The Potential Impact of QTLS Recognition on Teacher Shortages in London Secondary Schools

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Abstract

In April 2012 the Institute for Learning’s endeavour was gratified with the recognition of QTLS in schools. This paper reports on the findings of the potential impact of such recognition on the teachers’ shortage, particularly in secondary schools in London. To achieve this, using a small survey, 10 London secondary schools participated in the project. The survey’s evidence indicated that the majority of schools showed preference over female FE (Further Education) teachers with QTLS (Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills) and reported the schools’ unwillingness to recruit teachers without the status. Furthermore, among the teachers recruited, those teaching the shortage subjects were predominant. Though the research shows the possible impact employing QTLS professionals from FE can make on the insufficient number of teachers in the secondary education sector, the requirement for a wider scope research is necessary for the real assessment of the impact.
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Chapter 1 - Introduction

The restrictive chances for FE practitioners into the academia world have crowned my attempts into that direction with unsuccessful results. However, a shift in the situation appeared plausible with the Institute for Learning (IfL) and the Oxford University’s programme where collaborative work with other practitioners and the gain of practical research skills were made possible. Hence, my research topic relates to the issue of teachers’ shortage in schools for its close link between some of the IfL’s work. Throughout the report, I will be referring merely to FE teachers with QTLS. However, before any further elaboration, I would like to introduce myself.

1.1 About me

Over a decade ago, I joined the FE sector as an IT Lecturer prior to my HND in Computing and additional IT qualifications. Over the years, I was provided with several opportunities including supporting students with learning difficulties. Consequently, I became passionate about dyslexia which I was diagnosed from later on. My interest for the condition has grown further to the extent that I became a qualified dyslexia teacher. Hence, for the last 7 years, I have been working as a dyslexia specialist in FE.

As a qualified FE teacher and dyslexia specialist, I also possess a Subject Specialism in Adult Numeracy, a level 5 Diploma in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and a Masters in Inclusive Education and Technology. Although, I would not deny the pride in my realisations up-to-date, my upmost achievements would be the exercise of my expertise in dyslexia to its maximum and becoming a researcher in education. These two objectives can be reached via the IfL’s support. Firstly, the QTLS and QTS parity’s recognition increases my employability within the compulsory education where students are, generally, on longer courses compared to students in FE. Secondly, the actual IfL’s Practitioner Researcher Programme is a stepping stone into my aspiring researcher’s career. In the terms of this
paper, I will only concentrate around the mobility within the education sectors, particularly from FE to a secondary school. While further elucidation is provided in later chapters, in the following lines we will find out more about IfL.

1.2 Background

1.2.a The Institute for Learning (IfL)

The Institute for Learning was created in 2002 as the independent professional body for practitioners in FE (IfL, 2009). However, owing to its influential work, it included the professionals within the skills sector in the following years. Currently, the IfL represents over 75,000 professionals (IfL, 2012, p. 4). The continuous prowess of the institution was encouraged by the new FE workforce reforms (LLUK, 2007). Indeed, from 2007, it was required from new professional entrants to the FE sector to be professionally registered and hold a practicing certificate leading to the acquisition of a QTLS or ATLS. While QTLS (Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills) is for those with full range of teaching responsibilities, ATLS (Associate Teacher Learning and Skills) is reserved for professionals with reduced teaching responsibilities and those delivering training to adults within the sector. Consequently, the IfL became the regulatory body promoting the professional excellence of teachers and trainers in FE and the Skills Sector through wide range of continuing professional development events. Moreover, the institution is devoted to raise the status of its members as well as giving them the opportunity to influence policies (IfL, 2010). Among the numerous achievements of the IfL, as mentioned previously, is the recognition of the parity between QTLS and QTS (Qualified Teacher Status). Though Toni Fazaeli, IfL’s chief executive vowed that the “IfL will be working to get the best for members” (IfL, 2012, p. 4), it is clear that the institution was challenged by the government’s new regulation. In fact, this year, IfL’s position has been altered with the regulation of October 2012 where its registration is no longer a requirement (IfL, 2012, p4); hence, membership to the institution returns to its voluntary basis as it was when the institution was initially set up.
1.2.b Link between IfL and the research’s topic

The long awaited alignment of FE teachers’ status with their peers in schools became a reality in April 2012. Indeed, Simons (2012, p. 12) reported that FE teachers with QTLS accreditation have been recognised by law as equal to teachers holding the QTS in schools. This enables fairer employment mobility between the compulsory education and the FE sector as it is stated by the DfES (2012):

“From 1st April 2012, teachers with Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status will be able to teach in schools as fully qualified teachers. This change has been made to give schools greater access to experienced teachers of vocational subjects, as recommended in Professor Alison Wolf’s Review of Vocational Education.”

Prior to such recognition, teachers from schools can seek employment as lecturers in FE (Smithers & Robinson, 2003). Yet, the inverse was not permitted. With the shift in the situation, it can be argued that the poor descriptor attributed to FE teachers compared to the compulsory and higher education professionals is no longer valid (Simons, 2012, p. 12). Therefore, if FE teachers with QTLS can be employed in schools, can one claim that the compulsory education has found a solution to its insufficient number of teachers?

1.3 Research aims

In the recent years, there have been concerns over teachers’ shortage in schools. So, the acceptance of FE professionals into the compulsory education can be argued beneficial to the wider education sector in appeasing the tension in schools. The hypothesis of the research derives from the assumption that if there is lack of teachers in schools, QTLS parity with QTS should help filling the gap. Therefore, this research
attempted to assess whether the recognition of QTLS has impacted on the presumed lack of teachers in the compulsory education. To answer this question, I approached only secondary schools in London owing to the limited timescale of the project. So, the study aimed at examining the:

- Number of secondary schools hired/employed QTLS teachers before and since April 2012
- Gender difference in the recruitment
- Most subjects taught
- Schools’ opinion on teachers without QTLS

1.4 Scope
The study’s scope was restricted to 100 secondary schools in London; this was with the intention to minimise the risk of receiving disappointing responses from the schools. Although the maximum response was expected from the participating schools, 10% secondary schools volunteered in the research. This has resulted in modifying one of the aims of the study from number of QTLS teachers hired/employed before and since April 2012 to number of secondary schools hired/employed QTLS teachers during these periods.

1.5 Impact on my own professional practice
As a QTLS FE teacher, the research’s impact on my professional practice is twofold. Firstly, as an aspiring researcher in FE, the current research gave me the opportunity to conduct a study collaboratively with expert researchers and experienced professionals in education. The extra privilege obtained from this work is the chance to take part in a study from a bottom-up approach contrary to the usual “top down, centralised policy design process, often married to an obsession with volume participation and achievement targets” (Keep, 2012) forming the basis of researches in education.
Secondly, the findings of this study have the potential to help with the improvement of my practice (Lovitt & Higgins, 1996) by guiding towards my decision to work in the compulsory education sector. Consequently, this is increasing my chances to deal with students on longer courses. Hence, the possibility of an improved assessment of the impact of my support (as a dyslexia specialist) on students’ progress and the adoption of a more realistic reflective process regarding adjustments in my practice prevail. One of the motivating factors prompting my intention resonates with the uncertainty of the employment sustainability in the FE sector due to incessant funding cuts. Indeed, in addition to the actual pressure from funding constraints (Green & Fletcher, 2012) faced by FE colleges, Exley (2012) reported on the government’s intention to reduce FE colleges' budget by a quarter by 2015. From this tangent, I will evaluate the employment prospect in secondary schools as a female QTLS FE teacher.

Summary
The victorious recognition of the statuses’ parity allows FE practitioners with QTLS to work in schools. Also, the IfL has joined up with Oxford University to develop a programme allowing professionals with QTLS to conduct researches. Hence, as a qualified FE teacher with QTLS, two of my ambitions: seeking employment in the secondary education and becoming an education researcher could be accomplished. Nevertheless, since, the central focus of this paper is based on the research in schools; my study has examined the extent to which secondary schools in London showed interest to FE teachers with QTLS in order to tackle the claimed teachers’ shortage that the schools are facing.
Chapter 2 – Literature review

2.1 Introduction

Literature review often forms one of the major preparatory works in researches as it assists in “locating and summarizing the studies about the topic” (Creswell, 2009) with the specific intention to provide range of models helping “in achieving clarity and focussing on key issues” (Cohen & Manion, 1994). So, the overall reading performed revealed an exhaustive work on teachers’ shortage; however, the opposite prevailed concerning the topic of this paper.

The 21st century education policies are steered by a substantial increased learning in schools to meet students’ needs individually and equip them with critical skills for their future success in the labour market. Since schools are, often, viewed as incubators of knowledge and the means of “expanding economic opportunity, enhancing social mobility, developing a skilled workforce, and preparing young people to participate in a democratic society” (Murnane & Steele, 2007), the provision of high quality education is vital in order to compete (Sahlberg & Boce 2010) in the current fast-paced global economy. Still, effective progress can only be achieved in education, more precisely in the teaching profession, unless the major challenges are addressed and resolved. By and large, teaches’ shortage has made the headlines and featured in various political and academic discourses. Nevertheless, concerning the link between the QTLS recognition and teachers’ shortage, the scarcity of researches in the field triumphed due to the novelty of the matter. This chapter talks about the gender difference in teaching, followed by the history of teachers’ shortage, the reason for the shortage, the main subject areas of the shortage and the QTLS summer 2012 cohort.

2.2 Gender difference in teaching
The concept of gender is perceived as the basis of a society organising principles; As a result, the teaching career reports differences in gender representations. The situation is depicted in an interesting way.

In UK, nursery, primary and special schools “had the largest majorities of female teachers” (Department for Education, 2010). Furthermore, Acker (1989) attested that such dominance is equally reflected in the management of the sector. Yet, secondary schools display differing position. This can be justified by the under-representation of secondary schools female leaders in ‘UK and elsewhere’ (Gokçe, 2009). But, on the whole, the gender disparity in the teaching workforce in secondary schools shows roughly equal numbers of teachers. Explicitly, Smith (2011) stated that in 2006, there were 57% of female teachers in England and Wales secondary schools. Nevertheless, the fact remains that there were slightly more female teachers than their male counterparts. Accordingly, the current figure of female teachers could be an additional factor augmenting the chances of female QTLS professional into secondary education. Yet, before a definite conclusion further in the study, let’s look at the history of the lack of teachers.

2.3 Teachers’ shortage history

For the central position held by the teaching profession in relationship to countries’ economic progress (Sahlberg & Boce, 2010), it remains the voguish topic for researchers and academics. In truth, Caires, Almeida &Vierra (2012) asserted that the teaching field has been of a greater interest for scientific and academic discussions and studies around the world for many years. Moreover, the authors proclaimed that: “the richness and complexity of this phenomenon has been the subject of multiple interests and ways of exploring its different dimensions, actors and dynamics”. So, one of the areas in teaching that has been raising eyebrows for decades is the inability of schools to cope with the limited number of teachers in the compulsory education.
Half a century ago, Archilbald (1954) noted the persisting unfilled teaching positions in education. About a decade later, the situation remained unaffected. Besides, Israel (1961) attested on the qualified teachers’ recruitment difficulties experienced by school administrators. Aligning with the former two authors, Laird & Schilson (1964) reported on the same issue of the insufficient number of teachers in schools. From Laird & Schilson’s stance, the degree of the crisis was expressed in the feeling among schools of being fortunate when equipped with the appropriate number of teachers at the beginning of the academic year. Nevertheless, far for being an issue affecting a few countries, the problem has been observed worldwide (Ever et al., 2011). Although it might appear tempting to judge the matter of teachers’ shortage as non-reflective of the 21st century’s schools, it is sad to claim the contrary since there has not been any noticeable alteration in the current years concerning the matter. Rather, Evers et al., (2011) vowed that “teacher shortages are even expected to increase in the years to come”.

For example, in Europe, UNESCO’s teaching profession study (EURYDICE, 2002a,b) warned the candidates and member countries of the European Union to address and find solutions to the “severe shortage of teachers” for the prevention of “slides in education standards” (UNESCO, 2002). Among the participating countries of the study, 68% reported having insufficient teachers in their schools and 19% claimed surpluses. The remaining 13% said to have an effective demand and supply balance; these countries are notably (Finland, Spain, Northern Ireland and Scotland). The irony is that, despite belonging to the 68% European countries having teachers’ shortage, England does not appear to learn from its home countries. Consequently, the actuality of the problem is ever pressing.

Also, in The Telegraph, Paton (2011), reported on the ‘Fears over teachers’ shortage following training slump’ and the secondary schools’ crisis owing to the poor recruitment of
teachers. Furthermore, in the same article, Professor John Howson, the Managing Director of Education Data Surveys, reiterated the eminence of the crisis and its effects in 2013 and 2014. This dominant situation undermines the government’s initiative to recruit and retain teachers in the sector.

For the situation of the teachers’ shortage is complex in nature, Israel (1961) admitted that no quick-fixes would be effective remedies to the matter. Nevertheless, he pointed in the direction of better pay conditions and effective training for teachers. Espousing this view, the government has adopted varied approaches in order to alleviate the problem. For that reason, Smithers & Robinson (2003) applauded the numerous incentives of the government from 1998 in order to tackle the shortage. They remarked that, in addition to the ‘Golden Hellos’ scheme for the shortage subjects, further support where provided in the nature of tuition fee remission, repayment of student loans and fast-tracking to increase teachers’ recruitment figures. Finally, the authors concluded on the relative positive influence of the incentives in boosting the numbers of teachers in schools; nonetheless, they failed to make substantial difference to readdress the situation entirely. Equally, the work of Charles et al., (2008) has established the incessant shortage of certain category of teachers, principally in science and mathematics in secondary schools. So, what can this persevering lack of teachers in schools be attributed to?

2.4Reasons for the shortage

The clear definition of what constitutes teacher shortages and the availability of relevant data on the matter are farfetched. However in England, the following factors: retirement, workload and salary can be blamed.

Despite the continuing shortage of teachers in secondary schools, it is practically unheard of that students are “sent home because no teacher is available” (Smithers& Robinson, 2000).
This raises the questions on how the schools have been coping with the situation. Robinson & Smithers (2000) suggested that, the apparent management of teachers’ shortage is handled by varied coping strategies by schools; these are:

a- recruitment of staff through networking  
b- reliance on overseas teachers  
c- adjustment of the curriculum to suit available staff  
d- use of part-time, temporary and supply staff  
e- reduction of contact time  
f- request from teachers in post to teach outside their subject

Certainly, all the above would require some adjustment from the entire institution and probably would affect students’ performance and achievement. More importantly, it is indisputable that the last two points would impact greatly on teachers in addition to “the numerous factors that they have to deal within their on-going interactions in the classroom” (Bullough & Stokes, 1994). So, Butterworth (1982) cautioned on the phenomenon of overloading of teachers in schools. In other words, the expectations from teachers have been exacerbated through the allocation of extensive teaching sessions and the increase in students/teacher ratio. Both of these reasons are detrimental to teachers to the extent that they may affect their personal and professional performance. Nevertheless, the upmost consequence is that they bear a higher risk to push teachers out of the profession through excessive stress; consequently, aggravating the shortage of professionals in the field. Regarding the intensification of the stress level experienced by secondary teachers currently compared to over a decade ago, Sheffield, Dobbie & Carroll (1994) reported in their work that “secondary school teachers in this study registered high levels of self-reported job stress”. Further factors attributed to the shortage range from the teaching workforce
retirement, salary (Eagle et al., 1987; Smidiers & Hill, 1989; Smithers & Robinson, 2003; Murnane & Steele, 2007) and poorly qualified teachers (Smithers & Robinson, 2003).

With regards to the problem of retirement, Murnane and Steel (2007) advised on its effect on the sector. From the same viewpoint, Evers et al., (2011) perceived the reduction of the teaching workforce due to the greying of its population as a crucial justification of the lack of teachers in schools. Moreover, they coined the cause of the situation to the use of unqualified teachers or the requirement for teachers to teach outside their subjects. Actually, Charles et al., (2008) survey on secondary schools in 2007 showed that 19% of teachers did not possess A Level qualifications in the subjects taught in exam classes (years 9, 11, 12 and 13) in contrast to 22% of teachers in non-exam years classes (years 7, 8 and 10).

As aforementioned, Murnane & Oslen (1989) believed that teachers’ remuneration also plays a principal role on the shortage. So, on the assumption that the attraction and retention of effective teachers occurs when the ‘quantity demanded exceeds the quantity supplied at a given wage,’ Murnane & Steele (2007) recommended the increase of teachers’ salaries as the way forward. Until all the above causes of the shortage are resolved, the number of teachers to covers all subjects in schools will pose challenges to the education sector, particularly in the fields of mathematics, technology and science.

2.5 Main areas of the shortage
Many countries across Europe are experiencing shortages in mathematics, sciences and technology. Among these shortage areas, the situation is more noticeable in the mathematics field as Cockcroft (1982) pointed out that the “shortage of good teachers of mathematics has been a matter of concern for years”. Equally, Bullock & Scott (1993) attested on the severity of the problem. Accordingly, the overall situation has prompted the
UK government to implement initiatives in the training of teachers in mathematics, physics and technology by providing a tax-free grant to trainee teachers of these subjects.

Owing to the persistence of the issue of the deficient number of teachers in the current years, despite the government’s attempts to solve the matter, it is clear that solutions needed to be sought from a different angle. Therefore, it is not unrealistic to consider the recognition of QTLS in the compulsory education as one of the means to solve teachers’ shortage in schools. Hence, in the next lines, some light will be shed on the suitability of QTLS teachers.

2.6 QTLS cohort for summer 2012
The number of FE teachers gaining QTLS status has been increasing over the years. In November 2012, the institution declared that 10,000 professionals gained the status (IfL, 2012, p. 5). Although it would have been interesting to look at the entire QTLS cohort since the institution was created, the scope of this paper would not permit it. In consequence, the focus was on the cohort of the teachers who gained QTLS in summer 2012 (Appendix A).
The data showed that 2630 practitioners have achieved the status during that period, among them they are 1658 females and 972 males. The teaching qualifications of these teachers range from level 4 to masters and doctorates. Furthermore, their teaching subjects are widely varied including the shortage subjects above mentioned confirming that they are effectively qualified and are in appropriate number to help with the shortage. Arguably, if the previous government’s attempts to supply more teachers in the shortage areas did not produced the expected outcomes for various reasons including the over reliance on young graduates’ teachers (Bullock & Scott, 1993), with the QTLS a further alternative is presented to tackle the issue.
Summary
So far, in order to draw a clearer picture of my chances to be employed in the secondary education as female a FE practitioner, I highlighted the gender difference in the sector. Also an overview of the issue of the teachers’ shortage was presented concluding the persistence of the matter in the current years where the subjects of maths, science and technology were mostly affected. Finally we paid attention to some of the failed attempts of the government to bring effective solutions to the issue and showed that one of the alternatives to be explored is the employment of QTLS teachers.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

3.1 Introduction
Conducting a research implies the collection of data and information for further insights on a matter or situation (Drew, 1980). Though, such collection can be exercised through various means including surveys and interviews, the selection of the appropriate method depend on the data required. While quantitative researches deal with computable data, qualitative approaches are concerned with understanding people’s conception of their environment (Bell, 1999). But, since “no approach prescribes nor automatically rejects any particular method” (Bell, 1999, p. 7), combining the approaches is not unusual.

3.2 Methods
Bell (1999, p. 101) suggested that the steps in doing a research are: the purpose of the research, the examination of previous studies on the research topic and the selection of the research’s method(s). Abiding to Bell’s suggestion, the absence of studies on my research topic was apparent. This was a further drive in exploring the QTLS impact on teachers’ shortage in secondary schools. To achieve this, I opted for a quantitative approach using a survey.
3.3 Justification for the approach

One of the motivational factors for choosing the quantitative approach for this study rests on its popularity with researchers. It allows the collection of facts and the study of the link between ‘one set of facts to another’ (Bell, 1999, p. 1). The obtained quantifiable data can be measured and analysed with potential ‘generalizable conclusions’ (Bell, 1999, p. 1) for a more objective findings reporting. Through the mean of a survey, the primary source of data, for this study, was collected in addition the use of statistical information from IfL’s summer 2012 QTLS (Appendix A) cohort as a secondary source of data.

3.4 Survey design

To obtain the required quantitative data in the view to study the attitudes and opinion of secondary schools with regards to employing QTLS teachers and draw a conclusion (Creswell, 2009) on the potential impact of these professionals on the shortage of teachers in the secondary education sectors, I used a survey as this appeared to be a “relatively cheap and quick way of obtaining information” (Bell, 1999, p. 14) considering the constricted resources and time frame of the study.

In the survey, all respondents were asked the same questions. As suggested by Maylor & Blackmon (2005), a particular attention was placed on the impact of the design and planning stages. For the reliability of the questions relies heavily on the wording and the questions’ categorisation and presentation (Sekaran, 2003). However, most crucially the dismissal of “questions that are superfluous to the main task” (Bell, 1999) is highly recommended. So, the questions of my survey were designed using simple and regular terms allowing the message to be conveyed accurately. Equally, much consideration was paid to the length and the presentation of the survey which was well spaced out on an A4 paper. The questions were classified into 3 groups and piloted among work colleagues and relatives resulting in some amendments prior to their delivery.
3.5 Ethics and sample

The survey was addressed to Headmasters, HR Officers and administrators in schools. Therefore, owing to the human's participation causing possible complexity, complication and moral issues (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000), the adherence to the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2011) guideline was respected for participants' anonymity, confidentiality, Data Protection and any related ethical considerations. A reminder of the voluntary involvement of participants is stated on the survey (Appendix B) and emails (Appendix C).

The survey was conducted on-line via Survey Monkey. Since I chose the free option of Survey Monkey's facility, I was limited to 100 responses and 10 questions. So, I approached 100 schools in order to increase the number of responses as not every school contacted would participate. An email was sent to the schools explaining the purpose of the study, the anonymity of the information collected and the voluntary nature of the participation; also was included the link to the survey's site. 10% of the total of the schools responded to the survey (Appendix D).

3.6 Data collection

The survey had 3 questions (Appendix B)

Question 1 – Respondents had to state the number of QTLS teachers, females and males their institutions had hired and employed since April 2012; also, they had to mention the subjects taught by the teachers

Question 2 – This is similar to question 1 to the exception that the period of employment is before April 2012
Question 3 – Respondents were asked if their institutions would hire/employ teachers without QTLS.

The data received was compiled using MS Words, MS Excel and Macromedia Fireworks. The normalisation of the data was performed with MS Excel and transferred into the appropriate graphs. For esthetical reasons and probably to reduce the size of the overall document on the computer disc, all the graphs were converted into JPEG format pictures using Macromedia Fireworks. Finally, MS Words was used to test the final look of the pictures (graphs) and the effective way to display them in the report.

3.7 Lesson learnt

My past experience with extremely small scale researches was based on published researches, varying tutors’ support, lengthy lectures based on occasional perplexing or complex concepts and books which sometimes impact negatively on my ambition to become a researcher. Nevertheless, the IfL’s practice to theory approach in contrast to the traditional theory-to-practice method (Schroeder, 2004) has provided me with greater insights into conducting my research more effectively. In fact, the practical sessions led by the institution with Oxford academics revealed some of the precautions needing considerations throughout the stages of an academic research. This has enabled us (IfL, Oxford University and the practitioners on the programme) to build a research partnership (Brew & Prosser, 2003) from which I experienced some of the realities faced by researchers in their practice. For example owing to the advice from the practical sessions, I increased considerably the number of targeted schools participating in the study. From the initial 25 schools, the number has been altered to 100 schools from which I received 10 % responses. Many factors may have contributed to the minimal responses from the targeted schools; but, the principal justification could be the fact that the emails sent to the schools during the recruitment process were not addressed, in general, to any designated staff. Hence, in the future, I would operate
differently. Although I regarded the percentage of participants in the study as acceptable for my small scale project, I felt obliged to adjust one of the study's aims. Consequently, as a novice in the field, the IfL's approach has been of invaluable benefits to my developing research skills. Moreover, the periodic emails from the IfL to all students on the programme reminding us of deadlines or future meetings coupled with the continuous support from our mentor reduced the usual isolation and overwhelming feelings often experienced on higher education programmes I attended.

Summary
The study used a quantitative approach based on a short and anonymous on-line survey to collect the required data. The survey was designed with a careful consideration to the wording, presentation and the categorisation of the questions. Moreover, the British Educational Research Association’s guideline was observed. The returned data from the completed survey was sorted out, manipulated and represented using word processing, spread sheet and image manipulating software. Additionally, the lesson learnt from the programme as an aspiring researcher was stated.

3.8 Data Analysis
The achievement of meaningful information required the analysis and interpretation of the raw data from the survey in order to meet the aims of my study; hence, the gathered information is displayed in order to highlight similarities and divergences (Bell, 1999, p. 173). The information is interpreted under the following headings: the situations since 2012, the situation before 2012 and number of schools showing interest in hiring/employing teachers without QTLS. The main objectives of the questions are to show that QTLS can enhance the chances of FE professionals while seeking employment in secondary schools, the dominance in number of female teachers recruited versus male teachers and the high percentage teaching areas such as Maths, Science and ICT. All these are directed to
establish the potential positive impact of QTLS recognition to the shortages of teachers in the participating schools.

3.8.a Situation since April 2012.

Since the recognition of QTLS in schools in April 2012, the study showed the number of the institutions that hired/employed QTLS teachers, number of male versus female teachers and the subjects taught during that period in Table 1.

Table 1- April 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of secondary schools that had hired QTLS teachers</th>
<th>Females and males QTLS professionals hire</th>
<th>Subjects taught</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chart A</td>
<td>Chart B</td>
<td>Chart C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the first column of Table 1, the research’s findings reported that since April 2012 and among the 10 respondents, 6 secondary schools hired/employed QTLS teachers compared 4 that did otherwise (Chart A). In the second column, in Chart B, from the teachers hired/employed, 12 were females and 6 were males. In column 3, the subjects taught were
Photography (1), Law (1), Maths (5), Science (4), ICT (3), English (2), Drama (1) and History (1) (Chart C).

So, in Chart A, there is an apparent tendency towards the increased recruitment of teachers with QTLS than those without the status by secondary schools. Evidently, the figures showed that 60% of the schools have hired and employed teachers with QTLS and only 40% did the opposite. Chart B confirmed the prevailing situation of female teachers outnumbering their male peers as the schools in the study hired/employed 67% of females teachers compared to 33% of male teachers. Chart C testified on the areas of the curriculum most affected by the shortage of teachers. Consequently, Maths, Science and ICT occupied the largest percentage of 67% of the subjects taught among the overall 8 subjects teachers were recruited for. The rest of the subjects occupied 33%.

3.8.b Situation before April 2012
At this stage, the number of schools that hired/employed QTLS teachers prior to April 2012, number of male teachers compared to female teachers and the subjects taught are stated in Table 2.

Table 2 – Before April 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of secondary schools that had hired QTLS teachers</th>
<th>Females and males QTLS professionals hired</th>
<th>Subjects taught</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
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</table>
In the above Table 2, Chart D reported that, from the overall 10 participating secondary schools, 3 institutions had hired/employed teachers with QTLS when 7 declined. The genders of the teachers hired/employed constituted of 4 females and 2 males (Chart E). They taught Maths (2), Science (2), Business (1) and ICT (1) (Chart F).

Contrary to Chart A, in Chart D, there is an obvious low turnover of the schools (30%) that hired/employed teachers from FE with QTLS before April 2012 compared to 70% of the schools that did otherwise. This might suggest that schools paid much consideration to the recognition of the parity between QTS and QTLS. However, similarly to Charts B and C, Charts E and F showed a larger percentage of hired/employed female teachers (67%) and the dominance of Maths and Science (67%) in the teaching subjects. The rest of the subjects occupied only 33% of the overall subjects teachers were hired for before April 2012. Nevertheless, the recruitment for ICT subject, in this case, was not in much demand as in the findings of Table 1.

3.8.c Schools willing to hire/employ teachers without QTLS

From here, secondary schools that expressed their intention to hire/employ teachers without QTLS are debated.
Chart G evidenced the fact that, from the 10 respondents, 3 secondary schools were willing to employ teachers without QTLS and 7 stated the contrary.

Attesting on the general tendency among schools regarding the probable consideration they might pay to the recognition of QTLS in schools as shown in Chart E, in Chart G, only 30% of the schools were inclined to allow teachers without QTLS to join their workforce when 70% expressed the opposite.

Summary
Since April 2012, it is shown that the secondary schools involved in the study hired/employed more teachers with QTLS; but the contrary occurred prior to April 2012 where least secondary schools hired/employed a minimum number of teachers with QTLS. Furthermore, the schools expressed the general tendency in their lack of interest towards FE teachers without QTLS. Vis-à-vis to the gender disparity in the recruitment, there has been a higher percentage in the female teachers recruitment compared to their male peers. Also, the shortage subjects, in general, reported higher demand in their recruitment.
Chapter 4 Discussion and Conclusion

4.1 Discussion

This paper has tried to show the impact of the recognition of QTLS in schools on the teachers’ shortage in secondary schools in London by assessing: a) the number of secondary schools that employed/hired QTLS teachers since/before April 2012; b) number of female and male teachers employed/hired since/before April 2012; c) the major subjects taught by the recruited QTLS teachers during these periods; d) the position of the schools on recruiting teachers without QTLS. The information captured had guided us in concluding that the schools in the study employed/hired a higher percentage of females FE teachers with QTLS since April 2012 for the majority of the shortage subjects. However, prior to the recognition of the parity of QTLS with QTS, less interest was shown in employing FE teachers with the status. Though, a limited number of QTLS teachers worked in the schools prior to April 2012, the number of female teachers outnumbered their male colleagues. Furthermore, the subjects taught concentrated, in general, on the shortage subjects. Finally, the secondary schools expressed their indifference, by and large, towards FE teachers without QTLS.

Hence, the research illustrated that the recognition of QTLS in schools has impacted on the perception of teachers in FE from not “real teachers” (Opie, 2012) to equal professionals as QTS teachers in schools (DfES, 2012). Not only that such recognition has enhanced the notion of professionalism in the sector through “better trained and qualified staff” (Turner, Thomas & Rose, 2008) by affecting the quality of service delivery and improving Ofsted inspection, it appeared to have played a decisive role in the recruitment of FE teachers in secondary schools in London. With QTLS, the assumption of acquiring “better knowledge, transferrable skills and qualifications” stands; therefore, it is believed that the status can “improve employment chances and career progress” (Turner et al., 2008). From such perspective, as a female FE teacher with QTLS and due to the fact that before and since
April 2012, a larger number of female FE teachers were hired/employed by the schools in the study, my hopes are increased regarding moving into the secondary education sector.

However, returning to the main discussion, it is clear that the reality of the lack of teachers in secondary schools subsequent to myriad factors is irrefutable. As Murnane & Steele (2007) and Sahlberg & Boce (2010) pointed out, the correlation between education and effective competitiveness in the fast changing economy has forced the government to response to the challenge through diverse ‘policy instruments’ and incentives for improvement. One of the government’s attempts to address the issue was to favour young graduates into the profession; however, this failed to reach the expected results. Therefore, it is questionable whether a combined recruitment of younger teachers (largely inexperience) with QTLS teachers, often, with wide-range of teaching experience would have led to better outcome regarding the persisting shortage. Indeed, it can be argued that the more experienced teachers are, in most of the cases, they might have “the advantages of looking older, well-developed interpersonal skills, confidence and experience of bringing up children is a bonus on school experiences” (Bullock & Scott, 1993).

In my opinion, referring to the holistic definition of teaching practice, the reliance on QTLS teachers as a solution for the discussed shortage is irrevocable. For according to Caires, Almeida & Vieira (2012), teaching practice is primarily the application of the relevant skills “in order to guarantee some level of technical expertise in the classroom” which in turn implies the possession of some occupational competence and expertise. Nonetheless, Van der Heijden (2000) sees occupational “competence” and occupational “expertise” as interchangeable terms for their reference to personal qualities and capabilities needed in the workplace. She believes that the notion of competence resonates with one’s ability as well as the willingness of an individual to take on work responsibilities (Van der Heijden, 1998). Furthermore, Bullock & Scott (1993) perceived essential the provision of continued
professional development (CPD) to all new teachers during their probationary year for the provision’s quality. Consequently, regardless of the sector, becoming and remaining an effective teacher, “depends on the interaction of multiple variables amongst which the teacher’s personal characteristics” (Caires, Almeida & Martins, 2010). So, if QTLS teachers show interests in working in schools by accepting to take on their new role of secondary school’s teachers and are enthusiastic about any relevant CPD with the desire to provide effective teaching towards the improvement of students’ performance, would not they be ideal for filling in the gap for the actual practitioners’ shortage in secondary schools?

4.2 Research limitations

One of the initial aims of this study was to conclude on the potential impact on the QTLS’s parity with QTS on the discussed shortages in the participating institutions. Nonetheless, the insufficient respondents’ turnover prevented the generalisation of the findings to all London’s institutions. Nevertheless, the feel of the positive contribution the statuses’ parity can represent to the lack of teachers in secondary school is obvious; thus, this research cannot claim to be confirmatory or deductive but rather descriptive and explanatory for the limitation in the number of participating schools as the sampling was not representative of the London secondary schools’ population. The real assessment of the situation will required a longitudinal research on the topic in England, or to a lesser extent in the secondary schools in London.
4.3 Conclusion

The study’s outcomes revealed the standing of QTLS parity with QTS and its potential to assist with teachers’ shortage in secondary schools.

On one hand, for the wider education sector the recognition of QTLS in schools could indicate the need for better collaboration intending to provide enhanced curriculum to young people. Inevitably a better harmonisation of the teacher training for FE and secondary education teachers may be considered. Moreover, QTLS assists with the formation and maintenance of a high standard workforce in FE. But above all, the parity of the statuses (QTLS and QTS) is of a vital significance. For the positive attitude among the schools towards FE teachers holding the status, one can say that QTLS can increase employability chances in the compulsory education. In fact, with the current precarious financial situation within FE, this might be reassuring for practitioners in the sector. Subsequently, this could be perceived as an incentive for achieving the QTLS status even though the registration to IfL was no longer a government requirement since 1/10/12.

One the other hand, despite the study’s scale, it exhibited the possibility that QTLS teachers could help with the issue faced by the secondary education. The evidence of the increased IfL members gaining QTLS status provide a substantial amount of qualified professionals with wide range of teaching expertise including the shortage subjects of mathematics, science and ICT readily available for the secondary education sector. However, more researches are needed to unveil the actual influence of the recognition of QTLS in schools.
## Appendices

### Appendix A: QTLS Cohort Summer 2012

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### Appendix B: Survey Form with Questions

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Teachers’ Shortage in Secondary Education

The impact of recognition of QTLS status on teacher shortages in secondary schools

Since April 2012, the government has recognised Further Education’s teachers/lecturers with the Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills Status (QTLS) as equal to professionals with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) in schools. Hence, this survey tries to assess whether the status parity has impacted on teachers’ shortage in secondary schools in London.

1. Has your institution hired and employed teachers with QTLS status from the Further Education sector since April 2012?
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No

2. Number of teachers hired/employed since April 2012
   - No of female teachers
   - No of male teachers

3. Subject taught by teachers hired/employed since April 2012

4. Did your institution hire and employ teachers with QTLS status from the Further Education sector before April 2012?
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No

5. Number of teachers hired/employed before April 2012
   - No of female teachers
   - No of male teachers

6. Subject taught by teachers hired/employed before April 2012

7. Would your institution hire and employ teachers without QTLS status from the Further Education sector?
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No
Appendix C: Participants' Recruitment Email

Sir, Madam,

I am a student conducting a survey about teachers’ shortage in secondary schools. My name is Delali Idrissou.

In order to assess the current situation regarding teachers’ shortage in secondary education, I am conducting a quick survey in terms of a programme run by the Oxford University and the iFL and requesting your voluntary participation in the study. Please, be informed that the survey is anonymous and takes no more than 5 mn to complete.

This survey aims at finding out whether your institution has hired and been employing teachers from the Further Education (FE) sector before and after April 2012. Since April 2012, FE lecturers/teacher with the QTLS (Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills) status are recognised as equal to teachers with QTS in schools.

Can you complete this short survey (in no more than 5mn) by clicking on the link below or refer this email to the relevant person within your institution.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/J9LC3D8

Thanks for your support.

Regards,

Delali I.
Appendix D: Summary of Response from Participating Schools

Teachers' Shortage in Secondary Education

Below is a list of the collectors you are currently using to collect responses. To view the details or change the properties of an existing collector, just click the name. To collect more responses for this survey from a different group of people, click "Add New Collector".

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Reference

Bibliography


Web


IfL (2009) ‘Where we came from: History of IfL’. http://ifl.build.squiz.co.uk/about-ifl/who-we-are/history-of-ifl [accessed 31/12/12].


Delali Idrissou

Delali Idrissou is a qualified FE lecturer and specialist in Dyslexia as well as adult numeracy. For over a decade has taught various subjects in FE colleges, workplaces and communities centres before concentrating on dyslexic students during the last 8 years. As a dyslexic herself, Delali currently works as a dyslexia specialist with university and college students.

As a full IfL member, an associate member of the British Dyslexia Association (AMBDA) and a member of PATOSS (Professional Association of Teachers of Students with Specific Learning Difficulties), Delali completed a Master Degree in Inclusive Education in 2012. Her ultimate goal is to become an FE researcher.