



Workforce data across the Further Education sector 2014/15

Summary of findings from analysis of administrative and survey data

June 2016

The
Education
& Training
Foundation

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Findings

The Education and Training Foundation (ETF) commissioned Frontier Economics to provide a summary report which brings together workforce data about FE colleges (FECs), private training providers (PTPs), Third Sector providers (TSPs) and Local Authorities (LAs). The analysis in this report is based on a combination of administrative (human resources) and survey data.

Data for FECs are based on a census of all relevant institutions in England as part of the Staff Individualised Record (SIR) 23 which achieved a response rate of 115 providers (about one third of the total number of colleges). SIR data contains detailed information about each standard contract of employment with a member of staff.

Data on PTPs, TSPs and LAs are derived from the annual Work-Based Learning (WBL) and Adult and Community Learning (ACL) workforce surveys which are rolled out by the ETF and promoted through the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) and WBL regional networks as well as the HOLEX National Office, the Local Education Authorities Forum for the Education of Adults (LEAFEA) and the Third Sector National Learning Alliance (TSNLA) networks. The surveys achieved response rates of 63 PTPs, 47 LAs and 37 TSPs. The survey data contains aggregate information about members of staff at the institution level.

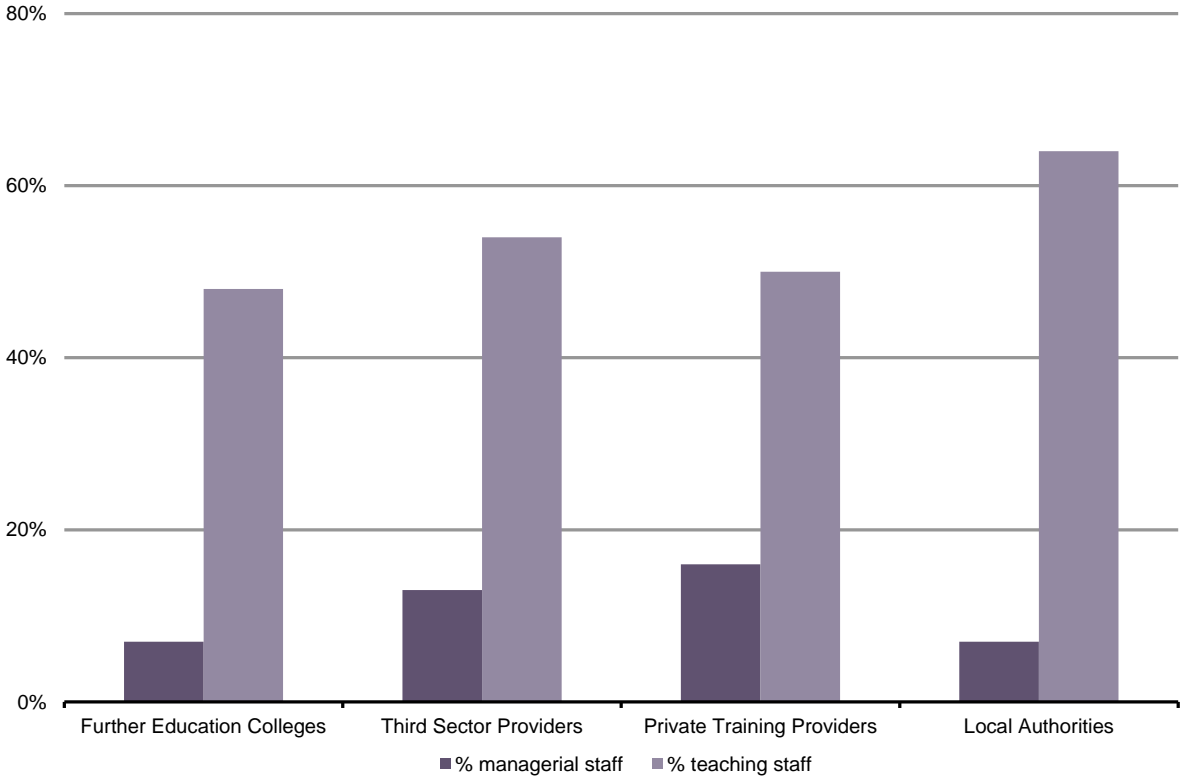
The aim of this summary report is to highlight, as far as possible, the main similarities and differences between the four workforces whilst recognising that differences in the nature of the data sets and the samples in each mean that it is only possible to bring together a few key pieces of information. Specifically, we are able to compare occupational distributions, mode of working (full-time/part-time), gender, age, ethnicity and, in some cases, pay.

Occupations

Teaching staff (including teachers, assessors and verifiers) are the largest staff category in all provider types. They constitute around half of staff in GFECs and private training providers, 54% of staff in Third Sector providers and 64% of staff in Local Authority providers. The assessor and verifier role is much more prominent in private training providers than the rest - 38% of teaching and training staff in PTPs are in assessor and verifier roles, compared to only 3% of staff in GFECs.

Figure 1 indicates that managers (including senior managers and other managers) account for 7% of staff in GFECs and Local Authorities, 13% of staff in Third Sector providers and 16% of staff in private training providers.

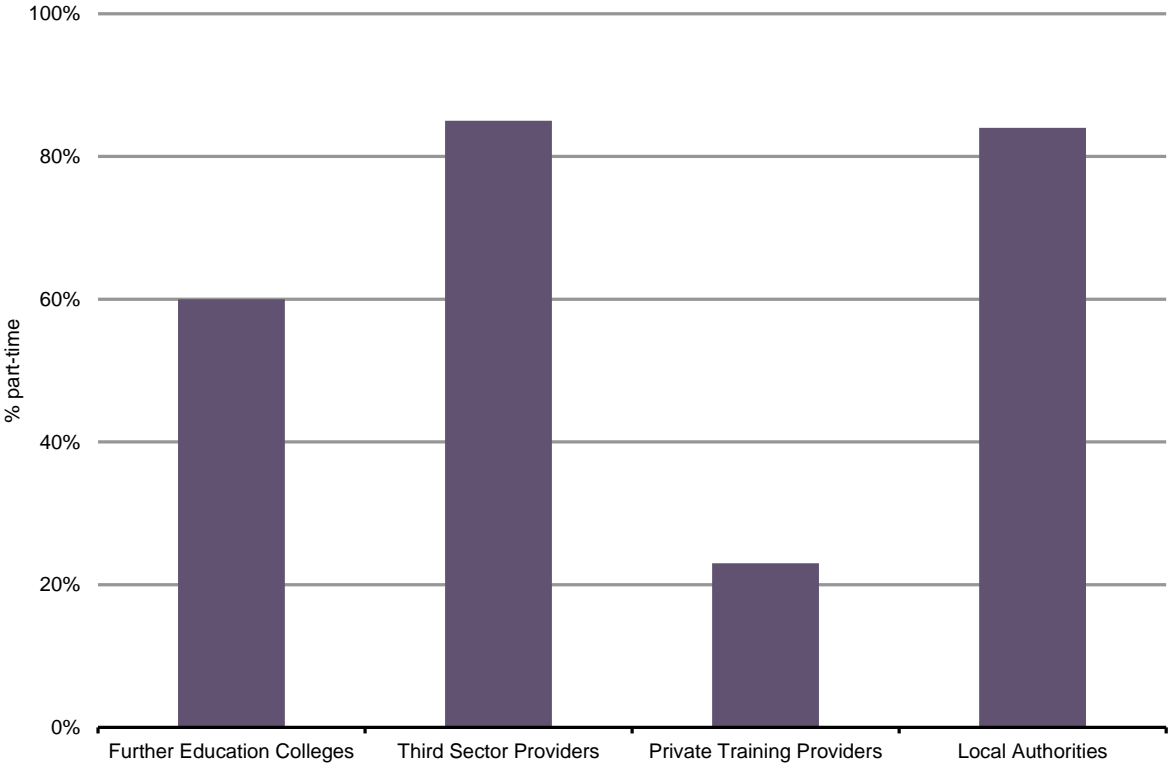
Figure 1: Proportion of staff in managerial and teaching roles



Contract types

Part-time working is very common in all provider types other than private training providers, where 23% of staff work part-time. 60% of staff in GFECs and more than 80% of staff in Local Authority providers and Third Sector providers work part-time. Part-time working is less common in private training providers where three quarters of staff work full-time. See figure 2.

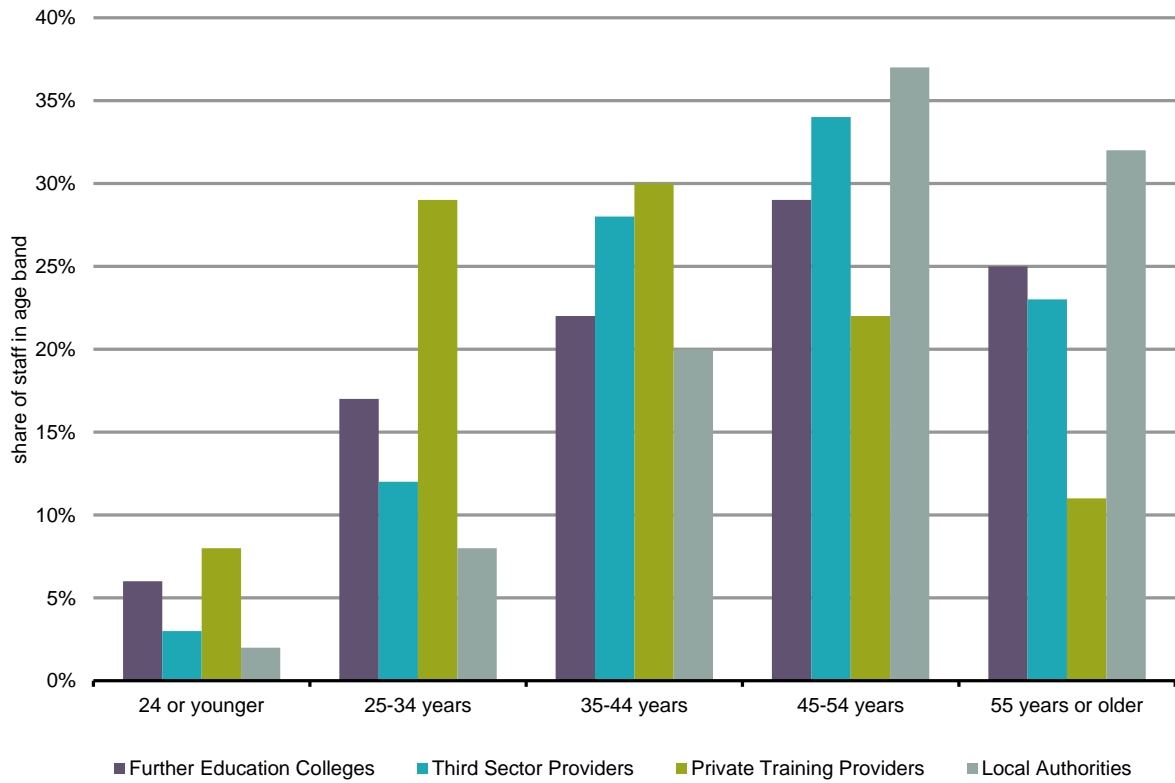
Figure 2: Proportion of staff working part-time



Age

The age profile of staff in Further Education colleges and Third Sector providers is similar – just over half of staff in these provider types are aged over 45 and relatively few staff are aged under 35. Staff employed by private training providers tend to be younger with two thirds aged under 45 and a third aged under 35. Conversely, staff in Local Authority providers tend to be older with two thirds aged over 45. See figure 3.

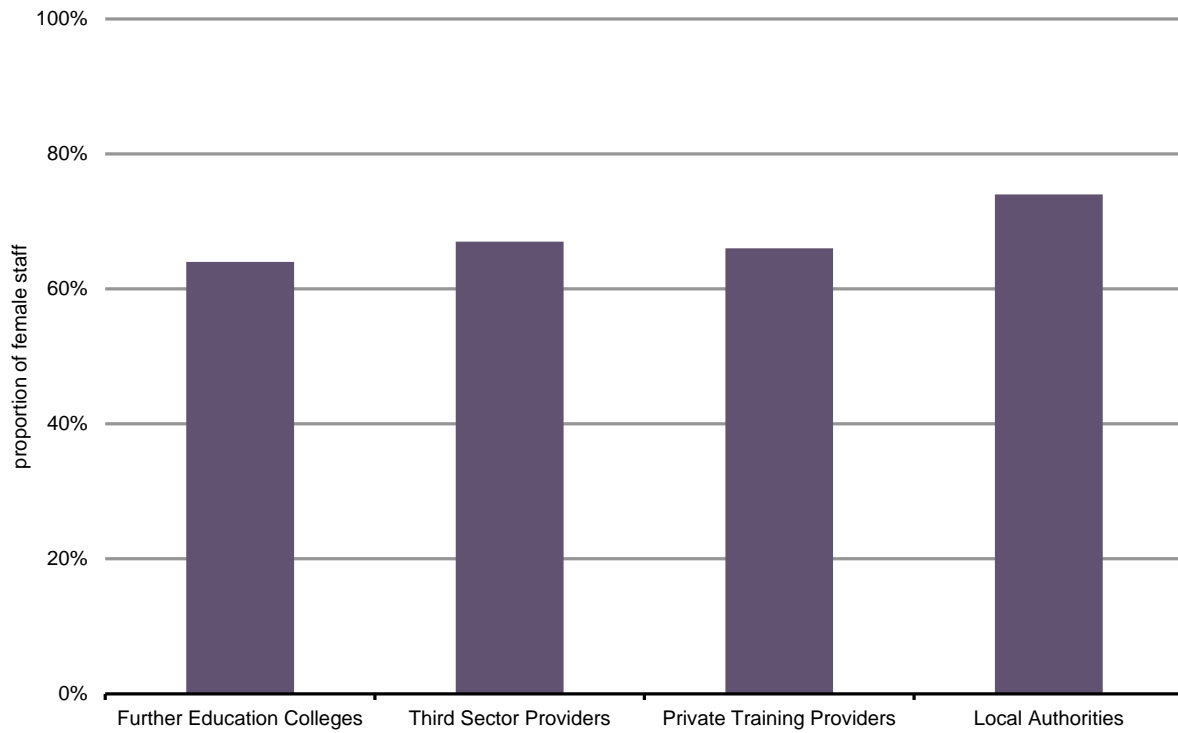
Figure 3: Age distribution of staff



Gender

Staff working in further education are predominantly female. Women constitute around two thirds of staff in FE colleges, Third Sector providers and private training providers. In Local Authorities, the proportion of female is even higher at 74%. See figure 4.

Figure 4: Proportion of female staff



Ethnicity

There is little difference in the ethnic composition of the four workforces considered here. The vast majority (between 77% and almost 90%) of staff¹ are white in Further Education colleges, private training providers and Local Authorities.

Table 1. Staff ethnic composition

	Further Education Colleges	Third Sector Providers	Private Training Providers	Local Authorities
White	85%	77%	89%	86%
Asian	5%	8%	4%	8%
Black	4%	5%	3%	3%
Mixed	1%	3%	1%	2%
Any other	5%	7%	3%	1%

Annual pay

Pay information is available only for Further Education colleges and private training providers. The information is recorded in pay bands rather than exact salaries which reduces the precision of the data. Further, SIR data pay bands are fairly narrow (increments of £1,000) but survey data are considerably wider (increments of £5,000). This means that only broad comparisons in pay are possible.

Median pay in Further Education colleges is £26,000-£26,999 which is higher than median pay in private training providers – the latter stands at £20,001-£25,000.

Changes in the workforce

The Further Education workforce has been declining for the last few years. College accounts data (available from the Skills Funding Agency) show that the workforce in GFECs has fallen by around 9% or around 12,000 full-time equivalents in the last three years. The college workforce now stands at 124,609 FTEs.

¹ We consider only those who have provided information on ethnicity. This remains a data category which is under-reported. The proportions of data coded as 'unknown' are FECs (5%), TSPs (24%) PTPs (27%), LAs(39%).

The survey data covering other types of providers does indicate reductions in staff numbers are likely: 61% of private training providers reported static or declining staff numbers. The corresponding figures for Third Sector providers and Local Authorities are 73% and 80%. Assuming that the extent of workforce decline in these types of providers is similar to that observed in GFECs², one would expect the combined workforce (Local Authorities, private training providers and Third Sector providers) to have declined by around 4,600 staff since last year³. This implies a total workforce (headcount) of around 235,000 in GFECs and 71,400 across Local Authorities, private training providers and Third Sector providers.

² The rate of workforce decline in FECs (as measured by SFA College Accounts data available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sfa-financial-management-college-accounts>) between 2013-14 and 2014-15 was 6.11%.

³ This is based on a combined workforce in WBL and ACL of 76,000 in 2013/14 estimated in last year's workforce summary report available here: <http://www.et-foundation.co.uk/research/fe-workforce-data-reports-2013-14/> .