EDUCATION & TRAINING
FOUNDATION

FE TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND THE LANDSCAPE OF FE

RESEARCH STUDY

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Further Education teaching changes lives for the better

We are undoubtedly in a time of great economic challenge. The Covid-19 pandemic and more recently, Russia's invasion of Ukraine are set to have a significant impact on our economy.

The Government's official financial watchdog – the Office for Budget Responsibility – has just concluded that inflation is at a 40-year high, while living standards are set for their biggest fall in any year since records began in 1956/57.

Not only that, but we also face an array of health, demographic, environmental, technological and social challenges, which will require careful policy development and implementation to tackle head-on.

Levelling up

The Government's 'build back better' and 'levelling up' agendas have set out a range of policy proposals to tackle some of these important issues.

The 'Levelling Up the UK' white paper highlights that research indicates nearly all jobs will change by 2030, in some cases radically, with up to 90% of the workforce needing to be reskilled. A thriving FE sector in its broadest sense is critical to the UK's ability to meet these and the wider systemic challenges.

Significantly, in an ETF/YouGov survey, Further Education and Training was identified by the public as being one of their top three priorities for delivering levelling up.

The FE white paper: skills for jobs for lifelong learning opportunity and growth, published in January 2021, again places the Further Education and Training sector front and centre in contributing to the challenges that lie ahead.

Yet recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers, particularly attracting new candidates to technical and vocational teaching roles, continues to be a critical issue. Indeed, a report from the Association of Colleges highlights the worst staffing crisis in two decades in England's colleges.

Boosting sector recruitment

The Department for Education's recruitment campaign launched earlier this year to boost the number of teachers into FE and Training is a welcome development. Other initiatives and programmes offered by the Education and Training Foundation are already having a positive impact on teacher recruitment.

For instance, the ETF's 'Taking Teaching Further' initiative, which has just launched its fifth round, aims to attract high-quality teaching professionals from industry into FE and Training. Our 'Talent to Teach' programme aims to offer a taster of Further Education teaching to university students and graduates.

And through the Society of Education and Training we are supporting more than 22,000 teaching professionals throughout their career, including free membership for students taking those important first steps into their teaching careers.

Support for the future

There is of course more that we can and must do to boost recruitment and retention in our sector. In order to take a deeper look at the issue, to map out the FE sector teaching workforce and to identify what a high calibre recruit might look like, the ETF commissioned the following report from independent researchers ICF.

FE Teacher Recruitment and the Landscape of FE paints a picture of the current state of play for recruitment in the FE sector and provides some practical recommendations on how we can build a workforce which fits the needs of future learners.

The report calls for a more strategic approach to recruitment, by building sector capacity, scaling-up successful initiatives, and offering better support to teachers and trainers throughout their careers.

The challenge is to create a workforce of experienced, skilled and talented teachers to inspire the next generation of industry experts. Investment in FE and Training supports social mobility, economic development and boosts innovation and productivity. In fact, our sector has a key role to play in tackling many of the challenges we face today.

We will be building on the insights set out in this research to continue to champion the vital role of the FE workforce throughout our work. Over the coming months, we are embarking on a comprehensive period of engagement with organisations, partners and providers from across the sector to understand how we can best contribute to the challenges that lie ahead. Together, we must do more to raise awareness of how FE can and does change lives for the better.

Vikki Smith
Director of Education,
the Education and Training Foundation

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Executive summary

Size and structure of the FE sector and teaching workforce.

The FE provider base can be divided into three segments:

1 FE Colleges, the majority of which are General FE Colleges (GFE), although there are other types of college (e.g. sixth forms).

2 Independent Training Providers (ITP), historically also known as Work-Based Learning (WBL) providers.

3 Adult and Community Learning (ACL) Providers, sometimes also known as Adult and Community Education (ACE) providers.

Each segment is operationally distinctive from a workforce perspective. The term 'FE teacher' encompasses a variety of labels used in the sector to describe those engaged in the delivery of learning. Individuals roles may be described as trainer, tutor or lecturer. In an apprenticeship context, the recruitment focus might be on assessors. Tacitly, these different terms correspond to different parts of the market.

234
FE colleges in England

1,250
Independent Training Providers

222
Adult and Community Learning providers

There are 234 **FE colleges** in England (163 of which are General FE colleges)[1]. The overall number of FE college providers has reduced considerably over the last decade, largely as result of the ongoing process of consolidation through college mergers. FE colleges employ around 70,000 teachers[2] within an overall workforce of 182,000 (including support and functional staff, as well as leaders) in England[3]. The composition of the teaching workforce in colleges by role type/subject that is quite similar irrespective of college or geographic setting (urban versus rural)[4].

There are 1,250 active **Independent Training Providers** on the provider register[5]. ITPs are generally much smaller organisations than colleges (although there are large national ITPs). There are around 28,500 teachers (vocational trainers) working for ITPs across the UK (i.e. this over-estimates the number for England)[6]. There are many more professionals undertaking similar roles in other sectors as trainers in industry or for employer providers. These form an over-lapping labour pool with FE teachers in ITPs. ITP staff are younger and more likely to be employed on permanent contracts than those working in FE colleges or the ACL sector[7].

There are 222 **Adult and Community Learning providers** in England (including 139 councils and 72 not-for-profit organisations)[8]. The employment basis in ACL is characteristically different to FE colleges and ITPs. Around 72% of local authority ACL staff work part-time, including a large share less than one day a week, reflecting the structure of sessional staff in the sector[9]. The local authority ACL workforce is estimated at 15,500 people, but there could be up to around 40,000 people teaching recreational subjects in community learning-type institutions on a sessional basis[10].

FE teacher demand and vacancies

After a period of consolidation (in the FE college workforce, if not the ITP and ACL teaching workforce), the number of college teacher workforce numbers has been pretty stable in recent years[11]. There are several factors that potentially impact the future shape of demand in ways that are not yet clear:

- How will changes in provision through the introduction of T Levels alter the nature of demand for technical/vocational teachers, if at all? The small number of current T Level-specific vacancies emphasise a more specific technical/subject knowledge and experience than the 'typical' FE teacher recruitment profile.
- How will online/blended delivery models further stimulated in part by the enforced pandemic response play out in the long-term in relation to parts of the FE 'offer' and teaching in this context?

Teaching and educational professionals (including FE, but not in FE specifically) were one of the occupational groups forecast to grow rapidly in the decade from 2017-2027 (212,000 additional jobs, plus extensive replacement demand on top of this)[12]. The demographic bulge in 16-24-year-olds over the course of the 2020s may also impact on the medium-term demand for FE teachers[13].

In terms of the current situation, the education sector in the upper-middle rank of industries for current incidence of hard-to-fill vacancies according to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)[14]. Yet the Migration Advisory Committee found low vacancy rates for 'vocational and industrial trainers and instructors' and for 'Further Education teaching professionals' compared to similar occupations[15]. The vast majority of colleges nevertheless report having hard-to-fill vacancies[16]. This is partly driven by staff turnover.

There is no consistent pattern to staff turnover by provider type. Turnover appears to be much lower in the ACL sector (6%) than for colleges (13%) or ITPs (21%)[17]. The turnover rate for FE college teachers is not particularly an outlier when compared with other industries. However, the DfE college workforce survey reports that nearly half (46%) of those who had left their college in the previous year had been in post for less than three years, suggesting a degree of churn among new starters that may pose questions about recruitment more widely[18].

[1]Association of Colleges (AoC), 2021. *College key facts 2021/22*. AoC.
[2]ICF analysis of the ONS Labour Force Survey (2021)
[3]Association of Colleges (AoC), 2020. *AoC College Workforce Survey Summary of findings - 2018/19*. AoC.
[4]Kantar, 2018. College staff survey 2018: *Research report. DfE.*
[5]Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP). 2021. *Key Facts - Independent Training Providers 2021*. AELP.
[6]ICF analysis of the ONS Labour Force Survey (2021)
[7]Frontier Economics, 2020. Further education workforce data for England: *Analysis of the 2018-2019 Staff Individualised Record (SIR) data*. ETF.
[8]Local Government Association (LGA), 2020. *Learning for Life: the role of adult community education in developing thriving local communities – A handbook for councillors*. LGA.
[9]Frontier Economics, 2020. *Further education workforce data for England: Analysis of the 2018-2019 Staff Individualised Record (SIR) data*. ETF.
[10]ICF analysis of the ONS Labour Force Survey (2021)
[11]Association of Colleges (AoC), 2021. *College key facts 2021/22*. AoC.
[12]Wilson, R., Barnes, S.A, May-Gillings, M., Patel, S., and Bui, H., 2020. *Working Futures 2017-2027: Long-run labour market and skills projections for the UK Main report*. DfE.
[13]Gravatt, J, 2020. *The Demographic Upswing: More 16-24 Year Olds. FE News article.*
[14]Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), 2021. *Labour market outlook: Views from employers Autumn 2021*. CIPD.
[15]Migration Advisory Committee (MAC), 2020, *Review of the Shortage Occupation List: 2020*. MAC.
[16]Association of Colleges (AoC), 2020. *AoC College Workforce Survey Summary of findings - 2018/19*. AoC.
[17]Frontier Economics, 2020. *Further education workforce data for England: Analysis of the 2018-2019 Staff Individualised Record (SIR) data*. ETF.
[18]Kantar, 2020. *College Staff Survey 2019 follow-up Research report*. DfE.

A snapshot of teaching vacancies posted on three FE-specific job boards (fejobs.com; aocjobs.com; fecareers.com) shows that there were nearly 4,000 teaching vacancies in total over the period October-November 2021, roughly 500 new teaching posts per week across the three sites[19]. Only seven of out ten jobs were advertised as permanent roles and just over half were full-time roles. This is significant in terms of considering the potential labour pools that might be attracted to coming into FE teachers and those that are implicitly being targeted.

The vacancy data highlights particular demand for maths and English teachers, as well as SEN teachers and science teachers (relative to the size of the workforce). This encompasses some of the main subjects in which FE recruiters might be directly competing with schools. The top vocational subjects by volume are construction, engineering and health and social care. These correspond to the largest subject areas by number of staff and to the hardest-to-fill college vacancies reported elsewhere.

High-quality entrants from the FE provider perspective

There are three core dimensions to provider definitions of a high-quality entrant:

• **Level and extent of teaching qualifications and experience**: There is a distinction between job roles requiring candidates to be qualified teachers, versus job roles with the potential to qualify, versus industry teaching roles where the teacher qualifying element is ambiguous or flexible. The number of people with FE teaching qualifications is primarily a supply side issue, but it is shaped by demand side factors (e.g. the willingness or ability of FE providers to support or fund new entrants to gain FE teaching qualifications). The most striking characteristic of those training to be teachers in FE is that the average age of an FE ITE learner is 37 years, compared to 24 years for a school ITE learner[20]. This is fairly stable over time. On the whole, individuals are coming into FE teaching at a later career stage than other types of teaching role and many other professional roles. There is a potential pool of 25,0000 newly qualified teachers per year (shrinking slightly in more recent years)[21]. A clear majority of these individuals will already be working in the sector while completing Awards and, as such, may be on an ongoing training pathway to a Level 5 qualification.

• **Level and extent of industry or subject experience:** A clear characteristic of a high-quality entrant is that they bring experience (or qualifications) related to the subject that they will be teaching. There is, though, considerable nuance in terms of what this constitutes in practice and how it is defined. A majority of vocational subject teachers across all subjects have industry experience[22]. However, there are subjects for which providers appear more likely to bring in staff with extensive industry experience (hair and beauty; construction; catering and hospitality; engineering). This may just reflect that these are the largest, most-established FE vocational subject areas with better industry relationships and greater industry knowledge of the sector. Just over one in five FE teacher job adverts offer support with teacher training to new recruits[23]. Vacancies with support for teacher training are concentrated in construction and engineering teaching jobs, reflecting that these are both relatively substantial vocational subject areas and areas where there is a specific demand to recruit direct from industry.
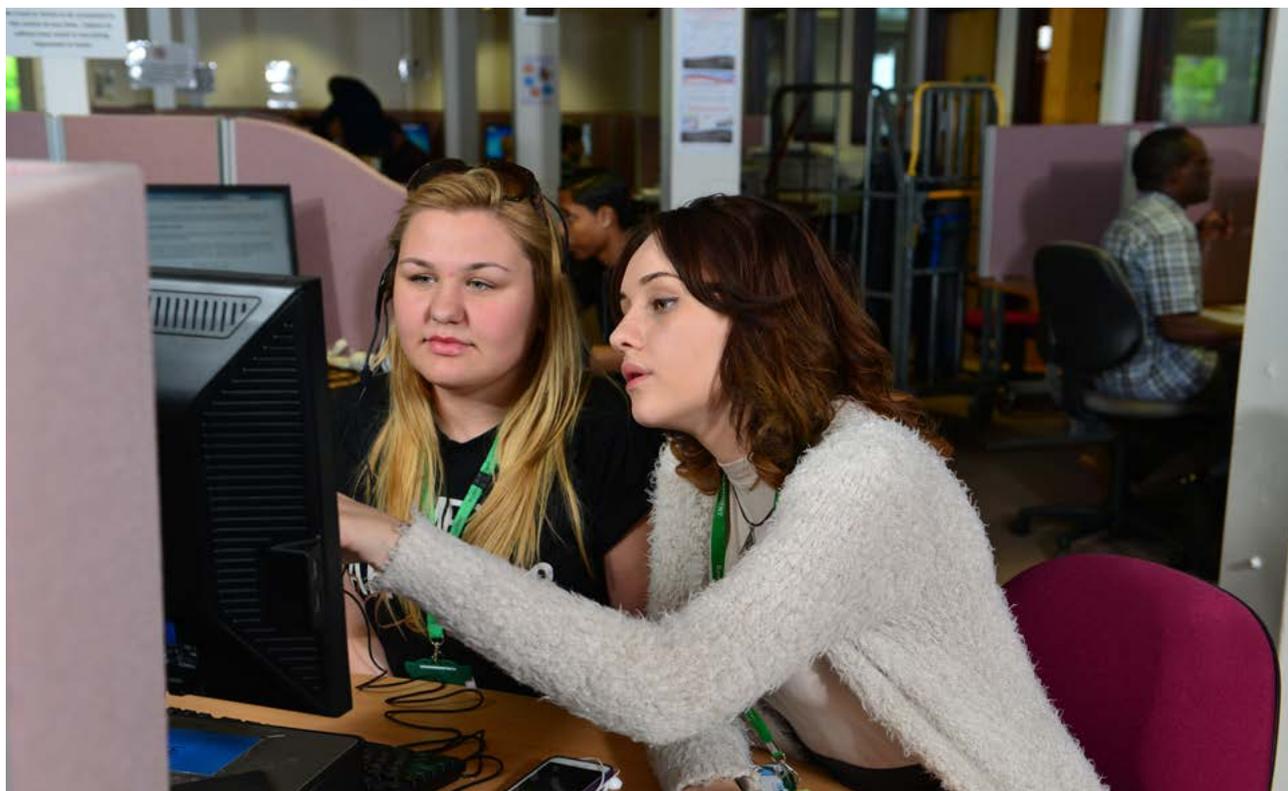
[19]ICF analysis of FE job postings (2021)
[20]ICF Consulting, 2018. *Initial Teacher Education in FE – 2015/16*. ETF.
[21]ICF analysis of Ofqual and HESA data from 20144/15 to 2018/19
[22]Kantar, 2018. *College staff survey 2018: Research report*. DfE.
[23]ICF analysis of FE job postings (2021)

- **Wider skills and competences associated with being an effective teacher:** Alongside the more experiential components above, there is a common 'ask' in terms of broader competences. Those skills/competences are usually framed in terms of pedagogical skills, learner engagement, resilience/problem solving, communications and the ability to work effectively in a team and are evidenced through experience. Jobs aimed at potential candidates who may not have direct teaching experience require a translation exercise in terms of highlighting the relevance of skills/experiences drawn from outside of teaching into the teaching context. This might be encapsulated as a measure from providers of the 'potential to teach'. It is defined by a focus on transferable skills that a candidate might usefully have, FE specific skills potentially gained from outside of the sector (e.g. mentoring) and the motivation of the candidate.

The job adverts by subject area are quite varied, but it is possible to distinguish two general categories of requirements by subject area for technical and vocational subjects:

- Those **subjects for which providers are open-minded in terms of the qualifications held by candidates** (and in terms of teaching qualifications specifically) but where high quality entrants are defined through a combination of extensive industry experience and a set of competencies that might be seen as a proxy for being a good potential teacher – especially in terms of having the presence to motivate and engage young people/adults in a classroom setting. This is seen in subjects such as construction and engineering.

- Those **subjects for which there is a great focus on subject matter qualifications and where vocational experience is more broadly defined.** This probably encompasses a larger number of subject areas, including health and social care, animal care and ICT. It appears linked to the Level of provision by subject area. For example, a considerable portion of ICT/digital teaching jobs are for entry-L2 basic skills provision.

Target markets

Target markets are shaped by:

- The structural and systemic factors that define the profiles willing and able to work with the FE sector (i.e. the potential labour pool/s).
- The priority groups/profiles that FE recruiters are trying/able to reach through their recruitment activities.

The potential labour pool for FE teachers is not, in practice, determined by the number of people in the labour market who meet the often-broad person specifications in FE job adverts. It is constrained by factors such as geography and job attractiveness considerations (e.g. pay). There are many trade-offs in terms of how providers might flex their ideal view of a 'high-quality entrant' to fill roles.

The motivations of those deciding to embark on a career as an FE teacher are varied[24]. There is a mix between subject interest (or 'passion') and the desire to work with the specific learners in FE. There is a cohort of individuals, including in the early stages of their careers, who are driven by wanting to teach and align with FE because it is perceived that it is where their subject of interest is taught. Attracting applicants (especially from industry) with realistic expectations can be challenging. This was directly linked to high early-stage staff turnover. This may impact on who providers target, seeing those closer to the FE orbit as lower risk. It may lead to job roles being reconfigured in order to manage the transition from industry.

There is no common recruitment strategy pursued across the sector. Common recruitment channels used include:

- FE and teacher recruitment sites.
- The provider's own website.
- General job boards that are not sector specific.
- Local and regional press in order to target the local labour market.
- Industry and trade press or networks for vocational roles.
- 'Word of mouth' recruitment.
- Recruitment agencies.

The two critical elements to ensuring 'fit' (i.e. the right person for the job and the right job for the person) were:

- Opportunities for potential candidates to engage and test whether teaching was for them or take an informed view about the role. This was sometimes articulated as an ongoing programme of work on the part of the provider. It is a formal articulation of some of the same activities/dialogue that underpin 'word of mouth recruitment', which is implicitly targeting fit.
- Support provided to new entrants to enable them to thrive and succeed, focused on the transition into teaching.

In terms of some of the apparent profiles (personas) that underpin the rich and varied FE recruitment market, it is clear that these are often best-defined in terms of career entry point. The research identified the following non-exhaustive list as being of interest:

- Recent Graduates.
- Early career professionals with industry experience.
- Teacher transition candidates.
- Specialist learner support and complex learner environment candidates.
- Engaged industry partners.
- Mid/late career switchers.
- Portfolio career candidates.
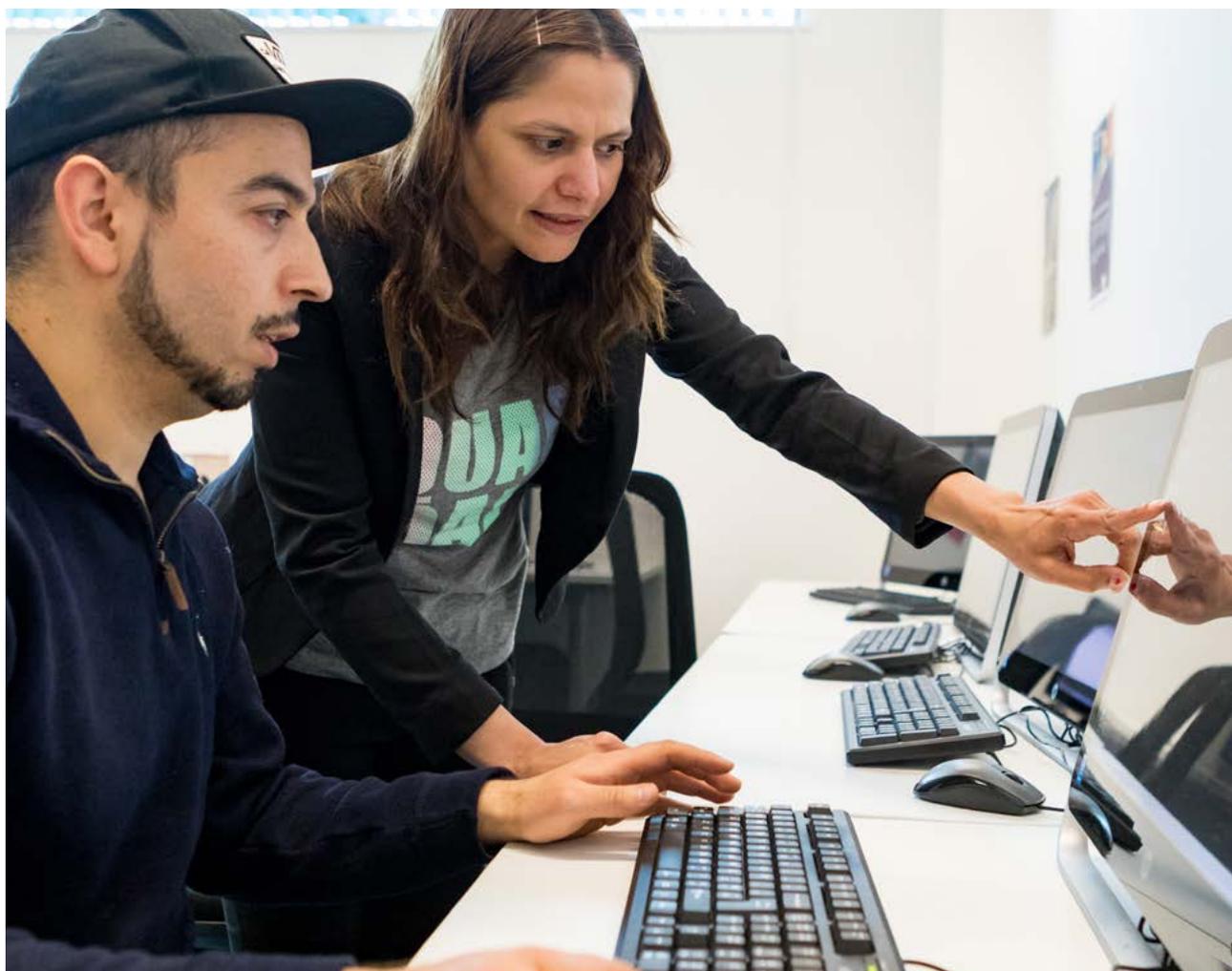
Recommendations

1. **Strategic approach:** The area in which ETF support is likely to have the most substantial impact relates to capacity building work with the sector to improve recruitment strategy in the round. This is as much about support for providers' ongoing networking with promising local labour pools, being able to offer a more active / less transactional approach to recruitment and, most importantly of all, being able to design a development path for new teachers that increases the likelihood of success.

2. **Campaigns:** For future FE teacher recruitment campaigns, it is worth emphasising the importance of grounded, credible messaging. While any campaign should have motivations to teach front-and-centre (and acknowledge that these vary in the context of different FE teaching roles), it is important to present the reality of the role in a way that avoids misjudged expectations or poor fit. Beyond this, any attempt to segment target markets as part of the campaign should be framed primarily by the career stage of targeted individuals as this is the key defining characteristic of different recruitment profiles.

3. **Building on relevant existing ETF activities:** The ETF should also consider scaling up or sustaining its relevant work in the recruitment space. Programmes such as Taking Teaching Further (for industry experts) and Talent to Teach in FE (for early career entrants) are exactly the kind of capacity building activities that would flow from the evidence if they did not already exist. There is no need to reinvent the wheel, but there may be opportunities to further disseminate the learning from these programmes across the sector.

4. **Re-thinking roles in the context of recruitment strategy:** One of the interesting wider debates raised through the study is how some providers compensate for gaps in the teaching profile by re-defining roles and re-distributing teacher responsibilities across the team. This is often described as a reactive and somewhat suboptimal model, but it might also be pragmatic and sensible if done appropriately, increasing the potential to recruit certain profiles (e.g. portfolio career candidates). In the context of new T Level demands, there could be a useful discussion within the sector (perhaps stimulated by the ETF) on the relationship between different new entrant profiles and work organisation.

5. **Learning more about effective recruitment strategies:** There is value in further research on 'what works' to support effective recruitment processes. This report sets out many worthwhile activities to generate an informed pipeline of high-quality applicants. This issue is less about knowing what to do than having the capacity and strategic intent to implement it. It is too sweeping to say that this is just a question of leadership, even if that is what it boils down to. What would be practically useful for providers to know is what steps they can take and how to make the case internally to invest in pathways for new teachers.

6. **A step change in support for new teachers:** In the context of longer-term activities, it is worth reflecting on whether the cross-sector entry requirements in terms of teaching qualifications are optimal. The current flexibility on this can be argued as both something positive and a source of inefficiency (because expectations are unclear or inconsistent across the sector). Beyond regulating the FE teaching profession, are there ways to better standardise the early career qualification/professional development routes across FE to reduce churn and increase quality?

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Study context

This is the revised final report for the research study into FE recruitment and the landscape of FE undertaken by ICF on behalf of the Education and Training Foundation (ETF). The project's over-arching aim was to develop the evidence base to support future action on FE recruitment, including the commitment set out in the Skills for Jobs White Paper to 'launch a national recruitment campaign' for FE teachers (Department for Education, 2021).

There are long-standing and well-known challenges associated with FE teacher recruitment, some of which are structural in nature. Known issues include:

- **Lack of profile and understanding of the sector** among potential recruits, including awareness of the range of available teaching roles and work contexts across the diverse FE provider base. This lack of visibility may reduce the size of the labour pool accessible to FE employers.

- **Competition with other sectors**, notably schools and universities, which may act as a barrier to recruiting those interested in teaching, especially if it is perceived that jobs in FE are lower status or subject to inferior Terms and Conditions.

- Specifically in this context, a **lack of understanding about the distinctive 'mission' of FE** and how that, for some, can act as an attractor when making career decisions.

- The unique need in some FE teaching jobs for recruits to bring industry expertise and experience, effectively creating **career entry points that are unlike those in most other sectors** in the sense that FE employers are drawing from multiple labour pools/markets.

While much of the ETF's work focuses on supporting the professional development and career progression of FE professionals, it is also active in the recruitment space. It has led programmes targeted at bringing industry/technical expertise into the sector (such as *Taking Teaching Further*, the former SET for Teaching Success programme and the Further Forces programme), awareness raising/taster activities aimed at undergraduates (the *Talent to Teach in FE* programme) and the provision of information and advice for those with an interest in training to become a teacher in FE (the long-standing *FE Advice Line* service).

The learning from these various programmes provides a source of intelligence on targeting teacher recruitment. This sits alongside a wealth of evidence from sector surveys, including regular workforce surveys undertaken by the AoC (Association of Colleges, 2020) and one-off surveys commissioned by the DfE (Kantar, 2018), national datasets (Labour Force Survey; Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings), one-off studies and qualitative sector insights.

The project explored these various types of evidence to develop a composite view of recruitment dynamics, alongside new primary research using data analytics to capture and review current FE teaching job advertisements, to read as well as discussion with ETF staff who are engaging with providers or potential future teachers on recruitment-related matters.

1.2 Research questions and method

The study intended to answer the following research questions:

1. *Confirm what is meant by the FE sector. What the sector is providing, how many and what type of providers are there to provide a comprehensive and inclusive view of the current FE sector.*

2. *What is meant by a 'high quality entrant' within the sector? Describe how this differentiates by provider and subject.*

3. *Create and validate personas to typify what high quality entrants means for each provider group.*

4. *Identification of target markets, the opportunities and potential of these markets. What markets are willing and able to work within the FE sector?*

5. *Identification and understand the challenges to FE sector in skill shortages. What are the vacancies across the sector?*

6. *What is the evidence-based recommendations on how the ETF can support the FE sector? How can the ETF engage with the sector in self-improvement?* [25]

The research questions were at the interplay between labour market supply and demand. They were mapped for the purposes of methodological design to the research tasks shown in Table 1.1. The project ran from mid-October to mid-December 2021 and, as such, was a rapid scoping and testing of the evidence base. The draft final report (Version 1) was submitted on 17 December 2021. This revised version (Version 2) takes account of comments from ETF stakeholders on the draft version. Annex 1 provides a more detailed outline of the work undertaken.

[25]Tender specification: *Research Study into Further Education Teacher Recruitment and the Landscape of Further Education* (ETF)

Table 1.1 Overview of method

Task 1	Inception & Scoping
	Kick off meeting / Rapid data and evidence review / Project Initiation Document
Task 2	Segmenting the provider base **(primarily focused on answering Research Question 1)**
	Data gathering / Data synthesis
Task 3	Data analytics: Recruitment activity **(focused on Questions 2 and 5, which relate to the demand side of the equation)**
	Building the web scraping tool / Capturing live vacancy information / Analysis of the dataset and wider labour market data
Task 4	Routes to recruitment **(focused on Questions 3 and 4, which situate recruitment demand in the context of supply)**
	Mapping the ITE supply line / Initial profiling / Analysing and contextualising recruitment challenges / Validating personas
Task 5	Testing and validation **(Question 6 and all questions)**
	'What works?' analysis / ETF workshop / Stakeholder interviews
Task 6	Reporting and project management
	Interim report / Final report / Project updates / Steering meetings

1.3. Report structure

The report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 2 focuses on Research Question 1**. It provides an overview of the **FE provider base**. The first building block of this was to define FE teaching roles in order to put parameters around the study scope. The chapter then situates FE teaching jobs in the context of the diverse provider mix, which is critical to understanding FE teacher recruitment in practice and segmenting the market on the demand side.

- **Chapter 3 responds to Research Question 5**. It looks at **current demand for FE teachers** and the dynamics underpinning/driving the recruitment market, including factors such as the incidence of skills shortages. The chapter also provides an overview of current vacancies.

- **Chapter 4 looks at Research Question 2** in terms of what constitutes a **high-quality entrant** to the sector based on the evidence. As well as exploring key facets of what defines a high-quality entrant, the chapter also explores how this varies by subject area.

- **Chapter 5 focuses on the connected Research Questions 3 and 4**. It explores **target markets** based on the factors that determine who is willing and able to work with the FE sector and, importantly, in the context of how candidate teachers are targeted. The chapter looks both a recruitment strategies and the profiles/personas of those who are targeted by FE providers.

- **Chapter 6 responds to Research Question 6**, presenting the study **conclusions and recommendations.**

2. SEGMENTING THE PROVIDER BASE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores what is meant by the FE sector in the context of Research Question 1. It does this in two ways: providing both a top-down view based on national datasets and a bottom-up view based on a synthesis of sub-sector sources.

The top-down analysis (Section 2.2) both explores the potential of segmenting the provider base using national sources and of using national classifications to define what is meant by an FE teacher. The bottom-up analysis (Section 2.3) adds richness to the picture of the provider base by focusing on evidence/intelligence regarding each of the main types of FE provider in turn.

2.2　The top-down view

2.2.1 The provider base from a top-down perspective

The FE sector is comprised of different types of organisation, which vary according to their status, structure and learning provision. There is no single source of workforce data that allows a quantified view of the workforce across different types of FE provider.

For analytical purposes, the FE provider base can be divided into **three segments**:

- FE Colleges, the lion share of which are General FE Colleges (GFE), although there are other types of college (e.g. sixth forms).
- Independent Training Providers (ITP), historically also known as Work-Based Learning (WBL) providers.
- Adult and Community Learning (ACL) Providers, sometimes also known as Adult and Community Education (ACE) providers.

Each segment is operationally distinctive from a workforce perspective. The segments themselves can be further sub-divided in important ways and niche providers can appear in different categories depending on the data source used (although this is not material to understanding the overall shape of the sector).

In terms of sector-wide data (i.e. data that covers the different types of provider), the Staff Individualised Record (SIR)[26] previously collected by the ETF presents information on workforce composition from a cross-section of providers (including general FE colleges, ITPs and ACL providers). It is useful for understanding detail about job roles and workforce composition – some of which is significant for understanding the dynamics of recruitment based on the profile of the existing workforce. However, it only partially quantifies segments of the sector by provider type owing to differing response rates by provider type.

ONS data based on sector/industry (the Standard Industrial Classification, or SIC2007) provides a top-down view of the size of the workforce based on national statistics. The SIC classification is based on the main economic activity of an employing organisation. This is interesting not least because the classification itself shows the difficulties in trying to capture the FE segments listed above.

[26]The SIR has been superseded by a new FE Workforce Data Collection process (the FE Workforce Staff Record) run by ESFA. The data collection period for the first year (2020 to 2021) ran from July to September 2021 and has not yet been published. The process only becomes mandatory for providers next year (2021 to 2022). As such, SIR27, covering 2018-19 (published in 2020) remains the most recent FE workforce dataset.

The relevant industry categories used in SIC2007 are primary, secondary and higher education. In effect, the ONS understands education and training sectors based on level of learning — and FE cuts across these levels:

- There are elements of FE captured as a subset of secondary education (SIC 85.32 Technical and vocational secondary education[27]) and of higher education (SIC 85.41 Post-secondary non-tertiary education; 85.42 Tertiary education).

- FE also forms part of the 'other education' sector (SIC 85.59 Other education n.e.c). However, to the extent that this pertains to adult and community learning, it is important to note that it is interspersed with organisations that fall outside of a core definition of FE (driving schools, elements of cultural education such as dance studios).

Table 2.1 shows the indicative number of jobs in the main detailed (four-digit) SIC categories based on the most recent ONS hours and earnings data. This is an over-estimate of FE sector size, especially in terms of the 'other education' category and the 'tertiary education' category (which is delivered by a mix of HE and FE providers). It does, though, provide an order of magnitude view of the number of people working for similar or related organisations to FE providers. A more meaningful picture of FE workforce numbers does, however, have to be built bottom up.

Table 2.1 Number of people working in 'FE type' organisations based on SIC (UK)

Description	Code	Number of jobs (indicative)
Technical and vocational secondary education	8532	205,000
Post-secondary non-tertiary education	8541	40,000
Tertiary education	8542	533,000
Other education n.e.c.	8559	149,000
Grand Total		**927,000**

Source: ONS, ASHE Table 16.7a 2021 provisional dataset

[27] "This class includes provision of education typically emphasising subject matter specialisation and instruction in both theoretical background and practical skills generally associated with present or prospective employment. The aim of a programme can vary from preparation for a general field of employment to a very specific job. This class includes technical and vocational education below the level of higher education...This class also includes: tourist guide instruction; instruction for chefs, hoteliers and restaurateurs; cosmetology and barber schools; computer repair training; driving schools for occupational drivers e.g. of trucks, buses, coaches, schools for professional pilots. This class excludes: technical and vocational higher education; performing art instruction for recreation, hobby and self-development purposes; automobile driving schools not intended for occupational drivers; job training forming part of social work activities without accommodation." (ONS, 2016)

2.2.2 The teaching workforce from a top-down perspective

The workforce figures in Table 2.1 above are not just an over-estimate because FE is counted alongside other parts of the education and training system. They also combine teaching and non-teaching staff. The focus of the study was on FE teachers specifically, so it is important to put boundaries around the analysis based on role type. Top-down classifications can help to do this.

In simple terms, the FE workforce can be segmented into three groups:

- Teachers
- Managers and leaders
- Support roles and functional staff (e.g. HR, finance etc).

Those working in support and functional roles were out of scope of the research. However, there was an immediate grey area in terms of managers and leaders. The study was primarily interested in new entrants and early career teachers, but also those who join teaching later in their careers and teaching-related roles further up the career pathway.

There are middle management roles in FE that retain a teaching focus (e.g. curriculum leads) that were not excluded from the analysis. It is an open question as to the degree to which these roles are filled through external recruitment rather than internal promotion. Most senior leadership roles (in an FE college context in particular) are not in general considered as teaching roles.

There are existing definitions used to distinguish teaching from leadership roles in the context of FE colleges, for example:

- Teachers were defined as any staff who described their role as a Lecturer, Teacher, Tutor, or Advanced Practitioner, or indicated that their role regularly involved teaching or lecturing.
- Leaders were defined as staff who described their role as a governor, members of the Senior Management Team (including vice-principals, working directors and CEOs, middle and junior managers (including managers of departments, divisions, units or teams or functions), and staff-governors. (Kantar, 2018)

This report uses the term 'FE teacher' to encompass a variety of labels used in the sector to describe those engaged in the delivery of learning. Individuals roles may be described as trainer, tutor or lecturer. In an apprenticeship context, the recruitment focus might be on assessors. Tacitly, **these different terms correspond to different parts of the market.**

This probably matters less from an analytical perspective than a presentation perspective. It was reported that the simple association with the word 'teacher' can be off-putting to some target markets, because it appears loaded with assumptions about needing to be particularly academic or to have a post-graduate qualification. Some FE providers work to combat this through the language of how roles are described in job adverts (for example, using 'trainer' rather than 'teacher' or phrases such as 'lend your experience and knowledge').

The Staff Individualised Record (SIR) categorised job roles at a high-level (Figure 2.1) but with little disaggregation of teaching roles specifically. The successor FE Workforce Staff Record, which has not yet reported, is following a similar categorisation of job roles (Figure 2.2) although it will also include information about subjects taught by teacher respondents.

Both the SIR and the FE Workforce Staff Record **distinguish between teacher and teacher 'support' roles** (e.g. the SIR disaggregated 'assessors' and 'learner-facing technical staff', the FE Workforce Staff Record includes a teaching support category encompassing assessors, teaching assistants and other roles). These are important parts of the current vacancy market and correspond to a reasonable share of 'entry level' teaching jobs.

Figure 2.1 SIR response staff breakdown by occupational group

Occupation	Number of records	% of total
Admin staff	12,231	14%
Apprentice	1,094	1%
Assessor	3,303	4%
Learner-facing technical staff	13,995	16%
Middle manager	4,634	5%
Non-teaching professional	1,541	2%
Senior manager	1,637	2%
Support staff - catering	1,435	2%
Support staff - other	6,901	7%
Support staff - technical	4,638	5%
Support staff - trades	947	1%
Teaching staff	35,813	41%
Total	**87,359**	**100%**

Source: Frontier Economics analysis of SIR 27 data
Note: records are not reported on an FTE basis - each record simply represents one contract in the SIR 27 data, not necessarily one full-time equivalent worker.
Source: Frontier Economics 2020

Table 2.2 Role specification in FE Workforce Staff Record

Data Element Details	
Field	Role
Definition	Indicates a role that a member of staff has
Reason Required	To be able to analyse the FE Workforce collection data by the various job roles and to enable additional data to be collected for staff members that do some teaching.
Collection Requirements	Collected for all staff members.
Notes	If a staff member performs more than one job role then multiple roles should be provided.
	Senior Leader is used here as a generic job role term. Providers may use different job titles e.g. principals, vice- principals, senior managers, CEOs, directors etc.
	Manager: is used here as a generic job role term. Providers may use different job titles e.g. Functional or people manager. Faculty, department, curriculum, or programme lead. Advanced practitioner.
	Teacher is being used as a generic job role term. Providers may use different job titles, e.g. lecturer, teacher, trainer, instructor or tutor etc.
	Teaching Support is being used as a generic job role term. Providers may use different job titles, e.g.Teaching assistant, mentor, assessor etc.
	Administration: Those that support the delivery of the FE provision in an administrative capacity such as technology support staff, human resources (HR), finance roles, admission and back office staff.

Source: ESFA, 2021b

Figure 2.3 shows how teaching jobs are classified by the ONS in the UK Standard Occupational Classification (SOC 2020). The occupations that relate (or primarily relate) to FE specifically in the context of teaching roles more widely (schools, universities etc) are highlighted in bold.

This classification is useful for putting the FE workforce in context. It allows for bottom-up workforce numbers and key characteristics to be compared to the wider economy in the context of the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)[28]. However, it is worth noting that, while the categories in bold correspond to the cross-section of provider types in FE, there are some categories that include workers who might or might not work in FE (e.g. IT trainers, SEN teachers).

The categories are at four-digit SOC level, the most detailed level of occupational classification. The main national datasets of potential relevance are survey-based and, as such, do not always support this level of granularity of analysis. At the larger, less disaggregated two-digit level, FE teachers form part of SOC23 (teaching and other educational professionals), which is much broader in scope[29]. Chapter 3 (Section 3.2.4) sets out the job role classifications used by the FE job sites, which provide further ways of disaggregating teaching roles (and beyond), all of which generally map to each other, even if they are distinctive at the margins.

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[28]Earnings and hours worked, occupation by four-digit SOC: ASHE Table 14 (ONS): https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/datasets/occupation4digitso-c2010ashetable14

[29]Higher education teaching professionals, Further education teaching professionals, Secondary education teaching professionals, Primary education teaching professionals, Nursery education teaching professionals, Special needs education teaching professionals, Teachers of English as a foreign language, Teaching professionals not elsewhere classified, Head teachers and principals, Education managers, Education advisers and school inspectors, Early education and childcare services managers, Other educational professionals not elsewhere classified (from SOC 2020 Volume 1: structure and descriptions of unit groups)

Figure 2.3 How FE teaching occupations are classified by the ONS in national datasets (such as the Labour Force Survey) based on SOC 2020

Teaching staff are generally coded according to the type of educational establishments where they work:

Higher educational establishments (for example, university, law college, medical school)	2311
Further educational establishments (for example, agricultural college, secretarial college, technical college	**2312**
Secondary schools (and middle schools deemed secondary schools, and sixth form education)	2313
Primary schools (and middle schools deemed primary schools)	2314
Teachers of children, at different levels of education, who have special needs	2316
Teachers of English as a foreign language	**2317**
Teachers of recreational subjects at evening institutes and similar establishments, and private tutors of music	**2319**
Information technology trainers	3573
Other vocational and industrial trainers that teach occupational skills	**3574**
Head teachers and principals of all types of educational establishments are coded to	2321

Source: SOC 2020 Volume 2: the coding index and coding rules and conventions (ONS, 2020)

2.3. The bottom-up view

A more meaningful view of the provider base can be developed 'bottom up' by looking at data related to each provider segment and taking a composite approach. There are different ways to classify and segment providers on these terms, but the differences are at the margins in workforce terms. Below, we look at the three main groups in turn (FE colleges; Independent Training Providers; and Adult and Community Learning). National data (from 'top down' sources) is used for context and to sense check the 'bottom up' data, not least where it enables comparison on the same basis between provider types.

2.3.1 FE Colleges

The AoC reports that there are **234 FE colleges in England** (Association of Colleges, 2021), subdivided into:

- 163 General FE Colleges
- 47 Sixth form Colleges
- 12 Land-based Colleges
- 10 Institutes of Adult Learning
- 2 Art, Design and Performing Arts College

The college accounts data (Education and Skills Funding Agency, 2021a) for 2019-2020 provides a similar breakdown based on a slightly different total number of organisations, reflecting that the number of colleges changes over time (Table 2.2). It uses some slightly different terminology. For example, the Specialist Designated Colleges, which have a particular status to reflect their access mission, are now known as Institutes for Adult Learning (Workers' Educational Association, 2021). Some classifications place these providers within the ACL sector.

In terms of trends, **the overall number of FE college providers has reduced considerably over the last decade**, largely as result of the ongoing process of consolidation through college mergers. Analysis from 2012 identified 229 General FE colleges at the time (versus 163 in 2021) and 91 sixth form colleges (47 in 2021) (GHK Consulting, 2012). The evidence indicates that the overall number of teaching staff in FE colleges has also declined, although, as discussed in Chapter 3, it is not suggested that this trend will continue.

Table 2.2 FE college accounts breakdown of the number and type of providers

College type	Number
GFEC/TC General Further Education College & Technical College	165
SFC - Sixth Form College	50
A&HC - Agriculture and Horticulture College	13
DC - specialist Designated College	9
AD&PA - Art, Design and Performing Arts	2
Grand Total	**239**

Source: College accounts academic year 2019 to 2020 (EFSA)

There are multiple sources to quantify how many staff – and how many teaching staff specifically – the 234 FE colleges represent. The FE college accounts provides a breakdown of staff numbers based on Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff. Table 2.3 indicates that there are around 50,000 FTE teaching roles across FE colleges. Four out of five of these roles are based in general FE colleges, which are also considerably larger in terms of the average number of teachers per organisation. There is obviously considerable variation within each category of provider. The largest general FE college reports 1,650 FTE teaching roles.

50,000

FTE teaching roles across FE colleges

Table 2.3 Number of teaching staff in FE colleges

College type	Number of teaching staff FTE	Average teaching staff FTE by organisation
GFEC/TC General Further Education College & Technical College	42,894	260
SFC - Sixth Form College	4,782	96
A&HC - Agriculture and Horticulture College	1,667	128
DC - specialist Designated College	813	90
AD&PA - Art, Design and Performing Arts	116	58
FE College total	**50,272**	**210**

Source: College accounts academic year 2019 to 2020 (ESFA)

An FTE calculation does not, though, correspond to the overall number of teaching jobs, which, in most other sources is calculated in terms of headcount. An experimental analysis based on the SOC2020 classification suggests that there are 70,263 further education teaching professionals working in the UK[30]. The AoC calculates that the FTE figures equated to **c70,000 teachers in 2018/19 as part of an overall college headcount of 182,000 employees** (AoC, 2020). To put the number of college teaching staff in context, the AoC further estimates that there are:

- **14,000 management staff** (including teaching staff with management responsibility, senior post holders and senior management teams)
- **99,000 support staff** (including instructors and demonstrators).

It is possible to further disaggregate the number of teaching staff in colleges using a survey commissioned by the DfE, which attempted to segment the college teaching workforce (excluding sixth forms) by subject area (Kantar, 2018). It covered academic, vocational and other provision and is worth presenting in detail (see Table 2.4) because the survey was used to extrapolate population estimates.

Superficially, **there is a relationship between the number of FE college teachers by subject and the subject focus of live job adverts** (see Section 3.3.3). There may be a larger volume of adverts geared towards teaching 'other provision' than might be expected as a function of the number of teachers in this area. This could indicate something about the recruitment channels used for subject specialist roles.

The DfE survey provided further useful insights on workforce composition. It reported **a teaching distribution by role type/subject that is quite similar irrespective of college or geographic setting (urban versus rural)**. Most teachers of vocational provision (72%) only teach vocational provision, while only a small proportion of those teaching academic provision (17%) only teach academic provision. This begins to hint at the different types of skill mix required for vocational versus 'non vocational' teaching roles in FE colleges.

Table 2.4 FE college teachers by subject area (2018 survey)

Vocational subject taught (15 Level routes)	Population estimate - total number of teachers (n)[+]	Confidence Interval (n)	Proportion of teaching population (%)
Creative and Design	5,700	+/- 700	10%
Construction	4,980	+/- 610	8%
Engineering and Manufacturing	4,580	+/- 559	8%
Agriculture, Environmental and Animal Care	4,030	+/- 1,352	7%
Health and Science	3,700	+/- 419	6%
Business and Administrative	2,980	+/- 358	5%
Hair and Beauty	2,900	+/- 267	5%
Childcare and Education	2,420	+/- 255	4%
Catering and Hospitality	1,650	+/- 181	3%
Digital/IT	1,980	+/- 248	3%
Social Care	1,970	+/- 264	3%
Protective Services	900	+/- 143	2%
Legal, Finance and Accounting	830	+/- 128	1%
Sales, Marketing and Procurement	720	+/- 249	1%
Transport and Logistics	390	+/- 221	1%

Source: Kantar (2018)

Academic subject taught (main subjects only)	Population estimate - total number of teachers (n)+	Confidence Interval (n)	Proportion of teaching population (%)
English	2,320	+/-262	4%
Mathematics	2,240	+/-227	4%
Art & Design	1,690	+/-346	3%
Business Studies	1,150	+/-243	2%
Physical Education	930	+/-176	2%
Media/ Film/ TV Studies	780	+/-144	1%
Drama	440	+/-105	1%
Biology	420	+/-75	1%
Design and Technology	310	+/-97	1%
Psychology	310	+/-57	1%
Sociology	270	+/-53	-
Chemistry	250	+/-48	-
Physics	210	+/-43	-
Other	250	+/-124	-

Other provision	Population estimate - total number of teachers (n)+	Confidence Interval (n)	Proportion of teaching population (%)
SEN or supported learning provision	2,730	+/- 4414	5%
ESOL	2,330	+/- 434	4%
Standalone English or adult basic literacy skills	2,080	+/- 296	4%
Standalone maths or adult basic numeracy skills	1,830	+/- 266	3%
Preparation for work	1,790	+/- 427	3%
Life skills	1,620	+/- 363	3%

Source: Kantar (2018)

2.3.2. Independent training providers

It is easier to quantify the FE college sector than the ITP and ACL sectors because of the richness of administrative data on publicly funded provision (e.g. college accounts). Yet it is possible to construct a reasonably reliable picture of the shape of the ITP sector by looking at different sources, which show a fairly consistent view.

The ITP sector includes providers who are eligible to receive government funding and who appear on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP). Not all ITPs deliver apprenticeships – although most do. The predecessor Register of Training Organisations (RoTO) was decommissioned in July 2021[31] and included nearly **4,000 organisations**. This was a cumulative list of providers who had undertaken a pre-qualification process but, even discounting the fact that FE colleges were included on that list, it signals a **large and diverse market**.

However, the list is inflated by the provision of work-based learning (e.g. apprenticeships) by employers whose main purpose is not training (i.e. employer providers). These are not meaningfully part of the FE provider base. As such, those working in the training departments of these businesses are out of scope, even though it might be argued that **employer providers form an over-lapping labour pool with FE teachers in ITPs.**

The AELP reports that there were **1,250 active ITPs** on the provider register in February 2021 (Association of Employment and Learning Providers, 2021). As AELP itself notes, this means that in organisational numerical terms, the ITP sector is largest part of the FE sector. However, there are fewer teachers working for ITPs than for FE colleges. This is because ITPs are generally much smaller organisations (although there are large national ITPs).

Analysis of the SIR estimated 'that there are around **26,000 individuals** (headcount) working in independent FE providers in England'. (Frontier Economics, 2020). This includes teaching and non-teaching roles and is based on ESFA funding allocations. As such, it does not include all ITP teachers (even discounting employer providers). It does, though, correspond to historic estimates of the size of the ITP sector. In 2012, there were estimated to be around 30,000 people working across 1,515 WBL providers (GHK Consulting, 2012). The SIR further indicates that **ITP staff are younger and more likely to be employed on permanent contracts** than those working in FE colleges or the ACL sector (Table 2.5.)

Table 2.5 SIR average age and employment type by provider type

Provider type	Mean age	Median age	Mode age band
All providers	**46**	**47**	**50-54**
Colleges	46	47	50-54
Independent	43	42	35-39
Local authority	51	52	60 and over
Other	45	45	45-49

Source: Frontier Economics analysis of SIR 27 data

[31] The previous: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/register-of-training-organisations [Accessed 19 November 2021]

Terms of employment	% of all records			
	College	Independent	Local Authority	Other
Casual staff	8.7%	0.7%	43.1%	9.4%
Employed through an agency	0.2%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%
Fixed term staff	9.6%	1.7%	4.4%	11.8%
Permanent staff	77.0%	96.6%	41.1%	77.0%
Self-employed	0.2%	0.7%	0.0%	1.8%
Voluntary staff	0.3%	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%
Zero hours contract	4.0%	0.4%	10.0%	0.0%

Frontier Economics analysis of SIR 27 data

The relevant SOC2020 classification of 'other vocational and industrial trainers' is estimated to include 154,201 people[32] based on LFS data. The SOC coding index for this group includes 76 different job titles. In the main, these are variations on a core group of roles (instructors; assessors; trainers; lecturers; training supervisors and managers) that are aligned to ITP delivery and, helpfully, serve to disaggregate these roles from those being undertaken by FE colleges and ACL providers.

The 'other vocational and industrial trainers' SOC category over-estimates the ITP workforce because it also includes training staff operating within businesses (training officers and advisers). As such, the LFS provides a sense of workforce scale encompassing both in-house and external work-based learning delivery.

However, using experimental analysis on the distribution of the 'other vocational and industrial trainers' by industry it is possible to develop a ballpark estimate of how many of this wider group of professionals are working for FE-type organisations[33]. **Across the UK, there are around 28,500 teachers (vocational trainers) specifically working in FE** on this basis.

As such, the occupational distribution of these vocational and industrial trainers based on the LFS analysis is markedly different from other FE teaching occupations in that only quite a small share of these roles (18-20%) are for FE organisations. There is a long tail of workers distributed across a large number of non-teaching sectors because, as noted above, it incorporates trainers in industry.

This is a similar order of magnitude to the SIR calculation but on slightly different terms. It represents teachers-only rather than the whole ITP workforce, so is in part a narrower calculation. But it goes beyond ESFA-funded ITPs and is UK-wide rather than England only in scope, so is simultaneously a wider definition than that underpinning the SI calculation. It suggests, though, that the SIR approach is not missing a large portion of a supposed 'non-ESFA' ITP teaching workforce.

[32]Person weighted two-quarter average (Q1/Q2 2021), SOC2020, Labour Force Survey
[33]SIC2007: Post-secondary non-tertiary education (85.41); Tertiary education (85.42); Other education n.e.c. (85.59)

2.3.3 Adult and community learning

The Adult and Community Learning (ACL) or Adult and Community Education (ACE) sector includes local authority training providers and third sector providers. The LGA identifies that there were **222 ACL providers** in England in 2017 (Local Government Association, 2020), comprising:

- **139** councils
- **72** not-for-profit organisations
- **11** 'specialist designated institutions' (independently constituted charities regulated by their own trust deeds).

The SIR traditionally categorised charities and national specialist colleges as 'other' providers and looked at local authorities as a discrete group. There is some logic to this given the specific organisational characteristics of local authorities, but the LGA approach arguably offers a more inclusive view and reflects some of the interplay in delivery of community-based provision.

From a recruitment market perspective, any estimate of the number of teaching staff working in ACL needs to acknowledge two important factors:

- The employment basis in ACL is characteristically different to FE colleges and ITPs, composed of a far smaller share of teachers on permanent contracts.
- As a direct consequence, the profile of teachers in this part of the FE sector is also characteristically different.

Around **72% of local authority ACL staff are working part-time**, including a large share less than one day a week (Frontier Economics, 2020), reflecting the **structure of sessional staff** in the sector.

Table 2.6 shows that teachers in the ACL sector are much more concentrated in certain subjects than their peers working in colleges and ITPs. The SIR local authority and 'other' categories (which includes third sector providers), which approximate to the ACL sector, indicate that half of local authority teachers are focused on preparation for life and work, English/literacy and arts, media and publishing. These subjects account for more than eight out of ten teachers in 'other' providers.

Table 2.6 SIR proportion of teaching staff by selected subjects

	Local authority	Other	College	ITP
Preparation for life and work	21.7%	55.6%	8.6%	6.9%
English (including literacy)	19.9%	3.1%	6.8%	2.2%
Arts, media and publishing	9.0%	25.4%	10.8%	0.0%
Total (selected subjects)	**50.6%**	**84.1%**	**26.2%**	**9.1%**

Source: Adapted from SIR27 analysis - Frontier Economics, 2020

The most recent SIR estimated that there were **'around 15,500 individuals (headcount) working in local authority FE providers in England'** (Frontier Economics, 2020). This encompasses both teaching and non-teaching staff. In practice, the SIR draws tighter boundaries around the teaching workforce for local authorities than other parts of the sector – because it is not meaningful to describe the non-teaching workforce in this context as the overall local authority workforce.

For this reason, local authority providers appear to have a higher share of teaching staff (as a % of the organisation workforce total) than FE colleges or ITPs. This reflects that there are functional and administrative staff providing some support to ACL providers from the wider local authority workforce who are not included in the calculations.

While the SIR may provide an over-estimate of the share of teachers within the 'organisation', it is also a partial count of teachers in the ACL sector. As well as only covering local authorities (63% of ACL providers based on the LGA calculations), it is based on ESFA funding allocations and, as such, does not take account of privately funded adult and community learning. A historic estimate from 2012 reported around 35,000 teaching staff across the ACL sector (GHK Consulting, 2012) based on there being 185 employers.

As noted in Section 2.2.1, the ONS industry category 'other education n.e.c.' includes adult and community learning alongside non-FE organisations (totalling an estimated 149,000 jobs[34]). Experimental analysis of the occupational distribution of employment within this industry suggest that there are around **87,000 people working in FE-type teaching occupations (58% of the overall 'industry') and around half of these (40,000) are teaching recreational subjects in community learning-type institutions.** The ACL sector therefore encompasses a larger number of teachers than the SIR local authority estimate suggests, albeit on a highly casualised basis.

3. DEMAND: RECRUITMENT ACTIVITY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on Research Question 5, which relates to the dynamics underpinning the FE teacher recruitment market (vacancies; shortages):

- Section 3.2 looks at the drivers of demand for FE teachers. It puts current demand for FE teachers into context based on historic trends and future forecasts. It sets out evidence on providers' ability to meet current demand (e.g. hard-to-fill vacancies) and how important factors such as staff turnover play into current levels of demand.

- Section 3.3 provides analysis of the current vacancy market based on data analytics of job advertisements, presenting data on the vacancy volumes and the types of teacher role that are being advertised in Autumn 2021.

3.2 Drivers of demand for FE teachers

3.2.1 Recent trends and future questions

The composite view of the sector data set out in Chapter 2 indicates that there may have been a decline in the overall number of FE teachers over the last decade. This is driven in part by consolidation in the FE college sector specifically and is not so clearly apparent in the ITP or ACL sectors (partly through difficulties in maintaining consistent boundaries around those sectors and the lack of consistently available data to measure overall workforce levels).

Other factors suggested by interviewees as contributing a decline in FE college teacher numbers include increases in the number of contact hours per teacher and increased class sizes in some areas, both of which reduce overall demand. These trends may impact on the attractiveness of FE teaching as a profession if it is interpreted as the role becoming more 'stretched', but it also might indicate increased 'efficiency' in learning delivery.

The picture in terms of college teacher workforce numbers has been pretty stable in more recent years (Association of Colleges, 2021). Elsewhere, several factors have been noted as potentially impacting on future demand in ways that are not yet clear:

- How will changes in provision through the introduction of T Levels alter the nature of demand for technical/vocational teachers, if at all?

- How will online/blended delivery models further stimulated in part by the enforced pandemic response play out in the long-term in relation to parts of the FE 'offer' and teaching in this context?

These are questions beyond the scope of the current study, although it is interesting to reflect on if/ how some of the 'bigger picture' questions relate to demand for teachers on the ground – and current demand, in particular. There is not yet clear evidence of any shifts in the live vacancy information, but it is probably too early to expect that. A handful of current vacancies make explicit reference to T Levels and the need for prospective teachers to be proficient in online delivery is a fairly common facet of the current FE vacancy market.

Overall, the vacancy data indicates relative stability in FE teacher recruitment centred around traditional areas of subject delivery. Some interviewees felt that **T Levels**, once reaching sufficient take up, would alter the pattern of the FE teaching profile simply because of the potential for higher level teaching and more teaching hours, sometimes in the context of more specialised provision. The small number of current T Level-specific vacancies fit this pattern in terms of emphasising more specific technical/subject knowledge and experience than the 'typical' FE teacher recruitment profile.

However, for many FE colleges, in particular, growth in existing provision at higher levels means that there is existing potential to support this transition and there is no apparent step change in the current vacancy market. There was some suggestion of there being scope for providers to transition existing staff to teach more specialised T Level content, although concerns about how sustainable this would be as a solution in areas such as digital (where the upskilling based on current ICT provision may create a significant gap) and engineering (where industry knowledge is required in niche specialised areas).

3.2.2 Forecasting future demand for FE teachers

There is data to frame the future direction of travel in terms of high-level demand. The UK's Working Futures long-term labour market forecast (Wilson, R. et al, 2020) projects **'teaching and educational professionals' to be one of the eight sub-major occupational groups to 'grow rapidly, by 10% or more'** in the period 2017-2027 (212,000 additional jobs).

Yet the total requirement for jobs to be filled is much greater than this, because the teaching and educational professionals occupational group also has an above-average projected rate of replacement demand (3.2% versus a 2.9% average for all occupations). This equates to a further 632,000 jobs that need to be filled over the decade to 2027 as consequence of replacement factors such as retirement and occupational mobility.

These figures are not specific to the FE sector. They incorporate other, much larger components of the education and training landscape, such as schools and universities. However, they outline a structural trend and signal something about competition for similar skills.

A potentially important structural factor that could increase medium-term demand for teachers in FE is the demographic bulge creating what has been called '*a rising tide of 16-to-24-year olds throughout the 2020s*' (Gravatt, 2020), although how this plays out over the decade will obviously interact with available funding, the wider economic situation (especially post-pandemic) and innovation in training delivery models.

3.2.3 Meeting current demand

The CIPD's Autumn 2021 employer survey puts the **education sector in the upper-middle rank of industries in terms of current incidence of hard-to-fill vacancies** (Figure 3.1). This is useful context, but obviously does not capture the FE-specific situation.

The national Shortage Occupation List (SOL) maintained by the Migration Advisory Committee provides a more granular view of vacancy volumes/recruitment difficulties for key FE teaching occupations in relation to other occupations. Its most recent analysis found **low vacancy rates for 'vocational and industrial trainers and instructors' and for 'Further Education teaching professionals'** compared to similar occupations (Figure 3.2).

This is not necessarily how it feels for FE providers, especially colleges, in terms of the ease of filling vacancies. According to the AoC's most recent college workforce survey:

> "96% of colleges reported having difficulty filling posts in 2018/19. The average college had 18 vacant posts at the start of the academic year (1 September 2019). The top two most difficult to fill posts in 2018/19 were teaching jobs - in construction and engineering. The third category was 'teaching – maths". (Association of Colleges, 2020).

Note that this data relates to the share of colleges reporting any hard-to-fill vacancies over the course of a year rather than at a point in time. It is also a pre-pandemic snapshot. However, the AoC's survey data does raise two important dimensions to FE teacher recruitment in practice: that the **difficulty in recruiting varies by subject area and is dependent on where/how colleges look to fill vacancies**. This is explored further in Chapter 5, which looks at target markets and recruitment strategy.

Figure 3.1 Autumn 2021 Share of employers with hard-to-fill vacancies by industry

Industry	Yes	No	Don't know	N/A - No vacancies
Construction	63	15		23
Healthcare	59	9		32
Public administration and other public sector	52	13		33
Business service (for example consultancy, law, PR, marketing, scientific and technical services)	49	10		41
Education	49	17		32
Manufacturing and construction	47	14		38
Voluntary	46	10		39
Adminstrative support service activities and other service support	44	12		43
Hotels, catering and restaurant/arts, entertainment and recreation	44	8		45
Wholesale, retail and real estate	44	13		42
Transport and storage	41	21		38
Manufacturing	35	14		50
Finance and insurance	31	14		52

■ Yes   ■ No   ■ Don't know   ■ N/A - No vacancies

Source: CIPD, 2021

Figure 3.2 Migration Advisory Committee analysis of FE occupation vacancies/shortages

SOC 3563: Vocational and industrial trainers and instructors

Vacancies

Number of Burning Glass job posts/number of employees relative to the median ratio for all occupations eligible for the Skilled Worker route (2012/13-2019/20)

BG posts/Employees relative to median occupation
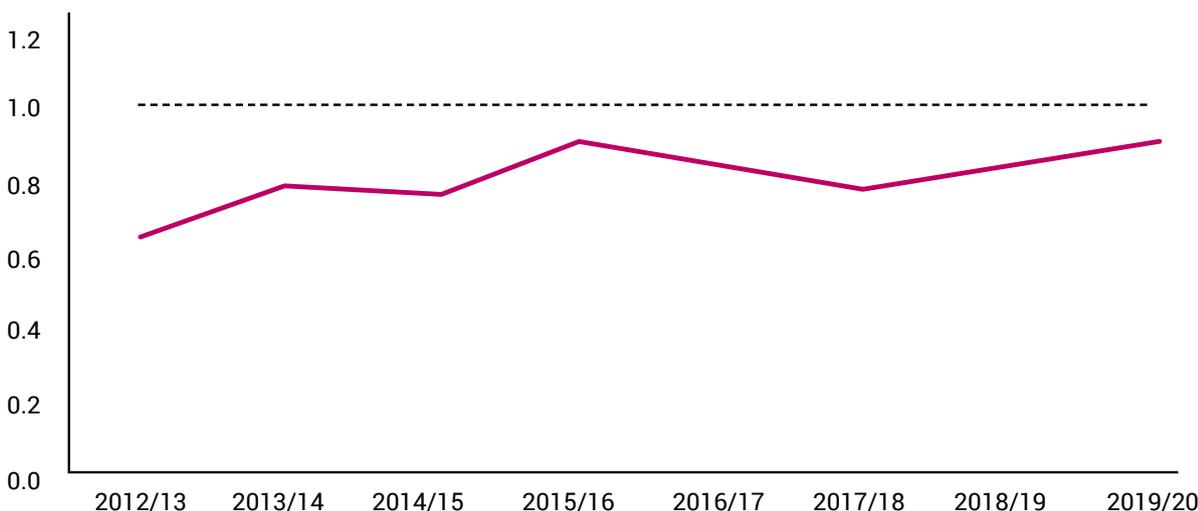
Shortage indicator rank (only including SOCs for which at least 5 indicators could be calculated)

Shortage indicator overall rank (/136 eligible occupations below RQF6)

SOC 2312: Further Education Teaching Professionals

Vacancies

Number of Burning Glass job posts/number of employees relative to the median ratio for all occupations eligible for the Skilled Worker route (2012/13-2019/20)

BG posts/Employees relative to median occupation
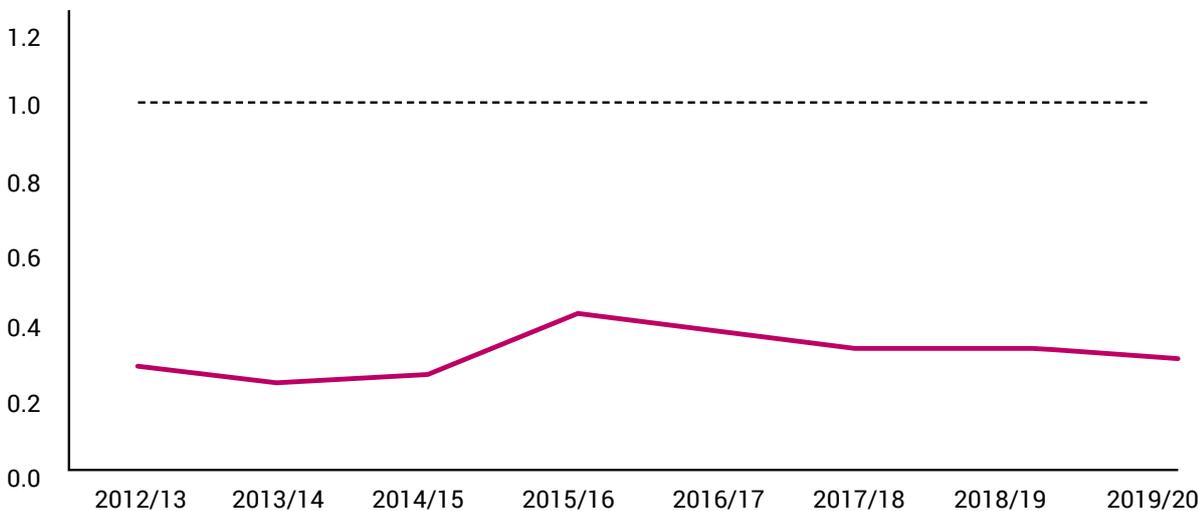
Shortage indicator rank (only including SOCs for which at least 5 indicators could be calculated)

Shortage indicator overall rank (/136 RQF6+ occupations)

Source: Migration Advisory Committee (2020)

3.2.4 Staff turnover and churn as factors driving demand

While demand for FE teachers is partly driven by structural factors (e.g. the demographics of the current workforce) and growth in the sector (where the evidence is inconclusive), a key dynamic underpinning the recruitment market at any point in time is the need to replace existing staff who leave to work for other FE employers or to work in other sectors. Fundamentally, **recruitment demand cannot be divorced from the issue of staff retention.**

These flows (staff turnover, churn) shape recruitment demand in practice in terms of:

- Influencing the scale of need to recruit new entrants to FE teaching given that a proportion of FE teaching roles will be filled by those already working in sector.
- Beginning to tell a story about what is attractive (or not) to which groups of FE teachers about working in the sector, something that has direct consequences for recruitment strategy in terms of marketing and the accessible market.

Most of the data available to understand FE teacher turnover, and, in particular, the flow and motivations for it (where teachers move to and why they leave), is focused on FE colleges specifically. The SIR is an important dataset in this context because it provides some comparative information on turnover for different types of provider and different types of role.

Table 3.1 presents a detailed analysis from the final SIR dataset that calculates a turnover rate (the number of contracts ending in-year as a proportion of all contracts at the start of the year) and change rate (the change in total number of contracts from the start to the end of the year, in effect a measure of growth) by occupation and type of provider. While care needs to be taken in interpreting these highly granular figures, for the large occupational group of teaching staff it provides a relative snapshot indicating that **there is no FE-wide pattern in terms of staff turnover.** Turnover appears to be much lower in the ACL sector (6%) than for colleges (13%) or ITPs (21%). This is not surprising given the differences in how the sector operates.

Table 3.1 SIR27 analysis of staff turnover & in-year employment change (2018-19)

Occupation	College		Independent		Local Authority		Other	
	Turnover	Change	Turnover	Change	Turnover	Change	Turnover	Change
Admin staff	16%	0	24	-1	4	9	12	9
Apprentice	34%	21	18	24	18	15	n/a	n/a
Assessor	16%	3	14	20	4	17	0	0
Learner-facing technical staff	13%	4	30	-2	2	16	13	2
Middle manager	13%	-4	17	21	3	6	7	-2
Non-teaching professional	11%	0	27	20	3	4	12	-9
Senior manager	16%	-3	10	-9	5	5	3	3
Support staff - caring	14%	5	n/a	n/a	1	3	11	17
Support staff - other	16%	2	67	0	2	20	18	4
Support staff - technical	15%	-1	23	6	2	5	4	4
Support staff - trades	11%	-3	n/a	n/a	0	0	2	2
Teaching staff	13%	1	21	6	5	9	4	5

Source: Frontier Economics (2020)

The college workforce survey (AoC, 2020) provides complementary data on staff turnover in colleges over a similar period. It reports a higher turnover figures for colleges teachers of 17%, and also provides trend data over the preceding five years (Table 3.2).

The DfE's 2019 follow up to its college staff survey found that 'one in eight teachers and leaders (13%) had left their main stage college over the last year for any reason, including retirement, career breaks or to work elsewhere… Among teachers, the organisational churn was 13%, and among leaders it was 11%' (Kantar, 2020). If an average turnover rate across all industries is taken to be around 15%[35], then **the turnover rate for FE college teachers is not particularly an outlier**. However, the DfE college follow-up survey reports that nearly half (46%) of those who had left their college in the previous year had been in post for less than three years, suggesting a degree of churn among new starters that may pose questions about recruitment more widely (Figure 3.3).

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[35] https://www.monster.co.uk/advertise-a-job/hr-resources/workforce-management-and-planning/staff-retention/what-is-the-ideal-employee-turnover-rate/

Table 3.2 AoC college workforce survey staff turnover

Year	Turnover			
	Management staff	Teaching staff	Support staff	All staff
2014/15	18.8%	19.5%	21.7%	21.0%
2015/16	15.1%	18.2%	18.0%	18.2%
2016/17	12.8%	16.0%	18.3%	17.4%
2017/18	15.0%	17.4%	19.7%	18.2%
2018/19	12.8%	17.0%	19.0%	18.2%

Note: 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 figures are not directly comparable with 2014/15 due to a change in methodology from 2015/16.
Source: AoC, 2020

Figure 3.3 DfE workforce follow-up survey: Length of time at college among those who had left the college and those who had remained

Less than a year   1 year but less than 3 years   3 years but less than 10 years

10 years and up to 20 years   More than 20 years
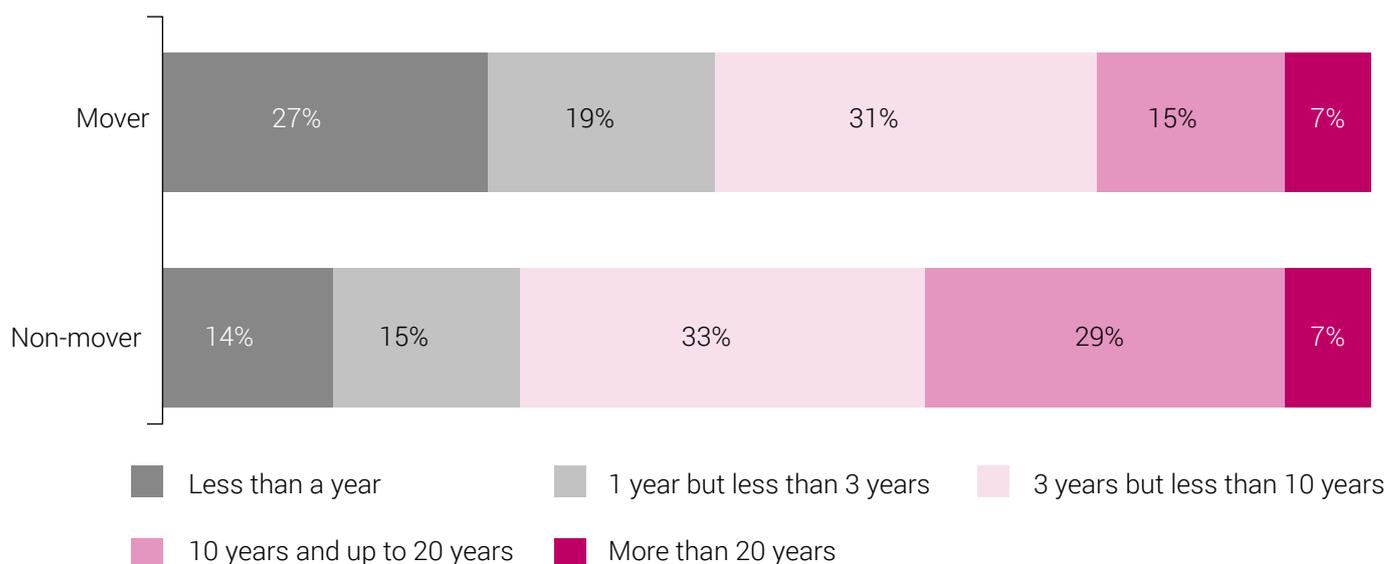
Source: Kantar 2020

Crucial to understanding the dynamics of staff turnover is to explore the destinations of those leaving FE teaching jobs. The AoC annual survey asks colleges experiencing staff turnover what the three main reasons are for turnover among FE teachers. The highest known reason is job changes within the sector (52% of respondents), which is much more widely reported as a factor than job changes outside of the sector (28%).

The education sector more broadly has a lower rate of industry turnover than any of the 21 main SIC industry groupings in the UK. Analysis of the Annual Population Survey longitudinal data (ONS, 2019) found that only 7% of individuals working in education at the start of 2017 had moved to a different industry two years later (compared to a UK-wide average of 17%). **Professionals who pursue a career in education tend to stay in education.**

This does not mean though that FE teachers stay within the FE sector. The DfE workforce follow-up survey suggests that 65% of those surveyed who had moved jobs were no longer working in FE. The survey data is worth quoting in full because it provides a detailed breakdown of flows across the piece, including those leaving the labour market (temporarily or not) and those moving between and within different industries:

- Teachers and leaders who said that they were no longer working at the same college as the main stage survey were asked what they were doing now. Of these, approximately a third (35%) continued to work in the FE sector, either in a different FE college (21%), or for a different type of FE provider (14%).

- One in five (20%) moved to work outside education or in industry.

- Slightly fewer than one in five (18%) were not working at the time of the follow-up survey, most commonly due to having retired (7%), being unemployed after resigning (5%), being unemployed after being made redundant or losing their job (3%) or being on a career break (3%).

- One in six (17%) continued to work in education but outside FE, with 10% moving to work in Higher Education, and 7% to work in a school. (Kantar 2020)

3.3 Number and type of FE teaching vacancies

Below we explore the volume and type of job adverts launched by FE organisations in Autumn 2021 to indicate the profile of current demand and the shape of the recruitment market. This is based on analysis of vacancies across the three sector-specific job sites included in the study (fejobs.com; aocjobs.com; fecareers.com). As such, it does not purport to cover all vacancies within the research window. Vacancies that are not externally advertised or not advertised in an accessible way are not included.

Table 3.3 shows the total number of jobs (teaching and non-teaching) that were either live or added over the period from late October to late November 2021 across the three sites **(c10,000 jobs)**. Note that while these sites primarily or exclusively focus on FE jobs, their reach is such that there is some overlap with other parts of the education and training system. Some sites, for example, include jobs in schools that might align to FE-type skills and not all jobs are teaching jobs (in particular, there are a considerable number of out-of-scope support and administrative jobs advertised).

Table 3.4 uses the filters available to better estimate FE teaching jobs specifically – **nearly 4,000 in total over the period October-November, roughly 500 new teaching posts per week across the three sites.** It also provides an aggregate estimate of vacancy numbers excluding identifiable re-posts of the same job, usually associated with recruitment agency vacancies. It appears that recruitment agencies are more visible in terms of assessor and similar jobs in a work-based learning environment.

It is worth reiterating that the overall volumes indicate something about the shape/size of part of the recruitment market, albeit a meaningful part. Section 5.3.2 explores job adverts in the context of provider recruitment strategies, reflecting that some vacancies will be targeted elsewhere (advertised locally, or specifically targeted at industry). There is, though, no suggestion that those vacancies are quantifiably distinct to the wide cross-section of jobs offered via the FE sector job sites.

Table 3.3 Number of live vacancies on key sector job sites (all jobs)

All Jobs	FE Jobs	AoC Jobs	FE Careers	Total
Initial snapshot (21 Oct)	1,109	1,985	596	3,690
2nd sweep new jobs added (1 Nov)	653	885	144	1,682
3rd sweep new jobs added (12 Nov)	852	1,625	222	2,699
Final sweep new jobs added (25 Nov)	816	1,016	198	2,030
Total live jobs in window	**3,430**	**5,511**	**1,160**	**10,101**

Source: ICF Data analytics

Table 3.4 Number of live vacancies on key sector job sites (teaching jobs)

Teaching Jobs	FE Jobs	AoC Jobs	FE Careers	Total
Initial snapshot (21 Oct)	534	547	596	1,677
2nd sweep new jobs added (1 Nov)	318	274	144	763
3rd sweep new jobs added (12 Nov)	404	342	222	968
Final sweep new jobs added (25 Nov)	419	364	198	981
Total live jobs in window	**1,675**	**1,527**	**1,160**	**4,362**
Total excluding re-posts	**1,529**	**1,380**	**1,082**	**3,991**

Source: ICF Data analytics

3.3.2. Types of job being advertised

There is a fairly even split between the number of job advertisements for teaching roles and support roles on the fejobs.com website (Table 3.5), with far fewer adverts for leadership and management roles, probably reflecting the overall FE workforce composition. The aocjobs.com website uses a slightly different method of categorising job types, with a long list of combined categories making it more difficult to see the complete picture (Table 3.6). Both sites show that the FE recruitment landscape is complex in terms of role type, but that teachers and lecturers are the largest category of roles.

Only seven of out ten jobs are advertised as permanent roles (Table 3.7) and just over half are full-time roles. This is significant in terms of considering the potential labour pools that might be attracted to become FE teachers and those that are implicitly being targeted.

Table 3.5 Live jobs by job type (high level)

Contract	Number of job adverts	%
Teaching-lecturing	1,663	48.5%
Support-non-teaching	1,413	41.2%
Leadership-management	253	7.4%
Multiple types	101	2.9%
Total	**3,430**	

Source: ICF Analysis of fejobs.com (snapshot of live jobs 21 Oct to 25 Nov)

Table 3.6 Live jobs by job type (detailed classification) – Top categories only

Job level	Number of job adverts	%
Teaching / Lecturing	1,628	29.5%
Administrator / Coordinator/ Assistant	1,362	24.7%
Learner Support / Teaching Assistant	641	11.6%
Manager	320	5.8%
Officer	209	3.8%
Team Leader / Supervisor	205	3.7%
Assessor / Trainer	202	3.7%
Technician	150	2.7%
Worker / Practitioner	141	2.6%
Graduate / Internship	121	2.2%
Adviser	86	1.6%
Administrator / Coordinator/ Assistant, Learner Support / Teaching Assistant	66	1.2%

Source: ICF analysis of aocjobs.com (snapshot of live jobs 21 Oct to 25 November)

Table 3.7 Live jobs by contract type

Contract	Number of job adverts	%
Permanent	2,417	70.5%
Fixed term contract	675	19.7%
Temporary	338	9.9%
Total	**3,430**	

Source: ICF analysis of fejobs.com (snapshot of live jobs 21 Oct to 25 November)

Table 3.8 Live jobs by working hours

Working time	Number of job adverts	%
Full Time	1,904	55.5%
Part Time	946	27.6%
Term Time	358	10.4%
Full Time or Part Time	170	5.0%
Casual	49	1.4%
Job Share	3	0.1%
Total	**3,430**	

Source: ICF analysis of fejobs.com (snapshot of live jobs 21 Oct to 25 November)

3.3.3 Jobs by subject area

Table 3.9 from fejobs.com suggests **particular demand for maths and English teachers, as well as SEN teachers and science teachers.** Table 3.10 from aocjobs.com shows a similar picture, with the **top vocational subjects by volume being construction, engineering and health and social care.** These correspond to the largest subject areas by number of staff and to the hardest-to-fill college vacancies (see Section 3.2.3).

Table 3.9 FEJOBS.com Live jobs by subject area (top ranked)

Subject area	Number of job adverts	%
Mathematics	89	5.8%
English	81	5.3%
Special Educational Needs (SEN)	56	3.7%
Building and construction	54	3.5%
Health and social care	53	3.5%
Science	52	3.4%
Business studies	46	3.0%
Electrical installation	37	2.4%
Engineering and technology	36	2.4%
Education	26	1.7%
Media studies	25	1.6%
Agriculture/ horticulture/ land-based studies	25	1.6%
ICT	25	1.6%
Computer science	24	1.6%
Children's development and learning	22	1.4%

Source: ICF analysis of fejobs.com (snapshot of live jobs 21 Oct to 25 November)

Table 3.10 AOCJOBS.com Live jobs by subject area (top jobs)

Subject area	Number of job adverts	%
Construction / Building Trades	98	7.1%
Education Studies / Teacher Training	95	6.9%
Special Education Needs (SEN) / Supported Learning	68	4.9%
Health & Social Care / Counselling	51	3.7%
Engineering / Motor Vehicle	50	3.6%
Business / Management Studies	34	2.5%
Animals / Veterinary	28	2.0%
Mathematics	26	1.9%
Sciences	24	1.7%
Catering / Hospitality	22	1.6%
Sport / Physical Education	21	1.5%
Construction / Building, Engineering / Motor Vehicle	20	1.4%
English	20	1.4%
IT / Computing	19	1.4%
Arts / Crafts / Design	19	1.4%
Adult Learning	17	1.2%

Source: ICF analysis of aocjobs.com (snapshot of live jobs 21 Oct to 25 November)

The fecareers.com website is more geared to ITP recruitment. While not classifying vacancies by subject, it is possible to analyse the most common job titles to provide a flavour of the types of role being required – though it is worth noting that analysis of the 1,000+ vacancies on the site in the research window represented 500+ different job titles. Table 3.11 shows the most commonly used job titles.

Table 3.11 FECAREERS.com Top job titles

Job title	Number of job adverts	%
Health and Social Care Assessor	71	6.6%
Management Assessor	24	2.2%
Functional Skills Tutor	16	1.5%
Electrical Installation lecturer	16	1.5%
Health and Social Care Trainer	14	1.3%
Business Development Manager - Apprenticeships	14	1.3%
Freelance Employability Tutor	12	1.1%
Retail Trainer / Assessor	11	1.0%
Plumbing Lecturer	10	0.9%
Residential Childcare Assessor	9	0.8%
Employment Coach	8	0.7%
Residential Childcare Assessor (CYPF)	7	0.6%
Lead Assessor – Health and Social Care	7	0.6%
Employability Tutor	7	0.6%

Source: ICF analysis of fecareers.com (snapshot of live jobs 21 Oct to 25 Nov)

Table 3.12 puts the snapshot of current vacancies in historic context for FE colleges. It shows the number of vacancies and vacancy rates at the time of the DfE 2018 survey. Similar concentrations of vacancies by subject emerge.

Set against the overall number of teaching jobs by subject area, this **data collectively may indicate that technical teaching jobs are more difficult to fill than creative and design roles**, but it is hard to argue that there is a specific subject shortage in any particular area, although maths and English appear as a continuing challenge.

Table 3.12 Number of vacancies by subject area (FE colleges, 2018 survey)

Vocational subject (mapped to T Level routes)	Number of vacancies reported (n)	Vacancy rate %
Construction	260	5%
Engineering and Manufacturing	240	5%
Legal, Finance and Accounting	40	5%
Business and Administrative	120	4%
Digital / IT	80	4%
Agriculture, Environmental and Animal Care	110	3%
Childcare and Education	60	3%
Health and Science	100	3%
Protective Services	30	3%
Sales, Marketing and Procurement	20	3%
Transport and Logistics	10	3%
Social Care	50	2%
Catering and Hospitality	20	1%
Creative and Design	60	1%
Hair and Beauty	30	1%

Other provision	Number of vacancies reported (n)	Vacancy rate %
Maths / numeracy	110	6%
English / literacy	80	4%
SEN or supported learning provision*	80	3%
ESOL	40	2%
Lifeskills*	20	1%
Preparation for work*	10	*

Source: Kantar, 2018: (*subjects not asked at survey main stage)

4. HIGH-QUALITY ENTRANTS

4.1 Introduction

The study specification asks what is meant by a 'high quality entrant' to the sector and how that varies by provider group and subject (Research Question 2). This chapter explores the question by bringing together evidence from different sources, but primarily focuses on analysis of FE teaching job vacancies. It looks at how FE teaching job adverts are framed in terms of experience, qualification requirements and competences (an aspect of demand that directly shapes supply).

This approach is arguably more objective than relying on employer perceptions or preferences (which can create a 'wish list' approach divorced from how they act in practice). It also enables comparison between different type of teaching role, notably in terms of subject area, as this is the point where FE employers are operating across different labour pools – and explicitly in some cases trying to attract new teachers from industry.

In order to structure the analysis, it is possible to separate out three core dimensions:

- **Level and extent of teaching qualifications and experience (Section 4.2):** There is a distinction between job roles requiring candidates to be qualified teachers, versus job roles with the potential to qualify, versus industry teaching roles where the teacher qualifying element is ambiguous or flexible. The number of people with FE teaching qualifications is primarily a supply side issue, but it is shaped by demand side factors (e.g. the willingness or ability of FE providers to support or fund new entrants to gain FE teaching qualifications).

- **Level and extent of industry or subject experience (Section 4.3):** A clear characteristic of a high-quality entrant is that they bring experience (or qualifications) related to the subject that they will be teaching. This is the essence of the dual professional role of the FE teacher. There is, though, considerable nuance in terms of what this constitutes in practice and how it is defined. This hinges on a key distinction between:

  – Recruitment of technical and vocational teachers, with the associated challenge of engaging industry experts across different labour market pools.

  – Recruitment of other teachers who are delivering basic skills, academic and similar provision at entry level and levels one and two and where the potential labour pool is somewhat different.

- **Wider skills and competences associated with being an effective teacher (Section 4.4):** Alongside the more experiential components above, there is a common 'ask' in terms of broader competences. The interesting thing to note is how this is refracted by the type of candidate implicitly targeted – i.e. how the packaging of these types of competence in terms of language/ framing varies and the focus in some cases on what might be called 'potential to teach'.

Source: https://www.feadvice.org.uk/i-want-work-fe-skills-sector/i-want-be-teacher-fe-skills

Below we look at each dimension in turn before analysing how the approach – and therefore the definition of high quality – varies by subject area (Section 4.5). This appears as a more important driver of differences in the definition of a high-quality teacher than provider type, although, of course, there is an association between certain teaching roles/subjects and provider types. The more substantial differences by provider type is in terms of how candidates are targeted (i.e. recruitment approaches/strategies), which is discussed in Chapter 5.

4.2 Level of teaching qualifications and experience

4.2.1 The relationship between FE teaching roles and qualifications

The key characteristic that sets routes into the FE sector is whether a prospective candidate holds a teaching qualification. This is well summarised on the FE Advice website, which lays out, in general terms, how expectations around subject experience/qualifications and teaching qualifications vary by teaching role (Figure 4.1). This summary corresponds with requirements set out in the vacancy market in practice, although, as discussed in Section 4.5, there is considerable nuance by subject area and no single approach by 'teacher type' across the sector as a whole. The FE Advice summary is therefore a 'rule of thumb' rather than a 'hard and fast rule'.

Figure 4.1 Routes in by qualification (from the FE Advice website)

As a vocational teacher (or trainer), you are expected to be a 'dual professional'. This means you are both an expert in your own professional area (e.g. Plumbing or Hairdressing) and an expert teacher. You would therefore be expected to **hold substantial qualifications and/or experience in your particular area and have or be willing to gain a teaching qualification**.

As an academic teacher, you would likewise be **expected to have a qualification in the subject you teach (usually a degree) and a teaching qualification or willingness to get one.**

As a Maths, English, ESOL or SEN teacher, you would usually be **expected to have some particular experience with and/or qualifications in dealing with the specific group you intend to teach**, be it Maths, English, ESOL or Special Needs (SEN), alongside **a teaching qualification or willingness to get one.**

[As an Assessor…] you need **some track record in the vocational area being assessed (preferably some qualification), and also a knowledge of the assessment approach as demonstrated by holding the relevant assessor qualifications."**

Source: https://www.feadvice.org.uk/i-want-work-fe-skills-sector/i-want-be-teacher-fe-skills



4.2.2 The Initial Teacher Education (ITE) pipeline

There is existing evidence about the flows of newly qualified entrants to the sector in terms of data on the ITE pipeline (ICF Consulting, 2018). The most striking characteristic of those training to be teachers in FE is that **the average age of an FE ITE learner is 37 years, compared to 24 years for a school ITE learner**. This is fairly stable over time. On the whole, individuals are coming into FE teaching at a later career stage than other types of teaching role and many other professional roles.

There are, though, different qualifying routes followed by new/prospective FE teachers and the profile of ITE learners varies by route. Those studying ITE qualifications full-time (e.g. in HE) are likely to be younger, while part-time learners (e.g. in FE) are more likely to be recruited from industry. This corresponds to there being a portion of new recruits from industry who undertake teacher training while in post.

Figure 4.2 presents unpublished data produced by ICF for the ETF presenting trends in the destination of ITE learners under the Diploma/PGCE/Cert Ed route. It shows that **FE colleges employ the lion share of ITE graduates who stay in the sector.** Noting that 'around 59% of ITE learners completing a diploma or PGCE/Cert Ed in 2016/17 progressed to a teaching role in FE within six months of completing their course', this equates to **a supply of 2,390 newly qualified Diploma/PGCE/Cert Ed completers starting in FE colleges, 620 in ITPs and 100 in ACL providers per year.** These figures are relatively stable year-to-year.

However, this only represents one part of the training pipeline. Figure 4.3 shows the trend in achievements for different types of FE teaching qualification. It indicates **a potential pool of newly qualified teachers of around 25,000 per year** (shrinking slightly in more recent years). A clear majority of these individuals will already be working in the sector while completing Awards and, as such, may be on an ongoing training pathway to a Level 5 qualification (or not).

Figure 4.2 Destinations by type of FE provider and year (Unpublished)
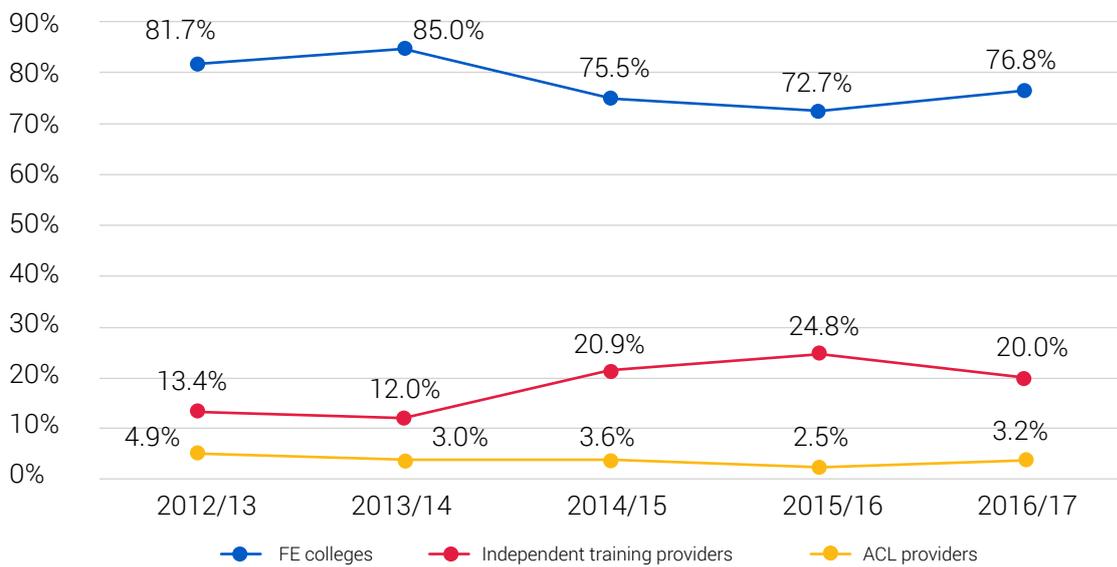
Source: HESA DLHE data from 2012/13 to 2016/17

Figure 4.3 Learner achievements by qualification type and year (Unpublished)
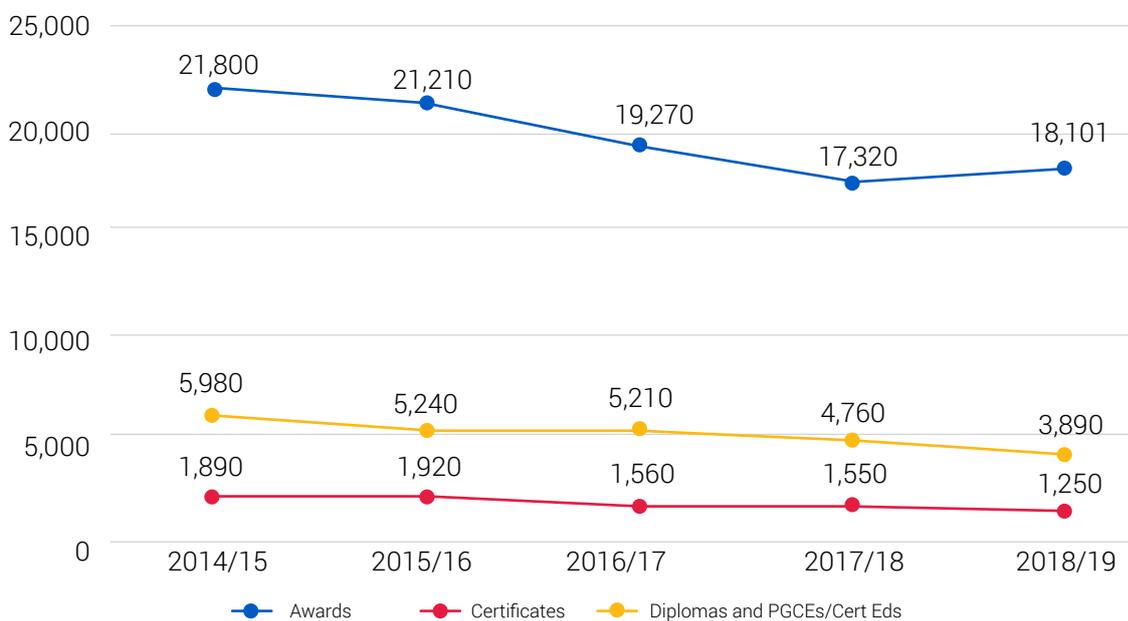
Source: Ofqual and HESA data from 2014/15 to 2018/19. Figures rounded.

Figure 4.4 shows that take up of specialist diplomas in literacy, numeracy and supporting learners with SEND, which are relevant to roles that are in demand in the current jobs market, remains small, although it has grown. Qualitative evidence suggests that the growth in SEND specialist learner, in particular, was driven by the availability of bursaries (ICF Consulting, 2018).

Figure 4.4 Take-up of subject specialist provision
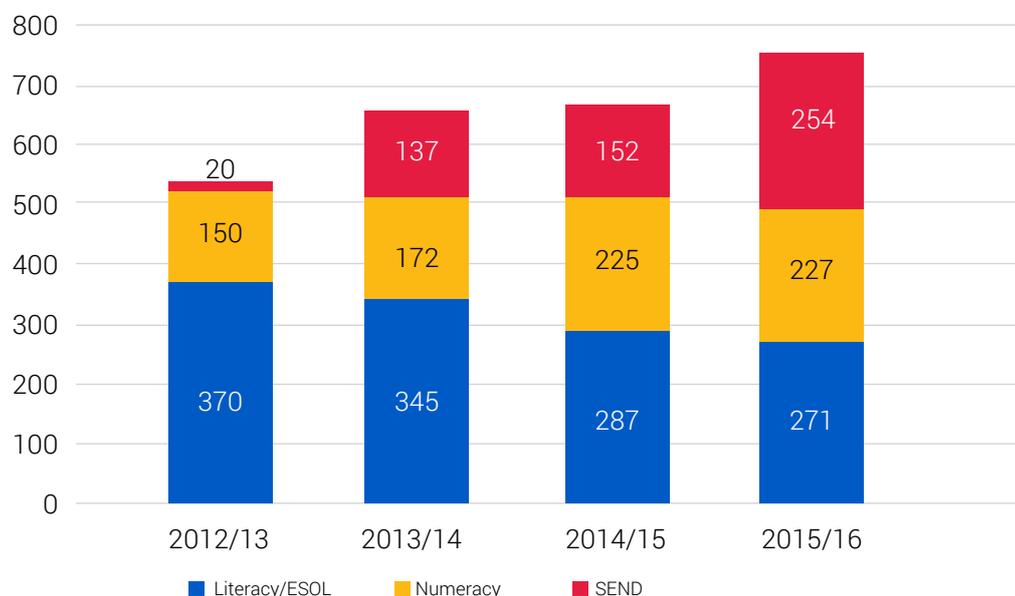
Source: HESA and ILR data, 2012/13 - 2015/16
Published in ICF Consulting, 2018

4.3 Level of subject or industry expertise

It might be suggested that providers prefer candidates who already have a relevant FE teaching qualification, but this is a limited pool and ignores the reality of how dual professionals are developed. The need for some FE teachers to bring industry expertise for vocational subjects means that providers are not necessarily looking at a single labour pool from which to recruit. In contrast, the requirements of those teaching general subjects or specialist subjects are somewhat different and more typically includes those entering FE teaching as a graduate destination. In this sense, there are some similarities to routes into primary or secondary teaching for these types of FE teaching role.

4.3.1 Levels of industry expertise among FE teachers

The traditional perception of the industry expert relies on a presumption of a more experienced technical or vocational professional who transitions later in their career into teaching. There is some evidence to back this up in practice. Across FE colleges, the DfE workforce survey suggests that a majority of vocational subject teachers across all subjects have industry experience (Figure 4.5).

The extent to which teachers have 10+ years of industry probably gives the more useful measure of the interplay between FE teaching and industry careers. The picture is mixed for all subjects (suggesting a non-rigid recruitment approach on the part of providers), **but there are subjects for which providers appear more likely to bring in staff with extensive self-reported industry experience (hair and beauty; construction; catering and hospitality; engineering).**

Rather than indicating anything intrinsic about these subjects, this may just reflect that these are the largest, most-established FE vocational subject areas with better industry relationships and greater industry knowledge of the sector. It may be these characteristics that make it easier for providers to recruit teachers with more industry experience. If so, it serves to emphasise **the importance of awareness and understanding FE as a sector as something that defines the pool of potential recruits** in practice.

Figure 4.5 Proportion of FE college teachers with industry experience

Subject	Have industry experience in area taught	Have 10+ years experience in industry
Hair and Beauty	87%	66%
Construction	82%	65%
Catering and Hospitality	85%	64%
Engineering and Manufacturing	85%	60%
Business and Administrative	84%	52%
Agricultural, Environmental and Animal Care	86%	40%
Creative and Design	82%	40%
Legal, Finance and Accounting	82%	39%
Childcare and Education	71%	36%
Social Care	79%	35%
Protective Services	81%	28%
Health and Science	71%	24%
Digital / IT	67%	24%
Sales, Marketing and Procurement	88%	20%

■ Have industry experience in area taught   ■ Have 10+ years experience in industry

Kantar, 2018

4.3.2 Providing support to facilitate industry recruitment

The aocjobs.com website provides a non-scientific snapshot that suggests teacher training is offered for just over one in five teaching vacancies (Table 4.1). This is important because it signals that providers are targeting a labour pool beyond those who are already qualified teachers. More detailed textual analysis of the job adverts shows that it is **not unusual for FE employers to formulate the availability of teacher training in ambiguous terms, as something that might be possible or for which there may be some support available.** This is interesting in terms of the clarity of the message about who is being targeted. It implies recruiters are hedging their bets (or just unable to commit upfront for resource reasons, which presumably complicates the whole recruitment process somewhat).

Table 4.1 Share of FE teaching vacancies offering teacher training

	Number of vacancies	%
Teacher Training Not Offered	466	74.9%
Teacher Training Is Offered	138	22.2%
Additional Teacher Development Offered	18	2.9%
Total	622	

Source: ICF analysis of aocjobs.com (snapshot of live jobs 21 Oct to 25 Nov)

Table 4.2 shows that vacancies with support for teacher training are concentrated in construction and engineering teaching jobs, reflecting that these are both relatively substantial vocational subject areas and areas where there is a specific demand to recruit direct from industry.

Table 4.2 Vacancies offering teacher training by subject

	Number of vacancies	%*
Construction / Building Trades	28	17.9%
Engineering / Motor Vehicle	15	9.6%
Health & Social Care / Counselling	9	5.8%
Animals / Veterinary	7	4.5%
Business / Management Studies	6	3.8%
Public / Community Services	5	3.2%

*Share of all vacancies offering support

Source: ICF analysis of aocjobs.com (snapshot of live jobs 21 Oct to 25 Nov)

Qualitative evidence suggests that providers who are more successful in accessing candidates from industry are those that have a **strong provider brand or good existing industry partners** from which there may be a ready supply of future teachers. It has been suggested that those based near industrial areas have greatest success and that there are particular challenges in London related to the salary gap in sectors, such as digital and engineering. It may be easier for ITPs than for colleges to target recruits from industry because they are better able to flex the offer, for example, in terms of salary.

Anecdotal evidence from new recruits who have been engaged through the Taking Teaching Further programme indicates a degree of serendipity in how industry experts came to join a college and the importance of 'word of mouth'. This suggests untapped potential in terms of marketing roles. There is a suggestion that the introduction of T levels is leading colleges to step up their focus on bringing in industry experts, although it is unclear whether this signals a change in recruitment ambition in practice.

4.4 The wider skills and competence mix

There is evidence that providers try to bridge the gap between those entering the sector through a teaching route and those coming through an industry route by articulating a required skills/competence mix that is applicable to both labour pools. In effect, some providers are explicitly trying to connect non-teaching experience with competences associated with the ability to teach.

Those skills/competences are usually framed in terms of pedagogical skills, learner engagement, resilience/problem solving, communications and the ability to work effectively in a team. Jobs aimed at potential candidates who may not have direct teaching experience involve a translation exercise highlighting the relevance of skills/experiences drawn from outside of teaching to the teaching context. This might be encapsulated as a measure of the **potential to teach**. There are three apparent dimensions to this in the recruitment 'ask':

1. A focus on **transferable skills** of relevance to teaching, including communications, resilience, organisational skills, team working and problem solving. These cross-cutting skills/competences are widely applicable to many work contexts.

2. A focus on **FE specific skills potentially gained from outside of the sector**. The FE specific part to this relates to requirements around learner engagement and the ability to motivate learners. It is sometimes slightly ambiguous based on review of the current vacancies whether providers are defining a high-quality entrant in these terms based on evidence of having worked with learners previously (e.g. 'the ability to inspire students and maintain excellent working relationships'). However, some outward-looking job adverts go further to 'join the dots' on relevant experience for those who have not previously taught in FE by framing it as 'an opportunity to share your skills' and build on mentoring and training capabilities ('you may not have considered using your skills in this way before, so this could take your career and experience in a new direction').

3. The **motivations of the prospective teacher**: This is usually implied rather than explicit part of wider recruitment 'ask', but the framing of many job advertisements includes language about the role being for those with an interest in supporting groups of learners to thrive, excel and reach their potential.

4.5 Defining high-quality teachers by subject area

The person specifications used by FE employers in job adverts provides a source of data that can be analysed by subject area. This section focuses on analysis of the c4,000 teaching job advertisements live across the three in-scope sites during the research window (from late October to late November 2021). It is therefore a snapshot of job requirements, albeit an up-to-date one. And it is a partial view in terms of a segment of recruitment activity, although there is no evidence that the person specifications are fundamentally different by recruitment channel.

The job adverts by subject area (and to an extent within job areas) are quite varied, but it is possible to distinguish two general categories of requirements by subject area for technical and vocational subjects:

- Those **subjects for which providers are open-minded in terms of the qualifications held by candidates** (and in terms of teaching qualifications specifically), but where high quality entrants are defined through a combination of extensive industry experience and a set of competencies that might be seen as a proxy for being a good potential teacher – especially in terms of having the presence to motivate and engage young people/adults in a classroom setting. This is seen in subjects such as construction and engineering.

- Those **subjects for which there is a great focus on subject matter qualifications and where vocational experience is more broadly defined**. This probably encompasses a larger number of subject areas, including health and social care, animal care and ICT. It appears linked to the level of provision by subject area. For example, a considerable portion of ICT/digital teaching jobs are for entry-L2 basic skills provision.

Below, the common themes are set out across subjects. The analysis is organised into groups of subjects partly to reflect the volume of vacancies in the October-November period and partly where there is some apparent commonality in the markets targeted. However, the organisation is primarily a presentational device rather than a hard-and-fast classification. Not every subject taught in FE is covered, but the analysis is illustrative of the wider picture:

- **General subjects and specialist FE provision:** Maths; English; Science; SEN provision.

- **Construction, engineering and related roles:** Construction and the built environment; Engineering / Motor vehicle; Electrical / Plumbing and heating.

- **Health and care:** Health and Social Care; Children's Development / Childcare.

- **Digital and media:** ICT / Digital / Computer Science; Media Studies.

- **Other services:** Business Studies; Hair and Beauty; Leisure, Travel and Tourism; Retail.

- **Land-based and animal care:** Agriculture and Horticulture; Animal Care.

4.5.1 General subjects and specialist FE provision

The largest share of teaching jobs overall relates to SEN, maths and English teaching roles. What comes through strongly is the relatively specific nature of the knowledge and experience required for these roles, especially in the context of **SEN teaching jobs.**

There are also numerous entry level learner support roles which are quite open in nature (e.g. 'applications welcome from those new to support but looking for a career in supporting students with a learning disability or difficulty'). Beyond this, though, providers recruiting SEN teachers are targeting a narrow pool of qualified/experienced practitioners, and are often explicit in seeking a combination of the following:

- A teaching qualification (though not always a subject specialist teaching qualification)

- Teaching experience (often not specified in terms of length of experience but, where it is, typically at least two years) specifically with the learner group in question (sometimes defined by age) and often determined by SEN support need.

- Being able to evidence adaptation of teaching, learning, assessment and behaviour management strategies to SEN groups.

- A broader mix of competences that aligns somewhat to those prioritised for other FE teaching roles (dynamism, enthusiasm, communications), but with particular emphasis on the ability to motivate diverse and challenging groups of learners.

For **maths and English** teaching roles, the requirements are more broadly based, but there is still generally a presumption that candidates have a teaching qualification/experience. There is a distinction between roles primarily focused on A Level and GCSE teaching, for which there is sometimes an explicit targeting of the role as being suitable for newly qualified teachers, and roles teaching functional skills for which there are looser qualification requirements in terms of subject level and, to a degree, an overlap with the competence profile for SEN teachers (e.g. the ability to motivate and inspire).

It is a similar story with **science** teachers, although important to note that this label encompasses a wide variety of roles. Jobs here are defined broadly, although advertisements include more targeted interest in teachers experienced in areas such as forensic sciences. Other roles also encompass English and maths functional skills teaching.

Across the board, there is a greater apparent focus in these job advertisements on 'selling' the provider/ teaching context than in other areas (i.e. the working environment). This may indicate an apparent focus on a target market with a good pre-existing knowledge of the sector. This 'selling' content variously covers available support, organisational culture, opportunities for professional development, available facilities for teaching and how administration/paper-work is minimised

Table 4.3　Summary of teacher requirements (General subjects / specialist provision)

Illustrative examples

SEN:

Applications welcome from those new to support but looking for a career in supporting students with a learning disability or difficulty.

The successful candidate will have the ability to manage and teach a diverse range of SEND learners, they will need to be adaptable in their teaching approach and use a range of alternative and augmentative methods of communication to enable an inclusive classroom.

Whilst we would prefer applications from qualified teachers who hold a PGCE or equivalent teaching qualification, we would consider applications from unqualified applicants with strong classroom experience and with the ability to inspire our learners and a willingness to complete a teaching qualification.

We are looking people who have experience of working within a team who support students who have high needs or SEND to support their learning through identifying strategies and preparing young people for adulthood.

The successful candidate will: be experienced and/or interested in SEN practices and provision with extensive knowledge of how to meet the needs of pupils with SEN or the capacity to gain this quickly.

The successful candidate will be an experienced and energetic practitioner with the knowledge, skills and understanding of a range of teaching, learning, assessment and behaviour management strategies to make a positive impact on the progress of pupils with autism.

The ideal candidate will be highly empathetic, positive, and have experience of teaching young people whom have sensory needs, communication difficulties/disabilities and/or physical needs resulting from their disabilities, due to the nature of the role candidates need to hold a recognised level 5 teaching qualification.

We are looking for learning support assistants who have direct experience of working with people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in an educational setting, as well as a proven ability to motivate students and promote learning.

Maths:

We welcome applications from newly qualified teachers (NQTS) and from current industry practitioners who do not have a teaching qualification.

A relevant degree is essential and you must already have a teaching qualification.

We are looking for teachers who have: an enthusiasm and passion for teaching maths, a personality to be able to engage with and inspire learners who have not yet achieved their full potential, good IT skills… no teaching qualification is required, but experience of supporting learners is desirable.

You will have an open mindset and attitude towards technology and virtual learning tools.

We are not just looking for good teachers, but for individuals who can act as role models to students and ensure that they leave us with both their desired professional qualifications as well as developing their individual potential as people.

Educated to degree level or equivalent in maths or a related subject area, you must have experience of successful teaching (or teaching practice) in maths or related courses and hold a full teaching qualification or professional recognition in learning and skills.

You will need to hold at least a level 4 teaching qualification: certificate in education/PGCE/Bachelor of Education or required to achieve level 5 diploma (DTLLS) or equivalent within 3 years of appointment, relevant assessment qualifications – IQA/A1/V1 and evidence of current continuous professional development.

English:

You will have an innovative and dynamic approach to delivering your subject, as well as a good understanding of what is required to achieve the highest quality.

Ideally, candidates should be qualified to level 3 in a subject related qualification or A level English and experience in supporting young people in a school or college setting.

We are looking to appoint a tutors with a level 7 subject qualification and experience of teaching at levels 2 and 3, this experience may be in school or college settings with or on adult access to HE courses.

You will be qualified to at least level 3 in English and a relevant degree qualification would be desirable.

What you'll need to succeed: be a qualified teacher of English or drama, be passionate about teaching and learning and have a positive outlook and excellent interpersonal skills, outstanding classroom practice with high expectations for achievements and behaviour, be able to deliver a creative and stimulating curriculum to a high standard.

You must have a degree in English (or English must form a significant part of your degree programme) or have a level 5 subject specialism diploma as well as relevant teaching experience.

Our ideal candidates will have recent experience of teaching and assessing GCSE and/or functional skills English courses and knowledge of the current developments in own specialist area.

Science:

The successful applicant should have a strong commitment to high standards of classroom practice and experience of teaching, and working with young people.

Key requirement from the successful candidate is skilled in teaching general applied science with knowledge of BTEC and GCSE curriculum biology and chemistry subject specialism and T Levels.

You will have at least an honours degree in forensic science or relevant subject or a teaching qualification or a willingness to gain one.

Previous experience of examination teaching at either KS4 or 5 is essential although there is no requirement to have taught post-16 previously.

You must have a solid understanding of curriculum standards and have experience in closing the achievement gap, and you must also develop engaging and innovative lessons that allow our pupils to grow academically, socially and emotionally.

Our ideal candidates will have current experience of teaching A level / GCSE in relevant subject(s) and experience of teaching in a sixth form or FE college environment with students 16 - 18-year-olds… No teaching qualification? No problem, with significant industry or subject knowledge, as part of your employment, we will enrol you on a level 5 apprenticeship.

4.5.2 Construction, engineering and related roles

For teachers in **construction and the built environment**, providers are generally explicit in prioritising industry experience (alongside a qualification in the relevant trade), although this not usually quantified by number of years, indicating an openness in terms of what the right candidate looks like. Recruiters are typically looking for professional experience in combination with a set of personality-based competences. This is often articulated in terms of personal characteristics associated with being able to engage/ motivate learners.

If teaching experience / a teaching qualification is mentioned, it is usefully desired rather than essential and recruitment adverts in this area are sometimes explicit about offering teacher training. The potential pool that providers are looking to access is therefore large and it is open to those working in industry to determine if they 'fit' the brief (a non-prescriptive approach).

The situation is similar with **engineering / motor vehicle** teaching roles, but here, the largest segment of jobs are assessor or apprenticeship-related roles. Here, the requirements follow a fairly standard format of new recruits needing to hold an assessor qualification, Level 2 English/maths and subject knowledge/experience couched in general terms. This reflects that some roles are quite explicit in terms of the breadth of required teaching by level (e.g. across Levels 2 to 4) and subject (based on a general knowledge and understanding of engineering subjects/pathways). Roles in **electrical installation / plumbing and heating** are highly varied in terms of whether they demand previous teaching experience. As with most work-based job opportunities, the willingness and ability to travel is often emphasised as a job requirement.

Table 4.4 Summary of teacher requirements (construction/engineering)

Illustrative examples
Construction and the built environment: If you have an industry background and the desire to become a lecturer of the future, then we have an excellent 'industry to education' programme that would support you to retrain. We are also happy to support candidates who are looking for their first opportunity in a teaching position if they have the right industry experience and qualifications and are willing to work towards a teaching qualification. This position would be ideal for someone with established bricklaying skills and experience, and a flair for passing on their knowledge to others… We need your expertise and enthusiasm to enable our learners to progress through their qualifications successfully. Seeking someone with excellent subject knowledge who can demonstrate an ability to combine a strong classroom presence with excellent student achievement. Ideal candidate will possess the skills to inspire and motivate our students to achieve in all areas… support students in developing their self-advocacy skills. The successful applicant will have experience in the construction sector, and either be a qualified teacher or willing to work towards their teaching qualification. A teaching qualification is preferred but not essential (we can assist you in gaining your teaching qualification while working with us). Must hold a recognised level 2 construction qualification and have a sound knowledge and experience of the wider construction and/or civil engineering sector.

Illustrative examples

Successful candidate will have a construction-based qualification, particularly in brickwork and have 3 years relevant industry experience.

Applicants will need to be qualified to at least a level 3 in carpentry and have appropriate vocational experience.

Be enthusiastic and able to motivate a wide range of learners towards successful careers in the plastering industry.

If you are an experienced industry professional, looking for a career change, then funding may be available to support teacher training.

Applicants should be well qualified in the subject area and ideally have a relevant teaching qualification although there may be opportunities for those wishing to move into teaching as a change in career direction.

Engineering / motor vehicle:

A dedicated practitioner with a sound industry background.

You will possess an excellent knowledge and understanding of engineering and be able to plan and use a range of effective and appropriate teaching and learning techniques.

You should hold a teaching qualification or be willing to work towards one, hold a level 3 qualification in mechanical or manufacturing engineering, hold a or TAQA units or equivalent you should also be able to demonstrate experience of working in machine shops, experience of assessing in the workplace, experience of teaching manufacturing engineering to a range of learners as a lecturer/assessor in engineering.

As post-holder, you will need to be qualified to at least level 3 (level 4 preferred) in engineering, with a comprehensive experience and understanding of wider engineering procedures, such as mechanical, electronics, mechatronics or aerospace.

We are looking for an experienced and enthusiastic individual to join our team, with expertise in the agricultural engineering and other relevant engineering industry knowledge would also be considered.

We are looking for a dedicated practitioner with a sound industry background, who is motivated and engaging and can deliver outstanding teaching to the future welders and sheet metal workers.

You will need to be qualified to at least level 4 in one or more areas of the engineering sector, with a comprehensive experience and understanding of wider engineering procedures, such as design, fabrication, machining and management of engineering.

Experience in undertaking solid modelling, product design, application of engineering maths and principles.

You are looking to move into education as part of your career plan, or you may have industry related skills and experience which could be transferrable, providing you are the right candidate for the job, we will provide you with an excellent level of support to guide you through your training and development and to gain the required qualifications.

Do you have experience teaching light and/or heavy motor vehicle studies? Or do you have experience in the motor industry and wish to make a career move? We are looking for lecturers for our motor vehicle department to deliver the curriculum and inspire the next generation of motor vehicle technicians.

Illustrative examples

Ideally, you will have teaching qualifications and at least a level 3 qualification in engineering…however, we would love to hear from you if you have the appropriate industry skills and experience (five years minimum), great communication skills (written and verbal) and the patience and passion to help others learn, develop and progress.

Electrical / Plumbing and heating:

You may currently be working in a construction or commercial setting looking for your first job in teaching.

Required skills and experience: has a level 3 (or equivalent) in a relevant discipline and 17th/ 18th edition inspection & testing, has or is willing to study for a relevant teaching qualification (DTLLS, PGCE or equivalent).

Knowledge of the industry and a willingness to impart your experiences to prepare our students for the world of work is essential as is the ability to recognise opportunities within the classroom or workshop, to support the development of English and maths as well as the relevant skills and industry standard qualifications.

You must have verifiable, relevant industry experience with current knowledge of working practices and regulations within a domestic/commercial building services environment… You must have a real passion for the sector, demonstrating your own skills, experience and knowledge within a range of electrical short course provision and apprenticeship delivery.

To be considered for this role, candidates need to hold a level 3 electrical installations qualification and a recognised level 3 teaching qualification, although we would welcome candidates from industry.

Is well organised and able to manage the peaks and troughs of a varied workload.

Suitable candidates will have relevant professional qualifications and industrial experience in electrical installation to teach levels 1 − 3, as this is a hard to fill post, a golden hello payment of up to £3,000 may be payable, subject to conditions.

Ideally, candidates will have a sound knowledge of electrical installation and the construction industry, together with a comprehensive knowledge of current site health and safety legislation, whilst you do not have to have a formal teaching qualification or teaching experience to apply for this role you do need to have a willingness to attain a teaching and assessing qualification.

Be qualified to a minimum of level 3 as an electrical installation educator or advanced craft certificate in electrical, and ideally have assessor qualifications and knowledge of the apprenticeship standard.

You will also need to have previous experience of working with electrical apprentices.

The ideal candidate will have a strong background within electronic or mechanical engineering with excellent industry experience, a relevant engineering degree as well as a teaching qualification and be an expert in online delivery.

4.5.3 Health and care

Teaching roles in **health and social care** generally assume/require previous teaching experience unless they are assessor roles. The level of industry experience required is usually defined in quite broad and non-prescriptive terms (outside of a small number of T Level-specific advertisements). A relevant subject qualification is often required (and often defined in just those terms). There are general requests for a thorough knowledge of the subject field and an ability to teach across a range of health and social care subjects. The range of subjects that an applicant is able to teach is occasionally a selection criteria. Some roles specifically require an ability to organise and broker placements.

There is less of a focus on direct sector experience than for other subjects, although some jobs do target those working in the sector who might want to transition into teaching (and are explicit about the support offered). A few roles explicitly target professionally registered nurses or allied health professionals in this context. There are also a cluster of roles for health and social care tutors at Entry to Level 2 where the person specification focuses on attributes associated with being able to engage, inspire and motivate learners, through personalised learning, effective embedding of functional skills learning and personalised learning.

The majority of advertised role in **children's development / childcare** are work-based assessor roles, for which there is a relatively strong focus on subject qualifications held (at Level 3) alongside requirements for holding Level 2 English and Maths qualifications.

Table 4.5 Summary of teacher requirements (health and care)

Illustrative examples
Health and social care:
You will also possess a recognised level 4 teaching qualification (PGCE/Cert Ed) or be willing to work towards a level 5 teaching qualification.
Applicants must have work experience with health and social care and/or qualifications to at least level 3.
The successful candidate must have appropriate skills, knowledge and experience as there will be a requirement for training learners in a variety of roles in the health care sector.
The successful candidate must have a proven track record in health & social care role, in training apprentices and with experience of successful use of ILT and digital learning.
You will be expected to liaise with employers and secure work experience placements; monitor placements and assess students in the workplace.
Experienced professional with a passion for education and healthcare to support the delivery health and nursing programmes.
Be occupationally competent in the health and social care industry.
You will have a good understanding of legislation, policy, multi-agency teams and theory related to working with service users.
Applicants for the post must hold a relevant degree and teaching qualification, have occupational competency within the health & social care sector.
The successful candidate would be required to have a teaching qualification, however, if you do not have this upon appointment, you will be supported in gaining this within 2 years.

Illustrative examples

Ideally has relevant teaching experience (particularly BTEC health & social care at levels 2 & 3) within the FE sector.

Tutors will have recent experience in the health and social care sector and will be aware of the needs of unemployed and economically inactive learners looking to develop the skills necessary to progress into employment or further education and training.

A degree or l4+ professional qualification in health and social care or associated field.

We are looking for a health and social care access to nursing lecturer with specialities in anatomy and physiology with the ability to deliver across the full range of the departments provision… You may currently be working in a health profession setting looking for your first job in teaching.

Anyone joining the college with relevant industry experience will receive support in attaining a relevant qualification and will be supported by a dedicated mentor from within the departmental team.

We are not just looking for someone who will be a good T-Level health teacher, but for someone who can act as a role model to students… Ideally, you will be current member of NMC or another relevant body and have knowledge and experience of statutory and mandatory clinical training.

You will also need to have up to date knowledge and understanding of the latest t-level modules and be confident in delivering these modules within a classroom setting or be prepared to undertake further reading and training in this area.

By working in an educational setting, you will have the opportunity to share your skills, develop mentoring and training capabilities and potentially widen your own employment prospects… You may not have considered using your skills in this way before, so this could take your career and experience in a new direction and may also present opportunities longer term, to provide you with a varied and fulfilling career path.

You should be an honours graduate or have relevant final professional qualification or experience of teaching or training or assessment within the specialisms required.

You will to be a current member of NMC, AHP or another relevant body and have recently worked in a clinical "hands on" setting.

Children's development / childcare:

Have experience working on a 1-2-1 basis or small groups.

You will have knowledge, experience and understanding of the 0-11 years curricular, hold a certificate in education/PGCE and a related qualification at degree level.

The successful candidate will need to have the following qualifications: level 3 qualification in early years level 2 in maths and English; hold an assessor's award or be willing to work towards one.

Do you have previous experience in working within childcare and feel you could bring your skills and knowledge into educating young people?

Candidates must be educated to degree level or higher within the field of early years education, possess a teaching qualification and an assessors qualification.

You will bring to the role: current and relevant level 3 vocational qualification in childcare, early years, CYPW or equivalent; experience of your vocational area of expertise at level 3 - 5 in early years childcare.

Source: ICF textual analysis of live teaching jobs on www.fejobs.com ; www.aocjobs.com ; www.fecareers.com (October/November 2021)

4.5.4 Digital and media

Most of the teaching jobs in the **ICT/digital/computing** space relate to basic digital skills provision. Jobs in this subject area are notable in terms of the breadth of the person specifications – even in the context of an FE recruitment landscape that revolves around broadly-based job adverts in many subject areas. There is the sense that providers are casting their net particularly widely in the context of these teaching roles. Not all jobs fit into these categories and there are some examples of either higher level software roles or gaming roles that require specific expertise from a menu of software packages.

Teaching roles in **media studies** overlap in practice in their requirements with some digital teaching roles because of the clear focus on digital media. For a lot of these roles candidates are expected to hold a full Level 5 teaching qualification. Adverts are targeted using phrases such as requesting a 'practice-experienced professional'. In this sense, post-qualification experience is often described as desirable rather than essential – but there is less explicit targeting of current industry professionals than in some other subject areas (perhaps reflecting the challenges in trying to compete with industries such as games, film and TV).

Table 4.6 Summary of teacher requirements (Digital and media)

Illustrative examples
ICT / digital / computer science: If you have a specialism that you are passionate about, we can offer you on-going coaching, mentoring and support. The successful candidate must hold a teaching qualification have experience in teaching digital skills or it to adults or learners aged 16 – 19, in addition, familiarity with the essential digital skills framework is a bonus. You have experience of engaging and working with employers to assess and deliver on their training needs. The successful candidate may be a qualified and experienced teacher of a subject other than IT, willing to enhance their existing computer skills and develop into the field of it; or an expert in the IT industry looking for a career move into teaching. The successful candidate will have a passion for this subject and be able to deliver high quality and creative lessons. The successful candidate will ideally have completed a degree in computing and have a minimum of 2 years relevant industry experience in the subject area, where a candidate does not hold a recognised degree, they must have at least 3 years' relevant industrial experience and it would be an advantage to hold professional qualifications from Microsoft, Cisco or CompTIA. If you have industry experience or are a qualified lecturer and can deliver outstanding lessons in all or some of the following subjects this could be the ideal position for you; excellent knowledge of network principles/security, network systems and architecture; excellent understanding of computer hardware, it technical support and computer systems architecture. Our ideal candidate will possess a good working knowledge of mobile applications, web development and databases, an understanding of programming constructs and concepts is essential, and knowledge of a language such as python or java would be beneficial.

Illustrative examples

Whilst we would prefer applications from qualified teachers who hold a PGCE or equivalent teaching qualification, we would consider applications from unqualified applicants, with the ability to inspire our learners and a willingness to complete a teaching qualification.

You will possess and be able to demonstrate your technical skills and software experience in 2d animation, 2d game engine experience, Unreal Engine 4 blueprints, 3d programs (Maya, 3d coat, and Quixel).

Whichever route you have followed the ideal candidate will have knowledge and theoretical understanding of game design and audience theories, principles of animation, the games development pipeline along with physically based rendering systems; we are looking for a dedicated, motivated professional who is forward thinking, innovative and ready to deliver an outstanding experience to our students.

Media studies

A background in the games design industry and experience of VFX/animation is desirable.

You will demonstrate a thorough understanding of visual and sound production for tv, film and online platforms, using a variety of production and post-production techniques.

We are looking for someone who can inspire and engage our diverse range of students across all levels, and support the creative skills enhancement.

Practical industry experience or comprehensive knowledge of the media industry is desirable.

Source: ICF textual analysis of live teaching jobs on www.fejobs.com ; www.aocjobs.com ; www.fecareers.com (October/November 2021)

4.5.5 Other services

There is a long tail of teaching jobs related to other services, including concentrations in hair and beauty, leisure, travel and tourism and retail (as well as catering and hospitality and sports/physical activity). What characterises jobs in these areas most clearly is the relative importance of pedagogical skills in an FE context, reflecting the extent of vocationally related provision at Entry to Level 2 (e.g. for teachers of **business studies**).

There are relatively few **hair and beauty** teaching jobs advertised given the size of the subject area. It may be that this says something about current demand or reflects the nature of the recruitment channels used for teachers in these subjects (using local links rather than sector-wide online adverts).

In **leisure, travel and tourism**, there is a notable emphasis on skills, experience and passion for working with young people. In **retail,** most roles are apprentice-focused, including delivering training and support for functional skills. There is a general focus on having retail and retail management experience.

Table 4.7 Summary of teacher requirements (other services)

Illustrative examples
Leisure, travel and tourism: Degree or equivalent and/or a youth work qualification and recent experience of working with young people aged 14-19. The post holder will have experience of working in travel, tourism and aviation and be able to inspire young people with their knowledge and skills. You should have passion for student well-being and promoting a positive learning journey. Genuine interest in student well-being and a determination to invest in positive outcomes for all student. You may not have considered using your skills in this way before, so this could take your career and experience in a new direction and may also present opportunities longer term, to provide you with a varied and fulfilling career path. Ideally, you will have experience of teaching or an understanding of teaching techniques, how people learn and the factors which affect their success. An excellent opportunity for subject knowledge or industry experts to work alongside our established teaching teams and deliver catch up tuition to small groups of students.
Retail: Must have experience of working within retail at management level. Experience of delivering training within the workplace. Confident with online remote delivery. Excellent communicator who is learner and quality focussed. Confident and professional with the ability to inspire and motivate people. Essential criteria for all candidates: the successful candidate hold retail management experience, such as store manager/area manage.

Illustrative examples

Business studies:

Applicants should hold a degree or similar professional qualification, a recognised teaching qualification and assessor qualification and have the energy and enthusiasm needed to contribute to a successful college… HR or private sector business experience would be an advantage, as well as experience of coaching and facilitation in a professional environment.

A knowledge of a range of teaching methodologies is essential.

Previous experience of assessment in an education, training or work-based setting is necessary and therefore, an assessor award would be a distinct advantage.

We are looking to appoint a tutors with a level 7 subject qualification and experience of teaching at levels 2 and 3.

You will also have a broad knowledge of business management subjects and be a dynamic and innovative lecturer with experience in teaching or training.

Source: ICF textual analysis of live teaching jobs on www.fejobs.com ; www.aocjobs.com ; www.fecareers.com (October/November 2021)

4.5.6 Land-based and animal care

Agriculture and horticulture teaching roles typically see a combined focus on having a relevant subject qualification (often at Level 3) and industry experience. Some horticultural roles require specific teaching experience (e.g. experienced RHS lecturer) but typically the teaching experiential requirement is more broadly based. There is a relative emphasis on the flexibility required, including in terms of the breadth of expectations for some of these roles (industry engagement, recruitment, marketing). For work-based learning roles, assessor training is often provided.

Animal care teaching roles encompass a mix of candidate requirements but with industry experience consistently at the heart of the specification. Some jobs are specific in terms of requiring/preferring a higher level or post-graduate subject matter qualification and the requirements overall are split between those wanting previous teaching experience and those willing to support candidates to qualify. As such, these jobs are targeting a relatively specific pool of candidates. The broader competences required are similar to other industry subjects.

Table 4.8 Summary of teacher requirements (Land-based and animal care)

Illustrative examples

Agriculture and horticulture:

Minimum 2 years' post qualifying experience of working in the industry and have experience of working with students and/or volunteers.

We are particularly looking for someone from the industry with land-based machinery experience, especially agricultural machinery.

You do not have to be a qualified lecturer as we will put you through the necessary training.

Range of subjects related to horticulture, including but not limited to amenity horticulture, plant science, propagation, soil science, machinery, landscaping and ecology, and garden design.

Illustrative examples

A specialist knowledge of plant sciences, field scale and controlled environment cropping, plants, shrubs and trees as well as propagation and pruning is a pre-requisite.

You should also have a level 2 qualification (or equivalent) in maths and English.

You will have a passion for engaging and motivating people, demonstrating creativity and innovation alongside delivering best teaching practice.

You should have relevant up-to-date industry experience in agriculture, supported by a relevant level 3 qualification or equivalent.

Our ideal candidates will have recent experience in the floristry industry and experience of working constructively to achieve team objectives and deadlines.

You will be required to work flexibly to meet the needs of the business and support marketing opportunities, employer and industry engagement as well as engaging positively in creating an outstanding learning environment.

The ideal candidate will have a range of industry skills including the ability to operate, maintain and repair horticultural machinery with some experience working in the training/education sector.

A level 2 qualification in horticulture is required, and a pa1/pa6 certificate is desirable.

The successful applicant should have a high level of experience in the area of horticulture/gardening and would ideally have professional qualifications and a relevant teaching qualification.

You should be qualified to degree level in either animal, agriculture or a related subject and have wide experience of working within the industry.

Ideally you should be an experienced teacher and hold a teaching qualification but for an exceptional candidate coming from industry the college would support your development to obtain the required teaching qualifications.

Animal care:

The successful applicant will be qualified to level 3 or above in a recognised professional grooming qualification; and a canine first aid qualification.

The successful candidate will have a degree or equivalent in a related subject along with a teaching qualification (or working towards) and relevant vocational experience in the animal and/or equine industry.

Competence in the care and management of a wide range of animal species would be an advantage.

Experience working with canines and within the dog grooming industry is essential and a network of contacts that can support the learners and the course is desirable.

The ideal candidate will have a passion for teaching and for sharing their knowledge and experience with the next generation.

Candidates should have a commitment to further education and be motivated to achieve high standards in teaching and learning.

The college is very supportive of new entrants into the teaching profession and we are therefore willing to consider applications from graduates who are willing to undertake a supported PGCE as part of their professional development.

Illustrative examples

Competence in the care and management of a wide range of animal species would be an advantage.

The post holder should be qualified to at least level 6 and possess a veterinary nursing qualification, with post graduate qualifications in a relevant subject desirable.

The post holder will have a suitable animal management or related subject qualification such as a higher national diploma or honours degree in animal management or a related subject, and is experienced with learners from 16 years of age.

Experience of dealing with young people and the challenges they bring would be advantageous.

We are looking for a highly motivated, enthusiastic and versatile lecturer with a proven track record at FE level.

Source: ICF textual analysis of live teaching jobs on www.fejobs.com ; www.aocjobs.com ; www.fecareers.com (October/November 2021)
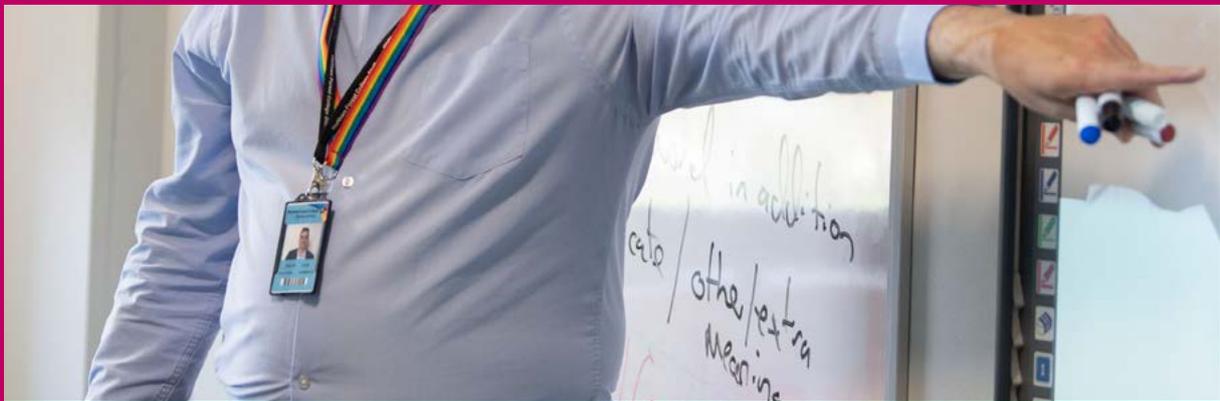
5. TARGET MARKETS

5.1 Introduction

The chapter explores target markets for FE teacher recruitment. These markets are shaped by:

- The structural and systemic factors that define the profiles willing and able to work with the FE sector (i.e. the potential labour pool/s).
- The priority groups/profiles that FE recruiters are trying/able to reach through their recruitment activities.

The chapter focuses on Research Question 3 and 4 in the study specification. The analysis is in four parts:

- First, it outlines the **factors – or challenges – that constrain the size of the potential labour pool** providers can target at the interface of supply and demand (Section 5.2).
- Second, it explores the **'pull factors' or motivations that work to attract people** to become FE teachers (Section 5.3). This is important in terms of recruitment campaigns, but also in terms of putting further boundaries around those likely to be positive targets for FE teacher recruitment – noting that this is more about individual situational characteristics rather than being a quantifiable labour pool per se.
- The chapter goes on to explore **recruitment strategies in practice** (Section 5.4) to acknowledge that not all providers follow the same process or face the same challenges in recruiting. Effective target markets are dynamic rather than static and the 'market' willing and able to work with FE is heavily influenced by the process followed (e.g. where jobs are advertised; how prospective candidates are engaged) and the support in transition to those entering the sector.
- Finally, the chapter concludes by defining, on the basis of all the evidence, what typical or promising candidate profiles or **personas** might look like, acknowledging the necessarily reductive nature of any such analysis (Section 5.5).

5.2 Recruitment challenges that shape target markets

5.2.1 Structural factors that constrain recruitment

The defined characteristics of high-quality entrants across the FE provider base indicate something about the markets being targeted for future FE teacher supply. Yet those markets are constrained on a basic level by structural factors. This means that the potential labour pool for FE teachers is not, in practice, determined by the number of people in the labour market who meet the broad person specifications in FE job adverts. There are constraints on the number of likely candidates.

From a labour market perspective, these constraints can be considered as recruitment challenges. For example:

- **Geographic mobility and the availability of skills within local labour markets,** further complicated by questions that are not just geographically based but touch on the interplay between location and urban/rurality considerations. Most providers will be recruiting from a local labour market and may be looking to identify quite specific subject matter or industry skills from that local labour market.

- **Job attractiveness factors** that serve to fundamentally shape the available labour market, notably pay, but also job quality factors (e.g. the availability of permanent contracts).

There is existing research setting out recruitment challenges facing the sector, many of which are well-established. For example, a 2019 study from the University of Huddersfield on the specific challenges associated with recruiting engineering teachers flags competition with industry in terms of pay and a general disconnect between policy ambitions over time and the reality of simply trying to maintain provision levels (Hanley and Orr, 2019).

The AoC reports that the 'top three reasons for recruitment difficulties across all college staff were: looking for more pay than the college could offer, a lack of necessary specialist skills and no applicants' (AoC, 2020). This highlights challenges at the intersection between recruitment expectations, how recruitment is undertaken and labour market competition.

Teachers working in FE typically earn less than those in primary, secondary and higher education (Table 5.1). Yet there are other aspects to the recruitment 'offer' on the part of providers that shapes the attractiveness of the idea of working in FE teaching.

There is also the longstanding inverse relationship between FE subject teacher shortages and demands in related industries. When industries such as construction and engineering are growing or actively recruiting, FE providers are generally squeezed in terms of their ability to recruit vocational experts from these sectors. At times of recession, this situation flips. This inter-relationship between FE and industry labour pools can put pressure on the existing workforce as well as making recruitment harder. One interviewee described a provider in the North West losing all of its digital tutors to the sector during a period of rapid industry growth.

Table 5.1 Median pay for selected education and training occupations (2021)

Occupation	SOC (2010)	Number of jobs	Median Gross Annual Pay
Higher education teaching professionals	2311	146,000	£46,161
Secondary education teaching professionals	2314	551,000	£39,419
Primary and nursery education teaching professionals	2315	504,000	£35,186
Further education teaching professionals	**2312**	**129,000**	**£33,630**
Special needs education teaching professionals	2316	40,000	£30,733
Vocational and industrial trainers and instructors	**3563**	**127,000**	**£27,764**

Source: ONS Earnings and hours worked, occupation by four-digit SOC: ASHE Table 14.7a 2021 provisional dataset https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/datasets/occupation4digitsoc2010ashetable14

5.2.2 Flexing ideal requirements to widen the candidate pool

As discussed in Chapter 4, two key candidate requirements relate to holding a teaching qualification and subject matter expertise / industry experience. This is the articulation of the dual professional FE teacher in job advert form. Taken together, it can lead to a small pool of potential applicants for some jobs, which can exacerbate shortages.

However, there are ways that providers can manage demand or address hard-to-fill vacancies in a way that may mask the overall situation. **Teaching qualification requirements might be flexed** in order to widen the candidate pool. There is interesting anecdotal evidence from the Taking Teaching Further programme, which indicates that some colleges do not necessarily want teachers entering from industry to undertake the level 5 qualification straight away (a requirement for receiving support through the programme) and have a preference towards initially offering a fixed term (e.g. two-year) rather than a permanent contract. Even with additional support available, colleges do not necessarily have the capacity to mobilise the shadowing or mentoring support that is generally felt to be important to the integration of new staff from industry.

These challenges hint at some of the constraints that shape the recruitment market from industry in practice. In contrast, ITPs are anecdotally much keener for industry recruits to achieve a teaching qualification straight away (although not necessarily at Level 5). Some of these training providers are successful in their recruitment partly through an ability to deploy flexibility in salary and incentives and possibly because of the strength of their industry relationships through the breadth of their apprenticeship offer. In other cases, it was suggested elsewhere that smaller ITPs find it difficult to take on permanent staff because of the funding model for apprenticeships. This can lead to a more casualised, non-permanent workforce in which staff do not necessarily hold a teaching qualification.

A converse factor relates to Ofsted requirements/criteria regarding teaching qualification and CPD levels, which can incentivise a focus on qualified teachers over other candidate profiles. As such, there are **many trade-offs in terms of how providers might flex their ideal view of a 'high-quality entrant' to fill roles in practice. This directly influences the markets engaged in practice.**

This adds a further dimension to thinking about recruitment markets: the acknowledgement that they are imperfect. Below we discuss how the recruitment strategy followed by providers can shape the pool of candidates in practice. But it is worth acknowledging that having a vacancy or the ability to fill a vacancy is not a simple measure of there being a problem or success. There is a difference between being able to somehow fill a post and being able to do so with the right candidate.

Anecdotes reported as part of the research include providers having vacancies open for many months in subjects such as maths and science without receiving a single plausible applicant. This can lead to bad recruitment decisions in order to simply have somebody in place. It may involve existing teachers from other departments getting pulled in to teach these classes, or class sizes may be increased. In extreme cases, courses may be closed as a final recourse if the provider cannot find a teacher.

5.3 Pull factors that support effective recruitment

5.3.1 Motivations to teach

Research undertaken in 2017 by the NFER for the ETF and SET on career progression in FE provides an interesting encapsulation from those working in the sector about motivations for becoming an FE teacher in the first place (Figure 5.1). This highlights a mix between subject interest (or 'passion') and the desire to work with the specific learners in FE. Anecdotal evidence from Taking Teaching Further suggests that key attractors for those transitioning from industry to FE are those who feel that it is 'time for a change' and who want to 'give something back'.

Those engaged in the ETF-run Talent to Teach programme, which provides a 40-hour mini-internship for undergraduates, show that open-mindedness and curiosity are key factors for early career entrants in exploring the potential of FE teaching roles (alongside provision of financial support in the form of a bursary). The programme evaluation (CFE Research, 2020) shows that when the opportunity for an FE taster is put in front of undergraduates, it can be attractive for those already considering teaching jobs and those who were not necessarily contemplating teaching. Few, if any, at that stage are concretely planning an FE teaching career.

Data on the previous subjects studied by those undertaking a PGCE provides an indication of the motivations for some of this group. There is a concentration of individuals **who want to teach subjects that are not taught at schools and this, therefore, becomes a motivating factor for becoming an FE teacher specifically**. In this context, creative arts and design, sports, business and social sciences (as well as law) are the most common undergraduate subjects studied by those undertaking PGCEs (ICF Consulting, 2018). The picture is different for those coming through FE-based in work training routes, where there is a stronger vocational focus in subjects of interest for ITE learners (hair and beauty; construction; childcare; motor vehicle).

From a practical perspective, the most common topic that the FE Advice Line is contacted about[36] is, not surprisingly, ITE qualifications. This is followed by questions about bursaries, about QTLS status, general career advice and funding. There are questions about specialist qualifications and also from people who possess overseas qualifications. The preferred subjects to teach among those contacting the FE advice Line in 2021 so far are English, maths, SEND, Law, ESOL, engineering, health and social care, computing and psychology, although this marks the top of a long list indicating a wide array of specialist areas and combined subject articulations/views.

Table 5.1 Motivations for joining the FE sector

Working with young people and adults: "I take great satisfaction in seeing adults who did not achieve at school gain in confidence and gain recognised qualifications."; "To make a difference to other people's lives."; "To support individuals gain necessary skills, develop confidence and progress." "I love to teach adults."

Enjoyment of teaching: "It's a very rewarding, fun and interesting job to have."; "I enjoy teaching and passing on my knowledge."; "It is interesting and never remains the same so that I cannot become bored".

Career development: "Belonging to my professional body provides help with training and qualifications, CPD and authenticates my motivation for being a tutor."; "It [membership of SET] has provided a pathway for me to gain recognition for my teaching experience via the recognition route and QTLS."

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[36]The FE Advice Line receives between 200 and 400 calls each month and a further 100 to 200 emails. There is a seasonal pattern to these contacts, which rise in the early months of the year to peak in March (presumably for those considering a September training start) and then again to a lesser extent in the summer.

Passion for subject: "…my academic qualifications combined with my relevant work-experience… equip me to teach outstanding lessons."; "To share my specialist knowledge and experience."; "I enjoy working in my specialist area…"

Building the future workforce: "To be part of the education of our future workforce."

Working with motivated learners: "You teach students who choose the subject they want to study and you are able to treat them as an adult and teach them how to behave and work effectively at a professional standard." "[I joined the sector] to work with enthusiastic learners."

Source: National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), 2017. Career progression in the further education and training sector

5.3.2 Managing or adapting expectations

Attracting applicants (especially from industry) with realistic expectations can be challenging. This was directly linked to high early-stage staff turnover. One interviewee reported that the most common reason for leaving the sector in exit interviews was that 'it was not what I expected'. Issues here are varied, but common themes mentioned include: workload; pressures of paperwork and form filling; pressure of learning observations and internal observations; and demands associated with Ofsted inspections.

These are not barriers to everyone but were raised repeatedly in the context of bringing in teachers from industry. It was reported as an even greater challenge for industry professionals working part-time in FE, for whom 'beyond teaching' job requirements, especially in terms of time commitment, can be off-putting.

The learner support aspect of the role can also be a shock or challenge to some coming from industry. For certain subjects, where the learner profile includes a higher proportion of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds or with additional support needs, the importance of effective classroom management and pastoral support can become more prominent success-defining elements of the teaching role. If this is not understood by a recruit (who may be transitioning into teaching with a view that it is an 'easier' role than industry because it is less physically demanding) then it can lead to burnout and churn. Interviewees generally felt that it was self-defeating to ignore these aspects of the role or downplay them as part of recruitment marketing.

Some argued that this can lead providers to rationally **prioritise those coming from closer to the FE orbit**, including those whose driving motivation is first-and-foremost to become a teacher (e.g. secondary school teachers who want to teach at a higher level) and others, such as ex-students, who are likely to come with a reasonable expectation of the role. This appears as a risk reduction strategy as much as anything.

There were some examples of providers **re-shaping teaching roles and the teaching team** in order to both retain recruits from industry and to adapt job activities around the reality of the skills mix being brought in. For example, one 'pragmatic solution' mentioned for hard-to-retain/hard-to-fill roles (e.g. engineering and A Level tutors) was not having these specialists undertake any tutorial or pastoral hours and have another staff member fill this role. This obviously affects continuity for the learner but may enable retention of a better mix of teaching skills.

5.4 Effective targeting: recruitment strategies

5.4.1 How roles are advertised

Live job advertisements provide information about how providers themselves describe what constitutes a high-quality entrant. However, target markets in practice are both defined explicitly through job requirements and implicitly through the **recruitment process** (where and how vacancies are advertised; the support available to prospective candidates).

There is no common recruitment strategy pursued across the sector. Common **recruitment channels used** include:

- FE and teacher recruitment sites.
- The provider's own website.
- General job boards that are not sector specific.
- Local and regional press in order to target the local labour market.
- Industry and trade press or networks for vocational roles.
- 'Word of mouth' recruitment.
- Recruitment agencies.

One interviewee estimated that, among FE colleges, it was traditionally the case that 80% of providers would use the college website as the primary location for job adverts. This was problematic for vocational or industry roles; although there has been a reported shift over the last couple of years towards greater use of more general job sites and growing recognition of the potential of social media.

A trend argued by some has been increasing use of online job boards, both the sector-specific job boards included in the analysis for this project and general job boards such as LinkedIn. This provides the most cost-effective way of a disseminating vacancies to the widest possible pool of candidates, but depends on how vacancies are framed and articulated (e.g. the use of sector jargon that might be off-putting to those outside of FE).

'Word of mouth' recruitment includes leveraging existing links with industry, local employers, ex-students etc. It is seen as being an effective model where available because of the reduced risk of candidates having a poor fit to the teaching role. It does, though, by definition reduce the potential pool of applicants if not used alongside other channels.

Issues raised that inhibit providers having an effective recruitment process include:

- Providers **lacking the resources/time** to commit to effective recruitment activities. There was a suggestion of a vicious circle here in terms of over-stretched staff teams not having the time to invest in targeting/finding the 'right person', which can lead to further teacher shortages and make future recruitment even more constrained. It was suggested that this issue has been further exacerbated by COVID-19 staffing pressures.

- While not possible to precisely quantify, it is clear that a share of the jobs posted on sector recruitment sites are from **agencies**, often posting generic adverts for similar roles multiple times. There was some unease among interviewees about the effectiveness of this 'last resort' approach because of the costs involved, especially in trying to permanently recruit agency teachers.

- **Lack of progression planning** including, for example, knowing that a colleague is about to retire but not being able to advertise a post until they have handed in their notice. This was thought to contribute to a generally reactive approach to recruitment.

5.4.2 Key messaging

What constitutes effective recruitment messaging is a complex question. Interviewees generally recognised the need to present teaching roles to external audiences in a way that would attract candidates who might not previously have considered teaching in FE. One interviewee noted that it might take a future candidate seeing three or four vacancies to ponder and seriously consider their potential for career transition.

The language used and the **benefits emphasised** are an important component to effective engagement. Analysis of current vacancies suggests this might include:

- Emphasis on the 'bespoke support' from line managers.
- Measures to reduce staff workload.
- Clear statements on the potential for progression and the CPD offer.
- Cultural elements such as collaborative approaches (e.g. to planning provision) and levels of autonomy.
- Facilities available to support high-quality teaching.

This kind of messaging probably lands more effectively in the context of roles aimed at those with a good understanding of the FE sector to begin with. More 'outward facing' job adverts create separate risks in terms of the recruitment messaging. In particular, problems associated with **not fully reflecting the demands of the role** were repeatedly mentioned by interviewees. Wasted time and investment in recruits who might have technical or vocational expertise to share, but not the skill set or professional motivation to deal with the job in the round, was felt to be a bigger problem than the challenges in identifying appropriate candidates in the first place.

In this context, the question of what constitutes effective messaging is particularly important. Emphasising the broad base of skills and experience that are relevant to the teaching role (and doing so in terms that connect with a wider labour pool) is important. This includes a focus on the skills that are needed, such as problem solving, overcoming challenges, thinking outside the box, and building relationships. These relevant skills might be underplayed in some teacher recruitment adverts. Explicitly stating that the provider is open to people with no teaching experience was argued to be a powerful way, where relevant, of tackling the concern that many will reasonably have that they do not feel they can make the transition to teaching.

5.4.3 What works

When thinking about effective approaches to recruitment, most of the examples/suggestions related to activities that sit around the core, transactional parts of the process. The two critical elements that aimed to best ensure 'fit' (i.e. the right person for the job and the right job for the person) were:

- Opportunities for potential candidates to engage and test whether teaching was for them or take an informed view about the role. This was sometimes articulated as an ongoing programme of work on the part of the provider. It is a formal articulation of some of the same activities/dialogue that underpin 'word of mouth recruitment', which is implicitly targeting fit.
- Support provided to new entrants to enable them to thrive and succeed, focused on the transition into teaching.

The probable reasons that these elements are not more widespread or standardised are limited capacity/resources to mobilise them. Some of that is about leadership capacity and capability.

Examples of approaches that were considered to be potentially effective were as follows:

- **Targeting those likely to succeed:** There were many suggested options here but, fundamentally, it related to target markets for whom the provider reasonably felt that the transition to teaching was a shorter journey or where new entrants were less likely to hit barriers associated with unrealistic expectations. Examples included a land-based college approaching ex-students who had gone to work in industry and, first, inviting them in to give guest lectures as part of a long-term strategy for transition into teaching. This involved targeting a cohort that had relevant industry experience and a high level of knowledge about the provider (what it does; how it works). Another interviewee reported that this 'grow your own' model was effective for some construction roles in relation to current students (especially mature students). Colleges that have in-house CertEd/PCGE provision can find a ready pool of potential recruits already on a path to teaching. Mobilising relationships with universities was another, similar strand of recruitment mentioned – in some cases attempting to divert new/recent graduates from industry to teaching.

- **Recruitment outreach activities:** Proactive presentations to industry groups as well as advertising/recruiting through sector bodies, organisations that provide apprenticeships and local Skills Partnerships were ways suggested to engage specialists (e.g. where a role requires technical expertise beyond that of, say, a generalist engineer). In practice, this hinges on having a clear view of the specialist skills needed and where they are located.

- **Tasters and open days:** Strategies to give applicants a more realistic view of the sector and working conditions (especially the teaching environment) were felt to be beneficial in supporting early career retention. There are many different models here that have been successfully deployed, including shadowing, tasters, the opportunity to observe lessons and regular open days. This can link to other 'pre-recruitment' activity to cultivate the pool of potential teachers. One interviewee reported getting contacts from industry involved in competitions (judging student activities) as a first step to developing a relationship with future recruits. This activity is structured outside of any given recruitment process (e.g. a provider that runs three open days a year) and obviously requires an additional investment on the part of the provider. Anecdotally, though, it was felt to lead to higher-quality applicants who came with a good understanding of what the teaching role involves, therein increasing retention.

- **Training sideways and staged pathways:** There were examples provided of teacher recruitment needs being met over the medium-term through development pathways relating to both the existing workforce and new starters. One solution for meeting specialist subject needs was to upskill high-quality existing teachers from similar or related subject areas to plug skills gaps. Other approaches included bringing people in first to a technician or assessor role before providing support to develop the theoretical teaching skills for lecturer roles. This could become more prominent as a solution in the context of emerging T Levels needs.

- **Pathways to qualifying and Strategic leadership on investment (making the case):** Some interviewees felt that the internal HR/CPD mechanisms within the provider were more critical to success than the provider's ability to recruit ready-made teachers. This was less about the teaching experience that a new recruit brings than the support provided in the onboarding stage and beyond. Some providers are distinguished by having effective internal provision with pathways for coaching, mentoring, 'handholding', and routes to QTLS. In practice, this is often a resource question. Starting teachers on a reduced timetable and providing good quality mentoring support in year one has cost implications. One college that explored this was able to set these costs alongside the current costs of recruitment/turnover in order to make the financial case for investment to governors. This was not reported as being an easy process, but, ultimately, it shows that the ability to provide this type of support to new teachers is partly a function of leadership capacity and strategic priorities/choices.

These examples highlight that 'what works' is not necessarily about having one approach, but multiple strands to generate a good supply of future teachers for multiple roles. It is an ongoing task. The interplay between resources/capacity to deploy these approaches and return on that investment is difficult to judge conclusively and might be an area for further research.

5.5 Personas

Research Question 3 focuses on 'personas' that typify what a high-quality entrant means to different providers. This is a difficult and complex question in the context of an FE recruitment landscape that is so varied by role and target market. Perhaps the most important point to note is that any implicit or explicit target recruitment profile for most FE teaching roles is underscored by pragmatism and flexibility. Overall, a key distinction in recruitment strategy is between:

- vacancies that are outward-facing and looking to 'sell' the teaching job on the candidate's terms (prioritising what value the candidate might bring in terms other than already being a trained teacher; emphasising what the candidate will get out of the job in terms of the working environment, job satisfaction and impact on learners)
- vacancies that are more straight-forwardly presenting a set of essential and preferred requirements for the post, implicitly targeted at a narrower pool although often still framed in quite general terms (e.g. being explicit that there are a number of routes to fulfilling subject experience requirements or being non-prescriptive about this criteria).

Beyond this, it is possible to articulate seven personas that reflect different target markets. They are distinguished by role/setting and likely motivations for becoming a teacher but, looking across the evidence as a whole, what separates them is career entry point.

1. Recent Graduates
This profile, which includes those still studying, captures those who are at the start of their career and have a subject-driven interest in teaching. These are people who are already considering a career in teaching but who are open to pursuing that career in an FE setting. It is, in practice, probably a small subset of those with a vocational interest in becoming teachers given the higher profile/status and pay in other parts of the system (e.g. schools). The focus is therefore on those motivated to teach older learners, or at higher levels, and, crucially in subjects perceived to be associated with FE (but probably towards the academic end of the scale). The profile therefore relates only to a narrow segment of teaching roles. It is a relatively easy group to target via HEIs/careers services and relatively low risk.

2. Early career professionals with industry experience
This profile matches someone who has progressed from higher education into industry and may have from 2-5 years recent experience but are generally in the early stages of their career. They may have decided based on experience that their chosen industry is not for them and are looking to do something quite different (something that is more rewarding and that might offer a different pace and style of working). They may have thought that teaching was a possible career in the back of their minds, but it is not something that they have necessarily actively considered, and they may well have a low awareness of the FE sector. This profile appears as something on a 'holy grail' to FE providers because of the currency of the skills and career potential of this profile of recruits. However, there are real barriers in bringing people in from relevant industries, such as digital and finance, based on remuneration levels. So, the effective profile to be targeted here is very narrow and depends on a very specific set of motivations.

3. Teacher transition candidates
This profile is one of the broadest and most difficult to define. It relates to individuals who are joining the sector in learner support or assessor roles with a view to starting a career in teaching, but often linked to subject matter interest in areas such as health, social care, or children's development. It is, in some cases, an alternative entry level route to HE, targeting those who may be qualified at Level 3 and who are interested in a job with long-term career potential. These candidates are therefore likely to be interested in the longer-term progression potential of a teaching role (and support available to progress, including gaining a teaching qualification). They may be more immediately driven by an interest and some experience in a subject matter, such as social care/childcare, but open minded about their professional role.

4. Specialist learner support and complex learner environment candidates

This profile relates to future teachers who have gained (perhaps considerable) experience working with young people who have complex support needs or special educational needs and are interested in pursuing a career that enables them to use those skills/experience to help disadvantaged groups to fulfil their potential. They may already be working in the voluntary sector or social care and may have a specialist qualification. They are likely to have some awareness of the FE context and are certainly attracted by the FE 'mission' and, as such, while a narrow pool of individuals, they are easier to engage initially.

5. Engaged industry partners

This profile relates to individuals working in industry either for businesses that maintain an ongoing relationship with FE providers (e.g. through apprenticeship delivery) or who have come through FE themselves and retain some tacit connection with the sector as result. The relationships these individuals have with the sector are therefore localised and provider specific. They are candidates with a good a prior understanding of what the FE sector does, even if that view is partial. These candidates are likely to be naturally pre-disposed toward the sector and see value in its skills development work. They may not, though, instinctively consider teaching as a career option and may not see the fit between their experience and the teacher skillset. They will be thinking about future career options, although the prospect of working in FE might be a 'slow burn' idea. Unlike persona #2, these individuals are likely to be further advanced in their careers. The messages likely to land with this group are therefore those that relate to how teacher transition can be supported.

6. Mid/late career switchers

This profile is associated with vocational areas in which the physical demands of work can lead to an interest in pursuing a different working environment and professionals who see value in sharing their expertise and training the next generation (construction trades etc). It is somewhat beyond the cliché of older workers interested in a slower-paced pre-retirement offer, but this profile of candidate is likely to have 20-30 years of industry experience in a practical role that aligns closely with FE provision. Messaging that emphasises the transferability and value of these skills, as well as providing clear insight on the expectations of the role (and qualification requirements) can help to pin down those with potential to thrive in a teaching role.

7. Portfolio career candidates

This profile relates to mid and later career senior professionals who are interested in teaching in FE on a part time basis. It encompasses those working in industry who may lecture in an FE college and some people working on a sessional basis in adult and community learning. These individuals are not interested in full-time teaching and are continuing with other professional activities. This offers considerable flex to FE providers in terms of being able to engage experts who would not otherwise be able to work in the sector. The motivations here are about giving something back and sharing experience. In order to be effectively targeted, it is critical that providers can articulate a way of working that enables these professionals to contribute on their terms rather than assuming that they are fully-fledged teachers on a part-time basis.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusions

6.1.1 Segmenting the provider base

Any lens used to **define or label FE teaching roles** is imprecise, even though standard categorisations exist. This is a function of the complexity of the sector as much as anything else. There are grey areas when attempting to quantify and characterise the teaching workforce – for example, at the boundaries between teaching and management, and with teaching support roles. However, this is marginal to making overall sense of the workforce and incidental to understanding the recruitment market.

Compared to other sectors, there is relatively good data available to be able to piece together a picture of the workforce, especially in terms of some key job characteristics that might be important in determining the nature of target recruitment markets (such as working hours and contract types – i.e. factors that shape the **attractiveness of teaching jobs**, alongside pay).

The use of different terminology to label or segment teaching roles is not analytically problematic, but it hints at a presentational point about **how vacancies are being presented and conveyed to target markets.** The messaging used to attract candidates with no previous teaching experience, who may or may not have a good understanding of what FE teaching roles entails, comes through as one of the most critical elements of the process. And it is clear that is a process, in which publishing and disseminating a job advertisement is only one part of the story.

The established categories of colleges, Independent Training Providers (ITP) and Adult and Community Learning (ACL) providers remains the best entry point for **understanding the provider base**, not least because these categories signify important differences in teacher roles. Reasonably reliable estimates are possible for the size and breakdown of the college teaching workforce, including the breakdown of teacher numbers by subject area. It is possible to quantify the number of ITP and ACL providers, although it is more difficult to be precise about the size of the teaching workforce for these providers (although it is perfectly possible to attain 'good enough' estimates).

There are good reasons for the challenge in quantifying the ITP and ACL workforce:

- The ACL workforce by volume is heavily geared towards part-time and casual working.

- In national statistics, the ITP workforce blends in with employer-providers delivering work-based learning and others in similar industry-based roles.

These are arguably features of the training/adult learning system rather than problems for understanding FE. Indeed, challenges demarcating the ITP and ACL workforce from 'non-FE' activities conversely provides a proxy for quantifying the overall pool of current labour that is either involved in training in a workplace context or in delivering community-type learning (whether or not working for an FE provider).

6.1.2 FE teacher vacancies and factors driving demand

Current vacancies generally appear to map to the size of the teaching workforce by subject area with activity by volume focused on traditional, well-established FE subjects There is little to indicate shortages associated with any given subject area (based on the number of vacancies). It may be that there is a higher volume of vacancies for specialist subject teachers (SEN; maths; English) than would be expected given the size of the workforce, or it could be that the more defined/targeted nature of the job requirements here make the vacancies more prominent (i.e. these jobs may be less likely to be recruited informally through local networks).

This is not to say that FE providers find it equally easy to recruit across all subject areas. There are challenges linked to competition for skills in some areas (e.g. maths) and linked to the specialist nature of vocational experience sought in other areas (e.g. construction trades). T Levels may make this a greater challenge in future.

There are issues related to churn and teacher retention, especially in FE colleges, that serves to generate vacancies. The FE sector is losing a proportion of teaching staff each year not just through staff retiring, but also through those leaving to work in other parts of the education sector. In overall terms, the turnover of FE teachers is similar to other sectors, but there are issues with early career retention.

6.1.3 High-quality entrants

The definition of a **high-quality entrant** probably varies more by subject area than provider type. It is formed through a combination of industry/subject matter knowledge and wider competences associated with being an effective FE teacher. This is variously articulated in terms of willingness to learn (and train), a mix of competences that form a proxy for potentially being an effective teacher and, in some cases, experience of or a passion for working with specific FE learner groups.

In this sense, the definition of high-quality is broadly based. It reflects that FE providers appear to be open-minded and non-prescriptive in identifying teaching talent. There are exceptions to this model. Subject specialist provision (e.g. SEN) jobs tend to have longer list of essential requirements and, as such, are targeted at a narrower pool of recruits (although one that easier to reach given that teaching experience with specific learner groups is generally required). However, there are teaching roles in almost all subject areas that are either niche or which require a high qualification/experiential bar to be met.

6.1.4 Target markets and recruitment strategy

Some roles are explicitly targeting a profile of individuals with considerable (10+ years) industry experience who are looking for a career change (and have something to contribute to a second stage career, rather than as a form of early retirement). These roles tend to align with certain technical teaching roles (construction; engineering etc).

While the language of other FE teaching job adverts is implicitly targeting experienced career changers, they could equally appeal to recent graduates interested in teaching roles because they are either passionate about a subject (that is generally taught in FE) or interested in supporting second chance education. For many jobs, there is an implicit recognition that subject matter expertise can come through learning/ qualifications, possibly with a mix of some industry experience. The level of open-mindedness among providers in terms of how subject expertise is derived is probably the single factor that does most to expand the frame of the potential recruitment market.

A cross-cutting element of the target profile relates to the **motivations** of FE teacher candidates. The defining factor for these target markets is having reached a point of wanting to do something different (irrespective of how that translates into career history). These groups may already be considering pursuing a path into teaching or they may simply have decided that their initial industry choice is not meeting their expectations. The key barrier here is lack of awareness of FE and understanding of what FE teaching roles entail. These individuals may be less likely to see FE teacher adverts and, if they do, they may be put off by the descriptive language used or a basic understanding of the pathway to becoming a teacher.

Candidates with a **teaching qualification** are at an advantage generally because there is less investment/ support required upfront to new starters. However, many in this category will already be working in the sector and, as such, are associated with in-sector churn rather than being new entrants. There is little evidence of substantial flows into FE from schools and universities. This is either an untapped market or an unrealistic market to pursue in and of itself.

The profile of new entrants that are being targeted across the board is therefore much more about having a willingness to train to become qualified. The barrier here in practice is where there is a lack of clarity about the **support available** to qualify or to start teaching within a provider. Overall, a key distinction in recruitment strategy might be between:

- vacancies that are outward-facing and looking to 'sell' the teaching job on the candidate's terms (prioritising what value the candidate might bring in terms other than already being a trained teacher; emphasising what the candidate will get out of the job in terms of the working environment, job satisfaction and impact on learners).

- vacancies that are more straight-forwardly presenting a set of essential and preferred requirements for the post, implicitly targeted at a narrower pool although often still framed in quite flexible and general terms (e.g. being explicit that there are a number of routes to fulfilling subject experience requirements or being non-prescriptive about this criteria).

6.2 Recommendations

1. **Strategic approach:** The area in which ETF support is likely to have the most substantial impact relates to capacity building work with the sector to improve recruitment strategy in the round. This is as much about support for providers' ongoing networking with promising local labour pools, being able to offer a more active / less transactional approach to recruitment and, most importantly of all, being able to design a development path for new teachers that increases the likelihood of success.

2. **Campaigns:** For future FE teacher recruitment campaigns, it is worth emphasising the importance of grounded, credible messaging. While the campaign should have motivations to teach front-and-centre (and acknowledge that these vary in the context of different FE teaching roles), it is important to present the reality of the role in a way that avoids misjudged expectations or poor fit. Beyond this, any attempt to segment target markets as part of the campaign should be framed primarily by the career stage of targeted individuals as this is the key defining characteristic of different recruitment profiles.

3. **Building on relevant existing ETF activities:** The ETF should also consider scaling up or sustaining its relevant work in the recruitment space. Programmes such as Taking Teaching Further (for industry experts) and Talent to Teach in FE (for early career entrants) are exactly the kind of capacity building activities that would flow from the evidence if they did not already exist. There is no need to reinvent the wheel, but there may be opportunities to further disseminate the learning from these programmes across the sector.

4. **Re-thinking roles in the context of recruitment strategy:** One of the interesting wider debates raised through the study is how some providers compensate for gaps in the teaching profile by re-defining roles and re-distributing teacher responsibilities across the team. This is often described as a reactive and somewhat suboptimal model, but it might also be pragmatic and sensible if done appropriately, increasing the potential to recruit certain profiles (e.g. portfolio career candidates). In the context of new T Level demands, there could be a useful discussion within the sector (perhaps stimulated by the ETF) on the relationship between different new entrant profiles and work organisation.

5. **Learning more about effective recruitment strategies:** There is value in further research on 'what works' to support effective recruitment processes. This report sets out many worthwhile activities to generate an informed pipeline of high-quality applicants. This issue is less about knowing what to do than having the capacity and strategic intent to implement it. It is too sweeping to say that this is just a question of leadership, even if that is what it boils down to. What would be practically useful for providers to know is what steps they can take and how to make the case internally to invest in pathways for new teachers.

6. **A step change in support for new teachers:** In the context of longer-term activities, it is worth reflecting on whether the cross-sector entry requirements in terms of teaching qualifications are optimal. The current flexibility on this can be argued as both something positive and a source of inefficiency (because expectations are unclear or inconsistent across the sector). Beyond regulating the FE teaching profession, are there ways to better standardise the early career qualification/professional development routes across FE to reduce churn and increase quality?

ANNEX 1 METHODOLOGY

A.1.1 Inception and scoping

The sources of data critical to the research were confirmed as:

- ONS data from the ASHE and LFS surveys.

- FE college accounts data from the ESFA.

- Staff Individualised Record (SIR) reporting on data gathered by the ETF.

- Key facts and workforce summary data for different parts of the FE sector produced variously by the AoC, AELP and the LGA.

- Additional one-off analysis and survey data commissioned by the DfE (including the 2018 college staff survey and subsequent follow-up survey).

A1.2 Data analytics

FE job advertisements were gathered and analysed to provide robust evidence on current vacancies and an objective view of the entry requirements as articulated by FE employers to potential candidates. Between October and November 2021 information was gleaned from the following websites:

- FE Jobs (*https://www.fejobs.com*). There were 1,109 live jobs posted on the 19 October. We used FE Jobs to test our proof of concept in terms of initial development of the web scraper.

- FE Careers (*https://www.fecareers.co.uk*)

- AOC Jobs (*https://www.aocjobs.com*)

- Education Week Jobs (*https://www.educationweekjobs.co.uk*)

A1.3 Routes to recruitment

The patterns identified within current FE teaching recruitment were used to develop and refine personas and target markets. The literature and evidence used to inform this analysis is set out in the Annex 2 bibliography. There were five steps:

- Mapping the ITE supply line: Mapping the variables that might be used to define recruitment profiles/markets in terms of individual characteristics, using ICF's ITE dataset as a starting point.

- Developing an evidence base on industry/subject routes into the sector from existing studies and the data gathered through the job posting analytics.

- Initial profiling: Based on the evidence, we translated the initial scoping into draft groupings of routes into FE teaching.

- Analysing and contextualising recruitment challenges: Stress-testing our initial profiles in the context of evidence of known recruitment challenges, in order to deepen the initial profiles (to ensure draft personas are plausible recruits).

- Validating personas: Testing evidence gathered about target markets in workshops.

A1.4 Reporting and project management

This task included production of the following:

- An interim report setting out the emerging evidence base, submitted on the 22 November 2021.

- This final report.

- Fortnightly project updates and monthly steering meetings.

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