

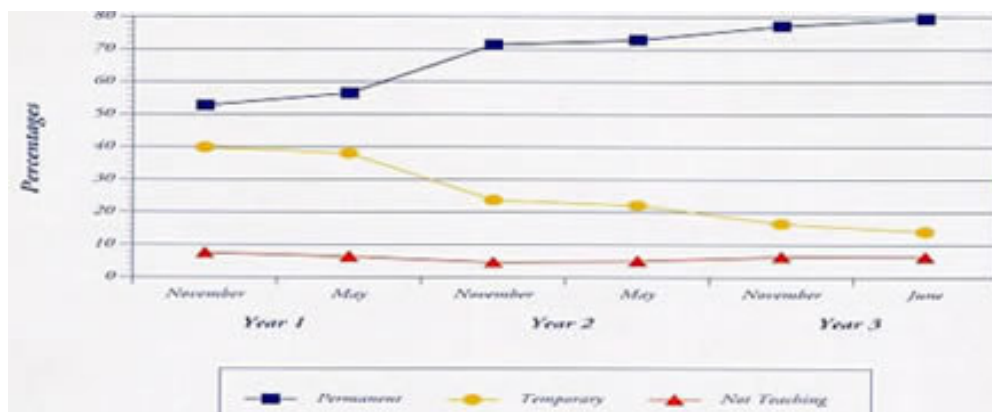
A follow-up survey of teachers who qualified in 1991 and 1992

Key Findings

- Over half (53%) of the recently qualified teachers (RQTs) had found permanent posts within five months of qualification. Three years after qualification this percentage had risen to 80%.
- The percentage of RQTs in nonpermanent posts dropped by almost two thirds from 40% in the November after qualification to 14% in June three years after qualification. The greatest decline was among those employed in the shorter types of temporary appointment (eg covering maternity leave and daytoday substitute teaching).
- The percentage of RQTs still actively seeking teaching posts fell from 4% five months after qualification to 1% three years after qualification.
- About 90% of the RQTs who were currently teaching thought they would certainly or probably remain in teaching for the foreseeable future and only 3% thought it probable or certain that they would leave the profession.

Figure 1

RQT Employment Over 3 Years



Introduction

1. Annual monitoring of the employment situation of teachers who qualified in Northern Ireland revealed that in the early 1990s only about half were finding permanent posts on qualification. Concern about possible wastage and a wish to know more about career patterns in the early years of teaching led to the present followup survey. There was particular interest in whether those RQTs in temporary appointments were covering for absent teachers or filling posts which existed only on a nonpermanent basis, and to which no other teacher had the right of return. In this study these two types of temporary appointments were called 'locums' and temporary 'postholders'.

2. From the data collected it was possible to:

- trace patterns of employment at sixmonthly intervals over a twoyear period for the 1992 cohort and a threeyear period for the 1991 cohort;
- examine in some detail the RQTs' teaching responsibilities in June 1994.

Employment Patterns in the Early Years of Teaching

3. The employment situations of the RQTs were charted at sixmonthly intervals. As can be seen in Table 1, the percentage in permanent teaching posts rose from 52.7% in the first November after qualification to 72.9% at the end of the second year and though data here were available only for the 1991 cohort to 79.5% at the end of the third year. During the first two years the percentage in temporary appointments dropped from 39.5% to 21.8%, while for the 1991 cohort the figure after three years was 14.1%.

Table 1

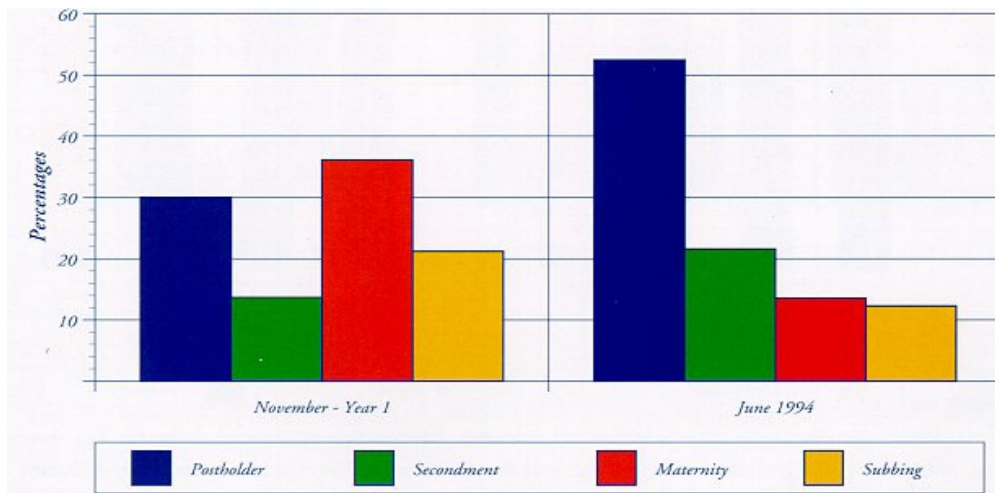
Employment situations of RQTs at 6Monthly intervals, 1991 and 1992 cohorts combined (in percentages)

Employment Position	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3	
	November	May	November	May	November	June
Permanent	52.7	56.5	71.5	72.9	77.2	79.5
Temporary:						
- postholder	11.2	12.3	9.7	9.6	7.8	6.8
- secondment	5.1	5.4	4.3	4.3	2.7	2.1
- maternity/long illness	13.1	11.5	5.1	4.3	3.9	2.7
- short-term substitute	7.9	6.2	3.3	2.7	1.6	1.6
- details unknown	2.2	2.3	1.1	0.9	0.5	0.9
Teaching: details unknown	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.0
Not Teaching						
- known to be seeking a post	3.8	1.4	1.2	1.3	1.1	0.9
- known not to be seeking a post	2.1	1.6	1.6	2.6	2.7	5.3
- Not teaching (other)	1.6	2.4	1.9	1.3	2.5	0.2
TOTAL No	941	941	941	941	438	438

4. The decrease in the number of temporary appointments was much more marked for the shorter forms of nonpermanent appointments (eg covering for maternity leave and daytoday substitute teaching) than for the forms likely to last at least a year (covering for teachers on secondment and 'postholding'). In the November after qualification fully twothirds of the temporary appointments were covering for an absent teacher but by the end of the third year 'postholders' slightly outnumbered 'locums'. Whereas providing cover for teachers on maternity or sick leave was the most frequent type of temporary post in the first November, by the time of the survey it was 'postholding' (Figure 2).

Figure 2

Type of Temporary Appointment



5. The percentage of RQTs who were not teaching fell between the first and second Novembers from 7.5% to 4.7% but subsequently rose slightly to 6.4%. However, the percentage who were actively seeking teaching posts declined over the threeyear period from 3.8% to 0.9%.

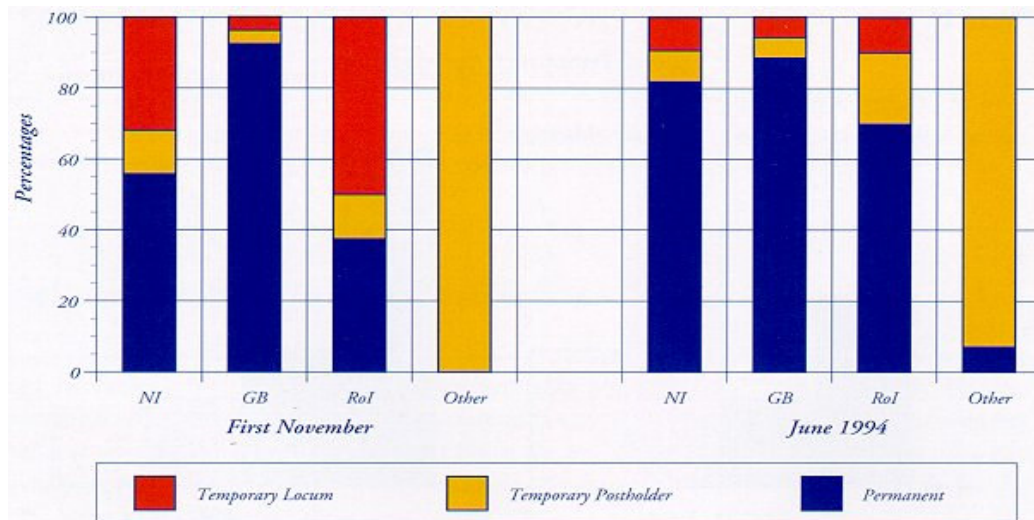
6. At the time of the survey, when the RQTs had been qualified for either two or three years, 76.6% were in permanent posts and 18.0% in nonpermanent posts. Of the remaining 51 RQTs (5.4%) who were not teaching in June 1994, 25 had previously taught, 9 had never applied for a teaching post and 17 had been unsuccessful in all their applications. Only 11 of the 51 who were out of teaching were actively seeking a post, although 13 others thought it likely that they would do so within the next few years. A change of career and difficulty in obtaining a permanent post were the main reasons given for not currently teaching.

7. Some groups of RQTs were more successful than others in establishing their careers. More of the primarytrained than of the secondarytrained RQTs had found permanent posts by the first November (59.1% vs 44.2%), although the gap had narrowed somewhat by the end of the third year (83.7% vs 73.1%). Teachers whose main subject was music were the most likely to be in a permanent post, whereas those offering business studies, religious education, a social science or home economics had greater than average difficulty in obtaining a permanent contract.

8. In June 1994, the great majority (91.5%) of the RQTs in teaching posts were working in Northern Ireland but 5.8% were in Great Britain, 1.1% in the Republic of Ireland and 1.6% elsewhere. The marked increase over time in the proportion in permanent posts (Table 1) was seen only in the groups in the North and South of Ireland. Teachers who had gone to Great Britain on qualification, usually to areas of teacher shortage, were nearly always offered permanent appointments, even at that early stage, while for those teaching outside the British Isles temporary contracts remained the norm (Figure 3).

Figure 3

Status of Posts by Geographical Location



9. Over half (57.6%) of the RQTs who had taught since qualification had worked in only one school; threequarters had worked in no more more than two schools. However, 10.1% had been in five or more schools and those who began as shortterm substitute teachers had typically been in about six schools.

Teaching Posts and Responsibilities in June 1994

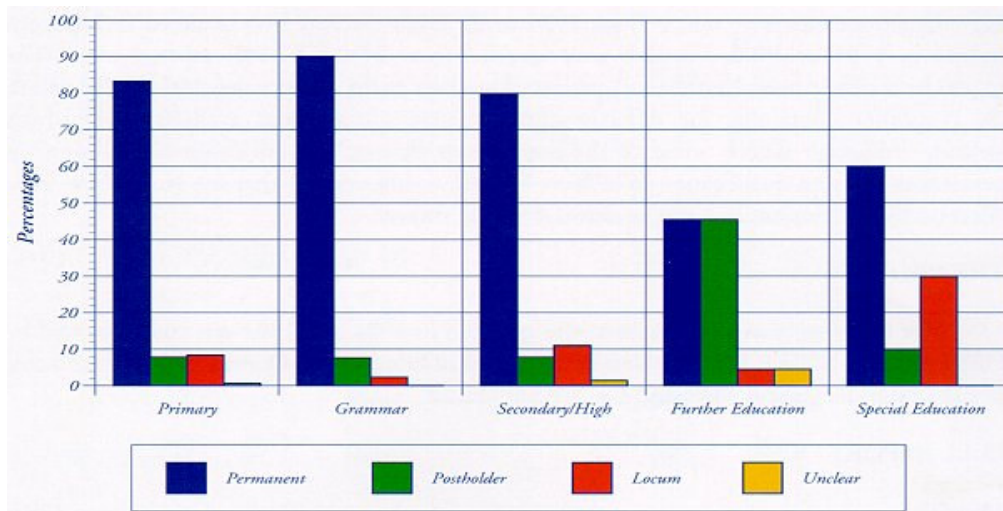
10. Of the 890 RQTs teaching in June 1994:

- 494 (55.5%) were in the primary sector, including seven in nursery schools;
- 131 (14.7%) were in grammar schools and 218 (24.5%) in other types of secondary schools;
- 22 (2.5%) were in colleges of further education;
- 10 (1.1%) were in special schools;
- 15 were in other types of educational institution, mainly tertiary.

Whereas 80%90% of the teachers in primary, grammar and secondary high schools were on permanent contracts, the majority of those in colleges of further education and other types of postcompulsory education were still teaching on a temporary basis (Figure 4). Overall, 87% of the RQTs in teaching posts 89% of the primarytrained and 83% of the secondarytrained were employed in the sector for which they were specifically trained.

Figure 4

Posts Held in Different Types of Institution by RQTs at June 1994



11. More than a quarter (28%) of the RQTs in primary schools had composite classes of two or more age groups and over half (56%) taught one or more subjects to classes other than their own. The most frequently mentioned subjects were music, art, physical education and technology.

12. Of the RQTs in secondlevel schools, 36% did some sixth form teaching, another 58% taught to Key Stage 4 and only 6% did no teaching beyond Key Stage 3. In listing the subjects they taught for at least two hours a week, 39% named just one subject, 41% named two subjects, 19% named three subjects, while a few (1.4%) listed four subjects.

13. Special responsibilities had been given to over half (54%) of the RQTs although only a quarter of these teachers received an abovescale allowance. For primary school teachers the responsibilities were usually for an area of the curriculum; teachers in secondlevel schools had relatively more pastoral and organisational responsibilities.

Further Study and Future Plans

14. By the time of the survey, 12% of the RQTs had already obtained a further qualification, 14% were currently studying and 29% intended to begin studying within two years. In all, 46% of the RQTs expressed some interest in further study. While many of the qualifications already obtained for example, in religious education, information technology and sports coaching may have been taken to improve employment prospects, most of the qualifications being planned were parttime master's degrees, either in Education or the RQTs' main academic subject.

15. Some 70% of the RQTs indicated that they fully expected to remain in teaching for the foreseeable future and another 20% thought they would probably stay. Only 3% thought it probable or fairly certain that they would leave, the remaining 7% being 'uncertain'. Unsurprisingly, teachers in temporary employment were less certain of staying than those in permanent posts.

Methodology

16. Questionnaires were sent in June 1994 to all 1,403 teachers who qualified in Northern Ireland in 1991 or 1992. Replies were received from 941, a 67.1% response rate. The respondents closely resembled the full cohorts of teachers in the subjects they had studied and in the proportions obtaining the different initial training qualifications available in Northern Ireland. Although slightly more of the respondents than of the full cohorts had taken up permanent posts on qualification (52.7% vs 47.9%), a difference of that size would have little effect on the conclusions that can be drawn from the survey.

The Project

17. The followup survey of teachers who qualified in 1991 and 1992 was commissioned by DENI from the NICER Research Unit of the School of Education at Queen's University at a cost of £15,000. The grantholder was Miss A E Sutherland.

Full Report

18. The results of the survey are reported in full in "Teachers who Qualified in 1991 and 1992: A Followup Survey of Employment Patterns" by Anne E Sutherland. A limited number of copies are available from the Department of Education for Northern Ireland.

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Education for Northern Ireland who funded the study.

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