

Workforce data across the Further Education sector – 2013-14

Summary of findings in the 2013-2014 Staff Individualised Record (SIR) data, Work Based Learning report, and Adult and Community Learning Workforce report

Contents

- Contents..... 2
- Executive summary 3
- 1. Introduction..... 5
- 2. Summary of FE Colleges, WBL and ACL 7
 - 2.1 Composition of staff..... 7
 - 2.1.1 Occupational categories 7
 - 2.1.2 Contract types..... 8
 - 2.1.3 Gender 8
 - 2.1.4 Age 9
 - 2.1.5 Ethnicity 10
 - 2.2 Annual pay..... 10
 - 2.3 Size of the overall workforces 11
- 3. Conclusions 12

Executive summary

The Education and Training Foundation commissioned Frontier Economics to provide a summary report that brings together workforce data about FE Colleges (FECs),¹ Work Based Learning (WBL) and Adult and Community Learning (ACL) providers. The data in this report are based on three separate publications produced by Frontier Economics (for FECs) and RCU (for WBL and ACL). Data for FECs are based on a census of all relevant institutions in England as part of the Staff Individualised Record (SIR) 22 which achieved a response rate of around 25%. WBL and ACL data are derived from surveys with sample sizes of 186 and 54 providers respectively. In the SIR data collection, FECs are asked to return information on each standard contract of employment with a member of staff. The surveys of ACL and WBL providers instead asked institutions to return aggregate information on their members of staff and their characteristics.

Given these differences in the nature of the data, it is only possible to bring together a few key pieces of information. This report presents the similarities and differences between the three workforces we have been able to draw out. Our analysis shows that:

- Around half of staff in FECs and around 60% of staff in ACL are teachers (excluding assessors and verifiers), compared with 23% in WBL. This difference arises because the assessor role is much more prevalent in WBL (31% of all staff) than in FECs and ACL, where assessors constitute 3% and 7% of all staff respectively.
- Approximately half of employees in WBL and FECs are teachers or assessors. In ACL, teachers and assessors make up around 60% of all staff.
- Part-time working is very common in FECs and ACL. More than half of staff in FECs and 83% of staff in ACL are employed on a part-time basis. The incidence of part-time working is lower in WBL where only around a fifth of employees have part-time contracts.
- Part-time working is more common among teachers than all staff. Almost all (92%) teachers and assessors in ACL are part-time. The proportions in FECs and WBL are 60% and 25% respectively.
- The majority of staff in FECs, ACL and WBL providers are female – women make up approximately two-thirds of the workforce in FECs and WBL and around 80% in ACL.
- FECs have an older workforce than WBL. The largest group of employees in FECs is in the age bracket 45 to 54 while in WBL the largest group of employees is in the 35 to 44 age bracket. The high share of employees with unknown age in ACL (15%) hinders comparability across the three sectors, although the data suggest that ACL staff are a similar or older age than staff in FECs.
- FECs, ACL, and WBL workforces are predominantly white. This is somewhat more pronounced in ACL (90%) than in FECs and WBL (both 85%). However, all three reports have large proportions of staff with unknown ethnicity (between 14% and 23%).
- Annual pay of full-time staff is highest in Greater London in FECs and WBL. While the median pay band is higher in FECs (£25,000 to £29,999) than in WBL (£20,001 to £25,000), it remains unclear what determines this gap as the available data does not allow controlling for the underlying differences in the workforce.

Because only a sample of FECs, WBL, and ACL providers report information on their staff, comparing the size of the workforce across the three sectors is a challenging task. It is possible to produce indicative estimates of the total FECs, WBL, and ACL workforce sizes by scaling up the total number of staff reported in

¹ FE Colleges include all college types providing data in the Staff Individualised Record (SIR) data for 2013-14. These are General FE colleges, Sixth form colleges, Agricultural and Horticultural colleges, Arts colleges and Specialist designated colleges.

the SIR and in the WBL and ACL surveys to match the total number of providers in each sector. This is a reasonable approach if, for each of our data sources, the organisations in the sample are representative of the population of all providers in that sector. For FECs only, the availability of data from an external source allowed us to compare colleges in the SIR against the overall population.² Our statistical comparison suggests that scaling up the SIR data is a reasonable way to estimate the size of the overall FECs workforce in England. However, we were not able to perform a similar comparison for WBL and ACL providers. Our indicative estimates suggest that the total number of staff working in FECs is 249,800, compared to 51,000 staff in WBL, and 25,000 staff working in Local Authority providers of Adult and Community Learning.³

² Data on the income, expenditure, student and staff numbers of member institutions of the Association of Colleges.

³ Since third sector providers are underrepresented in the ACL sample, this estimate refers to staff in local authorities only.

1. Introduction

This report provides a summary of the results of three separate reports commissioned by The Education and Training Foundation examining the workforce composition of FE Colleges (FECs)⁴, Work Based Learning (WBL) and Adult and Community Learning (ACL) providers in England over the 2013-14 teaching year. The report highlights, as far as possible, the main similarities and differences between the three workforces, based on commonalities in the data contained in the three reports. A shorter version of this summary was completed as part of the analysis of the Staff Individualised Record (SIR) 21 looking at the FEC workforce composition in 2012-13.⁵

The summary in this analysis is based on three separate reports published by The Education and Training Foundation and produced by different contractors:

- A report on the Further Education workforce, produced by Frontier Economics (the FECs report),⁶ based on data gathered in a census of all FE colleges within the SIR. The sample for 2013-14 described in the FECs report covers about 25% of all colleges. This is equivalent to 84 FE colleges with 61,524 submitted records (employment contracts).
- A report on the WBL workforce, authored by RCU (the WBL report), which analyses data from a survey of WBL providers supported by the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP). It yields information on 186 providers, employing a total staff of 12,428.
- A report on the ACL workforce, also produced by RCU (the ACL report). Data for this report are gathered in a survey of ACL providers, supported by the association for Local Authority Education providers, HOLEX and the Third Sector National Learning Alliance (TSNLA). The sample consists of 54 providers with a total staff of 9,206.

Although information on FECs, ACL, and WBL has been gathered from three separate sources, contrasting the ACL and WBL survey questionnaires and the SIR 22 data specifications reassures us that the analysis in this report is based on like-for-like comparisons. The WBL and ACL survey questionnaires share the large majority of questions on the composition of the organisation's workforce. The definitions adopted for the SIR data fields were designed to be broadly consistent with the questions in the ACL and WBL surveys. Throughout the report, we highlight where there may be differences between the two surveys and the SIR.

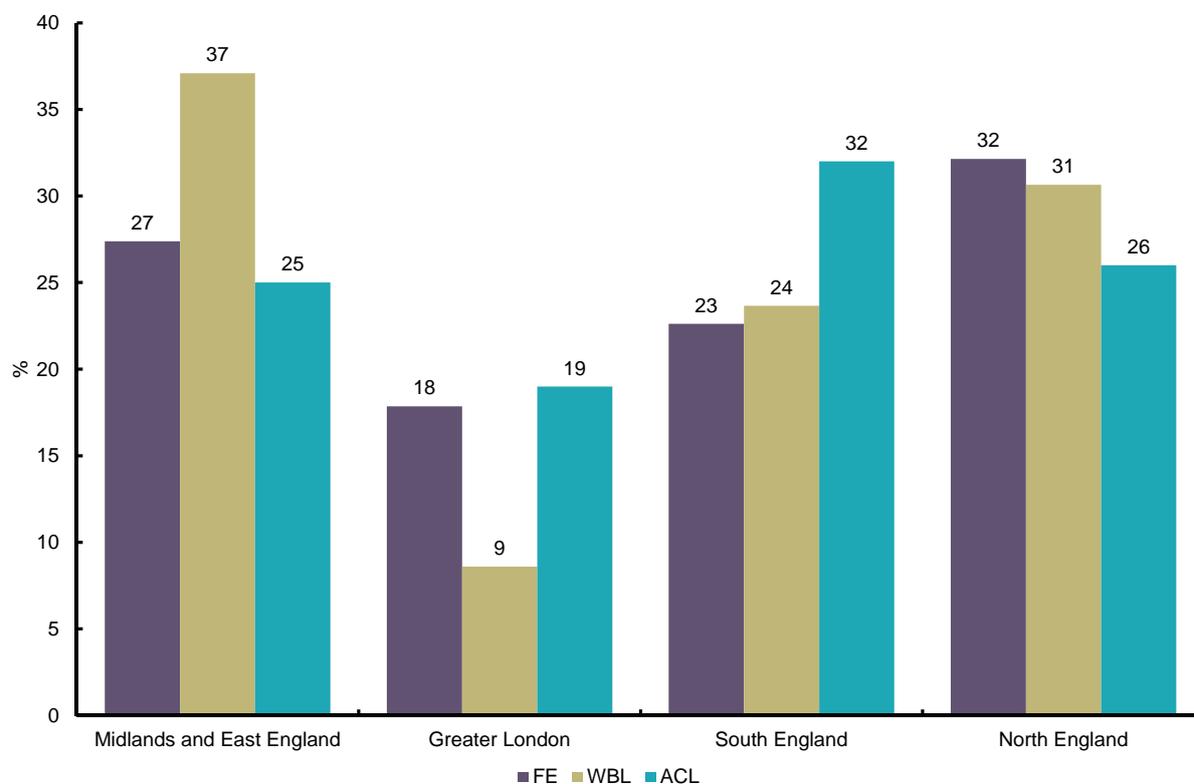
Figure 1 shows the geographical distribution of respondents in the three reports. Respondents in the WBL survey are relatively more likely than the rest (FECs and ACL providers) to be located in the Midlands and East of England and less likely than the rest to be located in Greater London. In general, Greater London is the area with the fewest respondents for all three parts of the FE sector, with fewer than 20% of respondents for FECs and ACL and only 9% of respondents for WBL. It is difficult to say with certainty whether these differences reflect different response rates by region in the three datasets, or genuine differences in the location of FECs, ACL and WBL providers.

⁴ FE Colleges include all college types providing data in the Staff Individualised Record (SIR) data for 2013-14. These are General FE colleges, Sixth form colleges, Agricultural and Horticultural colleges, Arts colleges and Specialist designated colleges.

⁵ <http://www.et-foundation.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/SIR-Report.pdf>

⁶ "Further Education Workforce Data for England – Analysis of the 2013-14 Staff Individualised Record Data", 2015, Frontier Economics.

Figure 1. Proportion of providers per region in England, 2013-14



Source: Frontier analysis of FECs, WBL and ACL reports.

This report brings together some of the key staff characteristics across the three sectors including age, gender, ethnicity and pay.⁷

This report is structured as follows:

- Section 2.1 summarises the workforces in terms of occupation, mode of working, gender, age and ethnicity;
- Section 2.2 considers annual pay;
- Section 2.3 provides indicative estimates of the total size of the workforces;
- Section 3 briefly concludes this report.

⁷ These comparisons are descriptive in nature. Ideally, we would like to be able to test whether differences across the workforces are significantly different from one another using formal statistical tests. However, lower availability of granular data (in particular, individual- or contract-level data) on staff in ACL and WBL limited our availability to carry out statistical comparisons across the three sectors.

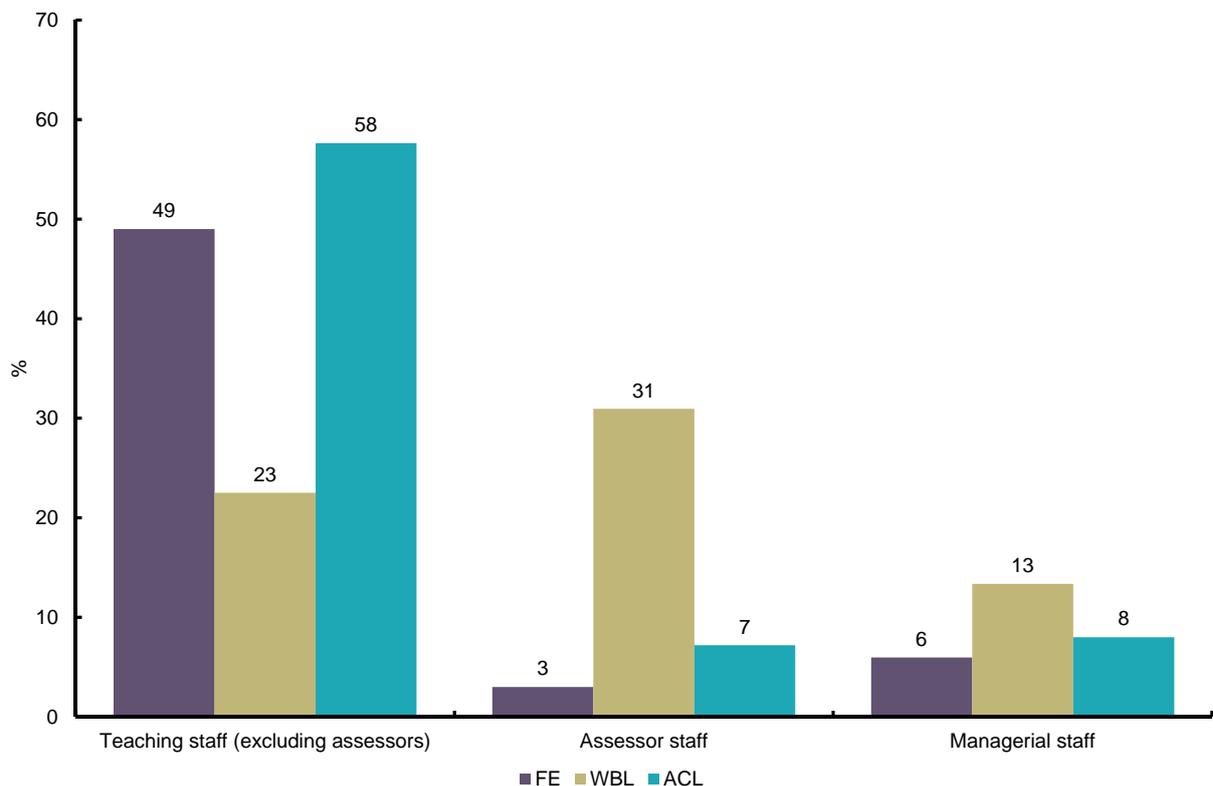
2. Summary of FECs, WBL and ACL

2.1 Composition of staff

2.1.1 Occupational categories

Around half of staff in FECs and around 60% of staff in ACL are teachers (excluding assessors and verifiers), compared with 23% in WBL. This difference arises as a result of the assessor role being much more prevalent in WBL (31% of all staff) than in FECs and ACL, where assessors constitute 3% and 7% of all staff respectively. The difference in the share of assessors between WBL and ACL does not appear to be explained by differences in the definition of occupational categories across the two surveys. Teachers and assessors combined account for 53% of the workforce in WBL, 65% in ACL and 52% in FECs.⁸

Figure 2. Proportions of teaching, assessor and managerial staff, 2013-14



Source: Frontier analysis of FECs, WBL and ACL reports.

The implied range of occupational categories differs between the three sectors. The proportion of managerial staff is highest in WBL (13%), while it is only 8% in ACL and 6% in FECs. Occupations other than teachers, assessors or managers make up 42% of staff in FECs, compared with 37% in WBL and 28% in ACL. The largest other groups in FECs are service staff (16%) and word processing, clerical and secretarial staff (10%).

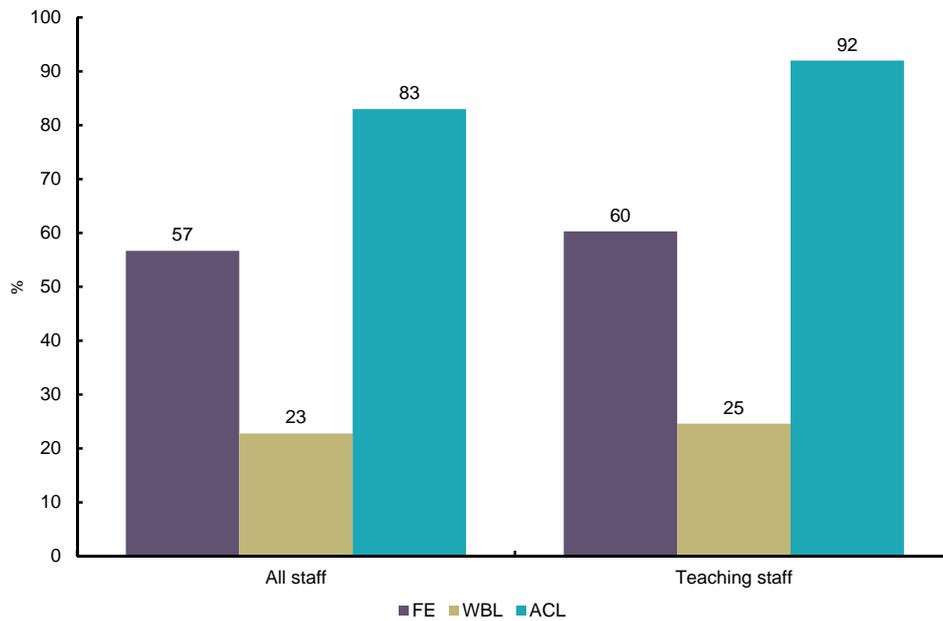
⁸ The occupational categories used appear to be consistent across the two surveys and SIR. However, there are small differences in the description of each category which may affect marginally our summary of the whole FE sector.

2.1.2 Contract types

Part-time working is common in FECs and ACL. More than half of staff in FECs and 83% of staff in ACL are employed on a part-time basis. The incidence of part-time working is lower in WBL where around a fifth of employees have part-time contracts.⁹

Part-time contracts tend to be more prevalent among teaching staff than other staff in each of the workforces considered. Indeed, almost all (92%) teaching staff in ACL are part-time. The proportions in FECs and WBL are 60% and 25% respectively.

Figure 3. Proportion of part-time staff, 2013-14



Source: Frontier analysis of FECs, WBL and ACL reports.

2.1.3 Gender

Staff in FECs, WBL, and ACL are predominantly female. Women constitute around two-thirds of employees in FECs and WBL. In ACL, the proportion is higher at 79%.

Table 1. Gender distribution of all staff, 2013-14

Gender	FECs	WBL	ACL
Male	37%	35%	19%
Female	63%	63%	79%
Transgender	0%	0%	0%
Prefer not to say/ Unknown	0%	2%	2%

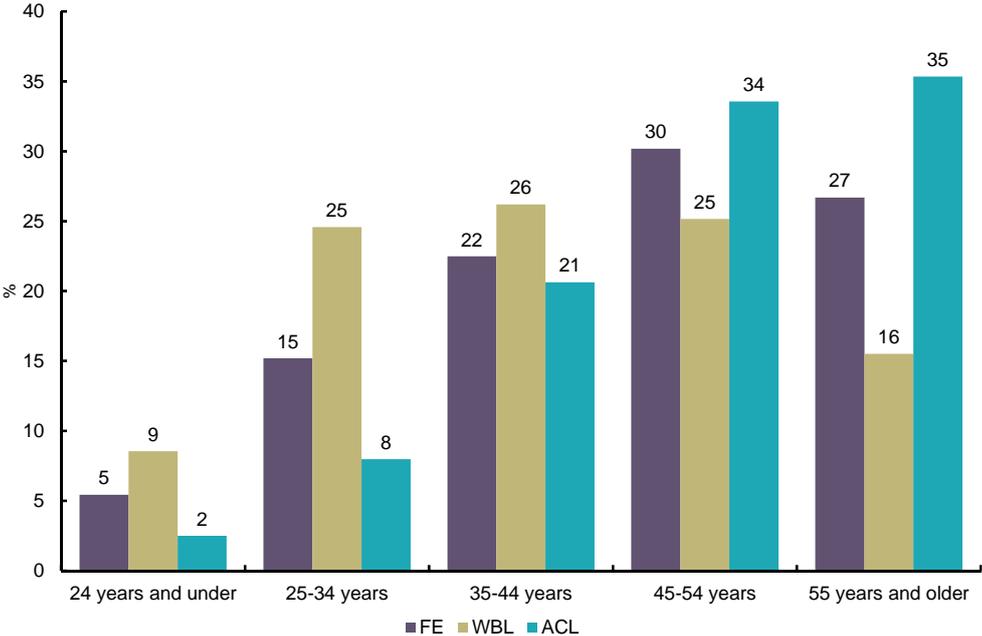
Source: Frontier analysis of FECs, WBL and ACL reports

⁹ Both in SIR and in the ACL and WBL surveys, the definition of part-time in terms of hours worked may vary by provider. SIR includes information on the fraction of full-time hours as defined by the institution worked in each contract. Contracts with a fraction smaller than 100% are defined as part-time. In the ACL and WBL surveys, providers are simply asked to provide the number of their full-time staff, with no further specification.

2.1.4 Age

The workforce in WBL tends to be younger than in FECs and ACL. Figure 4 below shows the distribution of all staff by age band across the three sectors.¹⁰ The largest group in WBL staff is aged 35 to 44. FECs staff in turn appears to be slightly younger than staff in ACL with their largest group being aged between 45 and 54 years. However, ACL reports a relatively high share of staff with an unknown age (16% in ACL compared to 6% in WBL and 2% in FECs), thereby making it difficult to be sure about the age distribution of ACL staff in comparison to the FECs and WBL sectors.

Figure 4. Proportion of staff by age bands, 2013-14



Source: Frontier analysis of FECs and WBL and ACL reports. Note: excludes unknown age. The oldest age categories in the FECs and WBL reports have been aggregated in order to ensure comparability.

¹⁰ As a proportion of all staff whose age is known.

2.1.5 Ethnicity

There is little difference in the ethnic composition of staff in FECs, WBL and ACL. The vast majority of staff (who provided information on their ethnicity) are white – 90% in WBL and 85% in FECs and ACL (see Table 2). However, we note that a large share of staff did not report any information on their ethnicity: ethnicity was unknown for 13.8% of respondents in FECs, 18.4% in WBL and 23.4% in ACL.

Table 2. Ethnic distribution of all staff, 2013-14

Ethnicity	FECs	WBL	ACL
White	85%	90%	85%
Mixed	1%	3%	2%
Asian	5%	3%	7%
Black	4%	3%	4%
Any other	1%	1%	1%

Source: Frontier analysis of FECs, WBL and ACL reports. Note: Excludes unknown ethnicity.

2.2 Annual pay

The reports covering FECs and WBL include information on the annual pay of all full-time staff. No pay data are collected for ACL.

We therefore only present data for FECs and WBL (see Table 3). For consistency across reports, we aggregate pay bands in FECs to broader levels to match those used in the WBL report.

The median pay band in FECs is £25,000 to £29,999, higher than the median pay band in WBL of £20,001 to £25,000. Note, though, that drawing on the more detailed pay data available in the FECs report, we find median pay in FECs to be £25,000 to £25,999, suggesting that the difference in average pay across the two workforces may be less marked than suggested by these figures.

Our ability to control for such factors is limited by the data available. In Table 3 we show how annual pay varies by broad region across workforces. As expected, pay in Greater London is higher than pay in the rest of the country for both FECs and WBL. The difference in pay between FECs and WBL holds in most regions except the Midlands and East of England, though again it is important to stress that this does not control for any other differences in the workforce between FECs and WBL and that differences may be exaggerated by the broad bands of pay.¹¹

Table 3. Median pay bands for full-time staff, 2013-14

Region	FECs	WBL
Greater London	£30,000 - £34,999	£25,001 - £30,000
Midlands & East England	£20,000 - £24,999	£20,001 - £25,000
North England	£25,000 - £30,999	£20,001 - £25,000
South England	£25,000 - £30,999	£20,001 - £25,000

Source: Frontier analysis of FECs, WBL and ACL reports

¹¹ More detailed comparisons of pay would be possible with the availability of more detailed data allowing one to control for important factors such as age, gender, experience, occupation and so on.

2.3 Size of the overall workforces

Only a sample of FECs, WBL, and ACL providers report information on their staff, so providing comprehensive data on the size of the workforce across the three sectors is challenging. It is possible to produce indicative estimates of the total size of the workforce in FECs, WBL, and ACL by scaling up the total number of staff reported in the SIR and in the WBL and ACL surveys to match the total number of providers in each sector. This is a reasonable approach if, for each of our data sources, the organisations in the sample are representative of the population of all providers in that sector. Observing similar characteristics in the sample to those of the population can provide some confidence on the sample's representativeness. Such a comparison is feasible where certain characteristics are known for the entire population of providers. For the FECs, we were able to undertake a statistical comparison of colleges in SIR against the overall population which suggested that the two groups were reasonably similar in terms of income, expenditure, student and staff numbers. For WBL providers, we have used data from AELP on size of provider by income from the SFA (direct and sub-contractors) to estimate the total number of staff. However, we were not able to perform a similar comparison for ACL providers, so figures presented in this section should be taken with caution.

Comparisons across the three workforces should also be made with caution, since data on WBL are limited to SFA-funded providers only, whereas providers surveyed in ACL and FECs receive funding from a wider range of sources.¹²

Moreover, the ACL sample is largely based on Local Authority providers (51 of 54 respondents to the survey). Therefore we restrict our estimates of the ACL workforce to staff employed directly by Local Authorities only. We follow a simple scaling-up approach involving multiplication of the average number of staff per provider by the total number of providers in the respective sector. The total number of providers we are using to scale up workforce numbers, are:

- For the WBL sector, the number of independent training providers funded by the Skills Funding Agency, including sub-contractors, 1,284;¹³
- For the ACL sector, 152 Local Authorities;
- For the FECs sector, 341 FE colleges¹⁴

Given sample sizes of 61,524 staff in FECs, 12,428 staff in WBL and 9,206 staff in ACL, our indicative estimates of the total sizes of their workforces in 2013-14 in England are:

- Approximately 250,000 staff in FECs;¹⁵
- Approximately 51,000 staff in WBL, and
- Approximately 25,000 staff providing ACL directly employed by Local Authorities.

This gives a total figure for the whole FE workforce of 326,000 staff.

¹² These include the Education Funding Agency (EFA) in FE and ACL, and the European Social Fund (ESF) in ACL.

¹³ Figure based on estimates of the number of providers in receipt of SFA-funding, either directly or indirectly, by the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP). For the purposes of analysis, this was broken down into providers with a turnover over £5m pa – 54 providers; those with a turnover between £1m and £5m pa – 300 providers; and those with a turnover less than £1m pa – 930. The total figure of staff was calculated as 50,976 based on totals in large providers of 20,466; in medium providers of 14,700; and in small providers of 15,810.

¹⁴ See “Further Education Workforce Data for England – Analysis of the 2013-14 Staff Individualised Record Data”, 2015, Frontier Economics (“the FE report”) for further detail on the derivation of this figure.

¹⁵ In the FE report, we were also able to estimate the number of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) staff, using information included in SIR on the hours worked by part-time employees. This information is not available for ACL and WBL. For the purpose of this report we only focus our comparative analysis on the total staff count in the three sectors.

3. Conclusions

This report draws on workforce information in three separate publications in order to summarise the data from FECs, WBL and ACL workforces.

There are a relatively limited number of direct comparisons that can be made given differences in the questions asked and the way data are collected, issues which should be resolved by the new workforce data collection from 2015-16. We only had access to summary statistics from WBL and ACL which precluded any assessment of the statistical significances of any differences observed. With those caveats in mind, our key findings are that:

- Approximately half of employees in WBL and FECs and around 60% in ACL are teachers or assessors. The proportion of staff who are not teachers, assessors or managers is highest in FE (42%, compared to 27% in ACL and 37% in WBL).
- Part-time working is very common in FECs and ACL. More than half of staff in FECs and 83% of staff in ACL are employed on a part-time basis. The incidence of part-time working is lower in WBL where around a fifth of employees have part-time contracts.
- Part-time working is slightly more common among teachers than all staff. Almost all (92%) teachers and assessors in ACL are part-time. The proportions in FECs and WBL are 60% and 25% respectively.
- The majority of staff in FECs, ACL and WBL providers are female – women make up approximately two thirds of the workforce in FECs and WBL and around 80% in ACL.
- FECs have an older workforce than WBL. The largest group of employees in FECs is in the age bracket 45 to 54 while in WBL the largest group of employees is in the 35 to 44 age bracket. The high share of unknowns in ACL (16%) limits the comparability of the ACL age distribution, although the data suggest that ACL staff are a similar or older age than staff in FECs.
- The workforces in FECs, ACL and WBL are predominantly white. This is somewhat more pronounced in ACL (90%) than in FECs and WBL (both 85%). However, all three reports have large proportions of unknowns (between 14% and 23%).
- The median pay band in FECs of £25,000 to £29,999 is higher than the median pay band in WBL of £20,001 to £25,000. As expected, pay is highest in Greater London for FECs and WBL.

Based on the number of staff reported in the sample of providers included in the SIR data, and in surveys of WBL and ACL organisations, we provide indicative estimates of the size of the total workforce in England across the three sectors. We produce these estimates by scaling up the reported staff counts to the total number of providers in each sector. This approach can provide reasonably accurate estimates of the total workforce sizes if the samples are representative of the overall population of providers in the respective sectors. Our statistical analysis suggests that this is the case for the sample of FE colleges in the SIR data; the data available were not sufficient to perform a similar analysis of the samples of ACL and WBL providers. Based on this approach we estimate the following approximate staff counts for 2013-14: 250,000 in FECs; 51,000 in WBL; and 25,000 staff providing ACL employed directly by Local Authorities. This gives a total workforce in the FE sector as 326,000 staff.