but the extent to which a balance is struck between these two needs varies between local authorities. All these points taken together mean that due to the way that the TIS is configured, there is considerable variation in the experiences that inductees have.

Kearney (2015) suggests that the provision of a 'comprehensive' programme for induction is problematic since the main purpose of a teacher induction programme is registration to the professional body with the professional learning of teachers being secondary. Research in the Australian context indicates that such state-run induction programmes suffer from a lack of understanding around the induction process or what constitutes 'comprehensive' induction and what is required to administer such programmes, which has led to induction programmes that lack a theoretical or conceptual foundation that fosters teacher learning in the early years of their careers (Kearney, 2013). We argue that the Scottish TIS is not a comprehensive induction programme but provides a general induction into the profession because of the inconsistency mentioned above and since the onus is very much placed on the individual inductee to gather the requisite experiences, during the year, to give them the best chance of being able to speak well in job interviews to gain a teaching position post-induction.

A large body of International research on induction exists looking at many aspects of the induction process from its impact on retention (Buchanan et al., 2013; Gujarati, 2012; Ingersoll, 2012; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Kearney, 2014a); the characteristics of specific programmes (Gilles et al., 2009; Howe, 2006; Kearney, 2014b; Shanks et al., 2020; Wong et al., 2005); induction's impact on improving teaching and educational outcomes (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Wang et al., 2008; Wong, 2004); policies that support induction (Bartlett & Johnson, 2010; Smith, 2007); induction as a professional learning community (Carroll, 2005; Fulton et al., 2005; O'Malley, 2010); and participating teachers' perceptions of their experiences in induction (Algozzine et al., 2007; Buchanan et al., 2013; Kearney, 2013; Shanks, 2014). However, what is missing from much of the research and commentary about beginning teacher induction are research-informed frameworks that can be implemented which serve both the needs of the beginning teacher and the institution/s providing the induction.

5.5.1 Integration into the School Community

Our research indicates that a pre-requisite for a good induction year experience is an effective integration process into the school community. We suggest that this is an important element of how inductees are made to feel supported and nurtured. Indeed Kearney (2015) suggests that organisational socialisation practices are important to orientation of beginning teachers. In Claire's example, being informed by the head teacher that they did not want a probationer within the first five minutes in the school is a clear indication of the process not working. If learning is central to organisational socialisation (Antonacopoulou & Güttel, 2010; Gherardi & Perrotta, 2010), and is rooted in situated professional learning, then schools need to ensure that they welcome new teachers from the beginning of their induction experience. What is Clare to do in such a situation? For Claire, this set the tone for her entire time in the school and her induction experience. We would argue that no inductee should be made to feel as if they are a burden to the school or are in any way unwanted. We would suggest that this situation indicates an issue with the way induction managers at the local authority allocate inductees to schools. According to the McCrone agreement (Scottish Executive Education Department, 2001), induction year teachers are supposed to be supernumerary to the school's staff complement and mentors are meant to be given time perform their role. We are left with questions as to *how local authorities allocate inductees to schools, what are the criteria used for allocating inductees to schools and to what extent is there a consistent approach across all local authorities?*

5.5.2 The School-Based Mentoring Experience

The research literature advocates for quality induction mentoring as vital component to the success and development of beginning teachers (Fletcher & Barrett, 2004; Fulton et al., 2005; Wong, 2004). Indeed, several of the interviewees in our research suggested that they had a very good experience of induction concerning their school-based mentor. However, this positive expression was couched in a manner that suggested that they felt 'lucky' to have had a good school-based mentor. When probed on this point, many participants suggested that the picture is mixed as to the quality of mentoring given to their peers with most recounting instances where a fellow inductee was having a difficult time with their mentor. This suggests that there are issues with the relationship between some mentors and the inductee they support.

We believe that the heart of this issue may lie in the way that mentors are assigned to inductees by school leadership teams. The level of support that mentors receive for them to properly fulfil their role is not consistent across schools or local authorities, and we would suggest that there needs to be a more systematic approach to mentor support to help eliminate any deficiencies in the current system. From experience,

we are aware that many mentors take on the role to gain experience of mentoring in preparation for them applying for a promoted post. While we would argue that this is neither an appropriate nor sufficient motivation for becoming a mentor, we accept that this is one factor that a teacher may consider when deciding on whether to become a mentor. It is also important to note that in Scotland, there is no formal requirement for school-based mentors to have any formal training or qualification in coaching or mentoring to be able to support someone through the Teacher Induction Scheme. The only stipulation is that they must be registered with the GTCS, thereby implying that all registered teachers are suitably equipped to mentor beginning teachers. We suggest that this is simply not the case. We repeat what was stated in the Donaldson Report (2011): ‘all teachers should see themselves as teacher educators *and be trained in mentoring*’ (p. 98, our emphasis).

Another factor in relation to mentoring is that of the allocation of mentors to the inductee (Shanks, 2020). It appears from the interviewees that there is an inconsistency in practice concerning whether and the way in which schools and local authorities vet potential mentors in terms of their aptitude for the role, their motivation to do the role and the level of support and training they need to fulfil the role. We would suggest that there should be a minimum requirement for mentors to undergo formal training before permitting them to undertake this role. Ideally, we argue school-based mentors should undertake a formal qualification in coaching or mentoring.

5.5.3 Mixed Reviews of the Local Authority Professional Development

Several of our participants indicated that they had become involved in school learning communities and that this was advocated by the local authority. The learning community as a concept has become increasingly prevalent in education (DuFour et al., 2010), and some local authorities in Scotland promote their use. Several of our research participants indicated that the local authority development days were designed around group activities to foster a community of practice. However, the idea that people always learn as members of communities rather than as individuals is open to debate on the grounds that communities of practice need to be properly established and regularly nurtured to be truly embedded in schools and, in the case of induction, awareness of this point needs to be clear among those charged with organising this.

With respect to the inductees’ views on their experiences of local authority professional development sessions as part of the TIS, participants were not altogether enthusiastic about their experience in terms of the quality, rigour or sequencing of content in the local authority sessions. McNally (2002) suggested that practical concerns might be uppermost in local authority induction manager’s minds when constructing professional development activities for induction year teachers. Donaldson (2011)

made several recommendations on partnership working and bringing higher education into the induction scheme (see above). Twenty years on from the induction scheme's inception and eleven years on from the Donaldson Report, we argue that we are no further forward in this regard. We suggest that higher education partners could make a distinctive contribution to the induction scheme as a partner. However, Higher Education Institutions have (in the main) been kept at arm's length from local authority partners' professional development programmes to the point where quality and rigour have arguably been 'squeezed out' resulting in a lower quality experience than that to which inductees had experienced during their initial teacher education as McNally (2002) warned might be the case. Most of the interviewees suggested that the content covered similar ground and, in some cases, used the same readings as those used in ITE. In most cases, there appears to be a lack of coordination between local authority induction managers and university staff when it comes to the construction of professional development programmes run by local authorities. This often results in repetition of material rather than supporting or stretching new teachers with appropriate professional learning opportunities.

Another issue raised by interviewees was the fact that those in the secondary sector felt that the local authority sessions were overly geared towards primary teachers and that the relevance was not made clear (if at all) to them of the session to secondary teachers' practice. This theme was mentioned by all secondary interviewees and has been, in our experience, a perennial complaint from secondary inductees since the inception of the TIS with the way that local authority induction managers have organised their induction programmes. Bringing higher education institutions in as a partner in professional learning sessions could be part of the way to rectify this.

5.5.4 *The GTCS Profile*

The GTCS induction profile is the mechanism through which induction year teachers evidence their development and is how their mentor and the head teacher indicate to the GTCS that the inductee has been performed satisfactorily, met the Standard for Full Registration and can progress onto the national register of teachers. Most of the beginning teachers we interviewed suggested that the online profile was overly bureaucratic in nature and felt like a 'tick box' exercise. They also said that while they found some parts of the profile to be relevant, they felt that the profile was of little worth or relevance beyond them evidencing that they had met the Standard for Full Registration. Previous research found that the profile layout assumes that all professional learning takes place in an organised and planned way, thus ignoring informal learning which can take place more spontaneously (Shanks, 2018).

Interestingly, the only full-scale review of the Teacher Induction Scheme that we could find was one commissioned, conducted and published by GTCS (Pearson & Robson, 2005) which made no mention of the profile requirement themselves. Given the experiences of the beginning teachers in this research, it might be useful for the GTCS to reflect on how they can make the process of assessment against the

Standard for Full Registration a more authentic and useful experience that will then help teachers in their five-yearly Professional Updates (GTCS, undated).

5.5.5 Post-induction Year Issues

The most prominent post-induction issue to emerge from our research was the one that all inductees face when they complete the Teacher Induction Scheme—namely, finding a permanent teaching post. Most of the interviewees indicated that this was a chronic problem. They stated there was a lack of jobs for them to apply for in the areas they could work in without moving. They stated that the system ‘seemed’ to be skewed towards the need for schools to provide new induction places for the next cohort of student teachers coming out of initial teacher education. It appears that priority is given to the next cohort of inductees rather than retaining those who have successfully completed the induction scheme. We acknowledge that workforce planning is complex and that there are often several unknown factors, such as the number of teachers retiring and/or leaving the profession. However, there is an ethical issue with a system that produces newly registered teachers each year who have little prospect of securing permanent employment as a teacher. At least four participants indicated that the situation was so acute that they had actively sought jobs outside of teaching. This echoes findings in research carried out previously with beginning teachers in Scotland (Shanks, 2021). This is an urgent issue as it could be regarded as a waste of taxpayers’ money to support the development of a teacher through initial teacher education and induction to then lose them from the profession because there are no posts for them at the end of the induction process.

Some participants expressed the view that local authority recruitment practices appeared to operate like a ‘closed shop’ that reduces the chances for those who did induction in another local authority. They felt they had less chance in being successful in either securing an interview or being successful if interviewed. This is an issue of fairness, of transparency and of creating a level playing field in recruitment and selection. In addition, several participants mentioned that the practice of local authorities filling substantive posts with inductees was part of the problem. This means there are less vacancies for the teachers to apply for after their induction year.

5.6 Conclusion

We can see there are different gaps in provision during the induction year and a gap in employment continuity for some after the induction year. The bridge between initial teacher education and a career in teaching is not the same for all beginning teachers with some receiving much less support than others from their school and/or their mentor. The induction year is followed by temporary and/or supply teaching which

means less of a continuum and more of a stop-start experience which is rather like the situation which the Teacher Induction Scheme was meant to address.

The GTCS is involved in all phases of teacher education in Scotland, but there are still some disconnects in the teacher education continuum. For example, higher education institutions provide initial teacher education, and the GTCS accredits these programmes. Programme requirements include a certain number of weeks on placement at schools, and this brings schools into the initial teacher education process. The Teacher Induction Scheme involves local authority staff who co-ordinate professional learning activities for the induction year teachers in their area.

The Flexible Route to Registration is overseen by the GTCS but there is no formal role for local authorities, and again higher education institutions are not involved. Beginning teachers on the Teacher Induction Scheme have a mentor at the school they work at, or a mentor is provided by their local authority, however beginning teachers on the Flexible Route are not allocated a mentor. Thus, in the career-long trajectory of teacher education in Scotland, there is a disconnect between initial teacher education and induction, and differences in the induction experience for beginning teachers. It is not only in the teacher induction process that higher education institutions are excluded. When Full Registration is achieved, teachers must complete a 'Professional Update' process every five years and again there is no formal role for higher education institutions.

The Teacher Induction Scheme was created with the best of intentions, to regularise the employment of beginning teachers for their first year after initial teacher education. It provided them with time and space to experiment and to undertake their own professional development with the support of a mentor. However, over the last twenty years, the time out of the classroom has reduced, less funding goes directly to schools and less posts are supernumerary. A review of how the scheme is operating in each local authority and what happens to teachers once they leave the Teacher Induction Scheme would show what changes are necessary to make sure that it can meet its aims for the next twenty years. Currently, the only national review of the whole scheme was conducted by the GTCS just after its introduction (Pearson & Robson, 2005) so a full review is long overdue.

5.7 Recommendations

That a review of the Teacher Induction Scheme and the Flexible Route to Registration is carried out and considers the following:

1. Supporters/mentors of beginning teachers having to complete Masters level course/s in mentoring.
2. Local authority induction managers and higher education institutions working together to create professional development opportunities for beginning teachers at Masters level.

3. Combining initial teacher education and the induction year so that fully qualified teachers emerge from higher education after 5 years (replacing the undergraduate route) or 2 years (replacing the PGDE) with a Masters and successful completion of the Standard for Full Registration.

Appendix

Demographic Questions

- Where did you do your ITE programme and what subject do you teach?
- What year did you complete your Initial Teacher Education programme?
- What academic session did you enter the Teacher Induction Scheme?
- In which local authority did you complete your probation?
- In which school did you complete your probation?

Semi-structured Questions

- Can you describe your probationary year in your school for me?
- What types of activities did you engaged in within your school during your probation?
- Can you describe the relationship you had with your school-based mentor?

Prompts—how supportive were they? Did they push you—if so in what way if not, why do you think that was?

- What were the main issues you faced in your probation year and how did you overcome them?
- What was the pattern of local authority support for probationers in your probationary local authority?
 - What kinds of activities did the local authority sessions introduce you to?
 - What was your view on the quality of those sessions?
 - Did they differ from what you experienced during your ITE programme? If so in what way?
 - What was it like filling in the paperwork associated with probation?
 - What impact did your experiences on probation in your school and local authority have on your developing teacher identity?
- In your opinion, what were the benefits to you of the probation in terms of your professional development?
- Were there any tensions within that professional development? What were they and how did you resolve the tension?
- In your experience were there any unexpected or unintended consequences that arose at the end of your probationary year? How would you describe them? In what way did the impact on you and your early career?

Prompts

- Did you have any issues finding a post to go to post probation?
- How do you think teachers view the teacher induction scheme?
- Do you think the teacher induction scheme will/has helped you to stay in the profession?

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