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Beyond the Ordinary campaign

2020 report (FINAL – September 2020)

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Background / challenge

- 376 ITT RE teachers were recruited in the 2018/19 cycle, contributing just 58% to the target of 643 places. This ranked RE as the 4th worst of all subjects in the percentage of places filled, following a national trend in falling teacher training applications.
- To tackle this problem, the 2019 Beyond the Ordinary campaign was launched, focusing on the reasons why RE teachers love the subject and the job, why they think RE matters, and why RE teaching is a great career.
- The impact of this campaign, combined with the availability of funding for the 200-hour Subject Knowledge Enhancement course for those entering teacher training in September 2019 led to a marked increase in recruited trainees.
- In fact, 525 trainees were recruited in the 2019 cycle, contributing 93% to the target of 525 places - an increase of 30% on the previous cycle.
- The challenge for the 2020/21 cycle was to raise awareness of the SKE course and attract further candidates from disciplines such as History, Philosophy and Sociology, while maintaining the message that teaching RE is a rewarding and inspiring career path.
- A £3,800 grant was made available to support the campaign in 2020.

Campaign overview



- The campaign approach was as follows:
- To highlight the number of RE ITT candidates that had undertaken a SKE (based on a Freedom of Information request to the Department for Education).
- To develop a story angle and approach, and sell this into the education, careers, student, and faith and belief media.
- To develop an infographic and a student case study, and promote these items via social media, including serialised posts to increase the shelf-life of the campaign.
- To support the activity with engagement with the existing RE stakeholder network, encouraging them to amplify the message and resources via their own communications channels.
- The campaign directed interested individuals to the Beyond the Ordinary microsite for further information.



TEACH:RE

TO ENTHUSE. TO EDUCATE. TO INSPIRE.

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Campaign elements: case study

- A case study was developed following an interview with Armani Campbell, an RE teacher trainee who entered the career through the SKE route.
- The purpose of the case study was to send the message that RE teaching is open to graduates from a wide range of academic backgrounds and previous careers through an SKE, with mentoring and support available for candidates.
- The case study was developed then posted on the Beyond the Ordinary microsite. This was paired with a video of Armani explaining his story and experience.



The video is available to view [here](#).

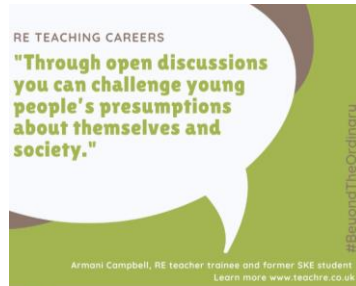
Campaign elements: Infographic

- A simple, powerful infographic (following the established Beyond the Ordinary campaign design style) was developed using the DfE data.
- The infographic was designed to break down the data into easily digestible statistics whilst simultaneously communicating the key campaign messages of RE training uptake and SKE availability.
- The infographic was designed to be easily shareable online, and was posted on the Beyond the Ordinary campaign microsite.
- It was also seeded and promoted via social media and shared with stakeholders to disseminate further.



Campaign channels: Social media

- Elements of the infographic were serialised in order to maximise the impact of the content and extend the campaign shelf-life.
- Twitter cards with quotes from Armani's interview were also shared, outlining the reasons and motivating factors behind choosing a career in RE teaching.



Campaign channels: Social media

- The organic social media campaign was supported by targeted campaigns aimed at individual associations with relevant profiles on Twitter, for example:
 - Teaching careers
 - National careers
 - Graduate and postgraduate careers
 - Education and teacher associations
 - Relevant subject associations: Religious Studies, History, Sociology, Law, Philosophy, Politics, Criminology, etc.



[@postgrad_com](#) Data reveals a 30% increase in the number of ITT RE teachers in the 2019/20 cycle, hitting its highest level for almost a decade, with many candidates drawn from other subjects such as History, Philosophy, Sociology or Law [#RETeaching](#) [#TeacherTraining](#) [#SKE](#) [#PleaseRT](#)

12:27 PM · May 12, 2020 · [TweetDeck](#)

[View Tweet activity](#)

1 Retweet 1 Like



[@histassoc](#) The number of new RE trainee teachers in England has risen by 30% in 2019/20, with many candidates drawn from other subjects such as Philosophy, History, Sociology, Law, Criminology or Politics, according to [@NATREupdate](#) data [#RETeaching](#) [#TeacherTraining](#) [#SKE](#) [#PleaseRT](#)

12:31 PM · May 12, 2020 · [TweetDeck](#)

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1 Like

Campaign channels: Media relations

- A media release reporting on the increase in ITT RE teacher trainees was developed, aimed at:
 - Education media
 - Student / university media
 - Jobs and careers media
 - Faith and belief specialist media
 - National media
 - Relevant broadcast media

MEDIA RELEASE



Embargoed until 00.01: 12th May 2020

Surge in RE teacher trainee numbers as candidates are drawn from other humanities

Four out of ten new PGCE Religious Education students have become teachers after graduating in other subjects such as History, Philosophy, or Sociology, boosting the number of new RE teacher trainees to its highest level in almost a decade.

New data obtained by the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) via a Freedom of Information request to the Department for Education reveal that 196 Initial Teacher Training (ITT) students preparing to become RE teachers have taken a Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) course, having graduated in another subject.

The overall number of new ITT RE teachers increased significantly - by 30 per cent – to 488 in the 2019/20 recruitment cycle, compared with 376 in 2018/19. The number of new RE teacher trainees is at its highest for nine years; 860 students were recruited in 2010/11, exceeding the Government's target by 131 per cent.

Campaign channels: Stakeholder engagement

- An email communication was drafted and sent to Beyond the Ordinary stakeholders (accompanied by links to the infographic, media release, and case study) in order to encourage stakeholders to amplify the message via their own communications channels.

Subject: 4 simple ways you can help us beat the 2020 RE trainee teacher recruitment target

Good news!

- Trainee RE teacher numbers reached their highest for almost a decade this year (488 trainees started in September)
- This year's intake is 30% higher than 2018/19 and the highest since 2010/11
- We reached 93% of the Government's recruitment target (compared with an average of 85% across all secondary subjects)

We want to beat this next year and we need your help!

This year's figures were boosted by the availability of Department for Education financial support for those taking Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) courses. In fact, 40% of new recruits took a SKE - compared with 33% for English. Recruits came from a wide range of academic disciplines, including sociology, politics, and even criminology!

This message is simple:

RE teaching is open to graduates from a wide range of academic backgrounds and previous careers!

So how can you help?

We've developed some materials to help you spread the message and attract potential new RE teachers to start training in September this year.

You can help support this effort by:

1. Sharing the message via social media. We've created some simple social media cards that you

Results: *organic* social media

- Organic social media reach of the ReThinkRE Twitter page:
- Twitter (12th-15th May):
 - 73,137 total potential impressions
 - Potential reach: 28,613
 - 44 tweets about @ReThinkREnow, including 21 retweets and 19 replies.
 - 15 unique contributors
 - Retweets and recognition by various faith and belief, careers and subject associations, including the Historical Association (23.1k followers)
- #BeyondtheOrdinary hashtag (7th-15th May):
 - 97,366 total potential impressions
 - Potential Reach: 50,638



ReThinkRE Campaign @ReThinkREnow · May 12

The number of new RE teacher trainees is at its highest for almost a decade, with a large proportion of candidates drawn from other humanities, data obtained by @NATREupdate via an FOI request to @educationgovuk reveals #RETeaching #beyondtheordinary #TeacherTraining #SKE



1 11 18

The top performing tweet, earning 2,659 impressions from 11 retweets, 17 likes and 25 clicks.


Results: media relations

- Broadcast coverage
 - UCB
- Online coverage
 - TES
 - Church Times
 - Methodist Recorder
 - Keep the Faith
 - Religion Media Centre
 - REC, RE Today, NATRE

The news story was also tweeted by TES (310.5K followers)

- *NB We expect further coverage, however it is notoriously difficult to track in student media, and much media coverage is currently focused on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.*

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The screenshot shows the TES website interface. At the top, there are navigation links for Resources, Jobs, Community, News, Courses, and Store. Below this is a search bar and a secondary navigation bar with links for News, Scotland, FE news, Exams, Magazine, Back issues, New Teachers, and Partners. On the left side, there is a user profile section with a 'Register for free' button, a 'Log in' button, and a 'Jobs' section with links for 'My jobs', 'Job alerts', 'My CV', and 'Career preferences'. Below that is a 'Resources' section with links for 'Downloads', 'Saved resources', 'Author dashboard', 'Add resource', 'My shop', and 'Tax Elements'. At the bottom of the left sidebar is a 'Community' and 'Courses' section. The main content area features a news article titled 'RE popularity boost with 30% rise in trainee teachers' by Dave Speck, dated 12 May 2020. The article includes a photo of a young man in a white shirt and red tie standing in a classroom. The text below the photo states: 'The number of new religious education trainee teachers in England has risen by 30 per cent compared with last year – to its highest level in almost a decade.'

Keep The Faith



CORONAVIRUS NEWS GOSPEL FEATURES COLUMNS LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE RES



Surge in RE teacher trainee numbers as candidates are drawn from other humanities

CHURCH TIMES

Home UK World Comment Features Faith Books & Arts Regular

Trainee RE-teacher numbers increase after bursary offer

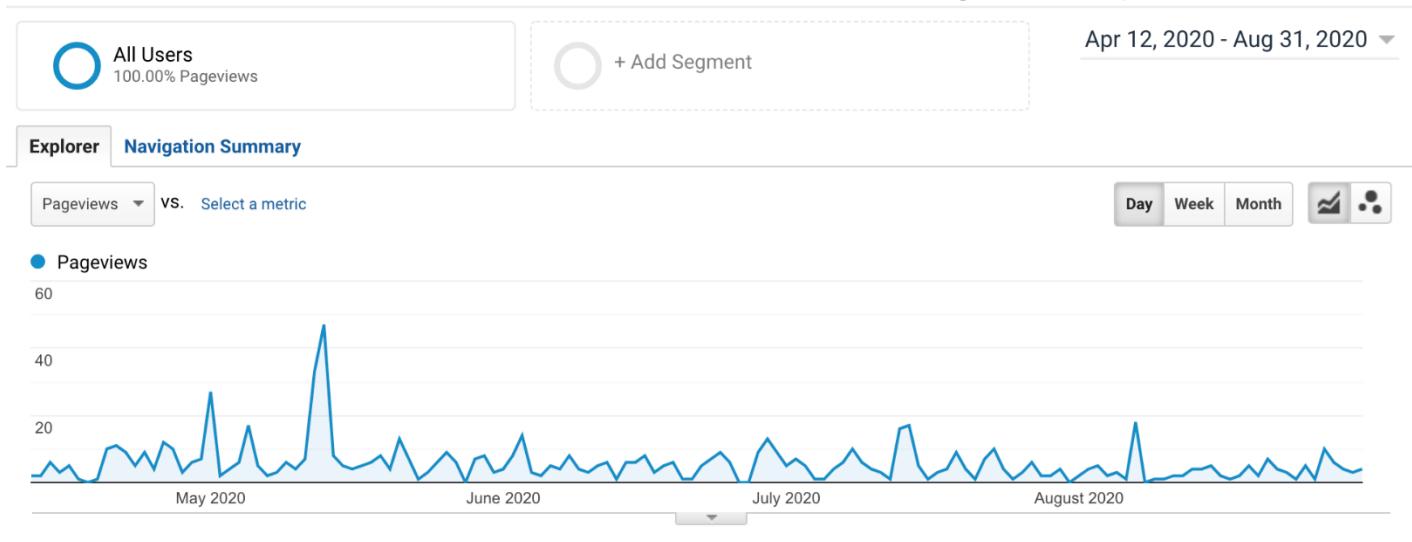
By MADRID PRESS
15 MAY 2020



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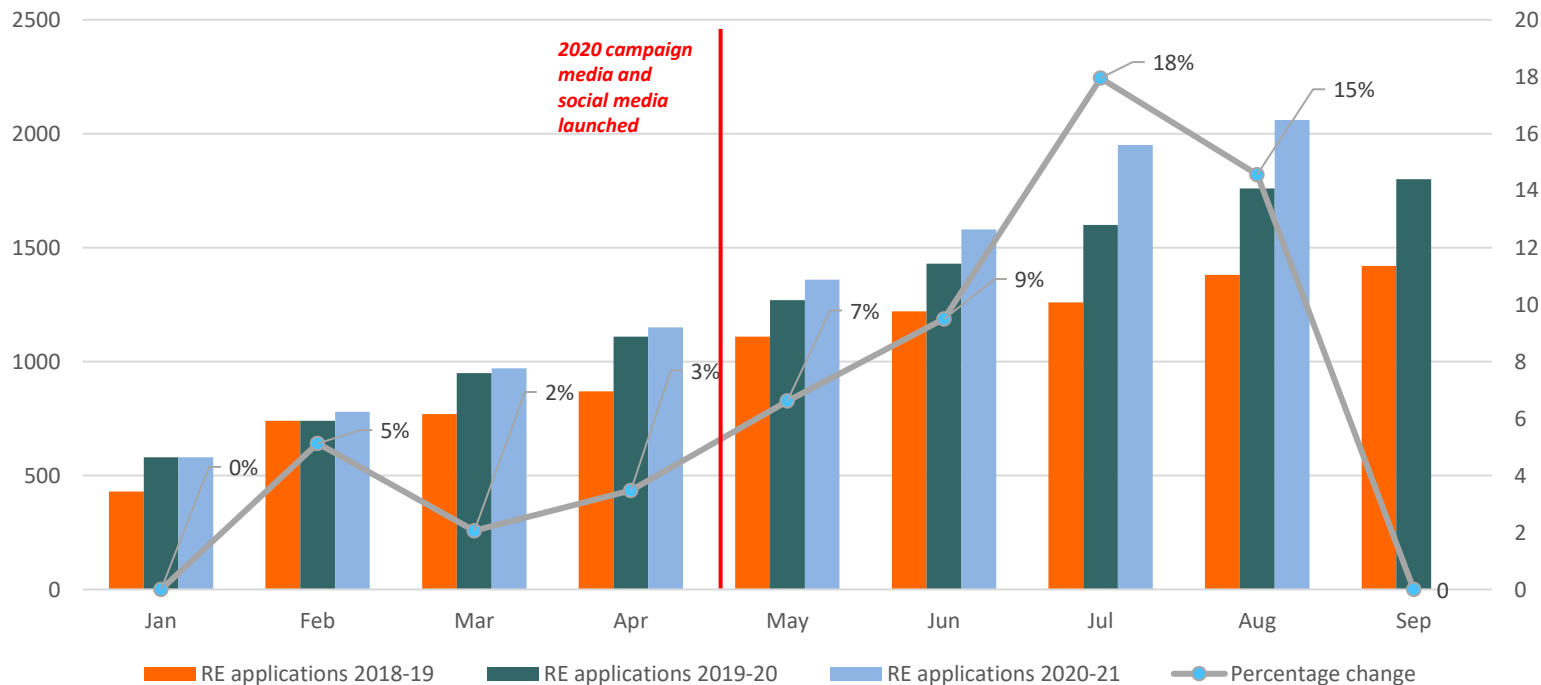
Results: Campaign website visitors

- Beyond the Ordinary microsite data (www.teachre.co.uk/beyondtheordinary)
 - April 12, 2020 – August 31, 2020
 - Pageviews: 797
 - Unique pageviews: 672
- Noticeable spikes in visitors coincided with the campaign activity



Results: applicant numbers

RE ITT Applications 2020-21 (Source: UCAS)



UCAS Monthly applications (England & Wales) for single or combined subjects (All States / 10 or more applications)

Conclusions

- RE applications exceeded last year's total by 15% (by August 2020)
- The DfE's target of 510 was exceeded by 110 (by August 2020)
- The pandemic 'lockdown', the positive media portrayal of teachers, and home schooling may be contributory factors to increasing applications
- Overall applications (all subjects) are up 13% compared to the same time last year
 - History applications are up 14% year on year
 - Geography applications are down -17% year on year
- Despite the increase in RE applications, there has been feedback from qualified teachers that they are unable to find jobs, suggesting some regional variation
- The DfE target being exceeded and budget restrictions may present some challenges for RE
- Further discussion at the REPU Committee is required to define the strategy for 2021

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