

Guide to...

Teaching in Further Education and Higher Education

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Contents

Introduction	3
Part 1: Further education	3
What are the entry requirements?	3
Can I do a PGCE equivalent for further education?	4
Are there other entry routes?	4
What is the difference between “in-service” and “pre-service” qualifications?	5
How to find training courses	5
What is QTLS?	5
Can I teach in primary and/or secondary schools?	5
Is there any funding available?	6
Gaining experience	6
Additional information	7
Part 2: Higher education	8
How do I find out more?	8
Do I need to do a Masters?	8
What else do I need?	8
I’m not sure that I want to go on to study a PhD...	9
Where do I find out more information about studying for a Masters/PhD and funding?	9
Can I go abroad for postgraduate study?	9
Further support from Bath Spa Careers	9

Introduction

This two-part guide has been designed to provide an overview of the most common entry routes into teach in the Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) sectors.

Part 1: Further Education

Lecturers in this sector generally teach students over the age of 16, in a wide range of vocational and academic subjects. Teaching is usually delivered in further education (FE) colleges, sixth form colleges, adult and community learning centres, work-based learning organisations, prisons and youth offending organisations, charity and voluntary organisations.

The sector might also be referred to as:

- Post-compulsory education and training (PCET)
- Life-long learning sector

For graduates of degree subjects not widely available in secondary schools (such as media, film, drama, dance, sociology and psychology) it is often a chance to teach their subject. There are an increasing number of part-time posts and fixed term contracts in this sector, which means employment maybe less straightforward, and many employees will have developed a 'portfolio career' – meaning they are employed/self-employed across other areas of work also.

For further information please see:

- <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/further-education-teacher> - Prospects
- <https://targetjobs.co.uk/career-sectors/teaching-and-education/advice/468062-training-to-teach-in-further-and-higher-education> – Target Jobs
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6hTXmv6P4Kc&t=4s> - Become a FE Teacher video

What are the entry requirements?

From Sept 2013, it is up to employers to decide what qualifications they require. However, typically teaching in the FE sector broadly falls into the following areas, each with its own requirements;

- Vocational Training or Vocational Teaching
- Academic Teaching
- Maths, English, ESOL (English as a Second Language) or SEN (Special Educational Needs)

As a Vocational Trainer or Teacher, you are likely to be an expert in your own professional area (e.g. Hairdressing or Health & Social Care) as well as a teacher. You are likely to need substantial qualifications and/or experience in a particular area and have or be willing to gain a teaching qualification.

As an Academic Teacher, you would be expected to have qualifications, usually a degree, in your subject area as well as hold a teaching qualification or be willing to gain one.

As a Maths, English, ESOL or SEN Teacher you would be expected to have experience and/or qualifications relevant to the specific group you intend to teach, alongside a teaching qualification or willingness to gain one.

Although entry requirements may vary between different FE providers, possession of a teaching qualification would certainly enhance your chances of getting a job. At the moment, it is not a government requirement for FE teachers to have Maths and English GCSE and there are no professional skills tests to take, but you need to demonstrate skills at Level 2 to gain QTLS (more about this later).

Can I do a PGCE equivalent for further education?

Yes, these are available through higher education institutions (universities) either directly or through associated colleges. This is the most usual route into the profession for new graduates. Some courses are generic and some will allow you to follow a pathway in a subject area (English) and/or specialism, such as literacy or SEN/D.

Some course providers may adopt entirely different titles for their qualifications e.g. they may be called PGCE in Post Compulsory Education and Training (PCET), Cert Ed, Post Graduate Diploma, Professional Diploma. They could also be described using the phrases “life-long learning” or “further education”. This is of no significance as they all qualify you to teach in the sector. The PGCE can be undertaken as a full-time one year course (often “pre-service”) or on a part-time basis (usually “in-service” route). Entry requirements may differ, but providers may require you hold GCSE English and Math at Grade C or above.

You can also take a Cert Ed (Certificate in Education) which meets the Level 5 requirements (see below) but does not require a degree. Instead you will need a Level 3 qualification in the area you wish to teach or extensive experience. This is ideal for those who wish to teach a different subject from their degree subject.

For further information go to: <https://www.feadvice.org.uk/i-want-work-fe-skills-sector/i-want-be-teacher-fe-skills/teaching-qualifications-fe-skills-sector>

Are there other entry routes?

The Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training

This is similar to the PGCE and is considered to be a “full teaching qualification” for the sector. It can be gained through a one year programme, or two-year part time programme, and you are required to complete 100hrs of teaching practice as part of the course. It is most commonly offered by further education colleges, with the majority of students undertaking this route already employed in a teaching role.

Lower level qualifications are also offered at Level 3 (Award in Education and Training) and Level 4 (Certificate in Education and Training), although there is no requirement for you to have completed one before progressing onto the level.

For further information go to: <https://www.feadvice.org.uk/i-want-work-fe-skills-sector/i-want-be-teacher-fe-skills/teaching-qualifications-fe-skills-sector>

Trainee Lecturer Jobs

Very occasionally colleges may set up their own trainee lecturer schemes aimed at graduates. These are usually initiatives by senior managers at individual colleges, so there is no central database of these. However, you may find opportunities advertised on <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/graduate-jobs> or <https://www.fejobs.com/>.

Taking Teaching Further

Taking Teaching Further is a Department for Education funded initiative that is currently being piloted. It aims to attract experienced industry professionals with expert technical knowledge into the FE Sector. For further information see: <https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/supporting/support-teacher-recruitment/taking-teaching-further/>.

What is the difference between “in-service” and “pre-service” qualifications?

Approx. 30% of teachers take the full pre-service diploma; therefore 70% take some kind of in-service route. The “pre-service” option would suit someone with little or no teaching experience. Those studying part-time will often follow the “in-service” route, and will need to find some teaching work (paid or voluntary) in order to meet the requirements for supervised teaching assessments and observations.

How to find training courses

For the most up-to-date information (for England) go to: <https://www.feadvice.org.uk/>. There is no central admissions service for training courses to teach in the sector, but you can ring the FE advice line: **0300 303 1877** or email feadviceline@etfoundation.co.uk for an up-to-date list of providers offering both the postgraduate routes for PGCE equivalent and the Education and Training routes at Levels 3, 4 and 5.

Many further education colleges in the UK run the courses, often in conjunction with a local university. Contact them directly to find out what they offer (N.B. Bath Spa University does not currently offer this type of teacher training, but might in the future).

Some providers offering the postgraduate route for PGCE equivalent will use the UCAS Teacher Training website where you can search for postgraduate teacher training courses via the Direct Gov link: <https://www.gov.uk/find-postgraduate-teacher-training-courses>. You can search for providers by region or across England by clicking the ‘Further Education’ option.

What is QTLS?

QTLS is a post-qualification voluntary ‘status’ and stands for ‘Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills’. The QTLS is the badge of professionalism for post-16 education and training, helping practitioners advance their careers and demonstrate their expertise. You must hold a recognised teaching qualification at Level 5 or above and demonstrate that you are committed to continuous professional development via submission of a portfolio of evidence online which is reviewed to ensure that the required professional standards have been met. You have to be member of the Society for Education and Training to register for professional formation and maintain your QTLS status. For further information go to: <https://set.et-foundation.co.uk/professionalism/qtls/#>.

Can I teach in Primary and/or Secondary Schools?

Since April 2012, lecturers in further education who hold QTLS status and whom are members of the Society for Education & Training (SET) can be employed in state-maintained primary or secondary schools

in England, as fully qualified teachers. See the Department of Education pages on QTLS recognition/QTS equivalency for more information: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/qualified-teacher-status-qts>.

Is there any funding available?

For those studying a PGCE equivalent (such as PCET Post-Compulsory Education & Training), financial support may be available from Student Finance England in the form of tuition fee loans and maintenance loans. Go to: <https://www.gov.uk/teacher-training-funding> or contact Student Finance England.

For other training options the FE Advice website states that “*The FE initial Teacher Training (ITT) Bursary and Subject Knowledge Enhancement schemes are both now effectively finished. The DfE announced in February 2019 that both these schemes will cease from 1 September 2019*”. (Source: <https://www.feadvice.org.uk/want-work-sector-i-want-be-teacher-fe/incentives-new-teachers>).

Future funding within the FE sector has focused on the development of T levels, new government qualifications intended to be equivalent to A’Levels allowing young people a choice between technical and academic education post-16. For further information see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-t-levels-mark-a-revolution-in-technical-education>.

Gaining Experience

Gaining experience of the FE sector is recommended for those considering further education teaching. Not only will you be able to write a more convincing application form for the further education sector, but gaining experience is a valuable way for you to make an informed decision about whether teaching in the sector suits you.

You can arrange your own experience or classroom-based observations by contacting further education sector providers, such as colleges. It is advisable that you contact the department that teaches the subject area you are interested in. To enquire about gaining experience, send a formal letter by post or email to a named contact (check the provider’s website or contact the provider directly to enquire who you should address your letter to). In your letter;

- Introduce yourself and be clear about what you are asking for (for example, the opportunity to observe classroom teaching)
- Explain your interest in the FE sector
- Be clear about your availability for work experience
- Mention any relevant previous experience you might have to the education sector or working with post-16 or adults in a supportive and/or learning environment
- Include a copy of your CV

While gaining experience keep a record of what you did, what you learnt and what you observed as this may help to inform your future applications for teacher training and demonstrate that you can reflect on your experiences.

Talent to Teach in FE

Talent to Teach in FE is a government funded supported work placement, in partnership with Cognition England, which aims to raise the profile of FE teaching as a career option amongst the graduate

population. The scheme encourages students who have never considered a career in teaching or FE to apply. Key programme information includes;

- 40 hour placements with a FE provider, taking place over the course of one or a number of weeks (agreed with you) across the whole of England
- Placements available from April 2019 to end of March 2020
- Placements available to final year undergraduates or postgraduates of all academic disciplines

For further information go to: <https://www.snapsurveys.com/wh/s.asp?k=155655244033>.

Additional information:

- The Education and Training Foundation (formerly known as the FE guild) is an employer-led organisation for the sector: www.et-foundation.co.uk.
- <https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/research/workforce-data/> - Labour market information for the FE Sector.
- The Society for Education & Training is the new professional membership organisation of the Education and Training Foundation: <https://set.et-foundation.co.uk/>.
- The Association of Colleges exists to represent and promote the interests of colleges and provide members with professional support services: www.aoc.co.uk.

Part 2: Higher Education

Higher education teaching professionals work in universities and in some further education colleges, teaching students to at least first degree level, undertaking research, writing journal articles and publishing books in their chosen field, and presenting at academic conferences.

Other tasks include:

- Preparing and delivering lectures, seminars and tutorials (including use of multimedia technologies)
- Preparing, administering and marking examinations, essays and other assignments.
- Advising students on academic matters, encouraging independent research, providing pastoral care or guidance, directing the work of postgraduate students.
- Participating in the decision making processes regarding curricula, budgets, departments matters.

How do I find out more?

Speak to your lecturing staff, ask them about their career paths and any advice or tips they could give you, this would also be a good opportunity to explore the role in more detail and get a better sense of what is involved.

See these job profiles for further information:

- www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/higher-education-lecturer
- www.jobs.ac.uk/careers-advice/job-profiles/1778/lecturer-he
- www.jobs.ac.uk/careers-advice/working-in-higher-education/1057/how-to-become-a-lecturer

Do I need to do a Masters?

A Master's degree is not an essential to become a University Lecturer - although a PhD is more or less the expected standard these days. Therefore, further study is almost certainly the most logical way forward for most people. Of course, there are always exceptions to the rule and occasionally university lecturing staff will enter the profession from a position of industry experience/professional qualifications, rather than academia, but this is more common in vocational subject areas e.g. Law/Accounting/Creative Writing.

A teaching qualification (such as a PGCE) is not usually an essential criterion in job descriptions (but could be a bonus!). Instead, you are likely to be encouraged to undertake university teaching qualifications alongside your PhD or after you have been successfully appointed to your first lecturing role. The Higher Education Academy accredits university teaching and learning CPD (continuing professional development) courses: <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/>.

What else do I need?

You will also be expected to have gained a good first degree (1st or 2:1) that is relevant to the subject you wish to lecture in, and preferably demonstrable experience of teaching. Whilst completing a Masters/PhD, you may be able to take on teaching duties (such as running seminars and lecturers) and administrative responsibilities such as marking work. In some research student positions, teaching and administrative responsibilities are given as a condition of receiving a bursary. Looking for part-time, hourly paid lecturing roles is a good way of moving into the field whilst studying (at Masters/PhD level).

I'm not sure that I want to go onto study for a PhD.....

Some students find the idea of jumping from undergraduate to PhD level a bit intimidating, and opt to undertake a Master's degree first. This can be a good way of assessing your ability to deal with higher level study, and move you towards developing your ideas for a PhD. Master's degree courses are generally categorised as either research or taught, usually lasting one year full time or two years part time.

Where do I find out more information about studying for a Masters/PhD and funding?

Download the '**Guide to Postgraduate Study: Applications, Interview and Funding**' from the Bath Spa University Careers webpage. Here are a number of key websites to help you get started:

- www.gov.uk/funding-for-postgraduate-study
- <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/postgraduate-study>
- www.findamasters.com/
- www.jobs.ac.uk/phd
- www.scholarship-search.org.uk
- www.postgraduatestudentships.co.uk
- www.vitae.ac.uk/researcher-careers

Can I go abroad for postgraduate study?

Of course you can! Many overseas universities offer you the opportunity to study in English and the cost of studying abroad may even be cheaper than the UK.

To find out more please see the following websites:

- <https://targetpostgrad.com/advice/studying-abroad>
- <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/postgraduate-study/study-abroad>
- <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/world-university-rankings>
- <http://thestudentworld.edufindme.com/index.php>

Further Support from Bath Spa Careers

If you would like further support from Bath Spa Careers & Employability go to bathspa.ac.uk/careers to see the ways in which you can access our service, including workshops and events, appointments and to access our extensive range of resources.

You can also contact Careers Reception on 01225 875525 or at careers@bathspa.ac.uk.

Please note that Bath Spa Careers does not endorse particular organisations.

(This guide was last updated in Summer 2019).

GET A HEAD START

We're here to help you get a great start to your career. We're open all year round, so come and visit us in the Careers Space, book an appointment, or get in touch.

Careers Space, SL.G04
Steward's Lodge

careers@bathspa.ac.uk
01225 875525

www.bathspa.ac.uk/careers

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