EDUCATION
TRAINING
FOUNDATION

IMPACT REPORT 2024-25

CONTENTS

MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE 03

IMPACT IN NUMBERS 04

DRIVE PROFESSIONALISM 06

Achieving professional status in FE and skills 06

Driving professional standards for teachers and leaders 07

Professional development in sustainability 08

Driving professionalism through research 09

Case study: Achieving ATS and proactively managing professional development 11

IMPROVE TEACHING AND LEARNING 12

Improving teaching and learning in maths, English and ESOL 12

Championing high-quality teaching and learning through our members 13

Supporting the delivery of T Levels 14

ETF's Teaching and Learning Conference 15

Building an Initial Teacher Education community of practice 16

Case study: Improving teaching and learning through ETF membership and collaboration 17

CHAMPION INCLUSION 18

Championing anti-racist practice 18

An inclusive approach to leadership 19

Supporting learners with SEND 20

Case study: A 'Reverse Jobs Fair' with National Star 21

ENABLE SECTOR CHANGE 22

Driving social value 22

Supporting high-quality leadership and governance 23

Improving the quality of Apprenticeship delivery 24

Technical Teaching Fellowships 25

Case study: professional and personal growth through the Technical Teaching Fellowship 26

MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

This year, the Education Training Foundation (ETF) has supported the further education (FE) and skills workforce to meet the evolving needs of learners, employers and communities as the sector plays its vital role in facilitating the UK Government's mission-led agenda. Guided by our strategy, Together we transform, we have continued to work in close partnership with the sector to drive professionalism, improve teaching and learning, champion inclusion, and enable sector change for a resilient and future-ready FE and skills system.

Through our Professional Standards, continuing professional development (CPD), professional statuses and support for our growing membership community, ETF empowers the FE and skills workforce to deliver the highest quality of teaching and learning. With our training, resources and support, FE and skills educators and leaders are equipped to deliver the best experiences and outcomes for learners while helping to build the pipeline of skills that our economy and society need.

From kickstarting economic growth to breaking down barriers to opportunity, we are proud to be supporting the sector's contributions to each of the Government's five missions by:

- strengthening the capability of the workforce to deliver high-quality, employer-responsive provision to support local productivity and skills-led **growth**
- supporting the development of **green skills** curricula and recognising the contributions of those leading sustainability initiatives through our Specialist Status in Education for Sustainable Development
- enhancing teaching excellence in **health and social care** pathways through CPD, standards and support for T Levels and Apprenticeships
- recognising and supporting sector professionals' contributions to mental health, rehabilitation, and **community cohesion and safety**
- championing professionalism and inclusion to ensure educators and leaders are equipped to support all learners and **break down barriers to opportunity** for the most disadvantaged.

Every day, FE and skills teachers, trainers, tutors, coaches, leaders and governors transform the lives of learners across our sector. I am continually inspired by the passion and dedication of those I meet during visits to providers and sector events. ETF's 2025 Teaching and Learning conference recently brought together over 300 educators, policymakers and sector leaders to explore how teaching excellence and inclusive practice can drive social mobility and economic growth. Such events reaffirm our sector's vital contributions to our society and economy, and emphasise the power of collaboration across and beyond our sector.

This report celebrates the impact of those shared efforts. It is a testament to the professionals who are the heartbeat of our sector. As we look ahead, ETF will continue working in partnership with colleges, independent training providers, adult and community learning providers, employers and policymakers to help the sector – and its workforce – realise their full potential. Together, we are driving change. Together, we transform.

DR KATERINA KOLYVA
Chief Executive Officer, Education Training Foundation

IMPACT IN NUMBERS

IN 2024/25...

WE HAD 22,617 MEMBERS AND 50 CORPORATE PARTNERS

across England, Wales, Scotland and the Channel Islands.

615 FE and skills practitioners were awarded Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status, a badge of professionalism for technical and vocational teaching and training in the post-14 education sector.

16 professionals achieved Advanced Teacher Status (ATS), demonstrating their mastery in teaching and learning and conferring Chartered Teacher Status via the Chartered College of Teaching (CCT).

99% of professionals who achieved QTLS status said that it has had a positive impact on their teaching practice.

100% of professionals who achieved ATS said that it has had a positive impact on their practice.

ALMOST 6,000 FE and skills professionals used our Professional Standards self-assessment tool. This helped them to identify areas for improvement and supported them on their professional development journey.

We had **67 NEWS ARTICLES** published, on topics from inclusive leadership to the role of adult education in driving social mobility.

15 people were awarded the Specialist Status in Education for Sustainable Development during its pilot.

MORE THAN 3,000

people engaged with our leadership and governance development programmes, which equip participants with the skills and knowledge to drive system change and fulfil their organisations' potential.

100% OF SENIOR LEADERS

said they are more confident in their role after taking part in one of our leadership programmes.

The T Level Professional Development (TLPD) had over

11,800 ENGAGEMENTS

from more than

6,300 INDIVIDUALS

92% OF PRACTITIONERS

said taking part in TLPD has improved their knowledge.

3,314

people attended a special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) professional development activity, and **97%** said it will have a positive impact, on their professional practice.

94% OF PROFESSIONALS

said taking part in our maths, English and ESOL CPD will have a positive impact on their professional practice.

WE HAD 18,486

subscribers to inTuition, our quarterly magazine available to members.

With support and funding from ETF, Research Further has supported

12 SCHOLARS

to undertake postgraduate research to drive innovation and professionalism within the FE and skills sector.

OVER 1,000

professionals took part in our maths, English and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) continuing professional development (CPD).

98%

of governance participants said that taking part has improved their knowledge.

Through our Practitioner Research Programme (PRP), we have helped

10 TEACHING PROFESSIONALS

to begin studying for an MPhil to drive improvements in teaching practice.

96% OF PARTICIPANTS

in the Apprenticeship Workforce Development (AWD) programme agreed that they would apply their learning to inform and influence their future planning.

DRIVE PROFESSIONALISM

ACHIEVING PROFESSIONAL STATUS IN FE AND SKILLS

We are the professional membership body for teachers, trainers and leaders within the FE and skills sector. Recognised by the Department for Education (DfE)[1], we are the only body that awards Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status and Advanced Teacher Status (ATS) to practitioners within the FE and skills sector.

Achieving QTLS status allows professionals to show their progression and commitment to excellence within the FE and skills sector. It is legally equivalent to and has parity with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and is increasingly recognised across employment and regulatory frameworks.

ETF also awards ATS which allows professionals to demonstrate their mastery in teaching and learning, supporting their progress into more senior roles. It conveys Chartered Teacher Status in schools and signifies high-level pedagogical expertise and leadership in teaching. QTLS status and ATS form a structured professional journey and are based on evidence-informed reflective practice, grounded in ETF's Professional Standards.

In 2024/5, **615** FE and skills practitioners were awarded QTLS status, while **16** professionals achieved ATS and were conferred Chartered Teacher Status via the Chartered College of Teaching (CCT). Following discussions with DfE, all ETF members with QTLS status are listed on the DfE's central record of qualified teachers managed by the Teaching Regulation Agency. This recognition enhances their professional status and enables greater career progression and mobility across education sectors.

Impact data from previous cohorts shows that **99%** of professionals who achieved QTLS status said it had a positive impact on their teaching practice, and **99%** also agreed QTLS status had a positive impact on the outcomes of their learners, with **94%** noting organisational benefits[2]. **100%** of professionals who achieved ATS said that it has had a positive impact on their practice[3].

[1]DfE (2024) Guidance: routes to qualified teacher status (QTS) for teachers and those with teaching experience outside the UK. Available from: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-qualified-teacher-status-qts-if-you-teach-outside-the-uk/routes-to-qualified-teacher-status-qts-for-teachers-and-those-with-teaching-experience-outside-the-uk
[2]ETF (2024) QTLS satisfaction survey results based on 124 responses from 2023/24 participants.
[3]ETF (2025) ATS satisfaction survey results based on 8 responses from 2024/25 participants.

DRIVING PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS AND LEADERS

ETF's Professional Standards provide a nationally recognised framework that defines the values, knowledge and skills expected of teachers and leaders in the FE and skills sector. Our self-assessment tool supports practitioners to reflect on their own practice against this framework. More than 10,000 Professional Standards self-assessments have been undertaken since the tool's launch in June 2022.

This year, ETF continued to drive professional standards for teachers and leaders through our Professional Standards self-assessment tool, aiding practitioners to identify areas for improvement and supporting them on their professional development journey.

A total of 5,874 self-assessments were completed in 2024/25, reflecting substantial sector engagement. Of these, 47% were ETF members, with 1,623 completions from individuals holding Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status and 104 from those with Advanced Teacher Status (ATS).

The self-assessment tool provides valuable insights into sector-wide confidence and development needs. For those professionals who completed the self-assessment this year, their top three perceived strengths were:

- Promote and support positive learner behaviour, attitudes and wellbeing
- Value and champion diversity, equality of opportunity, inclusion and social equity
- Inspire, motivate and raise the aspirations of learners by communicating high expectations and a passion for learning.

The top three perceived areas for development were:

- Promote and embed Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) across learning and working practices
- Develop enrichment and progression opportunities for learners through collaboration with employers, higher education and/or community groups
- Critically review and apply your knowledge of educational research, pedagogy and assessment to develop evidence-informed practice.

The insights from this year's self-assessment tool are informing our ongoing workforce development priorities. The identified development needs – particularly embedding ESD, enhancing enrichment through external collaboration and applying evidence-informed practice – shape our targeted support programmes, resources and professional development opportunities. By aligning our activity to these sector priorities, we aim to build on existing strengths while addressing areas of growth that will have the greatest impact on learners, employers and communities.

In addition to the self-assessment tool, sector professionals can now access ETF's CPD mapping tool which maps professional development opportunities and resources they can use to meet each of the standards. This tool can be used alongside the self-assessment tool so that staff can understand which resources will help them meet specific standards and fill knowledge and skills gaps.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN SUSTAINABILITY

In response to sector-wide demand for professional development in sustainability, ETF launched the Specialist Status in Education for Sustainable Development (SSESD) as a pilot initiative in 2024/25. Developed in collaboration with the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC) and supported by an expert panel, the programme aims to equip professionals in the FE and skills sector with the knowledge and recognition to lead on sustainability.

The pilot cohort saw 21 registrations, with 17 participants submitting portfolios and 15 being successfully awarded the status following moderation. Participant feedback highlighted high satisfaction with both the content and delivery. The pilot also informed refinements to the SSESD through evaluation from stakeholders including participants, moderators and external experts. A key achievement was the successful transition from pilot to commercial delivery, with 64 registrations for the first commercial cohort that began in April 2025.

Crucially, the programme not only builds capability but also celebrates and formally acknowledges the expertise, innovation and leadership that individuals are already contributing to sustainability in their organisations and communities.

The SSESD represents a significant step in embedding sustainability leadership within the sector and aligns with ETF's strategic commitment to enable sector change.

DRIVING PROFESSIONALISM THROUGH RESEARCH

ETF is committed to supporting teachers and trainers to undertake meaningful research which improves the quality of education and drives professionalism in the FE and skills sector. By supporting this research community, ETF is raising the profile and professional reputation of educational research in the sector both nationally and internationally.

Between 2018 and 2023, ETF delivered the Practitioner Research Programme (PRP) in partnership with the University of Sunderland Centre for Excellence in Teaching Training (SUNCETT). The programme supported FE and skills staff to develop their research ideas, to receive expert research training and support from a renowned team of FE and skills specialists, and to inform their practice through the completion of either a one-year MA Short Course or two-year MPhil qualification.

Since the PRP launched, more than **190 FE and skills professionals** have taken part, researching a wide range of topics from achievement in GCSE resit examinations to learner wellbeing and mental health. **25 participants have been awarded PhDs** by the University of Sunderland and one has subsequently been awarded a **full professorship** by Leeds Arts University. In addition, **five have been awarded MPhil research degrees**, and a further **24 have completed year 2 of their MPhil** and progressed to PhD study (which they are scheduled to complete in 2025).

More than 10 participants have **published chapters in peer-reviewed books and journals**, with a further 12 sole or **co-authoring publications,** including a Special Issue of the journal Education Sciences in 2020 which has already attracted more than 65,000 views. A further Special Issue, co-authored by PRP participants, is scheduled for publication by 2026. As such, the programme has fostered a substantial community of research-focused practitioners who are driving evidence-based professional practice forward through their research projects and publications.

In 2024/25, ETF recommenced the PRP with SUNCETT by funding 10 teaching professionals to begin studying for an MPhil with a view to driving improvements in teaching practice in their own organisations and across the wider sector. Research topics include gamified learning, technological innovation in assessment, inclusive learning pathways and enhancing staff motivation for professional development.

Research Further is a holistic programme supporting teachers and trainers to undertake research to drive innovation and professionalism within the FE and skills sector. It is a collaborative initiative between the Association of Colleges (AoC), NCFE, Edge Foundation and ETF.

Research Further was established as a practical solution to the barriers experienced by FE and skills practitioners in undertaking or applying for research opportunities. It supports practitioners to undertake postgraduate research qualifications and apply their unique understanding of FE and skills to fill critical evidence gaps within the sector.

In 2024/25, the programme supported 12 scholars to undertake postgraduate research. Since Research Further started in 2022, scholars have made over 60 contributions to sector events, publications and podcasts, including 42 thought leadership pieces published via the AoC's Think Further platform. They have also delivered sessions at the AoC conference, run a series of webinars and established research groups within their institutions, enhancing CPD and sector-wide dialogue.

Survey feedback highlighted significant personal and professional development among scholars, including increased confidence, improved teaching practice, and greater engagement in public speaking and leadership opportunities.
The programme has also had demonstrable impact on learners, staff and institutional culture at the scholars' organisations[4] .

[4] Association of Colleges (2024) Research Further: Impact Report – The Research Ripple. Available from: https://www.aoc.co.uk/research-unit/research-further/research-further-impact-report#.

CASE STUDY:
ACHIEVING ATS AND PROACTIVELY MANAGING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Isabel O'Donoghue, Deputy Curriculum Leader at Waltham Toll Bar Academy, found achieving Advanced Teacher Status (ATS) to be a transformative experience that reshaped both her professional identity and personal confidence.

"Over 14 months, I engaged in deep reflection, evidence-informed practice and leadership development – all while continuing to teach full time.

Upon acceptance into the ATS programme, I undertook a comprehensive self-assessment against ETF's Professional Standards, incorporating feedback from students, a senior colleague and my manager. This process helped me to identify key areas for growth and led to a personal development plan focused on supporting SEND learners, deepening my understanding of Education for Sustainable Development, and using digital tools to create more engaging and inclusive learning experiences.

To meet these goals, I attended webinars, conducted research, and learned more about the use of AI and technology to support diverse learners. I read different books and journals on the subjects and applied this knowledge in my everyday teaching. These areas of focus not only contributed to my personal growth but also had a cascading effect on the professional development of my peers.

Ultimately, the ATS journey deepened my pedagogical expertise, enhanced my reflective capacity and reinformed my commitment to lifelong learning. It has empowered me to lead with confidence and contribute meaningfully to the wider FE and skills sector."

IMPROVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING IN MATHS, ENGLISH AND ESOL

ETF's maths, English and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) CPD courses and resources have been carefully designed to improve post-16 maths and English attainment, and to support teachers and trainers to develop subject-specific skills.

In 2024/25, ETF continued to deliver a robust programme of CPD to enhance the teaching of maths, English and ESOL for post-16 learners which attracted **over 1,000** participants. Trainers were consistently praised for their subject expertise and effective online delivery, contributing to increased confidence among participating educators. **95%** of participants reported satisfaction with the overall learning experience, and the programme achieved a Net Promoter Score (NPS) of **49**, indicating strong endorsement[5]. **94%** of participants said the learning experience will have a **positive impact on their professional practice**[6].

[5] A Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a simple score between -100 and 100 that helps organisations measure customer satisfaction. A score over 0 is generally considered 'good', with above 20 'great' and above 50 'excellent'. See Qualtrics (2025) What is a good Net Promoter Score? Available from: https://www.qualtrics.com/experience-management/customer/good-net-promoter-score/.

[6] ETF (2025) Maths, English and ESOL CPD satisfaction survey results based on 350 responses.

CHAMPIONING HIGH-QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING THROUGH OUR MEMBERS

We champion high-quality teaching and learning through our membership offer. We offer all FE and skills staff access to professional development, the latest sector research, exclusive resources, events, and a wealth of peer-to-peer knowledge and experience. Being an ETF member offers professional credibility and the opportunity to earn recognition with industry-standard professional designations.

In 2024/25, ETF maintained a strong and engaged membership community, with **22,617 members** across England, Wales, Scotland and the Channel Islands. The annual retention rose by five percentage points to 93% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, which is above the industry average for professional bodies[7] and reflects improved member engagement and satisfaction.

Individual membership via **50 ETF partners** accounted for 18% of the total membership. Our organisational partners highlight the value and relevance of our professional development offer for their staff.

Through the year, 24 member events were delivered, attracting **1,410 attendees**. Topics ranged from AI in education to inclusive teaching practices. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive: **97%** of attendees were satisfied with their experience and **95%** reported improved knowledge, resulting in a Net Promoter Score of **77**, indicating a very high level of customer satisfaction[8].

[7] Industry average is 86% - Memberwise (2025) Membership calculator. Available from: https://memberwise.org.uk/membership-retention-calculator/. While overall ETF membership numbers dipped slightly due to improved data cleansing, the increase in retention and engagement signals a positive trajectory.
[8] ETF (2025) Membership event satisfaction surveys based on 112 responses.

SUPPORTING THE DELIVERY OF T LEVELS

The T Level Professional Development (TLPD) offer, funded by the DfE since 2019, provides practical support and subject-specific training to everyone involved in the planning and delivery of T Levels. The offer has been developed in collaboration with employers, learning providers and experts in the design and delivery of CPD.

In 2024/25, TLPD had over **11,800 engagements** from more than **6,300 individuals,** reflecting strong and sustained demand for high-quality professional development for leaders, teachers, trainers and supporting staff delivering T Levels.

This year, the TLPD offer was refreshed in line with the evolving needs of the sector. New 'Part 2' courses were introduced for all subject-specific T Level areas, alongside enhanced provision for non-subject-specific topics such as assessment and pedagogy. These developments support more experienced providers and promote deeper engagement with T Level delivery. Furthermore, accessibility was improved through shorter, more flexible course formats and increased regional and peer networking opportunities. Tailored support for smaller providers, including schools, was also expanded.

Impact data from the 2024/25 academic year[9] shows that **92%** of TLPD participants said the delivery has improved their knowledge and **94%** reported it would have a positive impact on their practice[10].

The inaugural National T Level Conference, delivered in partnership with the Association of Colleges, attracted over 400 delegates and has led to the planning of two national conferences in the next academic year. The conference provided those involved in the planning and delivery of T Levels with an opportunity to network, collaborate on specific challenges, share effective practice and gain practical support on topics such as engaging with employers, growing provision and effective assessment strategies.

[9] August 2024 to March 2025.
[10] ETF (2025) TLPD satisfaction survey data based on 3678 responses.

ETF'S TEACHING AND LEARNING CONFERENCE

Held at a pivotal moment in national education policy, ETF's 2025 Teaching and Learning Conference addressed key themes including digital transformation, inclusive pedagogy, professional standards and workforce development.

This year's Teaching and Learning Conference brought together over **300 educators, policymakers and sector leaders** to explore how teaching excellence and inclusive practice can drive social mobility and economic growth. Highlights included keynote contributions from Ofsted, the Department for Education and Ofqual, alongside practitioner-led sessions on artificial intelligence (AI), neurodiversity and cultural competence. The event showcased the impact of ETF initiatives such as QTLS status and ATS, and reinforced the sector's role in tackling socio-economic inequalities.

Feedback praised the conference's relevance, thought leadership and collaborative spirit. Areas for improvement include expanding opportunities for practitioner voices and ensuring follow-up mechanisms to embed learning. The conference reaffirmed ETF's commitment to sector-led improvement and the centrality of teaching in delivering national opportunity.

BUILDING AN INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

This year saw ETF launch the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) community of practice, which was established to address a longstanding gap in sector-wide support for teacher educators.

Responding to demand identified through the ITE Forum, Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET) Forum and direct provider engagement, ETF's new ITE community of practice aims to foster professional dialogue, facilitate the sharing of effective practice and strengthen peer collaboration.

A pilot network event successfully brought together **66** attendees from across the sector. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with attendees commenting on the value of discussions on AI in teaching and professional practice and expressing an interest in future topics such as the ITE Inspection Framework and student assessment integrity. **95%** of attendees said the event has improved their knowledge and **95%** also agreed the event will have a positive impact on their professional practice[11]. The ITE community of practice represents a promising step towards sustained professional engagement and sector-led improvement in teacher education.

[11] ETF (2025) ITE Network survey based on 20 responses

CASE STUDY: IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING THROUGH ETF MEMBERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

For **Rebecca Le Prevost**, Lecturer at New City College, a key benefit of ETF membership is having access to networks and connections that support her teaching practice, digital skills and confidence in training colleagues.

"As a member, you have connections. There are lots of professionals, people who are dedicated to teaching and education. That, in itself, helps you in everything you do – knowing that these people want to educate and it's part of who they are.

In the college, we have lots of conferences and ETF has attended quite a few of them. We really value the fact that they're interactive and willing to come and speak to you. And they'll give you valid advice and support. So much so, that I've started getting involved in what we do here at the college. I'm due to become a Sustainability and Development Lead here at the college, delivering masterclasses. And I'm doing some courses with ETF starting in September to support this.

Another thing I really value about being a member is having those people that you can connect with, both here at the college and with ETF. It's shown me that there are people that I can connect with if I need to know something. That's why I'm really getting involved in my department and with the college, because of that support.

This applies not only to my work in sustainability and development, starting in September, but also my own development with digital skills. I've been brave enough, through those connections, to actually deliver to my colleagues, which I could never dream of doing before. I'm not really a very brave person but knowing that the support and help is there is really good for me."

CHAMPION INCLUSION

CHAMPIONING ANTI-RACIST PRACTICE

ETF is committed to working with the Black Leadership Group (BLG), restorative justice experts, community organisations and sector leaders to support anti-racist practice in teaching and leadership in the FE and skills sector.

In 2024/25, ETF launched a new **Cultural Competence** webinar series which sought to tackle systemic inequality across England's FE and skills sector. The webinar series exemplified inclusive, structural and collaborative approaches to effecting lasting change in education. Through embedding cultural competence across leadership, accreditation and classroom practice, and by reaching educators nationally, ETF made a powerful and sustainable contribution to addressing inequality and discrimination.

Engaging **over 140 participants**, topics included recruitment, retention and inclusive leadership, with overwhelmingly positive feedback highlighting the value of lived experience and dynamic, discussion-led formats. The series builds on prior thought leadership pieces published in FE News, reinforcing ETF's commitment to inclusive professionalism and anti-racist practice in teaching and leadership in the FE and skills sector.

ETF has been working in partnership with the BLG since May 2021, contributing to the Inaugural Symposium report. ETF and BLG have worked together on a range of areas, including improving outcomes and representation for learners, staff and leadership (including governance); enhancing workforce succession planning and the talent pipeline of Black staff in the FE and skills sector; influencing policy and practice; and sharing and cascading excellence and innovation in anti-racist practice. Examples of this work include:

- running a webinar, Leading with Integrity in an Ethnically Diverse Britain, attended by 27 senior leaders
- holding a CEO session at the 2024 BLG annual conference, focused on system leadership and organisational allyship
- supporting BLG with the Ethnic Equity in Education campaign, and more specifically with the Ethnic Representation Index
- anti-racism training, facilitated by BLG for ETF's senior leaders.

AN INCLUSIVE APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP

ETF is dedicated to championing inclusive leadership practice across the FE and skills sector. Our Inclusive Leadership programme is designed to promote equity, wellbeing and inclusivity.

2024/25 saw **599 engagements** with ETF's Inclusive Leadership programme, including **197 engagements** with online Inclusive Leadership workshops; **40 participants** in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) coaching programme; and **362 engagements** at mental health and wellbeing webinars.

A key achievement this year was the successful transition of the Inclusive Leadership programme from in-person to online delivery. This shift improved accessibility and flexibility, with **100%** of participants reporting satisfaction with their learning experience and **100%** feeling better equipped to lead change within their organisation. Similarly, the EDI coaching received a **100%** satisfaction rate, while the mental health webinars maintained a strong **98%** satisfaction rate.

The programme continues to address sector-wide priorities by equipping leaders and practitioners with the tools to foster inclusive environments and support staff wellbeing. Feedback indicates that participants value the practical relevance and accessibility of the content.

"Often when you attend training courses, they encourage you to reflect on your practice so you can improve. Like most programmes, some are good, some are excellent and a few are really transformational. The Education Training Foundation and Association of Colleges have together collaborated to produce what I do really believe was a truly transformational programme: the Inclusive Leadership Programme.

For me personally, it provided me with more confidence to be a more authentic leader, to drive forward initiatives throughout the organisations that I have worked in and to challenge and innovate to ensure there were improvements and new practices. It also enabled me to support others in their leadership developments. During this time, I was able to write and lead pan-London LSIF [Local Skills Improvement Fund] bids, develop innovative cross-college mentoring schemes to support disadvantaged groups, and develop strategies to improve teaching and learning through developing others. This was made possible by the support I was given through the Inclusive Leadership Programme... I can honestly say the programmes was transformative, for me personally, the organisations that I have worked in and to the sector as a whole."

Suba Dickerson, Deputy Principal Quality and Innovation at LSEC and College Principal for Bexley and Holly Hill

SUPPORTING LEARNERS WITH SEND

ETF's national Centres for Excellence in SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) provide expert support for leaders, managers and practitioners who wish to put learners with SEND at the centre of their organisation. Part of a DfE-funded national programme, they host strategic leadership hubs and communities of practice to support professionals from all types of FE and skills providers across England.

Our Centres for Excellence in SEND are complemented by our 'employer spokes', five providers that facilitate employer-led activities showcasing the benefits of having a diverse workforce and employing learners with SEND. These providers are Dynamic Training, Hampshire County Council, London South East Colleges, Luminate Education Group and National Star.

2024/25 was a very successful year for the programme, with **3,314** engagements across live online and community of practice events. In addition, **27** providers completed peer reviews, which gave them an insight into their strengths and areas for improvement in relation to provision for learners with SEND. Participants continue to value the offer with a **96%** satisfaction rating for the courses[12]. In addition, via the peer reviews, providers reported having increased confidence in the future of their SEND delivery as well as improved employer engagement strategies.

[12] ETF (2025) Satisfaction survey data based on 959 responses.

CASE STUDY: A 'REVERSE JOBS FAIR' WITH NATIONAL STAR

National Star is an employer spoke for ETF's Centres for Excellence in SEND. Employer spokes foster partnerships between providers and employers to encourage meaningful employment for people with SEND.

National Star runs a large independent specialist residential and day college for students with complex physical disabilities and medical conditions; neurodivergent students; and those with learning, behavioural and sensory disabilities. The organisation provides support to over 200 young people aged 16 to 25 attending the Cheltenham and Hereford sites.

To tackle the ongoing challenges that disabled young people face when looking for work, this year the college partnered with the National Careers Service to develop a jobs fair with a difference. Each student had a stand showcasing their skills and experience using displays and presentations. Employers moved around the tables to meet the students and talk to them about current vacancies in their organisation.

This 'Reverse Jobs Fair' created a positive and accessible networking and recruitment event, giving young people the confidence to experience talking to employers about their career aspirations and goals. One student gained paid employment following the event, while others made solid connections for placements. National Star have since mentored another provider to carry out their own successful reverse jobs fair.

"The Reverse Jobs Fair was successful for employers and students because it created a supportive environment where students could showcase their strengths in a personalised and low-pressure setting, using photo displays that showed them completing work tasks in real work settings, vocational profiles, CVs and discussions. Employers gained valuable insights into diverse talent pools and made meaningful connections with candidates they might not have encountered through traditional hiring methods." – Nicola Noah, Work Based Learning Manager, National Star

ENABLE SECTOR CHANGE

DRIVING SOCIAL VALUE

There are more than 20 definitions of social value currently in use. One definition that has applicability for the FE and skills sector is that social value represents social, economic and environmental wellbeing. Through a sector-wide call for evidence, ETF has explored how FE and skills providers understand and generate social value for learners, communities, and the wider economy.

ETF sent out a sector-wide call for evidence on social value and received 175 responses from FE and skills providers in England. These providers mainly described social value in terms of **creating opportunities for all learners, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds**. Providers who responded to our call for evidence also discussed social value in terms of **building a more cohesive, sustainable and ethically minded society**, as well as **contributing to the community and local economy,** and **providing high-quality education and training to meet the needs of the job market.**

Alongside the call for evidence, ETF commissioned a report to explore the meaning of social value in the context of FE and skills in England, Social Value in Further Education and Skills. Due to be published in autumn/winter 2025, the report demonstrates the potential of social value in providing policymakers with **better evidence** of the impact of public spending on education; **securing investment** at the provider and sector level; allowing providers to **attract new learners, professionals and employer connections;** and supporting the sector to **build a more equal, just and inclusive society.**

A focus on social value is woven through ETF's strategic goals. Through this focus, we seek to drive social value for the benefit of society, local communities and all learners, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

SUPPORTING HIGH-QUALITY LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Effective leadership and governance are essential to enabling sector change. They underpin an effective and proactive FE and skills system that can respond to complex challenges and emerging opportunities, from rapid technological innovation to shifting economic landscapes and demographic change.

In 2024/25, ETF supported **3,064** people in our highly successful leadership and governance programmes, spanning middle and senior leaders, governors and aspiring leaders. Funded by DfE, these programmes have been developed with key experts to build strategic capability, confidence and resilience across the FE and skills sector.

Participants reported exceptionally high satisfaction, with many programmes receiving a **100%** satisfaction rating. Notably, senior leaders' confidence in their roles rose from 94% to 100% after taking part in the programme, and the proportion of leaders allocating time and resources to organisational improvement nearly doubled from 44% to 87%[13] .

Key achievements included leaders and governors reporting enhanced strategic thinking, improved change management skills and increased collaboration across institutions after taking part in the programme. ETF also expanded access by increasing free course places offered from 20% to 50%, contributing to greater participation from underrepresented groups.

ETF's **Further Forward for Leaders Conference** in March 2025 brought together senior professionals from across the FE and skills sector to explore the role of skills in driving national renewal and economic growth. The event focused on systems leadership and the importance of collective action in ensuring the sector's impact is recognised and understood by policymakers, employers and the wider public. Delegates engaged in thoughtful dialogue on how to better communicate the sector's value and align efforts to meet future challenges. The conference reflected growing momentum behind the skills agenda and a shared commitment to sector-wide collaboration.

[13] RSM (2025) ETF Leadership and Governance Impact Evaluation 2024-25 Final Report.

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF APPRENTICESHIP DELIVERY

The Apprenticeship Workforce Development (AWD) programme aims to enhance the quality of Apprenticeship provision across the sector by improving apprentices' experiences, achievement outcomes and retention.

AWD is funded by the DfE and was launched in 2022 following a pilot phase. It is being delivered by ETF in partnership with the Association of Colleges (AoC), the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP), the Strategic Development Network (SDN) and the University Vocational Awards Council (UVAC).

Engagement in our live online and on-demand online courses confirmed the ongoing value and relevance of the programme. Participant feedback consistently highlighted that participants appreciated both the flexibility of our on-demand courses and the opportunity provided by live sessions to work closely with peers and share valuable experiences. All eight on-demand courses experienced increased volumes, with enrolments reaching 3,268 and completions at 1,449 – doubling participation compared to 2023/24. Our 127 live sessions reached over 1,550 individuals from approximately 650 providers, with a total of 2,840 participations, marking a 78% increase over 2023/24.

Bespoke support assisted 31 organisations, each receiving an average of 13.9 days of CPD. An additional 51 providers benefited from tailored in-house support delivered through 54 sessions, averaging 36 participants per session. Our Apprenticeship Action Groups were streamlined from 10 to 7 to ensure value for money. In total, 259 participants were supported in identifying changes to enhance *Apprenticeship Accountability Framework* markers, particularly in areas such as retention and achievement, with 93% reporting that their engagement helped to advance their implementation plans.

95% of participants said they were satisfied with their overall learning experience on the AWD programme, and **96% agreed they would apply their learning to inform and influence their future planning**. These outcomes reflect the quality and impact of our provision, comprising well-developed content delivered by skilled facilitators and underpinned by a strong quality assurance framework.

TECHNICAL TEACHING FELLOWSHIPS

The Technical Teaching Fellowship programme recognises, rewards, promotes and increases excellence of practice in industrial and technical education partnerships. The initiative is funded by a partnership between ETF and the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851, whose mission is "to increase the means of industrial education and extend the influence of science and art upon productive industry" through postgraduate fellowships and scholarships.

In 2024/25, four Technical Teaching Fellowships were awarded. Funded fellows develop projects demonstrating professional excellence in the delivery of technical education, and this effective practice is widely disseminated to improve the quality of technical teaching and training in the FE and skills sector. This year, project topics have included embedding sustainability across the technical curriculum; artificial intelligence (AI) in education (and whether this could impact teacher retention); and 3D modelling for teaching, learning and assessment in rural Wales. The projects have contributed to ETF's strategic aims of championing inclusion, sustainability and digital innovation.

Fellows shared their expertise nationally and internationally, including at the Festival of Education and through global partnerships. Notably, Jen Deakin presented her AI work to HRH Princess Anne and published two books, while William Davies disseminated his practice across the UK, India and Germany. The full impact data will be available in November 2025, with early indications suggesting that Technical Teaching Fellowship projects have positively impacted colleagues, other providers and educators regionally.

CASE STUDY:
PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL GROWTH THROUGH THE TECHNICAL TEACHING FELLOWSHIP

Sophie Harris, Teacher of Fashion Business and Retail at Derby College, recently completed her Technical Teaching Fellowship, which focused on promoting Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) within FE. Her project worked to empower teachers, trainers and assessors through professional development so they could confidently embed sustainability within their teaching practices and curriculum design.

While the project itself was impactful, Sophie highlights the mentoring she received from ETF as particularly transformative:

"The mentoring throughout has been the most enjoyable part of my [Fellowship]. I would often join our catch-ups thinking that I hadn't got much further or that I didn't have much to discuss. However, before I knew it. 60 minutes had passed, I had not shut up and [my mentor] had got me reflecting and re-aligning my priorities, re-considering my focus and recognising tentative conclusions. Our sessions were supportive yet challenged me, and I thank Katrina for the genuine support, honesty and positive reinforcement on those days when I felt my project had hit a brick wall."

For her fellowship, **Jen Deakin,** Course Leader of Graphic Design and Advanced Practitioner at Runshaw College, created the AI Teacher Handbook, a comprehensive guide designed to empower educators to confidently integrate AI into their everyday teaching practices. The handbook includes guidance on selecting the best AI tools available today, as well as insights on practical classroom applications of AI, from resource creation to assessment support and more. Jen reflects:

"Receiving the Technical Teaching Fellowship from ETF has been life-changing. It has given me the opportunity to network and share my AI research widely at national events such as the Association of Colleges' AI conference, amplifying my voice in the sector and boosting my confidence in public speaking. A key highlight was presenting my research to HRH Princess Anne at The Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851 Presidential Dinner, and recently receiving an honorary invitation to The Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace this summer.

The Fellowship has also strengthened my coaching skills and encouraged greater self-reflection and adaptability. It inspired me to pursue a PhD via ETF's Practitioner Research Programme, which I am now 10 months into! The inspirational people I have met along this journey have motivated me to aim higher in my career. The experience has been incredibly rewarding, filling me with a deep sense of gratitude and excitement as I continue to grow professionally and personally."

EDUCATION
TRAINING
FOUNDATION

Our work is supported through funding by the Department for Education (DfE), provider funding and professional membership.

157–197 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 9SP
020 3740 8280
enquiries@etfoundation.co.uk
ETFOUNDATION.CO.UK

Company registration number (England and Wales): 08540597. Charity number: 1153859