

**Talent to Teach in Further Education
Programme 2022 – 2023
Project Closure Report and Final
Evaluation**

Delivered by

InspirED Associates Limited

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Overview of the Talent to Teach Programme

The Talent to Teach in FE programme aimed to raise awareness of teaching in Further Education (FE) as a career option among second year and final year undergraduates and postgraduate students. In the 2022-2023 academic year, for the first time, this was extended to include a pilot group of 'career changers'; individuals with technical skills and/or relevant experience that could be valuable to FE.

The two different streams of participants, students and career changers, were recruited (via very different approaches) onto the programme, and once their applications were processed to determine their eligibility, they were offered a 40-hour placement with a Further Education (FE) provider. Students received a £300 bursary payment for completing the programme, whereas career changers did not. The aim of the placement was to expose them to the world of FE, in order for them to gain an understanding of the skills, expertise and qualifications required to work, and specifically to teach, in the FE sector.

The programme included the following elements: marketing and recruitment, online applications, matching, pre-placement information sessions, placements, post placement support, participant and provider post-placement surveys and The Talent to Teach Academy. A more detailed overview is presented in **Section 2 (Introduction to the Programme)**. The Talent to Teach Academy was provided as a value added element, in order to support up to thirty of the best T2T alumni (as nominated by providers) to receive additional professional development, obtain the Level 3 Award in Education and Training (L3 AET), receive targeted coaching and, where possible, and time permitting, benefit from additional support to secure a role in FE.

“This programme has allowed me to understand FE a lot more. I have learnt many new things about this sector, things I would not have even thought about beforehand. I have seen many different teaching styles, which work alongside and well with many different types of students (including different levels of support). The whole programme was run very well, with regards to the different areas we observed and all the presentations on extra things about what goes on behind the scenes in FE.”

Talent to Teach participant (student) at Myerscough College

1.2 Post-Programme Reflections

The most important, and sometimes challenging, elements of the programme, particularly in terms of ensuring success, were marketing and recruitment, matching and the placements themselves.

Critical to the success of the programme, especially given the extremely pressing targets and tight timelines, was the need to have a robust, effective marketing and recruitment plan for each of the three key stakeholder groups: FE providers, students and career changers, particularly given the very different nature of the latter two (participant) groups and therefore the significantly varying recruitment channels required. The approach to this is covered in more detail in **Section 3 (Programme Delivery)**, where the complexities and challenges of each of the different recruitment channels is highlighted.

Matching participants to providers was predominantly based on geography, and then on availability. However, within this, there were all sorts of complexities that came into play. As a result, it was the most resource intensive and time-consuming element of the programme, as it involved multiple providers, large volumes of participants and significant levels of liaison and documentation. The level of resource required to deliver this part of the programme cannot be underestimated.

As the placements formed the core of the programme, their importance in terms of ensuring participant satisfaction was paramount. As every provider is different, every placement was different, both in terms of structure and content. The make-up of groups was also varied. Most cohorts were made up entirely of students. However, there was one cohort that was made up entirely of career changers, and some career changers completed individual timetables - but there were also four 'mixed' cohorts that completed the programme, made up of both students and career changers, each with a different

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provider. There were both advantages and disadvantages to these mixed groups which are further explored in **Section 3 (Programme Delivery)**. Placement structures varied from an intensive week to one day per week for six weeks and, whilst the provider guide offered some suggestions as to what could be included in the placements, it was up to providers themselves to devise a programme of activity that best suited their organisation (and what activities were happening there at the time) and the participants. However, all of the placements focussed predominantly on the opportunity to observe teaching and learning.

1.3 Outcomes and Impact

The programme has been incredibly successful with all but one of the key performance indicators being exceeded. Outcomes, quality and impact are covered in **Section 5**, whilst additional value is explored in **Section 6**. To summarise, though, key programme successes include:

- 41 providers signed up to the programme against the target of 25 – made up of 31 colleges and 10 independent training providers (ITPs). Of the 41 that signed up, 30 were able to support placements (22 colleges and 8 ITPs).
- 1390 applications to participate were received, against a target of 1200. 1271 of these were from students and 119 from career changers.
- 368 placements were completed, against a target of 365 (336 students against a target of 335 and 32 career changers against a target of 30).
- A participant satisfaction rate of 99.7%. In addition, when asked if they would recommend the programme where 0 is 'not at all likely' and 10 'extremely likely', the average score from all survey responses received was 9.2. This provides a net promoter score (NPS) for the programme of 73 (Excellent).
- 100% of providers felt that the Talent to Teach in FE scheme had a positive impact on their organisation, on the environment for their learners, and that their mentors benefitted from working with the participants.
- Information gathered shows that 41 participants have moved into roles in education - 38 paid and 3 voluntary. Of these, 22 paid roles and the three voluntary roles secured are with the provider with which the participants completed their placements. A further nine participants are progressing to a teacher training programme, again some of these are with their placement provider. There is also the potential for more participants to secure roles after the programme end, for example, one provider confirmed they are looking to offer posts (voluntary or paid) to up to 10 of the participants who completed placements with them.

“The Talent to Teach programme has been absolutely essential for me in deciding where my future lies, and I would strongly recommend it to anyone. It’s changed my life.”

Talent to Teach participant (student) at Myerscough College

1.4 Conclusions and Recommendations

Lessons learned are explored in **Section 7**, whilst conclusions are drawn and recommendations made in **Section 8**. Given the successful outcomes that have been achieved in an unprecedented short time frame, despite some of the very real challenges that are touched on throughout this report, it is clear that Talent to Teach is held in high regard across the sector. This is further demonstrated by provider feedback, which highlights that there remains a very real appetite (and need) for a programme of this nature.

A similar programme would therefore continue to benefit the sector, particularly one which provides value, whilst continuing to offer flexibility within a simple framework. If, however, a similar programme was to be procured in the future, there are some changes that could be made to enhance the model, improve outcomes and benefit all of the stakeholders involved. These include:

- A dedicated programme website/portal;
- Payment of a bursary or reimbursement of expenses for career changers;

- Possible shortening of the placement time, or the placement duration remaining the same, but the bursary amount being increased;
- Focusing the programme/stream of the programme on particular areas/sectors to support policy issues, and/or areas of significant recruitment challenges, for example maths expertise to support (in this instance) both with recruitment and maths to 18 and Multiply; and
- Finally, any future programme should include an element of progression and increased post-placement support to drive tangible outcomes for participants and providers and allow increased measurement of value-for-money for the programme. This would potentially make the programme more attractive to all concerned and providing additional development and support as an option would help to ensure that resource was focused on those most committed to pursuing this potential career path.

Given that recruitment is currently one of the single most pressing needs across the FE sector, and the enormous cost of this, with a great deal of time, effort and money spent on trying to attract, recruit and retain talent, programmes such as Talent to Teach appear to offer an extremely cost effective approach in supporting the sector with their recruitment challenges and should therefore be considered in future.

“The Talent to teach in FE education programme has really exposed me to all that I require to be a good teacher in FE. I have seen teachers who are passionate, patient, empathetic, knowledgeable, flexible, creative, organised, dedicated and able to connect with their students on a personal level in order to create a supportive and engaging learning environment for them. The lessons I have learnt in these 6 weeks are highly impactful and will last me a lifetime.”

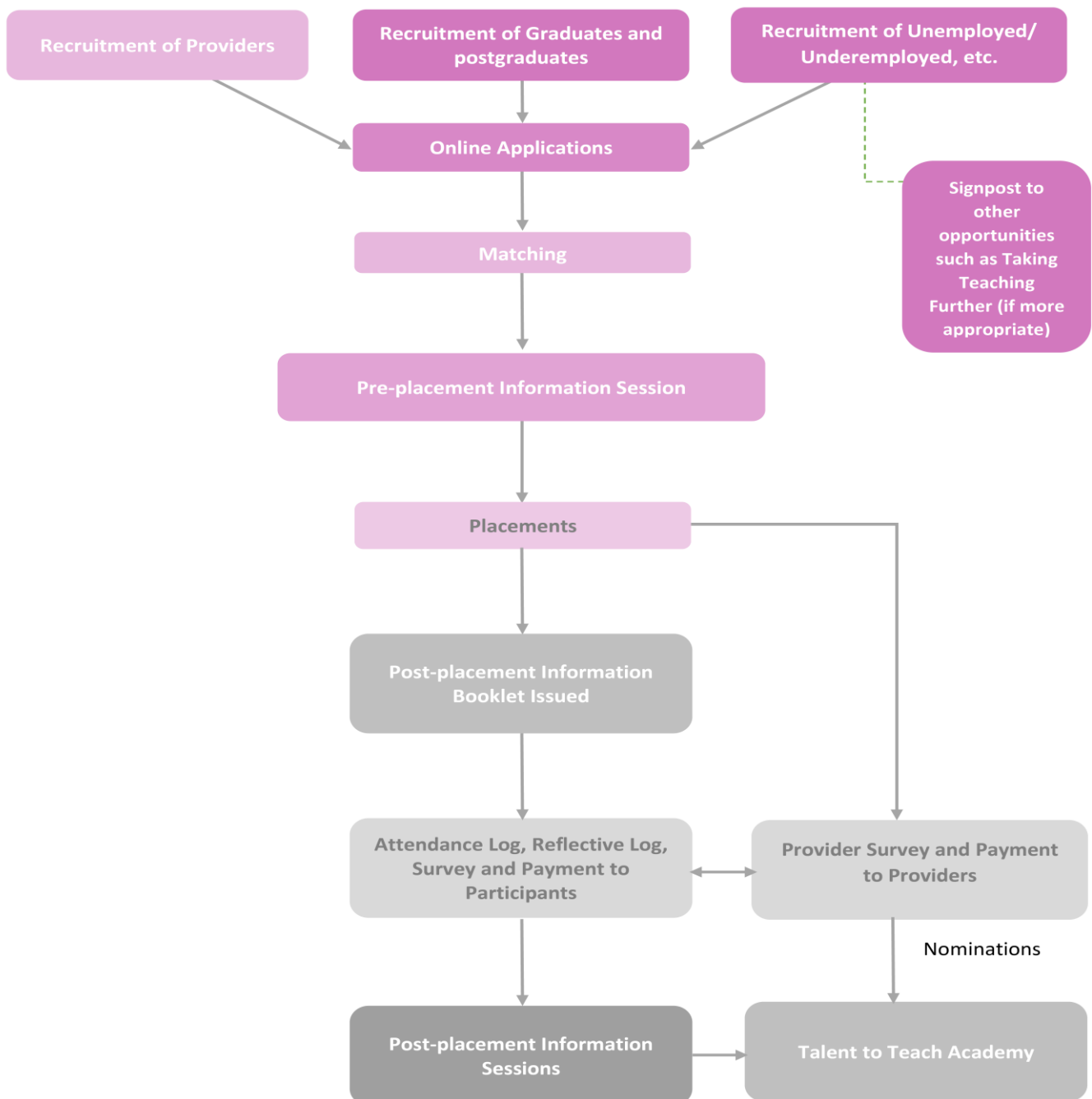
Talent to Teach participant (student) at Newcastle and Stafford College Group

2. INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAMME

The Talent to Teach in FE programme aimed to raise awareness of teaching in Further Education as a career option among second year and final year undergraduates and postgraduate students. In the 2022-2023 academic year, for the first time, this was extended to include a pilot group of ‘career changers’; individuals with technical skills and/or relevant experience that could be valuable to FE.

The two different streams of participants, students and career changers, were recruited (via very different approaches) onto the programme, and once their applications were processed to determine their eligibility, they were offered a 40-hour placement with a Further Education (FE) provider. The aim of the placement was to expose them to the world of FE, in order for them to gain an understanding of the skills, expertise and qualifications required to work, and specifically to teach, in the FE sector.

2.1 Programme Content



The programme included the following activities:

- **Recruitment:** Providers, students, career changers and other stakeholders were all recruited through a complex and wide-ranging set of communication channels and varied approaches. A critical element of the programme's success, this is explored in more detail in the next section.
- **Online application:** An online application form was designed for recruitment traffic to be driven to. Whilst relatively short, there were some sections of the application that were not used when delivering the programme. These were:
 - **Second choice of location:** We found as the programme progressed that neither students nor career changers wanted to be placed far from home and very few were happy to travel for more than 30 – 40 minutes. Matching was therefore completed based on their home postcode.
 - **Interest in a career in Further Education:** Through conversations with a small number of participants pre-placement, we realised that some participants were answering questions regarding their interest in FE and teaching with responses they believed we wanted to hear, and which would make their application more successful, namely, that they were enthusiastic about a career in Further Education. However, in reality, we wanted to measure how their views on teaching and working in the sector changed post placement. This was therefore addressed by asking participants to respond to two statements in the post-placement survey:
 - 'I was interested in entering a career in FE before I took part in the Talent to Teach in Further Education programme'; and
 - 'Participating in Talent to Teach in Further Education encouraged or further encouraged me to enter into a career in FE'.

However, there was also a question which we originally omitted from the initial application regarding availability. We therefore added a question about which days of the week applicants usually had availability on. This proved to be a significant help in terms of the matching process.

- **Matching:** Participants were matched to providers, predominantly based on three criteria (i) their location, (ii) their availability and (iii) their area of interest/study – and usually in that order.
- **Pre-placement Information Sessions:** Matched participants were asked to attend an online pre-placement information session, prior to starting their placement. This session provided them with an overview of the FE sector and details of what to expect, and what was expected of them, in terms of behaviour etc., whilst on placement. It also provided them with an overview of safeguarding.
- **Placements:** As every provider is different, every placement was different. Generally, though, most of the 40-hour placements included:
 - An initial introduction to the organisation;
 - A tour of the facilities;
 - The opportunity to observe teaching and learning;
 - The chance to observe or participate in meetings or events; and
 - The option to 'have a go themselves' – perhaps by completing a starter/plenary, completing one-to-one or small group work with learners or delivering a micro teach to their peers.

Feedback suggests that the latter point was key in making it a more interesting and interactive experience for the participants.

“I observed lessons and formed a clear idea of what the role of teacher in FE entails. I also listened to several speakers who shared their journeys into FE and realised that people can get into the sector from all walks of life. Delivering my micro-teach was a very useful hands on experience of teaching.”

Talent to Teach participant (student) at Lambeth College

- **Post-placement:**

- **Participants:** Post-placement, participants were asked to return an attendance log and reflective journal and complete a short survey about their experience. They were also invited to an online post-placement information session and, whilst attendance at this session was not mandatory, over 75 participants attended (20% of participants). These sessions included:
 - An initial brief focus group discussion about the placement and experience generally, offering more feedback to support the participant survey;
 - An overview of teaching roles and qualifications;
 - Brief details on other, non-teaching roles and opportunities;
 - What can be expected in terms of pay and benefits;
 - Guidance on where to look for roles;
 - Help with next steps; and
 - The opportunity to ask questions and seek bespoke guidance from the facilitator(s).

A post-placement guide, covering these areas in more detail, was also issued to all participants on completion of their placement, as well as to all applicants that had not been placed at the end of the programme.

- **Providers:** Providers were also asked to complete a post-placement survey and post-placement interviews were completed with seven providers to try to build on their experience and enhance placements going forward. A final focus group was held at the end of the programme, which five providers attended, along with a representative from the Department for Education. This provided an opportunity for discussion about the programmes key successes and lessons learned, to inform any future initiatives.
- **The Talent to Teach Academy:** This element of the programme was only offered to approximately 10% of participants, based on recommendations from providers. The Academy was made up predominantly of the Level 3 Award in Education and Training, and provided participants with a greater insight into the sector, enhanced their CVs, and provided a toolkit with which to begin a possible career in the FE sector.

3. PROGRAMME DELIVERY

3.1 Marketing and Recruitment

As the team at InspirED Associates had previously (prior to the COVID-19 pandemic) been involved in designing and delivering the Talent to Teach (and its predecessor Pathways to FE) programme, and had recently delivered a highly successful career changers programme in Greater Manchester, they were extremely well positioned to execute the Talent to Teach programme incorporating the new career changer element into the overall framework.

Critical to the success of the programme, especially given the extremely pressing targets and tight timelines, was the need to have a robust, effective marketing and recruitment plan for each of the three key stakeholder groups: FE providers, students and career changers, particularly given the very different nature of the latter two (participant) groups and therefore the significantly varying recruitment channels required. Leaflets containing standardised text were therefore developed for these three groups (based on previous marketing collateral).

The effectiveness of the marketing and recruitment strategies, implementation of these plans and any changes that were incorporated into the different elements is considered for each stakeholder and participant group below.

Providers

Given the tight timescales involved, the team began the recruitment of providers prior to the summer break in 2022.

- **Contacting previous providers:** The project team at the Education and Training Foundation contacted the thirteen providers who had been involved in the programme in the previous year to ask them if they wished to continue their involvement in the programme. This resulted in five of the thirteen continuing to offer placements into 2022/23. However, an unforeseen complication arose later in the programme as many of the previous years' placements had been offered online due to the COVID-19 pandemic and this caused issues either because:
 - providers tried to translate their previous programme into a face-to-face placement which was not always successful; or
 - providers were in geographic locations that were difficult to get to and therefore difficult to recruit participants for.
- **Contacting new colleges:** The delivery team hit the ground running, initially identifying their own existing links and contacts, then by identifying the most appropriate new contacts in other colleges. The team found that it was usually best, in the first instance, if this were a member of the senior team who could confirm the desire to be involved, even if they then passed the information to another member of staff to implement.
- **Contacting other potential providers:** Greater Manchester Learning Provider Network (and by extension Northern Skills Network) and Surrey and Hampshire Learning Provider Network had pledged support for the programme at the tender stage and were incredibly helpful in a number of ways:
 - Introducing the delivery team and promoting the programme to their contacts in other similar networks;
 - Including details of the programme in their newsletters and communications with their members; and
 - Facilitating opportunities for the delivery team to promote the programme at both face-to-face and online networking meetings and events.

The team also contacted nineteen other provider networks by email, and forwarded information about the programme, including the provider information leaflet, which could be shared amongst

their members. This resulted in a small number of new providers signing up to participate in the programme.

The Association of Colleges (AoC) and the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) also helped promote the programme through highlighting it in briefing documents and newsletters.

Providers would then either email the programme delivery team with a view to discussing further or sign up to the programme through the provider application form.

Regardless of which recruitment channel a provider used to engage with the programme, all providers were invited to attend an online meeting so that the programme delivery team could provide an overview of the programme, suggest elements that could be included in a potential placement, answer any questions and discuss the art of the possible in terms of how the placement might be structured by that particular provider, how many participants they might accept at any one time and how many cohorts they might want to consider. The Talent to Teach Academy was also discussed as providers were requested to identify and nominate potential candidates on placement with them who they believed showed interest and ability and would be of value to the FE sector. Following the online meetings, an email capturing any salient points that had been discussed (dates, numbers of participants etc.) was sent to all attendees, along with the provider guide. It was explained that the provider guide was not intended to be prescriptive in any way, but there to give providers suggestions and guidance on how they might structure placements, what could be included, etc. These meetings usually enabled the team to start to plan in terms of concentrating the recruitment of students and beginning the matching process.

This approach proved very successful, eventually leading to the recruitment of 41 providers, against a target of 25. 31 of these were colleges (or college groups), whilst 10 were Independent Training Providers (ITPs) or Adult and Community Learning (ACL) providers. By the end of the programme, 30 had provided placement (22 colleges and 8 ITP/ACL providers).

“It was beneficial to us as an organisation, beneficial to the participants and beneficial to FE in general, as many of the participants had never experienced FE and now know what it is and could potentially recommend to others/pursue a career in FE.”

Rachel Newton - Teaching and Learning Coach, Myerscough College

Students

Previous experience of delivering the programme and understanding the nuances and criteria involved in matching applicants to providers, suggested that three to four times more applicants would need to apply than places available. A target of generating at least 1200 applications to the programme was therefore set, in order to be able to achieve the target number of placements (335 students and 30 career changers).

The process of recruiting students therefore began during the summer months of 2022, initially with a blanket/generic approach of posting on online university opportunity/job/placement boards. However, this approach alone was not enough to recruit significant volumes of students, particularly given the constraints of the online opportunity boards - for example, only being able to post to five faculty areas at a time and the fact that each post had to be renewed every few weeks to ensure that it continued to appear near the top of student searches. This was no easy task, given that it was advertised with more than sixty universities.

Therefore the team also reached out to employability or careers teams within the universities and, where a connection was made with individual team members, this often bore significant fruit as they would include it in newsletters, promote it directly to students and secure places at careers fairs or the opportunity for the delivery team to directly present to students. Through the course of the programme, the team attended six university careers fairs and presented to students at a further four universities. Of these ten events, seven were face-to-face and three were online.

As the programme progressed and both providers and students began to be recruited, the team had to move from a proactive to a reactive approach – focusing the recruitment of students in areas where

providers had already applied to participate in the programme and recruiting providers where our marketing efforts had produced volumes of students.

The approach proved successful, generating 1271 applications from students before the application process was closed one month before the end of the programme.

Career Changers

This year, for the first time, a pilot of thirty career changers was included in the overall total target of 365 participants. Career changers are individuals with technical skills, experience and expertise that could be of value to the FE sector, and who:

- have been made redundant or are at threat of redundancy;
- are unemployed;
- have retired early or are about to take early retirement;
- are doing a job which is unrewarding and/or not utilising their skills and expertise ('underemployed'); or
- have taken time out of work to care for children, or for a relative, or for a variety of personal reasons, but are now looking to explore options to return to work.

Whilst the overall target of thirty was significantly lower than the number of students (being less than 10% of the 335 student target), these individuals were significantly more challenging to recruit, and therefore the recruitment, and the marketing and engagement of this group, required a very different approach and significantly more resource.

As opposed to a single route to market (through universities) for the student population, in order to recruit career changers, it was necessary to engage with multiple diverse stakeholders. Therefore, the programme was promoted through:

- Jobcentre Plus/Department for Work and Pensions, as well as their delivery partners responsible for ensuring delivery of key national programmes such as Restart, skills bootcamps etc;
- outplacement organisations;
- employers;
- other programmes such as school recruitment programmes, which could refer to this programme (and vice versa);
- social media channels; and
- local groups/organisations in order to reach economically inactive individuals.

Due to this, the decision was taken to focus the recruitment on only one or two large, urban and well populated geographic locations, so that the marketing and engagement could be given the resource and focus required to achieve the desired results, without impacting on the overall programme delivery. Given the success of a previous career changer programme that was delivered across the Greater Manchester location, the decision was taken to focus on the areas of Manchester, and either Birmingham or London.

Conversely, though, the career changer stream was of interest to almost every single provider that applied to the programme and it constantly had to be reiterated that it was a pilot element, involving very small numbers, with it therefore only be implemented in a couple of key locations, etc.

However, very early on in the programme, one provider, based in the South East (but outside of London), expressed significant interest in hosting twenty career changers on placement. Given the enthusiasm of the provider, despite having reservations about the location, initial efforts were targeted at recruiting career changers in this location. This proved to be quite challenging for a number of reasons including, importantly, that the individuals being targeted were scattered across a wide geographic area (as opposed to a major conurbation), making it difficult, or even sometimes impossible, for many interested individuals to participate in these placements. A great deal of effort

and resource was expended on trying to recruit 20 career changers, with a final number of six career changers who did complete placements with this provider. This experience reinforced the belief that the original plan of where to focus career changer recruitment had been the correct approach, and the team therefore reverted back to focusing on the locations of Manchester and London only. The only exception to this is when enquiries and/or applications were received from very keen individual career changers in locations where there were active providers, and where there would be benefit in supporting these individuals to experience FE. This included four individuals being placed in Nottingham, Bristol, West Yorkshire and the Midlands.

There was a great deal of interest in the career changers element of the programme, receiving 119 applications, with 32 placed.

3.2 Matching

Matching participants to providers was predominantly based on geography, and then on availability. However, within this, there were all sorts of complexities that came into play. Sometimes, a provider would offer a block placement, identifying fixed days to cover the 40 hours and a minimum and maximum number of participants that they would be willing to take. The delivery team would then offer it to all student applicants and/or career changer applicants within that area, outlining the dates that they would have to commit to, on a first-come-first-served basis. This approach tended to work in locations where there were large providers and volumes of applicants or where a provider was only offering a very small number of placements in total.

On other occasions, a provider would accommodate a large number of participants but creating bespoke, individual timetables for each, sometimes accepting them on a rolling basis. This was particularly effective in locations where either:

- There were large providers but fewer potential participants to match to them; or
- There were small providers but larger volumes of potential participants.

With either approach, providers would often try to allow each participant to spend at least some time in a faculty or department that matched their degree subject or area of interest.

The main exception to these approaches was if the provider specialised in a particular subject area, of which there were two on the programme – one sports and one engineering. Matching to these providers was done firstly on subject area, then on geographic location.

Whilst this sounds straight forward, it is the most resource intensive and time-consuming element of the programme, as it involves multiple providers, large volumes of participants and significant levels of liaison and documentation. The level of resource required to deliver this element of the programme cannot be underestimated.

3.3 The Placements

As every provider is different, every placement was different, both in terms of structure and content. The make-up of groups was also varied. Most cohorts were made up entirely of students. However, there was one cohort that was made up entirely of career changers, and some career changers completed individual timetables - but there were also four 'mixed' cohorts that completed the programme, made up of both students and career changers, each with a different provider. There were both advantages and disadvantages to these mixed groups; there was a richness and diversity to the group with the ability to reflect on their experiences collectively but from very differing perspectives. However, the fact that students received a bursary payment, whilst career changers received nothing, did at times create some difficulties and tensions.

Structure

One provider offered an intensive placement completed in one week. Most offered two or three days per week over two to three weeks. Others offered one day per week over five or six weeks. A few offered completely flexible placements to suit the availability of individual students. Anecdotal evidence from both participants and providers is that there is no correct approach or one size fits all

solution. In addition, all providers had to demonstrate a level of flexibility when faced with unforeseen circumstances including, but not necessarily limited to:

- Participant illness;
- Train strikes;
- Tutor strikes; and
- Extreme weather.

In these circumstances, there were usually further days/time arranged to make up the 40 hours at the end of the placement.

Content

Whilst the provider guide offered some suggestions as to what could be included in the placements, it was up to providers themselves to devise a programme of activity that best suited their organisation (and what activities were happening there at the time) and the participants. All of the placements focussed predominantly on the opportunity to observe teaching and learning but many included some, or all, of the following:

- An introduction to the organisation;
- An introduction to the senior leadership team;
- A tour of the facilities;
- The opportunity to observe, or participate in, meetings;
- A talk from one or more members of staff explaining their career journey;
- A chance to spend time in departments such as pastoral support or SEND functions; and
- Completing some one-to-one or small group work or even preparing and delivering a micro teach, either to the learners, or the group of participants who were on placement.

Feedback suggests that the participants enjoyed the placement more when the latter point was included and they were provided with the opportunity to be more proactive and interactive. The placement also often included daily reflection time and/or a final 'wrap up' session at the end of the placements.

“Before the Talent to Teach in Further Education programme I had never really thought about a career in FE but I had been almost certain that I didn’t want a career in teaching or in an education setting in general. However now, I am not only intrigued by working in the FE sector but also have become a lot more interested in teaching in FE, particularly with students who have SEND, learning difficulties or mental health issues.”

Talent to Teach participant (student) at The Opportunity College

3.4 The Talent to Teach Academy

The Talent to Teach Academy was provided as a value added element, in order to support up to thirty of the best T2T alumni (as nominated by providers) to receive additional professional development, obtain the Level 3 Award in Education and Training (L3 AET), receive targeted coaching and, where possible, and time permitting, benefit from additional support to secure a role in FE.

The T2T Academy (including the L3 AET) was offered fully online so that any participant could be nominated and no individual would be disadvantaged from participating due to location/access issues. The T2TFE Academy was open for nominations from the latter part of 2022, and was operational for three months from January to March 2023.

A total of 49 participants were nominated to join the T2T Academy, with a seventeen accepting a place in the first cohort, and twenty four accepting a place in the second cohort. Not all of these started, though, and the final numbers successfully completing were ten participants from cohort one and sixteen from cohort two. Of those who have completed, four are career changers, with the

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remaining twenty two being students. Unfortunately, a number of participants who engaged with the T2T Academy and commenced the L3 AET found that university and other commitments made it impossible for them to continue within the timeframe required. This was particularly unfortunate, as those who had progressed part way could have been transferred to another cohort to complete had the programme continued (as was originally expected).

Apart from this, the T2T Academy proved to be hugely popular, and providers and participants demonstrated a strong appetite for this element of the programme. Feedback from learners has been incredibly positive.

During February and March, InspirED Associates were visited by their Awarding Organisation's (City and Guilds) External Quality Assurer (EQA), who reviewed the L3AET work of the first T2T Academy cohort, and the assessment of this. In addition, the EQA observed part of a session for the second cohort. The feedback from the EQA was incredibly encouraging, noting that InspirED Associates had exemplary practices.

“I’ve been taking part in the Talent to Teach Academy and am close to completing my Level 3 Award in Education and Training, which has been extremely useful. All the activities have been extremely valuable, and I feel I have gained extensive knowledge through taking the Level 3 with Talent to Teach. I feel that it just sets you up for success. There have also been tutorials offered for the Level 3, which has helped me put my best foot forward when completing the assignments. From start to finish, I have really, really enjoyed it.”

Talent to Teach participant (Career Changer) at South Gloucestershire and Stroud College

It is worth noting that many providers offer the L3 AET and are often keen to make sure that participants are aware of this, so that they can access their provision if this is of interest to them. The Manchester College has committed to providing the L3 AET to any participant who has completed a placement with them, as they wish to support participants who are interested in progressing into FE post placement enhance their potential to do this. Similarly, Reaseheath College has offered the L3AET to fourteen of the participants placed with them who have subsequently gone on to secure paid roles within their organisation post-placement.

4. PROJECT MANAGEMENT, GOVERNANCE AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

Critical to the success of the programme was to mobilise at speed, and use sophisticated, targeted marketing and communication channels for the different types of audience. It cannot be over emphasised how important both were for a number of reasons; the Talent to Teach programme has run for a number of years previously, with yearly targets (spanning three academic terms), to recruit and provide placements for approximately 365 students. However, for the 2023-23 programme, the *target number* of 365 participants remained constant, but:

- The delivery period was reduced by just over one full academic term, or one third of the usual delivery time, commencing in September and concluding on 31st March;
- The target key performance indicator (KPI) of 365 participants included, for the first time, 30 career changers, a target that required a wholly different marketing and recruitment campaign to the one employed to recruit students; and
- Given InspirED Associates were a new delivery partner (although both directors and the wider programme team had deep knowledge of the programme), they were effectively tasked with re-launching the programme as:
 - Over the previous two years the majority of all placements had been delivered wholly online due to the COVID-19 restrictions that were in place. This resulted in a small number of providers, in fact the smallest number that had ever been recorded over a full year (13) delivering all 365 placements, as each could deliver to participants who were located anywhere in the country;
 - InspirED Associates, as a new delivery partner, was not able to leverage the ongoing engagement of these previous providers. Whilst the ETF did issue an email to the previous providers on the delivery team's behalf, this did not generate the same level of response that a personal relationship/engagement would be expected to have;
 - The programme also included new elements, including the career changers stream, which needed to be conveyed to the providers; and
 - Given the very reduced numbers of providers engaging with the programme during the COVID-19 pandemic, there had effectively been a lull of around two years when the vast majority of FE providers had not engaged with the programme, resulting in a general lack of awareness.

4.1 Staffing structure

Given the stretching targets and the inclusion of the career changers stream, the two directors of InspirEd Associates decided at the tender stage that they would devote a significant amount of their time to lead the project, as Co-programme Leads, supported by four other team members to support provider recruitment, quality assurance, university/student recruitment, general programme co-ordination and the delivery of the Talent to Teach Academy. One member of the team left to have a baby and so this was backfilled by the directors who ended up working full time on the project. In addition, two team members switched roles but generally, the structure worked well and, whilst a small team, the experience of team members meant that they were able to support each other, cover any absence as required, etc.

4.2 Project Governance

ETF had an internal project team which oversaw delivery of the Talent to Teach programme. The Co-programme Leads met with this team for an initial inception meeting, followed by fortnightly meetings where the team provided feedback to ETF on progress against agreed KPIs, lessons learned and risks, issues and mitigations. This was supplemented by monthly reporting, covering progress against KPIs, risks, quality assurance and lessons learned. This approach ensured that all stakeholders were informed and that issues were dealt with in a timely and responsive manner, whilst ensuring that project delivery was on track.

The project governance originally also included an Advisory Panel comprising key stakeholders including:

- Representatives of the FE workforce policy team at the Department for Education;
- The Head of Professional Status and Standards at the Education and Training Foundation; and
- Senior representatives from provider stakeholders.

The Advisory Panel was convened in September, with the remit to regularly review the design, including individual programme elements, and to provide guidance, feedback and suggestions aimed at enhancing the quality of delivery and impact. However, the announcement of the end of the programme meant that the focus shifted and a final meeting in March involving the DfE and providers concentrated more on reviewing the programme, identifying lessons learned and considering how this information might shape future programmes.

4.3 Quality Assurance

Quality assurance and continuous improvement formed a key element of the programme, underpinned by robust project management and risk control. Feedback was therefore continually sought, so that improvements could be made, where required and practical to do so. The delivery team worked collaboratively with the ETF quality assurance team, so that duplication was minimised and outcomes optimised through joint working.

The approach included:

- Completion of the ETF project reporting template which was shared on a monthly basis. This included our risk register which was regularly updated as new risks were identified along with mitigation as required, our Quality Assurance Plan (QAP) and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP);
- As outlined above, fortnightly team meetings between the two Co-programme Leads and the ETF project team, where the programme delivery and achievement of KPIs were shared and discussed in detail;
- Conducting regular reviews of survey results from the providers and participants so that any feedback could be considered and changes/improvements made, if these were required;
- High levels of engagement with key stakeholders (providers and universities) so that questions could be answered, and support provided where this was needed;
- Fourteen focus groups were held with 75 (20%) of all participants, allowing the team to gather additional feedback on the individual experience of particular placements/providers, to supplement any feedback provided in the post-placement surveys;
- Post-placement interviews were conducted with seven providers, and five providers attended a final focus group where they discussed their experience of the programme, and provided information on lessons learned;
- Senior members of the team provided face-to-face support by attending initial induction or final reflection sessions/days (often both of these were attended) where providers hosted large groups of participants and/or felt that this support would be beneficial;

The ETF's Regional Quality Assurance Managers also carried out four visits to providers in four different regions (Myerscough College, Lambeth College, Newbury College and Stafford College) as part of their own internal QA processes. The visits were carried out in the first term only in November 2022 (subsequent planned visits did not take place in term two, given that the programme was ending). Feedback from these visits was very positive and was triangulated with survey responses to highlight and share effective practice and identify opportunities for development;

As the Talent to Teach Academy included delivery of the Level 3 Award in Education and Training, InspirED Associates Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) Lead provided guidance and quality assured all work and assessment decisions in line with the Awarding Organisation's (AO) requirements. The AO's External Quality Assurance (EQA) visit took place during February and March, where the Talent to

Teach participants work was reviewed and some of them provided feedback to the EQA on their experience and learning. EQA feedback was highly complimentary, and InspirED Associates' direct claim status was retained.

The above approach worked well, with any risks identified at an early stage, so that mitigations could be put in place to remove or minimise any possible disruption to ensure the successful delivery of the programme, to the highest possible standards. As can be seen by the programme outcomes, this approach enabled the delivery of extremely pressing targets, in a shortened timeframe, with excellent feedback from providers and students.

5. TARGETS, OUTCOMES, QUALITY AND IMPACT

5.1 Key Performance Indicators

The programme has been incredibly successful with all of the key performance indicators being exceeded with the exception of the number graduating from the Talent to Teach Academy, where only 26 graduated, against a target of 30. The main key performance indicators are summarised in the table below:

KPI	Outcome
25 providers to sign up to participate in the programme	<p>41 providers signed up to the programme against the target of 25 – made up of 31 colleges and 10 independent training providers. Of the 41 that signed up, 30 actually supported placements (22 colleges and 8 ITPs or ACL providers).</p> <p>For the remaining 11 providers who did not end up hosting placements, this was usually due to either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lack of any university close to where the provider was located; or • Difficulty in engaging with their local university. <p>In either case, this resulted in a lack of student applications that placements could then be offered to.</p> <p>Other than this, a small number of providers cited a lack of DBS checks, others internal capacity issues as reasons for not engaging post-application.</p>
1200 applications received to participate in the programme.	1390 applications to participate were received - 1271 from students and 119 from career changers. Note though, that these numbers would have been higher had both surveys not been switched off (therefore closed for applications) on 2 nd March 2023, along with all marketing and recruitment activity also stopping just before that date, effectively reducing an already short timeframe by one full month.
365 placements to be completed – 335 students and 30 career changers	368 placements were completed – 336 students and 32 career changers, although one of the career changer placements was slightly shorter (three days or approximately 20 hours).
Completion rates of participants as good as or better than previous years.	Against a target completion rate of 95%, 96% was actually achieved. However, it is worth noting that the dropout rate was far higher in career changers than students – 14% for career changers as opposed to approximately 3% for students. This was mainly due to a lack of bursary or reimbursement of expenses being paid to career changers.
95% of participants satisfied with their placements.	The final satisfaction rate was 99.7% and, when asked if they would recommend the programme where 0 is 'not at all likely' and 10 'extremely likely', the average score from all survey responses received was 9.2. This provides a net promoter score (NPS) for the programme of 73 (Excellent).
Seek to secure FE roles for 20	Information gathered shows that 41 participants have moved into roles in education - 38 paid and 3 voluntary. Of these, 22 paid roles and the three

participants of the programme.	voluntary roles secured are with the provider with which the participants completed their placements. 9 participants are progressing to a teacher training programme, again some of these are with their placement provider. There is also the potential for more participants to secure roles after the programme end, for example, one provider confirmed they are looking to offer posts (voluntary or paid) to up to 10 of the participants who completed placements with them.
30 participants successfully graduating from the T2T Academy and achieving L3AET.	26 participants have successfully graduated the T2T Academy. Over 30 participants started the programme of study but, unfortunately, pressure from dissertations or other university work or indeed other commitments (especially for the career changers) meant that the timing was not right for them. Unfortunately, the termination of the programme and the fact that further cohorts would not run, meant that it was not possible to pause the academy for these participants and allow them to join future cohorts.

5.2 Participant survey data analysis

An impact survey was sent out to all participants on the Talent to Teach in FE programme as soon as they completed their placement. There were 369 survey responses but this included a duplicate response (which was discounted). Given that a total of 368 participants completed the programme, this provides a response rate of 100%.

Below is a summary of the survey responses. Survey satisfaction data is measured at points 3 (neither agree nor disagree), 4 (agree) and 5 (strongly agree).

‘I was satisfied with my placement on the Talent to Teach programme’

99.7% (358/359 responses) of participants are satisfied with their placement on the Talent to Teach in Further Education programme overall (98.8% Agree & Strongly Agree)

99.4% (357/359 responses) of participants were satisfied with the information received and organisation overall (95.8% Agree & Strongly Agree)

Ten participants marked ‘strongly disagree’ for this question. However, for nine of these, their NPS score, and their open responses contradict their answer. Therefore, they are considered as anomalies and so the calculation was based on 359 responses instead of 368.

‘I am now confident in my knowledge and understanding of the FE sector’

100% (360/360 responses) of participants are now confident in their knowledge and understanding of the FE sector. (97.5% Agree & Strongly Agree)

Eight participants marked ‘strongly disagree’ for this question. However, their NPS score, and their open responses contradict their answer. Therefore, they are considered as anomalies and so the calculation was based on 360 responses instead of 368.

Of those who marked ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’, reasons for their responses include:

“My placement was amazing, they introduced me to all aspects of FE.”

“Before starting the placement I was unsure of the opportunities that the FE sector could offer. Now I think I am more sure of the opportunities and could see myself working in this sector.”

“The experience was so good and whatever we got taught was really powerful and it taught me a lot about the FE sector. It’s made me want to change my mind in what I want to do in the future.”

“I learned so much during the placement and found it a really valuable experience”

“I had an amazing time at the college and learned a huge amount about FE.”

"I started the placement knowing nothing at all, i was scared to put myself out there but i did and it was the best ever decision!"

"The talent to teach opportunity was incredible for me because it seriously made me consider a career in education, and especially in F.E. Everything at the college was perfect."

"It was an enlightening experience. Had never thought of getting into teaching prior to this."

Of those who marked 'neither agree nor disagree', reasons for their responses include:

"I feel I now understand FE as a whole more. However we didn't have the opportunity to see/do any behind the scenes planning / target setting/marking which i think would have helped give a more well rounded understanding."

"It put me off teaching in further education, it wasn't an engaging and enjoyable experience."

"I didn't have enough confidence within myself to ask the appropriate questions about the sector."

"The college did not give us much to do, I didn't get a chance to really be hands-on. However, I used this opportunity to ask the mentor/teacher as many questions as I could think of just so I could get a feel of what a teacher's role and FE education involves."

"Saw a range of processes and examples of FE teaching: would have perhaps wanted an element of non-teaching roles in leadership within FE."

'Participating in Talent to Teach in Further Education encouraged or further encouraged me to enter a career in FE'

85.5% (308/360) of participants were interested in entering a career in FE before taking part in the Talent to Teach in Further Education programme (50.8% Agree & Strongly Agree)

98.3% (354/360) of participants stated that the Talent to Teach in Further Education encouraged or further encouraged them to enter into a career in FE (88.3% Agree & Strongly Agree)

Therefore, this data shows that participants' experience on the Talent to Teach programme has positively impacted their interest in pursuing a career in the FE sector compared with before taking part in the programme.

Of those who marked 'agree' or strongly agree', reasons for their responses include:

"Before participating in this placement, I had little or no interest in teaching, I was just curious to know what happens in being the Teacher and not the Student as I have always been. However, being in the presence of the students and feeling the satisfaction that comes with knowing that I have been able to transfer my knowledge to the people who really need it has positively impacted my interest in teaching."

"I didn't really know much about FE beforehand but I really fell in love with the environment and the style of teaching, it had a great community feel at the college."

"It really made me think about my career, as I always wanted to help other people and I think career in FE is also another really good opportunity for me to make a difference in someone's life."

"Participating in the Talent to Teach in Further Education programme allowed me to get a taste for teaching in a FE setting, and showed me the benefits, demands and expectations of a career in FE. As a result, I feel more prepared to embark on a journey into FE."

"Before the placement I did not even consider it or know anything about it, whereas now I can definitely see myself becoming an FE teacher in the future."

"I knew from the start that I didn't want to teach in FE but after this wonderful experience it's made me change my mind and I'm still surprised that I loved the FE sector experience."

"I had never considered teaching before and now I definitely am!"

"Seeing the passion and enthusiasm from the teachers I worked with and the willingness of students to learn has actually made me want to join the further education sector."

Of those who marked ‘neither agree nor disagree’, reasons for their responses include:

“I found the hours quite long and a bit stressful, not sure it is for me full time but will definitely consider it in future.”

“I am still unsure about teaching long term but definitely something I will consider short term.”

“Even though I learned regarding the FE sector; I do not feel more encouraged than I was before the placement.”

“I ... neither agree or disagree because I feel like I needed more hours.”

“In my view the short period I spent in participating in FE education is not enough for me to choose a career in FE.”

“I’m still not sure what I would like to do in the future, but definitely still view a career in FE as an option.”

“Still unsure as to whether or not I want a career in teaching as I would have to work on my confidence to be able to deliver a class.”

Of those who marked ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, reasons for their responses include:

“I completed two weeks of work experience prior to Talent to Teach at a primary school and felt that I am more suited in the primary education sector where I am given more freedom to teach various subjects to children.”

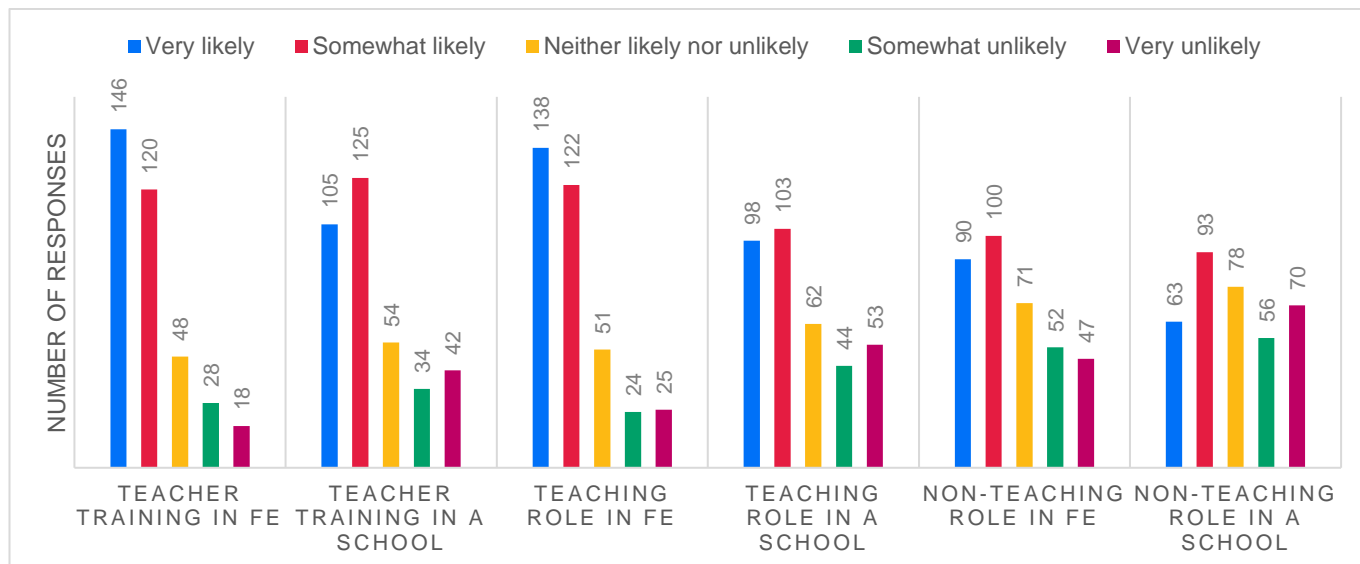
“The industry is massively underfunded & none of the tutors I was with were encouraging.”

“I had no knowledge of the FE area before and wanted to find out what it was like. I quickly discovered it’s not for me.”

“It has shown me that I still need to improve a lot of my own personal skills before contemplating entering this sector.”

“It has showed me the reality of being a teacher in FE and how much work is done outside of paid hours and that has put me off.”

‘In the next 12 months, how likely are you to apply for...’



‘If you are not intending on applying for a role in a school or FE in the next 12 months, please explain why’

Participants’ responses included the following reasons:

- Many were still in their second year of their degree and will still be studying in 12 months’ time.
- Some participants had plans to complete a higher-level degree or a gap year once they graduate.

- Some mentioned that they would prefer to complete a teaching qualification first before applying for a role.
- A few commented that they would like to pursue a career in their subject specific industry first, then consider applying for a teaching role in the future, whilst another suggested that they would need more time to consider what career path they would like to take.

‘How likely are you to recommend the Talent to Teach programme?’

The Talent to Teach in FE programme currently has a Net Promotor Score of **73** (Excellent).

What is a good NPS score?



RECENTLY

275 participants gave a score of 9 or 10, and 11 gave a score of between 0-6. The score was calculated out of 361 responses, as 7 did not provide a score.

What participants said was the best part of taking part in the programme (taken from both surveys and focus groups):

- Interacting with the staff was often commented on as a valuable element of the programme. It gave participants the opportunity to learn from teaching professionals who all had taken different routes into the FE sector.
- Participants stated that they really gained from observing a variety of different subject areas in addition to their own specialist subject, as it provided them with an insight into the many different aspects that FE offers, such as Supported Learning and Functional Skills classes. In addition, it also provided exposure to different styles of teaching and delivery.
- Some providers allowed participants the opportunity to lead a lesson, which gave a valuable first-hand experience of teaching. Others were able to help support and interact with learners and be involved in the lesson planning.
- Being on the placements with other participants was also mentioned as beneficial, as it allowed them to be in a peer group that shared the same challenges and aspirations and they were able to form a supportive community.
- The wrap-around experience that many providers delivered as part of the placement was often mentioned as being the best part. This included opportunities for participants to deliver a micro-teach, have support from a mentor, and attend micro-talks where a variety of staff delivered sessions on pedagogy and raised awareness of the different roles within the sector. This was not practically possible at all providers, however, where this was implemented, it was very well received by participants.

What participants said could improve their experience of the programme (taken from both surveys and focus groups):

- Some participants would have preferred to be closer, however, the delivery partner would ensure that participants were placed as close to their home or university as possible. There were also some suggestions that participants would have preferred to have the option to choose their provider type.
- Not all participants were able to have the opportunity to interact with learners and would have preferred to have more involvement in lessons being observed. There were some suggestions that they would have liked to have had more of a practical experience of teaching in lessons.

- Many suggested that the placement period could have been longer to enable them to have a greater depth of experience or to allow them to complete a different placement at another type of provider for comparison. Some stated that they found it quite intense, and so spreading out the duration over a longer period of time would help to alleviate this, especially when trying to fit in around their university and work commitments.
- Some participants mentioned that they would have liked to have been placed within the department that related to their special interest area, or to spend more time in these particular lessons.
- A career changer mentioned that they would have appreciated some financial assistance to help with travel costs.
- Being able to shadow teachers' activities outside of the classroom such as lesson planning was suggested as being helpful to understand their roles more holistically.
- One participant mentioned that it would have been helpful to have DBS checks in place before starting their placement to allow a greater flexibility of the activities they could be involved in.
- Another commented that they would have preferred more exposure to non-teaching roles in FE, especially around management and leadership roles.

5.3 Participant case studies

Participant case studies are reproduced in full at [Appendix 1](#).

5.4 Provider survey data analysis

A bespoke survey was sent out to all providers on the Talent to Teach in FE each term. By the end of the programme, there were a total of 31 survey responses, although seven organisations had responded more than once, either because more than one person responded or because they responded once per term (or a combination of the two). Out of a total of 30 providers who offered placements, 23 responded at least once, giving a response rate of 76.6%.

The survey contains the following headings:

- Prior Information
- Talent to Teach in FE Academy
- Impact of the Talent to Teach in FE programme
- Overall Experience

Below is a summary of the survey responses that support the opportunities of development and effective practice identified above. Survey satisfaction data is measured at points 3 (neither agree nor disagree), 4 (agree) and 5 (strongly agree).

Prior information

'I was satisfied with the amount of information that was provided'

96.7% (30/31) of respondents were satisfied with the amount of information that was provided about the scheme (93.5% Agree & Strongly Agree)

In response to the question that asked if there was any other information that would have been helpful that was not provided, here are some examples:

- *"I think a better understanding of the motivation of the students and their interest in ACE."*
- *"With hindsight it would have been helpful if we could have had a little more information a little sooner about the students but I appreciate there are logistical difficulties in doing this."*
- *"More clarity around DBS checks and what the fact they don't take place for the participants means for the hosting college."*

Some providers used the question as an opportunity to comment on their positive experience of the information provided:

- *“The guide supported well and T2T staff were available for any questions.”*
- *“The information provided was fit for purpose, I do not feel anything was missing.”*
- *“Julia was very informative and easy to communicate with.”*
- *“All the information was extremely helpful.”*
- *“Any queries or requests for information were dealt with quickly and giving suitable responses.”*
- *“No - always kept updated and the updates were timely.”*

The single provider who responded ‘neither agree nor disagree’ felt that *“Although a very simple scheme to run, the lack of contact and communication from InspirEd was a little disappointing. Although responsive to any queries, there were no check-in’s throughout the placements to see how we were finding it.”*

One provider responded ‘strongly disagree’ commenting, *“We as a college received good information, but we did receive feedback from participants that they were unclear around the funding of the programme. This could perhaps be looked at for future events.”*

In response to the question that asked if providers felt the number of participants they were placed was too many, just right or too few:

87.1% (27/31) of providers stated that they felt it was just right, with **12.9%** (4/31) stating that they felt it was too few.

Talent to Teach in FE Academy

In response to how many of the participants on placement were nominated for the Talent to Teach in FE Academy:

- Approximately 50 participants were nominated in total.
- The amount varied from 0 to 12 participants, with the majority nominating between 0-3 (Note, one stated that they had nominated 27, but this was an error).

In reference to nominating participants to the Talent to Teach in FE Academy:

- **96.7%** (30/31) of providers were satisfied with the benefits of having the option to do this (67.7% Agree & Strongly Agree).

Reasons for their answers include:

- *“The two I nominated were those who had expressed an interest in a teaching career and were most passionate about the project, if the opportunity had been offered to everyone on the programme, I do not feel this would have been as effective.”*
- *“I can see this working well - although I found it hard to choose as I did not get to know them all equally.”*
- *“Benefits to all involved. Raise profile of FE Teaching and attract more teachers.”*
- *“It felt appropriate to be able to nominate participants after observing them on the scheme.”*
- *“I believe that the Talent to Teach Academy is an excellent opportunity for participants to undertake a Level 3 Award in Education and Training qualification to get a head start in to teaching in Further Education as a future career as they are approaching the end of their degree/masters. It helps them to look into an alternative route into teaching aside from completing a PGCE.”*
- *“I felt that nominating our T2T participant was important as he had reviewed his future employment mindset and really worked hard when attending the placement.”*

The one respondent who selected 'disagree' cited a miscommunication as the issue, *"We found out on our placement students' final day with us that 2 of them had been offered teacher training places through the Talent to Teach academy. I had not formally been asked to nominate anyone, but had shared feedback about two of our students who were particularly driven and I think that was then interpreted as a nomination."*

Impact of the Talent to Teach in FE programme

In response to the question which asked how many participants were offered a job role by the provider:

- **18** providers **did not offer** any of the participants a job role.
- **5** providers offered a total of **20** participants job roles, which were accepted.
- One provider stated that they offered 15 participants job roles of which 15 accepted, however, it has transpired to be an anomaly as this was not the case.
- Note, though that some of these totals changed after the survey had been completed and job outcomes are covered in more detail later in the report.

Future opportunities

With regards to whether participants had enquired about roles or expressed their intention to take a teaching qualification or, if the provider intended to keep in touch with participants, comments included:

- *"This cohort was only in the last month, but 3 have asked about working here and are looking for more information about how to complete a teaching qual in the future here."*
- *"Two of the participants did not appear to be considering ACE as a future career and were in the second year of their degrees in subjects that we do not offer. They would have been more suited to a placement in an FE college or organisation that offers training for specific qualifications. They did not engage very much in the sessions they observed and seemed quite reluctant and disinterested."*
- *"It's a bit early in the piece for us to be considering job offers to participants but there were a number who could be potential candidates when they've graduated."*
- *"Most participants still had a while before they graduated but I think we opened their eyes to the possibility of a career in FE."*
- *"All T2T learners have been given my email and the opportunity to come back into college if they want any further experience or information. A couple from the programme seemed keen. All mentioned they are looking into taking a teaching qual in the future which was good to hear."*

In response to questions around the impact:

- **100%** (31/31) of respondents are satisfied that the Talent to Teach in FE scheme had a positive impact on their organisation (87.1% Agree & Strongly Agree).
- **96.7%** (30/31) of respondents are satisfied that the Talent to Teach in FE scheme had a positive impact on their staff (83.9% Agree & Strongly Agree).
- **100%** (31/31) of respondents are satisfied that the Talent to Teach in FE scheme had a positive impact on the environment for learners (61.3% Agree & Strongly Agree).
- **100%** (31/31) of respondents are satisfied that it was good to get a different perspective and feedback from participants about their approach and teaching in general (93.5% Agree & Strongly Agree).
- **100%** (31/31) of respondents are satisfied that their mentors benefitted from working with the participants (77.4% Agree & Strongly Agree).

- **90.3%** (28/31) of respondents are satisfied that the £300 bursary was a significant incentive to take part in the programme (67.7% Agree & Strongly Agree).

In response to the question that asked providers if they would engage with the scheme again:

- Two providers stated that they would not engage with the scheme again with reasons stated as:
 - *“We don’t have the capacity to support trainee teachers at the moment.”*
 - *“Only because we are so short staffed at the moment and don’t want to extra pressure on to our staff.”*
- All other providers stated that they would engage with the scheme again. Reasons for their responses include:
 - *“As a college we are committed to helping to promote the FE sector - this helped motivate staff to be involved. It was also rewarding to get good feedback from the participants about the college & we hope this will in a small way help change the narrative about the college externally. It was a lot more work than initially anticipated though!”*
 - *“I appreciate the importance of raising the profile of FE.”*
 - *“A worthwhile scheme to encourage new people into teaching and help deal with the recruitment crisis in post 16 education.”*
 - *“I’m an advocate for the sector and it does not always get the exposure it deserves in comparison to other education sectors, so anything which raises exposure and profile I am on board with.”*
 - *“The Talent to Teach scheme has had a positive impact on our organisation as we have met with participants who are looking to pursue a career in FE. This has helped Juniper to fill gaps within our recruitment with participants who can undergo training within Juniper to meet their own aspirations of working in FE.”*
 - *“I feel by having T2T participants on site educates everyone!”*
 - *“Organising the scheme and interacting with the participants made us as a teaching team reflect on both our own teaching and on the impact that the college has on the local community and how made us appreciate how much we offer. Tutors who had participants in their classrooms as observers, were interested to gain feedback from them.”*
 - *“It was beneficial to us as an organisation, beneficial to the participants and beneficial to FE in general, as many of the participants had never experienced FE and now know what it is and could potentially recommend to others/pursue a career in FE.”*
 - *“The participants were polite and keen; they seemed to build a good rapport with the staff and students. Liaising with departments has built good relationships for further placements (this helps my job!), it has raised the profile of our college to external students and the money has really helped the department at a time where funding is low.”*
- Although these providers stated that they would engage with the scheme again, a couple used the opportunity to suggest some improvements:
 - *“If we are to do this again in the future, we would want to know that the participants were interested in Adult and Community Education. We would ask them to select one or two subjects and match them with a teacher or team so that they would have the opportunity to build a rapport with teaching staff and learners, as well as better understand a curriculum area.”*
 - *“We would engage with the scheme again, however we have taken learnings and feedback from this experience and the students we had. They found full days to be too intense and lacked benefit by the end of the day due to the pace we kept the day moving, so moving forward we would look at spreading the 40 hours differently. The hardest part for us was the lack of DBS and therefore having to be accompanied the entire time, as well as the logistics of timetabling.”*

Overall experience

In response to the question that asked providers to describe what worked well:

- Many providers commented that they were impressed with participants' positive approach to their placement and were very engaged with the process. Some stated that they were enthusiastic, had a genuine interest and were eager to learn. Participants' communication with their placement provider and their attendance was generally very good, and they interacted well with other staff members.
- There were comments that the participants collaborated well when observing lessons in pairs and completing whole group activities. The microteach was also mentioned as a useful activity where participants were able to provide supportive feedback to each other.
- The communication from the delivery team was mentioned as very supportive, and the prior planning to match participants' availability with the provider's timetable so they could observe a range of classes worked effectively.
- There were some comments about the impact the programme has had for the participants, in particular, expanding their exposure of a range of job opportunities in the FE sector.

In response to the question that asked providers to describe how their experience could be improved:

- There were a couple of providers who fed back that a few participants did not appear engaged or have a genuine interest to know more about teaching, and that the participants commented that their subject preferences, locations and availability was not taken account of. Also, some participants at a particular Adult Community Education provider were not willing to travel to the organisation's other sites which limited the range of sessions they could observe at one campus.
- Some commented that it was a challenge to match up participants' availability and preferences with their own timetables, which added to an already demanding workload. One provider requested that where possible, if they could know the subject interests of the participants much earlier, this would then allow them to plan a schedule that might feel more individualised for some participants.
- A couple of providers would have felt more comfortable if participants have had DBS checks in place before commencing their placement.

How likely are you to recommend this learning experience to a colleague?

- The Talent to Teach in FE programme delivered by InspirEd currently has a Net Promotor Score from providers of **61** (Great).

What is a good NPS score?



RENTELY

- Of the two respondents who gave a score of 0 and 5, their reasoning was:
 - *“Organising the activities for the learner was time consuming.”*
 - *“I’m not in touch with other providers.”*
- Of the eight respondents who gave a score of between 7 and 8, their reasoning was:
 - *“It’s a good programme to be involved in - we need to encourage careers in ACE.”*

- *“It was a valuable experience for us as a well (hopefully) as for the participants. It is a lot of work though and I hadn't anticipated how time consuming it would be, especially as we had a fair amount of staff sickness at the time and so there had to be a lot of re-jigging of the schedule on a daily basis! But the people involved enjoyed it and it is good to do something to help the recruitment problem in FE.”*
- *“It's very worthwhile and hopefully will bring new PGCE learners into the college who we can grow into fulltime lecturers.”*
- *“Not really had issues but would have been good to have more starting with us.”*
- *“It was a positive experience (once I'd sorted out the logistics!)”*
- *“The venture is a good one and I am all for exposing more people to the sector.”*
- Of the 21 respondents who gave a score of 9 or 10, their reasoning included:
 - *“We got a lot out of it in terms of quality improvement and showcasing to us the good practice that is happening at the college, as well as meeting a group of enthusiastic people who are interested in teaching and discussing their experiences while here. It was refreshing to hear their ideas and reflections.”*
 - *“Given the current climate, it is in all of our interests as a sector to ensure we have informed and competent staff entering the workforce. This process provides opportunity for both employer and potential employee to explore suitability. It is also a great opportunity to sell and educate individuals about our wonderful sector which is often overshadowed by others.”*
 - *“It is a beneficial programme to give a holistic view of teaching in FE.”*
 - *“I have recommended the programme to other centres within Juniper Training which this year a few centres have had participants attend from the T2T programme. This helps the participant gain a good insight to teaching and FE but also lends a helping hand to tutors at Juniper so students get more support from the participant as well as the class tutor.”*
 - *“It is good for training providers like ourselves that like to help others progress.”*
 - *“Communication was great as was the explanation of the project.”*
 - *“The experience is a useful process from both sides.”*
 - *“Organised. Funded. Excellent communication. Promotes teaching in the sector to support recruitment whilst giving a balanced view of what it is to be a teacher.”*

5.5 Provider Interviews and Focus Groups

Post placement interviews were held with seven providers, and five providers attended a final focus group that was held to provide feedback and share learning to inform any future programmes of this nature. A representative from the DfE (FE Workforce Division) attended the final focus group meeting.

Feedback from providers very much reflected what they had submitted through the post placement survey, with a lot of reiteration of positive comments and the perceived benefits of the programme. Quite often, the post placement discussions focussed on the groups of participants that had just completed their placement, and which individuals has shown enthusiasm and interest in the sector, and which ones would be good nominees for the Talent to Teach Academy.

One provider, who had two groups of students placed at two different centres, noted that they had a tale of two halves, with one group very engaged, inquisitive and asking lots of questions, with the other group, relatively quiet, and not so engaged or inquisitive. This provider had identified at least one participant who they aimed to keep in touch with, and fed back that this one potential positive outcome made the programme very worthwhile. This provider did go onto to offer placements to another two large groups of participants.

Feedback from providers during the final focus group again reiterated the success of the programme, and also the support for something of this nature to be commissioned again.

Specific feedback provided included:

- **Communication and the provider guide:** overall providers felt the communication had been very good. One provider explained that they would have liked to have the information about the participants being placed sooner, to help them plan their placements, as one or two participants were studying subjects that they as a provider didn't offer, and on reflection, these participants may have had a better experience if placed with another provider.
- **Placement duration and structure:** all providers had structured their placements in slightly different ways, ranging from two days a week, six consecutive days, and one day a week, with one provider offering placements based on each individual's availability. It was concluded that there was no 'optimal' way to structure the placement.
- **Placement elements:** again providers had delivered the placements slightly differently, but all present did include an introduction to them as a provider, and all had built in time for reflection and feedback throughout the placement duration, and on the final day. Placements included elements such as internal CPD, shadowing, mini-talks from members of staff on their journey into FE, doing role play and simulations with the SEND team so that participants could understand the challenges learners with different needs may face, and input/sessions with other areas such as student services. Providers fed back that they had changed the order of elements of the placement for second and third cohorts, often moving sessions/input to earlier in the programme as part of their own learning journey on what worked well for the participants.

One provider fed back that they had invited all participants (from three separate cohorts) to share the final cohort's last day of reflections and feedback. Twenty two participants attended this session (eleven from the final cohort and eleven from the previous two cohorts) and this particular provider commented that they expect 8-10 of them to be working with the college in some form within the next few months in areas such as construction, learner support etc. This provider went on to explain how a key strength of the programme was helping increase diversity and bringing in people that wouldn't usually enter the environment. They aim to continue running a similar scheme as they see this as a way to help with their 'Grow our Own' approach to attracting and recruiting talent.

Another provider commented that the Talent to Teach programme was incredibly successful, as from their point of view as a provider, it was one of the best in terms of value for money and positive impact, and further went on to say that the simplicity and flexibility of the programme was a key strength.

Of the five providers present, three reported that participants were now working with them, or they would be offering roles to participants in the near future.

5.6 Provider Case Studies

Provider case studies are reproduced in full at [Appendix 2](#).

6. ADDITIONAL VALUE

6.1 Additional Outcomes

The Talent to Teach programme has run over six academic years, commencing in the last term of the 2017/18 academic year (Easter 2018), when it started as a small pilot known as Pathways to FE. Due to the overwhelming success of the initial pilot, the scheme was expanded with placements offered over the following two terms, following which the programme was renamed Talent to Teach. It has continued to run each year since then. Despite the longevity of the programme, it is worthy of note, that the actual funding has remained fairly constant since the outset, with the bursary element unchanged, remaining at £300 for each participant (with the exception of the thirty career changers this year, who did not receive this), and the same amount paid to providers (£300) for each participant placed. The actual cost of the programme delivery has also remained relatively unchanged in total over the years, in fact, it has probably been delivered at a lower cost this year, overall, given the Talent to Teach Academy was provided as a free-of-charge, value added element, and there were career changer bursary savings realised of approximately £9,000.

Considering the Talent to Teach outcomes achieved over the last two academic terms, it is difficult to quantify the positive impact this will have on those who participated in the longer term. However, we can assume that the FE provider network will benefit from Talent to Teach participants who have been, or will be recruited into the sector at some point in the future.

At a time when recruitment continues to be challenging, the programme has had an enormous amount of support across the sector, especially with those providers who have offered placements. In fact, this was very clearly demonstrated in the feedback from the providers when they heard about the programmes end, which was collated and shared with the programme funders.

In order to try to quantify the 'value' of the programme, beyond purely financial, the following achievements should be considered:

- 336 students and 32 career changers have now had exposure to FE with 98.3% of participants stating they are interested in a career in FE post placement. Many of these would never have considered FE or understood what career options were available within the sector without the exposure to FE that they gained through the placement.
- 26 individuals have graduated from the Talent to Teach Academy and achieved the L3 Award in Education and Training qualification. In addition, the L3 AET is being offered to participants who completed their placements at The Manchester College (open to all 34 participants) and 14 participants will complete this qualification with Reaseheath College.
- 41 participants (3 career changers and 38 students) have moved into roles in education, with 22 of these (21 students and one career changer) into paid roles with their placement provider.
- There are a further 11 participants awaiting news on potential roles which are at various stages of application/interview outcomes etc (8 students and 3 career changers).
- 9 students have enrolled onto teacher training programmes, some of these are with their placement provider.
- Providers have reported the value of the programme to their organisations, with one stating that, *"Having the reflective discussions gave us a different perspective into the quality of different provisions, which is part of my role ... so this was highly valuable. It also allowed us to see some of the fantastic resources, teaching and learning that was going on at the college and share this positive feedback with teams which was motivational."*
- The profile of the FE sector has been raised significantly amongst the career changers and students who participated in the programme; and
- Those who have completed the placement but decided that teaching in FE is not for them, can also be seen as a positive outcome, including financially, as these individuals will not now apply

for and take roles in FE along with the associated recruitment resource and financial costs, only to leave the role when they discover it is not for them.

It is very difficult to accurately reflect what the final outcomes will be. For example, during the Final provider focus group, one provider noted that they are likely to offer roles to between 8 and 10 participants who had completed placements with them. The college also commented about the challenges they have encountered when trying to increase representation in their staff from underrepresented groups. They noted that 86% of the participants they had through the Talent to Teach programme were underrepresented in FE careers, and at the end of the placements all participants were interested in jobs in FE. They went further to note that 80% had never set foot in a college. They therefore felt that a key strength of the programme was helping increase diversity and bring people into the sector that would not usually ever enter this environment. Further to this, they have offered the L3AET programme to any participant who completed a placement with them for no cost, and, given the success of their involvement, are aiming to run a similar placement programme themselves in the future.

In addition to the above, providers have fed back how refreshing it has been to get involved in a national programme that has had flexibility and has not required onerous amounts of reporting and paperwork. This has meant that they have been able to focus their resource on designing and then delivering the placements, where it has had most value. One commented that from a provider perspective, Talent to Teach has been one of the best initiatives in terms of value for money and how they (as a provider) had benefitted from it.

6.2 Cost per participant

In purely financial terms, the total cost of the programme (net of VAT) was £435,500. This amount is made up of £210,000 bursary element, and £225,500 for programme management and delivery.

Against a target of 365 participants (335 students and 30 career changers) a total of 368 participants completed placements (336 students and 32 career changers) with InspirED Associates bearing additional bursary costs. Therefore, this equates to a financial cost, or perhaps a better description would be a financial investment, of £1,183 per participant.

Looking at this in terms of the 41 job outcomes, it would also appear to be a cost-effective method of recruitment, particularly as it allows an element of 'try before you buy' for all parties. And it is important to remember that this is based on a snapshot in time as of today, as it is not possible to report on the final outcomes which could be at least 20 additional job outcomes that we are aware of (up to 10 with a single provider), not to mention those that have enrolled in teacher training programmes and who will be likely to end up working in the sector on completion of their qualification.

Given that recruitment is one of the single most pressing needs across the FE sector, and the enormous cost of this, with a great deal of time, effort and money spent on trying to attract, recruit and retain talent, this programme appears to offer an extremely cost effective approach in supporting the sector with their recruitment challenges.

“The Talent to Teach programme has proven to be a highly effective way of promoting awareness of the rewards of teaching in the FE sector amongst students who may not otherwise have considered it and a cost-effective way of helping Colleges to address their future workforce planning needs.”

Ian Hookway - Director of Human Resources & Communications, Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group

7. LESSONS LEARNED

As has been commented on throughout this report, the programme has been extremely successful and provider and participant feedback overwhelmingly positive. However, there are lessons learned that could be used to inform any future programmes of this nature, and these are provided below.

- A very comprehensive and detailed marketing plan/strategy was produced and implemented on day one of the programme commencing, which allowed mobilisation at speed, using networks, existing connections/relationships, and utilising all available marketing channels to drive recruitment of providers and participants. Given that early in the first term of delivery (at the beginning of October 2022) it was learned that the programme was not going to continue after this initial phase, and would end on 31st March 2023, the communication plan was not fully implemented. Instead, a different communication approach was adopted, to mitigate against the possible withdrawal of support impacting on the ability to deliver the desired programme outcomes and KPIs. Given this turn of events, the level of support across the sector, and the level of success that the programme managed to achieve even in these circumstances, was overwhelming. It is therefore possible (although difficult to state with certainty) that, had the programme continued and the original marketing and communication strategy been implemented, the interest in and success of Talent to Teach would have gone on to far exceed expectations.
- The lack of participants having a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check in place was an issue for some providers, including some large FE colleges in major conurbations. This was, in part, due to an increase in safeguarding practices post-pandemic, combined with increased scrutiny of safeguarding practices from Ofsted. Whilst DBS checks has always been an area of discussion with some providers, it did feel like this had risen more highly up the agenda post pandemic. That said, most providers do manage to navigate their way around this to successfully engage with the programme. Consideration should be given to how communication with providers about this issue could be improved, so that this does not remain an issue for some providers engaging in the future. The introduction of a dedicated website/portal could help with this, as providers could share information and feedback on how they successfully managed the placements without the need for DBS checks.
- Some universities refused to advertise the programme, as they believed it contravened guidance around the minimum wage. Many universities divide the £300 bursary payment by 40 hours and conclude that £7.50 per hour does not meet minimum wage requirements. Steps were taken to explain that the programme was funded by the Department for Education through the Education and Training Foundation and that the programme awards participants a £300 *bursary* which is intended to cover expenses such as travel, etc., and is not intended to be a wage or salary. This usually resulted in the university promoting the programme but this was a recurring theme. Whilst the scheme does provide other very valuable benefits to participants, including giving them the opportunity to gain some work experience and improve their employability skills, in addition to opening up a potential career choice in the FE sector, it may be worth considering an increase to the bursary amount paid to participants, or reducing the number of hours required on placement, given that neither of these have been reviewed for the entire life of the programme (six academic years).
- Initial promotion of the programme to universities resulted in a large volume of student applications early in the programme. Undoubtedly, where personal contact is made with Employability or Careers advisers, placement organisers or individual faculties, applications from that university increase up to ten-fold. This element of the programme can be time consuming, but it is absolutely critical, as is building relationships with key stakeholders in universities, attending career fairs where possible, and generally taking any and every opportunity to promote the programme across these organisations.
- Early in this latest iteration of the programme, it was discovered by a provider that two participants, who were nearing the end of their placement, had completed the programme previously through the former delivery partner. The situation was dealt with appropriately but highlighted that, despite

the application declaration covering this, there also needs to be an improved handover process and further information shared when there is a change of delivery partner.

- The dropout rate for career changers is very high, compared to students. There are a number of reasons for this, but the two main issues were:
 - A 40-hour placement is a significant chunk of time to commit to for someone who may have other commitments they need to work around (child or family care for example) along with those who are on zero hour contracts, and/or underemployed needing to take work opportunities as they arise, which did happen in a number of cases; and
 - Lack of reimbursement of expenses for this stream can leave them sometimes quite significantly out of pocket, for example, if someone needs to travel several times to and from a provider, this can be quite costly, and a disincentive to participate, particularly in today's economic climate.
- Whilst as much support as possible was provided post-placement, given the programme is not continuing past 31st March, this impacted on how much support could be made available. The post-placement information sessions were very popular and well attended, and many participants do express their desire for some ongoing support to help them progress into roles post-placement. This is particularly the case for career changers who have different drivers to the students, and who are often very keen to see a line of sight to actual job outcomes that they can then pursue. That said, the post-placement sessions and the support made available in this iteration of the programme has absolutely driven the employment outcomes that were achieved.
- The point above is further borne out by the popularity and success of the Talent to Teach Academy, and the appetite for participants to complete the L3 Award in Education and Training, which may be seen as the first tangible step post-placement on a participant's journey into a teaching role in FE. Had the programme continued past the 31st March 2023, and as explained previously in this report, the outcomes and successes of this strand of the programme would probably have been far higher. In addition, there are at least two providers are offering the L3 AET to participants post-placement, as this is seen as a valuable qualification for those who are just starting their journey into teaching in FE.
- Whilst all providers had the same input in terms of explanation about the programme, and what it aimed to achieve, and they all received the Provider Guide which had detailed information along with suggestions about how the placements could be structured, there were many instances of this communication not being passed on from the initial key point of contact. This did at times cause some confusion, although it was usually easily rectified by sharing the information again. It may be helpful to consider how this could be mitigated in any future iterations of a programme of this nature, perhaps by having a dedicated website with discrete areas for different stakeholders. Furthermore, some providers requested exemplar placement structures which would be a helpful addition to the post-placement guide.
- Following on from the last bullet point, as a result of not being involved in the initial discussions, some of the provider representatives tasked with implementing the programme were not fully aware of its aims and objectives. This is borne out in some of the provider survey feedback when more than one provider has commented that they would have preferred the participants to have had a greater interest in and/or knowledge of the sector and teaching as a career choice. This is somewhat at odds with the purpose of the programme which is to promote the sector and career opportunities to those that *might never have considered it*. This is why the programme is not open to those already studying towards a teaching qualification.
- In addition, despite clearly setting out that the programme was not intended to be sector specific, and that the recruitment of students was not sector specific, many providers did still go down the route of organising placements to be in a particular department/curriculum area, and some felt that they could not offer placements to students if they did not offer a particular curriculum area. On reflection, if this was 'writ large' in all communications, to both students and providers, then that

would probably deal with this issue and is something that could be addressed through a dedicated programme website.

- In direct opposition to the last bullet point, a number of discussions with providers highlighted the potential for a very targeted, sector specific stream, or separate placement programme. For example, providers were interested in how a Talent to Teach type of programme could be used to help recruit teachers in support of current policy initiatives, such as the maths to 18 and the Multiply programme.
- Provider feedback indicated that they would be interested in receiving participants' reflective journals, as well as the feedback from participants gathered post-placement. Whilst this would be an additional administrative burden, it would be particularly beneficial in building partner relations with providers.

8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the successful outcomes that have been achieved in an unprecedented short time frame, despite some of the very real challenges that have been touched on earlier in this report, it is clear that Talent to Teach is held in high regard across the sector. This is further demonstrated by provider feedback, which highlights that there remains a very real appetite (and need) for a programme of this nature.

A similar programme would therefore continue to benefit the sector, particularly one that provides value, whilst continuing to offer flexibility within a simple framework. As one provider noted *“The Talent to Teach programme was incredibly successful. From our point of view as a provider, one of the best in terms of value for money and the benefits enjoyed. FE is not homogenous, and some nationwide schemes have too rigid requirements or dates, or require a lot of paperwork to take part. The flexibility of this programme has been a real strength, it’s not such tight criteria in order to get involved, fixed time scales can be prohibitive in other programmes.”*

If, however, a similar programme was to be procured in the future, there are some changes that could be made to enhance the model, improve outcomes and benefit all of the stakeholders involved. These include:

- A dedicated programme website (which could potentially include a portal with different areas for different stakeholders) would greatly improve communication and support programme administration.
- Any programme for career changers should not leave them out of pocket and take into account the commitments that they have and the benefit that they bring. Therefore as a minimum, the reimbursement of expenses, where required, should be offered or they should receive the same bursary/allowance that students receive.
- In addition, the placement time could probably be slightly shortened for both students and career changers, again facilitating participation. This would also have the benefit of addressing the issue raised by some universities that the bursary does not equate to minimum wage (even though it is not a wage or salary, this would have the effect of removing that issue anyway). Alternatively, and perhaps preferably, the placement duration could remain the same (as 40 hours provides enough time for most participants to get a good exposure to the very diverse world of FE and all that it has to offer in terms of different career options), but the bursary amount increased.
- Whilst one of the benefits of the Talent to Teach programme is the breadth of potential participants that it could appeal to, any future programme, or even stream of the programme, could be more focused to address policy priorities at the time. For example, a programme could target those with maths expertise to support maths to 18 and Multiply.
- Finally, any future programme should include an element of progression and increased post-placement support to drive tangible outcomes for participants and providers and allow increased measurement of value-for-money for the programme. This could include:
 - The option to complete the Level 3 Award in Education and Training for anyone who successfully completes a placement; and
 - Support to identify, apply for and potentially secure roles within the sector.

This would potentially make the programme more attractive to all concerned and providing additional development and support as an option would help to ensure that resource was focused on those most committed to pursuing this potential career path.

“Disappointed that this will be the last running, please do get in touch if you secure funding for a similar programme as we have really enjoyed this one and it has been really beneficial for everyone involved.”

Talent to Teach Placement Provider

APPENDIX 1 - PARTICIPANT CASE STUDIES

Gemma Travers – Reaseheath College

What were your impressions of Further Education prior to the programme?

Honestly, I thought teaching in any sector was pretty much unattainable for me prior to taking part in the Talent to Teach programme. I thought I would need to not only have in depth subject knowledge, but also gain a lot of teaching qualifications which would involve going to college or university for a number of years. I'm currently in my second year of a Zoo Management degree, and because it's such a niche area, and I do really enjoy the hands-on aspects of the job, I didn't really consider teaching as an option initially.



Why did you decide to get involved in the Talent to Teach in FE programme?

It was promoted by my course leader, and several people told me they thought I would be well suited to a teaching role. I'd never really thought about it, but I saw the Talent to Teach programme as an opportunity to get a good overview of what it might be like to work in FE.

What appeals most about teaching in FE?

I don't feel that I have the necessary skills or experience to work with very young children, so 14+ is a good age range for me. It's also the subject matter – I'm very passionate about my specialism, and at Reaseheath there is a fully functioning Zoo. As a tutor here, I could teach learners about the animals but also help them to learn hands-on skills and I wouldn't have to sacrifice the practical side of the role, which I really love. The benefits within the education sector also appeal to me – a reliable pension, and the ability to spend school holidays with my own children.

What have been the benefits so far of engaging with the Talent to Teach in FE programme?

I'd never even considered education as a possible career path, and it's changed my entire trajectory. The hours in a Zoo environment are very demanding, especially in the school holidays when I feel that my own children still need me. It's given me an insight into a career option where I could still enjoy my work and be excited to get to work, but also be there for my children. It would give me the best of both worlds. The Talent to Teach programme has shown me the opportunities that are out there that I had no awareness of before. I also really appreciated the opportunity to have honest and open conversations with tutors on the placement about the reality of the job.

How did your experience on the programme develop your knowledge and insight into a career in teaching?

I've learnt so much! The importance of safeguarding, different teaching styles and methods, a lot about digital media and the use of technology for teaching and learning. I've also learnt about all the different supporting areas in FE, such as the media department and student support. The programme really opened my eyes to all the other roles there are in FE and the other aspects of teaching that I wasn't previously aware of. It's been extremely helpful for me.

What do you see yourself doing in the future?

I now see myself being an FE Instructor. I feel that an instructor role is the ideal area for me, as it still involves a lot of hands-on work with the animals, which I do enjoy. I would be able to deliver vocational courses and equip learners with hands-on skills as well as classroom-based learning.

I have applied for a course to do a Level 3 teaching qualification, and I'm waiting to hear if I have been accepted for that. Also, the college where I did my placement had a number of student support roles which they opened to participants who completed the Talent to Teach programme, so I have applied for one of those roles and am hoping to hear back soon.

Any further comments?

The Talent to Teach programme has been absolutely essential for me in deciding where my future lies, and I would strongly recommend it to anyone. It's changed my life.

Sean Ryan (Career Changer) – South Gloucestershire and Stroud College

What were your impressions of Further Education before getting involved with the Talent to Teach programme?

Before taking part in the Talent to Teach programme I had very little awareness of the Further Education sector. I was listening to a BBC programme about people who had changed careers during the pandemic, and a woman was interviewed who had been in the travel industry and had decided to go into education. She mentioned Further Education in the interview, and it caught my attention because my background is in Hospitality and we were closed during the first lockdown, from March to July. I was volunteering delivering medication, and I had a lot of time to reflect. So, when I heard this lady being interviewed on the radio I thought, “Why not?”



That was my first introduction to Further Education.

Why did you decide to get involved in the Talent to Teach in FE programme?

I was a postgraduate student, I had just completed my MBA at Keele University when I received an email about the programme. I made a phone call, and it was explained to me that I wouldn't necessarily need to do a PGCE to get into teaching in FE. That suited me very well, because after finishing my masters I didn't really want to do another year of full-time study. The person I spoke to from Talent to Teach was extremely helpful and talked me through the programme. I received tremendous support from her. She explained that my substantial industry experience would be very valuable in the FE sector, and suggested I take part in the programme, and I haven't looked back since. Now I'm just looking forward to the next chapter.

What appeals most about teaching in FE?

What appeals to me most is the opportunity to pass on my knowledge and give real-world examples from my experiences so far in my career. While I was on my placement it became clear to me that no classroom setting is the same, every situation is different. I think my extensive life experience in my sector will be very valuable to potential future learners. It's really exciting to see learners progress, to get to know them as individuals and help them succeed.

What have been the benefits so far of engaging with the Talent to Teach in FE programme?

The 40-hour placement is brilliant, because you can shadow a variety of different teaching styles and decide what works for you. Right from the outset, it's a chance to ascertain if a career in FE is the right fit. The support I've been offered throughout has been invaluable. I now have an interview for a position at the College where I completed my placement, and I've been offered support to prepare for that. I've been taking part in the Talent to Teach Academy and am close to completing my Level 3 Award in Education and Training, which has been extremely useful. All the activities have been extremely valuable, and I feel I have gained extensive knowledge through taking the Level 3 with Talent to Teach. I feel that it just sets you up for success. There have also been tutorials offered for the Level 3, which has helped me put my best foot forward when completing the assignments. From start to finish, I have really, really enjoyed it.

How did your experience on the programme develop your knowledge and insight into a career in teaching?

I've developed my understanding of how to create a safe environment for all learners, regardless of background. I've also learnt that preparation is key – I especially learnt that from my micro-teach on the L3AET. I hadn't practised delivering it on Zoom, so I had to do some troubleshooting on the day, and it meant that I panicked a little and as a result I rushed through some of the slides. But I definitely learnt from it – that it's important to prepare, arrive early and put in the groundwork, and I've learnt to adapt when necessary.

What do you see yourself doing in the future?

I plan to go into teaching in FE. I would love to teach Hospitality, Travel and Tourism, or perhaps Business. I've applied for a Travel and Tourism Tutor post at the college where I did my placement, and I have an interview for that position coming up. Since completing the placement, I have also stayed on at the college and continued to volunteer, shadowing tutors in Business, and in Travel and Tourism, just trying to gain as much experience as possible. I've been delivering short micro-teach sessions, getting to know the learners and learning their names, which I feel is so important.

Samuel McCracken – Juniper Training, Telford

What was your impression of Further Education before you did the programme?

I didn't know much about FE at all. My experience has been in the corporate world where I had been training people for quite a while, but I wanted more of an affirmation of whether this was the route I wanted to take or whether it was a secondary school education route. The main thing for me is that I want to teach people who want to be there and want to learn.

What are your thoughts now about the sector? Was there anything that surprised you?

The part that surprised me most about my (placement) centre was the range of learning needs. The learners at the centre had a substantial range of different needs and so required quite a lot of support. It was the most amazing experience, they were fantastic. The kids were really good fun, they were up for a laugh, and they wanted to engage. I was the first to be placed at the centre from the Talent to Teach programme, and they were really impressed. They were very grateful for the help and support that I gave them.



So why did you decide to get involved in the Talent to Teach programme?

One of my friends is the School of Art representative at my university, and she put a leaflet up on a notice board in our common area. I've moved away from the corporate environment and come to university with a view to potentially pursuing teaching, so I thought - what have I got to lose? I wanted to have that experience in my in my locker, add it to my CV and go off and try other placements and be able to demonstrate that experience. I also think that this experience should help to open more doors for me and therefore provide me with more options.

What appeals most to you about teaching in Further Education?

Because I had trained people in the corporate world, I had discovered that I was able to deliver key information effectively, resulting in people receiving and understanding that information. I was interested in making education fun rather than just passive, as in someone sits at a desk, looks at a screen and takes notes. I wanted to make learning fun and engaging. I don't believe this kind of role is possible in some corporate settings, as they tend to be mentor type roles, as in members of staff who have been there for a long time showing the ropes to someone who's new. There wasn't a specific role or a career path in the corporate setting I worked within, whereas there is in school or college environments.

What have been the benefits so far of engaging with the Talent to Teach programme?

I observed lesson planning which I never understood was such a big encompassing and important part of FE. I also saw the review process, a one-to-one with each student, and this highlighted to me how you can take an experience that may be quite negative for some (because a lot of them wouldn't have had a one-to-one in their secondary school environment) and how the use of engaging and positive language, can really change that experience, and help to improve confidence and encourage growth. I saw first hand what a massive impact a Further Education setting - particularly the one that I was in - has on people's lives. Helping young people develop life skills, for example, teaching them how to use an iron, what their washing machine in their new independent living space does, and how it works, real life skills that aren't taught in mainstream education, can make such a difference to young people, even to the extent that it keeps them from offending and ending up in the prison system. I saw the change of attitude in some of the learners, even while I was there some of them were starting to greet me by name as I entered the car park, which is something that some of them can really struggle with, so that was wonderful. When I was in a room the learners engaged with me, they were happy to get involved and some of them took time out to speak to me about their special interests, so you can really see them make progress, even though the time I had on placement was very short, the impact that had was clearly quite substantial.

How did the experience develop your knowledge and insight into a career in teaching?

It's given me an understanding that in FE, there's a certain area where my skill set and my qualifications will be valuable. For example, I can run workshops, which I have been asked to do at my placement centre, and they have asked me to go back and run a careers week focused on my specialism, illustration. Many of their students are very creative so this is an opportunity for them to understand what careers there may be for them in this area. I'm going to run a narrative building class with the learners, which will also encompass English and maths - so it will embed those functional skills, but make it arts specialism-focused.

Doing the Talent to Teach programme has allowed me to look back and think, if I'm running a workshop in a public space, I need to make sure that I have it planned out, I've got the materials I need, I've timed it correctly so that it lasts the length of time I expect. It also clarified for me that 16+ is definitely the age range that I want to teach, because 16 to 17 particularly are the most impactful years, I think. Young people are just coming through all the changes that they experience as they mature, starting to discover who they are, and that's when I believe you can make a real difference, and have that impact that can really help to set someone up for their future.

Finally, what do you see yourself doing in the future?

At the moment I do want to teach, whether it's delivering workshops or in a classroom setting, I definitely do want to teach, more so than ever.

Sam has completed the Level 3 Award in Education and Training with InspirED Associates.

Sarah Bowker – Myerscough College

Why did you decide to get involved in the Talent to Teach in FE programme?

I had considered teaching as a possible career option after finishing my degree, so I saw this as a great way to get an insight into teaching in FE, as well as all the other areas within the sector besides teaching, such as Student Support and Inclusion. Before committing to a PGCE, I thought 40 hours shadowing in FE would be really beneficial for me to get an idea of whether it really was for me.

Before starting the placement, I was considering teaching in Higher Education. I now know that I could also do that within an FE setting! However, after spending some time in FE, I realised that I have a real passion for working with this age range and with learners with additional learning needs. I realised that FE is also an option.

What appeals most about teaching in FE?

Working with learners with Special Educational Needs within FE is what interests me most. That area is quite personal for me because I have a son with SEN. It was an absolute joy to see the inclusive teaching at Myerscough, where I did my placement.

Furthermore, it was fascinating to see the way Functional Skills are embedded into the learning. Many of the learners at Myerscough are not there to study English or maths, they're there to study vocational courses like Motor Sports or Equine Studies. They may not be very motivated to learn those core skills because they don't see the purpose of them. I saw how important and effective it is to embed those skills within their subject specific learning, to really promote the fact that although they might be studying a vocational course, these skills are essential and will be necessary in their future careers in their industry of choice.

What have been the benefits so far of engaging with the Talent to Teach in FE programme?

A key benefit for me has been access to the Level 3 Award in Education. If I hadn't done the placement, I don't think I would even have been aware of that qualification, and I have now been able to obtain it through the Talent to Teach Academy.

How did your experience on the programme develop your knowledge and insight into a career in teaching?

The program was extremely well put together and well organised. We did reflection every day – it was quite exhausting! But extremely informative. I've realised that there is a lot more to teaching than just time in the classroom. I've deepened my understanding of the broad range of individual learner needs – how all learners are coming to the classroom from their own unique personal situations, and how important it is to take that into consideration. I've learnt more about lesson planning, and gained an insight into how much teaching also involves working with other professionals, such as Individual Learning Assistants (ILAs). While I was on placement, I definitely saw a real need for ILAs. There is a real shortage, and it has made me consider whether I could perhaps work in an ILA role before I do my teacher training, to gain some more experience in the sector. I gained a real understanding of how important that role is, as when an ILA is absent, it affects all the learners and the whole session suffers. I gained experience of how to put contingency plans in place in the case of staff absences, and how important it is to be able to adapt and plan for the unexpected. Subsequently, on the Level 3 Award with the T2T Academy, I have further developed my knowledge of the wider responsibilities of educators. For example, when it might be necessary to signpost a learner to other resources or to make a referral.

The placement was also quite emotional at times. We did some activities with the ILAs to better understand the experience of learners with additional needs. We read a passage from the point of



view of someone with dyslexia, and I found it quite emotional because my son has dyslexia. I just couldn't believe that is what their experience is like.

What do you see yourself doing in the future?

Since my degree is in Floristry, which is quite a niche area, I am planning to do a master's in Art History in order to broaden my subject knowledge, and then go on to complete teacher training. Eventually I am hoping to work in the FE or HE sector. If possible, I would like to work alongside completing my training. I learnt about the Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training in the post-placement information session that was given by the Talent to Teach programme, and it seems like an obvious route for me to go down with my experience.

Robert Gilbert – Juniper Training, Walsall

Robert is an undergraduate Education Studies student. He completed his Talent to Teach placement at Juniper Training in Walsall, during which he became interested in supporting the careers advisors and organisation of work experience opportunities for the learners. When the placement ended, he was encouraged to apply for their part-time Progression Co-ordinator role and was successful. He is now working at the centre, alongside completing his studies, and intends to remain there after he has finished his degree.



What were your impressions of Further Education before doing the programme?

Although I had some knowledge and experience of college, Talent to Teach was a really good opportunity to see how I might be able to work in an FE setting. I had an idea that I might want to teach in a university or college, because I had such a positive experience at college myself as a mature student. I spoke to my lecturer about it, and explained to him that “This is where I’d like to be. Primary school and secondary school really isn’t for me.” He advised me to go down the university route, and consider a PGCert following which I could go on to work in Post-16 education. However, I didn’t actually know if I’d be able to secure a role following this, so Talent to Teach was fantastic in that it gave me work experience in the field, and the opportunity to see whether it was good fit for me, and I genuinely fell in love with the place.

Why did you decide to sign up to the Talent to Teach programme?

My degree is in Education Studies, which is focused on education theory rather than teaching practice. I am studying the psychology side of education, which includes behaviour and development, the history, sociology, and ideologies of education. Completing a placement is a required element of the degree, consequently I was due to go to a SEN primary and secondary combined school, but the opportunity to do this fell through. I was therefore advised to look at the careers section of the university website and Talent to Teach popped up highlighting placement opportunities in the Further Education sector. The FE placement on offer lasted 40 hours, which was the time I was required to be on placement (for my degree), and the fact that there was a bursary payment, was just great, as I have two children and it was around Christmas time, so it basically paid for Christmas.

Now you are in a Progression Co-ordinator role at the provider where you did your T2T placement. Were you aware of the other, non-teaching roles like this one in FE before starting the programme?

No, I wasn't fully aware of how things work in FE. I knew there were teachers, a Head, and administrators but I didn't know about the operational side of it all, I really didn't have a good understanding of how it all worked.

What appeals to you about teaching in Further Education?

I've come to realise that I don't believe I have the energy or the capacity to work in a primary school. I considered secondary education, as I do like teenagers, but it's also the time where young people can be at their most vulnerable, and when they may lash out the most, and I don't feel I currently have the skills and experience to manage well in this type of situation. In Post-16 education, young people have been through this stage, and I have found that they want to be here (at Juniper). Although our learners do have to be in education until they're 18, there are a lot more options for them in this kind of setting, so they can explore more, which means they're more willing to engage. And that's where I hit on where I wanted to be. To work in an area where learners can start developing where they want to go and what they want to be, which means they're happier to be here, they want to learn, they want to come in and do their best. They're starting to see what they want to do in the future.

What I do in my role right now is that I speak to the students and ask them, “What do you want to do?” and we all work together to do our best to get something that matches their needs. Nine times out of ten it's really good because you can see them really engaging, they want to be here. That's where I

want to be, working in an environment with learners who want to explore, not one where they're being told what to do all the time.

What have been the benefits so far of engaging with Talent to Teach?

I was looking into securing any kind of role really, a placement or work experience, and I felt like I was going to be shut down constantly. Even when I tried to apply for Juniper, I still had to have a minimum of one year's experience in education. Even though my mentor on the placement at Juniper encouraged me to apply for the role, I applied but was rejected by head office. Until my mentor spoke to them and advised them they wanted to have me there, as I had the experience and had built the relationships as a result of the placement.

The role I have now have would not have been possible if it wasn't for the Talent to Teach programme. I wouldn't know Juniper existed; I wouldn't know anything about this organisation or the type of role I now have. I would still be in the position where I would finish university and still be in the same situation, with no idea of where I might find a suitable opportunity, knowing that working and supporting others is where I want to be, but having no idea how to secure a role of this nature. I found that I needed experience to get work or a placement, but I couldn't get the experience required until I had managed to secure and complete a placement. Therefore, being able to get experience through the Talent to Teach programme, getting to know the staff and students really well, and developing a rapport with them, gave me the opportunity to say "I haven't got the experience right now, but would you be willing to let me show that I can actually do it." And from this position, I secured the job.

I can't thank Talent to Teach enough for it to be honest, it completely changed everything.

How would you say that your experience on the programme developed your knowledge or insight into a career in teaching?

I went from having absolutely zero experience and knowledge about how it all works, to knowing how the different roles operate, how FE functions, and the different types of settings. I know about the progression tracks, how students engage, I know the procedures to follow if there is a problem. I've had to do an awful lot of safeguarding; I've been on training session after training session recently! Prevent and things like that, things I didn't even know about, I didn't know existed. So that's what I've learnt from the experience, I've gone from zero information to actually feeling quite confident talking to people about what I do and how it all works.

What do you see yourself doing in the future?

My original track was that I was going to finish university, get my PG-Cert and then go from there, or get my PGCE and go to work in a primary school or secondary school and try to progress. But now, things have changed quite drastically. I'm now going to finish university and I'm hopefully going to stay where I am, working at Juniper, moving to full time once I finish my studies. I'm going to do my master's part time so that I can complete this alongside working full time. I have however also discovered that there may be the opportunity to complete an apprenticeship with Juniper, as they do have members of staff who are completing apprenticeships with them, so I've been looking into how this all works and trying to find out what's available that might be suitable for me.

I want to stay in the Progression Co-ordinator role for a while, because I feel like it's the best way to understand what goes on and how things work in the background. Then from there I think I'm going to try and go into the management side of it, perhaps a Performance Manager role. Although I think I'd be okay as a teacher, my experience here now shows me I actually prefer being behind the scenes and helping prop everyone else up rather than being in a teaching role. I've discovered that there are other roles in FE, other possibilities that are not just teaching.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

I can't express how much Talent to Teach has changed everything. For me, for my wife, everything. It's something my wife is now looking into too as she's seen how beneficial it's been for me.

Loren Kerry – PETA Training

Why did you decide to get involved in the talent teach programme?

It came up during my degree, as an introduction to what teaching could be like, to give you some experience of “in the workplace” learning. So I just saw it as an opportunity to get some experience in the workplace, as well as be able to put something on my CV – to say that I’d done some engineering and teaching, so it was a good opportunity.

Before this placement had you thought of teaching?

I hadn’t really gone that far into researching teaching. I knew that teaching was an end goal of mine whether that be right after University finishes or in the future, because I didn’t have the best teaching at school so I wanted to start on that journey. I knew that once I left school, but I didn’t really think about Further Education so when this came up as an opportunity, I had to take it.

What appeals to you most about teaching in FE?

I think it’s that you have more of a relationship with the students than you do any other level. You have this mutual respect, and you’re more likely to have students who want to be there over the students that really don’t. Of course, you’re going to have students that don’t want to be there in general, but you’re less likely to encounter them.

What have been the benefits so far of engaging with the Talent to Teach FE programme?

I think just getting the visibility of what teaching is like. Being able to speak to teachers that have been in the industry from one day, all the way through to years in the role - getting to see what progression they’ve taken and how much they enjoy it. Seeing it from the students’ perspective as well; being able to see what it’s like being in Further Education. I didn’t go through an engineering college so being able to see it from that perspective is really beneficial.

How did your experience on the programme develop your knowledge and insight into a career in teaching in FE?

The insight that I got was first-hand being able to sit in the classroom and speak to the teachers about their resources, how they set up their lessons, how they start, how they went through things, what they did their evenings ... going all the way through. And then being able to also sit as a student in their class, being able to learn some of the things that I didn’t even know. Because studying engineering in college is very different to studying it at university, they cover completely different things.

What do you see yourself doing in the future?

Well, the goal at the beginning was to be in Physics or Engineering. When I was going through school I had terrible teaching. So I almost knew during school that I wanted to teach, so that nobody had to go through what I went through with my experiences. You’ve got to engage learners at a younger age, particularly in my subject areas; they need to know from the outset that that women can and should go into engineering.

I would like to get some industry experience next. I have always thought that the best teachers are the ones who have actually done the job. Especially in engineering - if you’ve never done the job you’re not the best person for learners to ask. You need to know *how* to do it before you go and teach it.



APPENDIX 2 – PROVIDER CASE STUDIES

Myerscough College – Rachel Newton, Teaching and Learning Coach

Myerscough College is a land-based college with a range of different courses and qualifications, ranging from agriculture and floristry, through to farriery and basketball. The College caters for students at pre-entry level, all the way through to those studying higher level qualifications from five different sites in Preston, Liverpool, Blackburn, Warrington and Penrith.

As a provider, why did you decide to support the Talent to Teach Programme?

Nationally, there is a shortage of FE teachers and this is exacerbated by the fact that many people have no knowledge of and therefore interest in teaching or working in FE. Therefore, we as a provider, felt that we could play a part in letting students see what FE teaching is and get them interested in careers in the sector, which could then also benefit us in the long term, if they become interested in returning to teach with us. However, it's also about helping people and so it seemed like a win/win for us as we are supporting programme participants, whilst also promoting the wider FE sector. Economic considerations mean that people are choosing careers in industry over teaching and so we are always keen to participate in programmes such as Talent to Teach, which help to buck that trend.



What was your experience of the programme, including key highlights?

We developed a schedule that highlighted the different areas of the College and, whilst we showcased teaching and learning across a range of subject areas, we also wanted to present the other career options that exist within the sector including student support, finance, inclusive learning, etc. I also enjoyed planning the logistics of the placement experience for the students.

The students themselves were all lovely and came across as passionate and enthusiastic. They were from a wide range of backgrounds and subject areas and it was a pleasure to get to know them and understand their experiences of education to date.

What did you value the most about engaging with the programme?

The real highlight for me was the reflection at the end of each day and hearing the students' own unique take on what they had observed. As part of the quality team, it was really beneficial for me to hear the positives, as well as some of the things that could be improved. At the end of each day, following the reflection, I contacted the departments who had been involved, thanked them for their support and provided feedback from the students. Individual departments therefore also benefitted from hosting the students.

How has supporting the Talent to Teach Programme been beneficial to your organisation?

The programme was promoted internally and teachers were aware that students may be coming to observe them and I think that this has led to teachers reflecting on and improving their own practice. They have almost taken on a sort of teacher training role themselves, when supporting the students, which is valuable professional development for them.

It's also been beneficial in promoting the college and highlighting what we offer to a new audience.

The experience has been overwhelmingly positive.

South Bank Colleges – Claire Dignum, Director of Teaching and Learning

South Bank Colleges, comprising Lambeth College and London South Bank Technical College, was judged as 'GOOD' following the Ofsted inspection in March 2022. As part of the LSBU group, Lambeth College offers a range of high-quality, professional and technical courses that open doors to future career opportunities in a vast array of sectors: health and social care, engineering and robotics, science, games design, hospitality, sport, digital media, IT and more. Most of all, they help students to become qualified, work ready and motivated professionals with the skills and confidence needed to participate in today's competitive job market.



As a provider, why did you decide to support the Talent to Teach Programme?

We recognise there is a recruitment challenge in the FE sector, and this is something that we are also experiencing too, particularly in some subject areas. Therefore, anything we can do to help and encourage people to come into FE, including as a later career choice, we will always support. As a college, we are massive advocates for the FE sector, and we feel that most people who work in FE believe that the sector is largely invisible to those who are not in the sector. Additionally, people often judge education through the routes they took themselves, which often does not include FE. As a typical FE college, we were therefore happy to support individuals to come in and experience FE, as this fits in with our own agenda of trying to recruit, train and develop teachers and those with the potential to become teachers.

What was your experience of the programme, including key highlights?

The programme went really well. We had fifteen participants on placement in total, in a mixed group of students and career changers, which worked extremely well, as they really came together as one group, rather than two disparate streams. It was good for the participants to learn from each other, but in particular, it was good for the students to hear and learn from the career changers, those in work, or who have had other careers. The participants made really powerful connections amongst themselves; this is really a by-product of the programme, but a very beneficial one. The college ran the placements in quite a structured way, starting with an induction, and after that, creating opportunities for participants to observe learning across the college, along with hearing from a wide range of people who had come into FE through various, different routes. We also made the decision to run some CPD for the participants, similar to staff CPD, but pitched slightly differently. CPD sessions included Digital Wellbeing, Blended Learning, and What makes good learning?, with the sessions delivered after participants had observed a significant amount of teaching and learning so that they had some context to draw on. The CPD sessions also helped participants with their preparation for delivery of their micro teaching sessions. Giving participants this rich diet of activities, combining the whole group structured sessions with paired observations and reflection, and giving opportunities for participants to come back together to reflect and talk about their experiences, worked very well. The group as a whole were very reflective and thoughtful, and asked very good questions of the people who came to talk to them. It was very interesting to note that many of the staff who came in to speak to participants about their own journey into FE felt that this had been a really positive experience for them, as it had presented them with time to reflect, and to really think about what FE means to them personally. Overall, staff really enjoyed engaging with the participants and they too benefitted from this experience.

What did you value the most about engaging with the programme?

The real highlight at the end of the placements, was hearing what the participant's expectations had been before they started their placements, and how this had changed post-placement. All participants commented that prior to the placement they had no idea what FE was, and some of them said they thought it was the 'problem sector' so there was some really interesting feedback from the participants about how their views had changed. There was unanimous acknowledgement that the FE sector was

a very important part of the education system, and that an FE college is much more than the learning that actually just happens in a classroom or workshop, but is the whole package of looking after a student as a person, and supporting and enriching their experience. The college did a survey of all of the participants at the end, and the word cloud (indicating the words most commonly used) threw up three words which were chosen especially frequently and these were: inspiring, dedicated and commitment. Overall, it was hugely positive to see how much their attitudes had changed as a result of the placement.

How has supporting the Talent to Teach Programme been beneficial to your organisation?

One of the college's key intentions is to develop and support their teachers, and teachers of the future, so the programme completely supports this agenda. The money received for supporting the placements, whilst helpful in supporting the logistics required, has also been used to support students and staff, in other ways. This includes having a Christmas draw for all staff, and funding prizes for a student poetry competition, and it is really nice to be able to say that these different things are possible because of the Talent to Teach programme. It also helps to showcase the benefits of participating in schemes such as this. Finally, it was also really encouraging to see how receptive the college staff were to having people come into the college as visitors, and how the programme overall had a positive impact on the staff, and the organisation as whole.

Have you stayed in touch with any of the students after their placement to find out how they are getting on?

Participants have made some positive comments on LinkedIn, and the College have contacted the participants to let them know that we are be running the Level 3 Award in Education and Training after the February half term, and also to advise them about other teaching training programmes that may be offered in the future. One participant has been in touch to say they have since found a supporting role working with students, which was great to hear.

Juniper Training – Charlotte Mincher, Performance Manager

Operating for over 35 years, Juniper is one of the UK's most experienced providers of training and apprenticeships. With 14 delivery sites located across the West Midlands, East Midlands and Northwest, they support in excess of 2000 students per year and work with over 300 employers. They offer a range of training courses, vocational pathways, traineeships, study programmes and apprenticeships and have been rated as GOOD by Ofsted in all areas of provision. They are one of the UK leaders in supporting students, adults and employers in bridging the skills gaps between education and employment.



Why did you want to take part in the programme from a provider perspective?

We've been taking part in Talent to Teach for about four years now. It's something that the previous manager here at the Walsall centre was involved in, and even after she left, I definitely saw the benefits of maintaining that relationship and having students from the Talent to Teach programme.

Could you tell me a bit more about your experience, and any highlights from the programme?

When InspirED took over the programme, I was contacted to ask if I would still be interested in being involved. We had an online meeting and discussed how the programme had run previously, and how it would be managed going forward. It was explained that the Talent to Teach team would send over the participants' names and contact details along with information about their area of study and any other useful information such as additional areas of interest. They would also provide details about the student's availability, so that we could schedule the placements in at a time that worked for us and fitted around the student's other commitments. This approach worked really well for us because our own learners enrol on a rolling basis, so we don't always know in advance how many learners we will have at the centre. If at any given point we had a large increase in the number of learners here at the centre, then we would probably be able to place a larger group of Talent to Teach students too, but I've really appreciated the flexibility of the programme. It has allowed us to take the number that best suited us at the time.

What did you value most about engaging with the programme?

I was speaking to one of my colleagues last week about the Talent to Teach programme, and she was so disappointed to find the programme was ceasing at the end of March. The students come and support the learners - it's almost like having a teaching assistant within your classroom to help with some of the students who might be struggling on a particular task. However, we also look at things like schemes of work and lesson plans with the students on placement so that they have a real and comprehensive taste of what it is like to work in FE. We show the students on placement how to mark learners' work, especially how functional skills such as English, Maths and SPaG should be embedded into their work. With guidance, they are also able to support us with some of those elements of marking as well as in-class support.

Having students on placement has also been really beneficial for our learners. When I first meet the students on placement, I give them a good overview of Juniper Training, and the type of provider we are. I ask the students what they're interested in, whether it is specifically teaching a certain subject or other roles in FE, for example, a Recruitment Officer or a Progression Coordinator role, and I provide some explanation about these roles so that they can understand the variety of different roles that exist other than just purely teaching roles. Usually, students do like to have a rounded experience, with a taste of all the different roles/activities. I do make sure that they get to spend time in classrooms observing lessons, and we are also able to let them have the opportunity to deliver some information to our learners, which they enjoy.

In the past we've had students who have delivered a short class to our learners about getting into Higher Education, and what university is like, which is extremely valuable for our learners. If the student who is on placement has not had the best experience in school themselves, they can say to

our learners, "I didn't have the best experience in school, but I'm here at university. I've been in your position, sitting in the same seat that you are sitting in." Because these students have broken the mould and really worked hard to get to where they are now, this has been really inspiring for our own learners, who can hear from these students, who are from all different backgrounds, talking about their experiences of getting into Higher Education.

How would you say that supporting the programme has been beneficial to the organisation?

Without Talent to Teach, we wouldn't even have had contact with some of the people who have done the placement and then joined Juniper, becoming valuable members of staff. This year is the second time we have employed somebody through the Talent to Teach programme. There was a lady who joined us about two or three years ago, she was studying her Masters in Maths and we had a part time Maths role available which she applied for, and she was successful. This year, our newest member of staff, Rob, is also from Talent to Teach. He was interested in progressing onto a teaching role, but when he started his placement with us, he really enjoyed the Progression Coordinator role, and we had a vacancy for a part time position. Throughout his placement he spent time speaking to employers and talking to our students about the benefits of work experience, so when we told him that we had a part time position available he saw that as a step in the right direction for his career. He applied and was successful, and he has been brilliant. Without Talent to Teach we would have never even met him, so we could still be recruiting for that position.

Furthermore, it's valuable for our students. Some of our students don't really see the purpose or the benefits of work experience. So, when they see students coming from university to complete some work experience with us and they hear that some of these students also have jobs, because they want to give themselves the best possible chance of having a rewarding career, this is really inspirational for our learners to hear. The fact that these learners are going to university and completing work experience really encourages our own learners who also need to complete work experience as part of their own programme of study. Whether our learner wants to work in a nursery, or become a mechanic and work in a garage, whatever aspirations they may have, the Talent to Teach students demonstrate how important and rewarding work experience is.

Have you stayed in touch with any of the other students to find out what they're doing?

All the students have my e-mail address and some of them use us for references which is great. Some have got back in touch with us post-placement to ask for support with basic lesson plan ideas or energiser activities and resources that we shared with them on placement. One student really wanted to get involved with creating her own lesson and then delivering a session to our students, so I challenged her to complete a 5 to 10 minute micro-teach. She sent me resources and I sent her feedback and suggestions. I wouldn't say it's every single student, but some people really embrace it and take us up on the fact that they can contact us afterwards if they want any support, which is great.

Is there anything else that you would like to add?

Just that it's been a real pleasure to work with the students. It's nice having students from all different backgrounds who are interested in different types of courses. It gives our learners that contact with the outside world and with people from all different backgrounds, who are interested in all different things, and who are now at university studying higher level qualifications. Some of these students might have taken the traditional route of going to school, followed by Sixth Form, then onto university, but some of them might have had very different experiences, taking on a job directly after school, then returning to education in order to retrain and change career. It's good for our learners to see that there isn't one route that they have to take, there are lots of different options. Many of the learners that we work with have experienced some very negative messaging along their educational journey so far, and they have started to lose hope. Their teachers might have also lost hope along with their parents. They come from disadvantaged backgrounds, and they sometimes don't consider education as a priority, or even really value it. They see it as something they are required to do rather than wanting to be here. So just having the opportunity to speak to someone from outside Juniper, somebody who seems like 'a real person' and not just a teacher, can be very valuable. It's been really wonderful to have this type of engagement and support from the Talent to Teach students.

Education Training Collective – Angela Stevenson, Group Teaching and Learning Development Manager

Education Training Collective (ETC) is a group of vibrant colleges and training providers comprising Stockton Riverside College, Redcar and Cleveland College, Bede Sixth Form College, NETA Training and The Skills Academy. ETC delivers a full range of courses, training and apprenticeship opportunities, as well as professional and commercial courses, and aims to create greater opportunities for all of their students and communities by equipping people with the skills to help them into employment, raise aspirations and meet the economic demands of the region.



As a provider, why did you decide to support the Talent to Teach Programme?

Our CEO was formerly with the Newcastle College Group, and he had been involved with the Talent to Teach programme there. He had a meeting with the Principals across the ETC Group to make us aware of the programme. Since I'm responsible for Teaching and Learning, I saw it as an excellent opportunity to give local university students a good insight into what we offer and all the diverse opportunities within the FE sector.

Tell us a bit about your experience and any highlights from the programme?

Everyone was involved, at all levels – including support teams for example Marketing and Learning Support. The students shadowed teachers, but they also met the CEO, Principals and Heads of Department. It was very rewarding to hear how much their confidence had grown in the short time they were with us. One of the participants was able to stand up and give feedback to a learner on a presentation, and he commented that he wouldn't have had the confidence to do that at the start of the placement. It was great to see how their communication skills developed.

What did you value the most about engaging with the programme?

It's been great to see the students get an insight into how the FE sector works and make them aware of how rewarding teaching is and how much you're making a difference. They said they didn't realise how much is involved in teaching and how much of a pivotal role it is.

How has supporting the Talent to Teach Programme been beneficial to your organisation?

It's been a really enjoyable programme to be involved in. The students engaged well with everyone they met, and asked some very interesting questions which provoked some great discussions.

It was exciting to see the talent of the future coming through, identifying people who have the right skills and qualities and would be ideal to work in certain roles. We had some very interesting discussions with the Talent to Teach students about how to engage learners and what to do if a learner is disengaged; it was wonderful to see their potential and make them aware of the career opportunities available to them.

Have you stayed in touch with any of the students after their placement to find out how they are getting on?

Having joined the programme more recently, we have only had one cohort of two students, who have just finished. However, I got some excellent feedback from them both, and they are both very interested in pursuing a career teaching in Further Education. They will need to finish their degree programmes, but they are both interested in doing the Level 3 Award in Education and Training - which is something we will be able to offer them - and progressing from there. They were able to speak to experienced teachers on the placement, but also to some teachers who are currently training, so they have a good idea of their experience and what is involved in teacher training too. I think it's great that they've had that insight.

Do you have any other comments?

It's been such an enjoyable programme. I think it's a fantastic opportunity – I wish there had been something like this when we were starting out! Being part of a large group of providers we've had the privilege to be able to offer such a wide range of different opportunities for them to observe and give them a real insight into all the different possibilities. It's been fantastic – it's just a shame that we found out about it a bit later in the programme, so we weren't able to be involved for longer.

APPENDIX 3 – PARTICIPATING PROVIDERS

Whilst forty-one providers signed up to participate in the programme, thirty offered placements. Thanks go to:

- Abberton Rural Training
- Basingstoke College of Technology
- BOSCO College
- Bradford College
- Brooklands College
- Cambridge Regional College
- Chelmsford College
- Chesterfield College
- Chichester College
- Education Training Collective
- Grantham College
- Hertfordshire Regional College
- Juniper Training
- Luminare Education Group
- Manchester Adult Education Service
- Milton Keynes College
- Myerscough College
- Newbury College
- Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group
- Nottingham College
- PETA Training
- Reaseheath College
- Salford College
- SCL Education
- South Bank Colleges
- South Essex College
- South Gloucestershire and Stroud College
- The Manchester College
- The Opportunity Colleges
- University Centre Quayside

Thank you