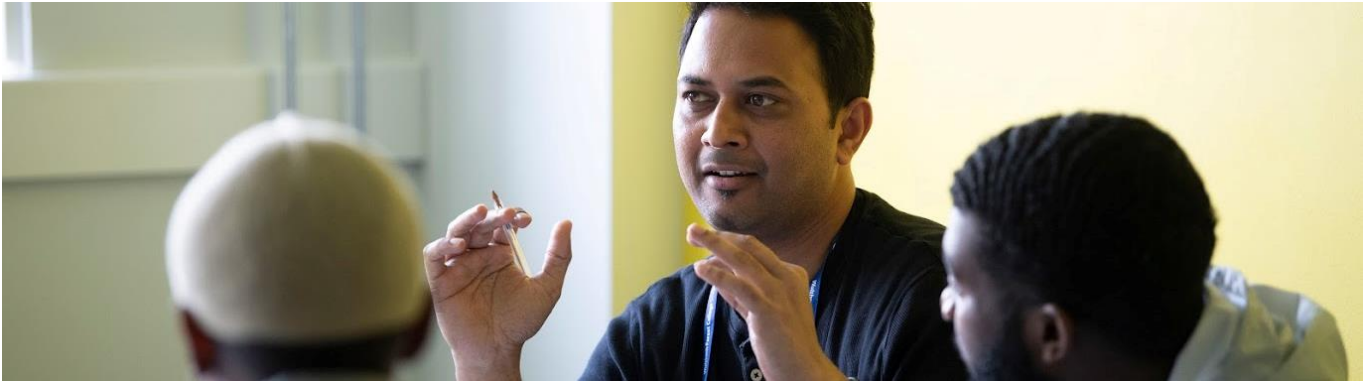


Talent to Teach review: 2019-23

A review of the Talent to Teach programme and its highlights

APRIL 2023



PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Purpose and objectives

Talent to Teach in FE started in 2019, developed following a local programme based in the South East of England – Pathways to FE Teaching. Funded by the Department for Education, Talent to Teach aimed to give undergraduates an immersion experience in a Further Education (FE) college to allow them to consider a career in FE teaching.

The programme was advertised in universities, aimed at recruiting final year undergraduates who were considering their career paths. Participants were offered a 40-hour placement in an FE college and paid a small amount to cover expenses. During the placement, they were able to experience classroom or workshop time with learners alongside wider exposure to the life of a college teacher. All participants were recruited on a 'no commitment' basis, meaning they did not need to indicate a preference for FE teaching before being selected. We were keen to connect with those who hadn't already considered an FE career.

To assess the programme's success, participants were asked before and after they took part whether they were considering a career in FE teaching. The results of these questions are shared below. The first local programme appeared successful on this basis and was repeated in three other regions, again with success. The following year it was rolled out to the whole of England. As the programme developed, recruitment was also extended to second year undergraduates and postgraduates. In its last year (2022-23), a pilot group of 'career changers' – individuals with technical skills and/or relevant experience that could be valuable to FE – were also recruited.

Overall, more than 1,200 people took part in Talent to Teach and satisfaction rates with the programme remained above 90% throughout its existence. In its final year of running, 40 Talent to Teach participants landed a role in FE whilst on the scheme or afterwards. The programme was highly regarded and recognised as an example of an 'innovative' programme in the Department for Education's *Skills for Jobs* whitepaper. It provided a valuable opportunity for some of the brightest and best university students and graduates to experience a 'taster' of FE teaching.

Summary of programme highlights

- The programme began on a small scale with approximately 15 participants, growing to 367 participants in 2022-23

- In total, more than 1,200 participants gained experience of the world of an FE teacher through the programme
- 57 FE centres hosted placements as part of the programme
- The percentage of participants considering FE teaching as a career following their participation in the programme never dropped below 60%
- This compares favourably to the percentage of participants considering an FE teaching career before engaging with the programme, which was never higher than 25%
- The programme saw strong demand, with 2,898 applicants
- In the final year of the programme, 40 participants landed a role in FE whilst on the scheme or afterwards, some with the placement provider
- Programme satisfaction rates were never lower than 90%

What Talent to Teach participants had to say

“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] 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.” – *Gemma Travers, Reaseheath College*

“The programme 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.” – *Sarah Bowker, Myerscough College*

“I saw first hand what a massive impact a Further Education setting – particularly the one that I was in – has on people’s lives.” – *Samuel McCracken, Juniper Training, Telford*

“The role I have now would not have been possible if it wasn’t for the Talent to Teach programme. [...] I can’t thank Talent to Teach enough for it to be honest, it completely changed everything.” – *Robert Gilbert, Juniper Training, Walsall*

What Talent to Teach providers had to say

“The real highlight at the end of the placements was hearing what the participants’ expectations had been before they started their placements, and how this had changed post-placement. [...] There was unanimous acknowledgement that the FE sector was a very important part of the education system. [...] Overall, it was hugely positive to see how much [the students’] attitudes had changed as a result of the placement.” – *Claire Dignum, Director of Teaching and Learning at South Bank Colleges*

“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.” – *Charlotte Mincher, Performance Manager at Juniper Training*

“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.” – *Angela Stevenson, Group Teaching and Learning Development Manager at Education Training Collective*

“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.” – *Rachel Newton, Teaching and Learning Coach at Myerscough College*

Closing comments

“Talent to Teach has been a great success. Potential teachers at graduate level have experienced FE teaching and found it an engaging and attractive proposition. In turn, this has increased the potential teaching supply amongst those who have long careers ahead of them.

“The opportunity to get first-hand experience of FE has opened up the benefits and possibilities of FE teaching to a new cadre of future teachers and trainers. When recruitment and retention of high quality teachers remains a challenge for the sector, this has clearly been hugely beneficial with participants moving directly into employment in FE or into ITE.

“We are indebted to all the participating FE providers for their engagement and efforts. We are grateful to our delivery partners, InspirED Associates and Cognition Education respectively, who coped with remarkably challenging situations including the pandemic, and adapted to the changing wishes and availabilities of both participants and providers. But we are most grateful to all the HE students who gave up their time to experience a taste of FE teaching, and to consider it as a possibility.”

- *Howard Pilott, National Head of Initial Teacher Education at the Education and Training Foundation*

Thank you