



Permanent Secretary

Meg Hillier MP
Chair
Committee of Public Accounts
House of Commons
London SW1 0AA

23rd July 2018

Dear Meg,

Third Report of Session 2016-17: Training new teachers

In the Treasury Minute Progress Report response of January 2018, the Department set out that some of the work relating to Recommendation 6 was still in progress, with analysis due to be completed by April 2018. This analysis is ongoing and I thought it would be helpful if I set out why the final analysis will now be published in autumn 2018.

Recommendation 6 of the Committee report on Training new teachers (10 June 2016) stated that the Department should evaluate properly whether bursaries, and other payments such as the future teacher scholarships, lead to more, better quality teachers in classrooms, including whether the money could be more effectively spent in other ways, such as on retention measures. As set out in the January 2018 Treasury Minute Progress Report, we have already completed important work to review financial incentives and put in place two new pilot schemes, which will be fully evaluated to assess their impact on teacher recruitment and retention and their value for money in comparison to traditional bursaries.

A key part of implementing the Committee's recommendation is developing a better understanding of outcomes for individuals that receive Initial Teacher Training (ITT) bursaries; work to meet this aspect of the recommendation is still ongoing but the outcomes of our analysis will be published by autumn 2018. The completion date for this work is therefore later than the date of April 2018 previously advised to the Committee.

The delay has arisen because the analysis is new and complex; it is based on linking together ITT and school workforce data. The first ever analysis drawing on this linked dataset was published as part of the third Teachers Analysis Compendium¹ in February 2018 and we have built on this to ensure we can accurately identify trainees who received a bursary. It has taken more time than anticipated to create a complete and accurate dataset that can be specifically used to assess the progression of bursary recipients, including identifying and implementing a robust methodology to complete the analysis.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/teachers-analysis-compendium-3>

The final analysis will be published in autumn 2018, as part of our next planned Teachers Analysis Compendium². The publication timing is in line with an equivalent compendium publication last autumn, as it is standard practice to avoid publishing new analysis and evidence over the summer holiday period.

This analysis is the first stage of a longer-term programme of work that we are undertaking to evaluate the range of financial incentives used to incentivise people to join and stay in the teaching profession. This work will feed into the recruitment and retention strategy, as announced by the Education Secretary, Damian Hinds, at the Association of School and College Leaders' (ASCL) conference on 10 March, which I mentioned in my letter of 10 July concerning Recommendation 1 of the Retaining and developing the teaching workforce report (17th Report of Session 2017-19).

We are of course disappointed that we have been unable to complete the analysis to the timeline originally advised to the Committee. However, I hope that you will agree that our priority is to deliver and publish a robust analysis that can be readily accessed and understood by the public and used to inform future decisions. I am confident that the extra time invested in undertaking the analysis will be beneficial to us achieving this objective.

I hope this is a useful update for the Committee. I am copying this letter to Sir Amyas Morse, Comptroller and Auditor General and Richard Brown, Treasury Officer of Accounts.



JONATHAN SLATER
PERMANENT SECRETARY

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements/teachers-analysis-compendium-4>