

STEM Teacher Education Bursaries

Bursaries would be available to career changers wishing to undertake an initial teacher education course in Scotland that leads to the award of registered teacher status in priority STEM subjects - currently Maths, Computing Science, Technical Education. The subjects eligible for bursaries would be reviewed each year according to need.

Qualification requirements: relevant degree at 2.1 or above with suitable subject content. Higher English or equivalent, National 5 / Credit level Maths (or equivalent) - although support would be provided for the provision of English/Maths qualifications if necessary.

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It is suggested that delivery would be in partnership with local authorities and universities, and tied into employment contracts with local authorities, in a similar way to the Transition Training Fund.

The individual would undertake study for the one year Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (Secondary subject) in one of the specified subjects.

On gaining PGDE(S), the individual would be required to undertake the induction year within the partner local authority.

The local authority would be expected to offer a guarantee of employment, for minimum of 3 years on completion of induction year/full registration.

On successful completion of the induction year, the individual would be expected to be employed in the partner local authority for this period. REDACTED

It is likely that we would need to undertake a procurement exercise to identify a delivery partner, as we could not deliver this in house - so additional costs would need to be built in for this. Would also require agreement with COSLA around LA tie-in, and universities. REDACTED Discussions with COSLA and the unions would commence immediately if Ministers wish to pursue this option further.

Supported Induction Route

Another option could be to expand/adapt the new Supported Induction Route (SIR) that has recently been developed by the University of Dundee and supported by funds from the Scottish Attainment Challenge. This programme offers the opportunity to become a fully registered teacher in a 52 week course while earning the equivalent of a probationer teacher's salary. This Supported Induction Route (SIR) brings together the first two steps of teacher education - Initial Teacher Education (PGCE) and the Teacher Induction Scheme into a single calendar year.

Key features include a 37 week placement in a single school (rather than the traditional 6 week placements) enabling the development of stronger, continuous working relationships with the school, its staff, pupils and community. On completion of the 52 week course students will be fully registered secondary school teachers with a Postgraduate Certificate in Education, and immediately able to apply for permanent teaching posts in their subject specialism.

Currently SIR is aimed at STEM subjects and home economics and is targeted both at career changers and recently qualified graduates. SIR is open for recruitment now, with numbers limited to 37, and the course begins in January 2018. This will be a challenging programme for students but is likely to be very attractive given the speed students will meet the Standard for Full Registration and the fact they will be paid a salary of £22,000 while they are part of the course.

It would be possible to increase the number of places available on this programme and potentially help the University of Dundee with marketing. Since the University of Dundee launched this programme on 13 September they have had a high level of interest and have already asked whether their allocation can be increased.

As the salary costs associated with this route are met from the money allocated in the local government settlement for the Teacher Induction Scheme, the cost of expanding this programme would be relatively limited. There would be an additional cost to the SG in terms of student fee. There would be a further additional cost as the programme relies on an enhanced mentoring role requiring more of an experienced practitioners time and for the purposes of the pilot the commensurate increase in supply staff is being paid by SG.

There are risks here not least the fact that the programme is a pilot, is a radical departure in terms of a Scottish model of teacher education and is currently the subject of scepticism from the teacher unions who are wrongly viewing this as a step towards a Teach First approach. We would also need to consider how students could be deployed if the numbers involved were increased as the current pilot is based on a relatively small number of partnerships with Angus, Dundee City, Perth and Kinross and Fife Councils who are traditional partners of the University of Dundee.

This could also be tied into a contract with local authority employers with a requirement that on successful completion of the course, the individual would be expected to be employed in the partner local authority for a further two years. If the individual wished to be released from the contract then there would be a financial penalty of the return of costs (which could scaled according to length of service given to the local authority employer).