

Guide to Working in Further Education

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Introduction

Maybe you've been thinking about becoming a teacher, trainer or assessor in further education for some time, or it's an option that you haven't considered before. Either way, we hope this guide will provide you with all the information you need to help you make your decision.

A lot of people think that teaching is something which only goes on in schools and is done by people who've been teachers from the start of their careers. In a lot of cases this isn't true and later we'll explain the wide variety of places where people are teaching and learning.

We hope that the information provided in this guide will encourage you to think about teaching or assessing in the further education sector – either on a part-time or full-time basis. We aim to answer these questions:

- What is the further education sector and what would it be like to work in it?
- What kind of opportunities can it offer you?
- What could you be paid and what are the working conditions like?
- What qualifications and skills will you need?
- How will the training be paid for?
- How do you know it's for you?
- If you have more questions, where can you go?
- Is there any support available?
- What is Skills for Life and could you also teach literacy or numeracy?

About this guide

The further education sector needs teaching staff who can guide and nurture an outstanding workforce for the future. At the moment, there is a lack of teaching staff to work with individuals who want to enter certain industries. And this is where you could come in.

Professionals like you could pass on your skills by becoming a teacher, tutor, trainer, lecturer or assessor (we'll use the term 'teacher and assessor' from now on, to refer to any of these roles).

This guide will help you find out more about opportunities to work in further education. It is funded by the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills and is produced by Lifelong Learning UK. If you want to find out more about Lifelong Learning UK, please visit our website at www.lluk.org or contact us at:

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It's probably useful at this point to explain a little more about what we mean by 'the further education sector'. Think back a moment to all the places where you have learnt something. These may include school, college and university, at work, an adult education centre and many more. You'll quickly see that people learn in many places other than school, and study subjects that don't always fall within the National Curriculum.

In this guide, when we talk about the further education sector we are referring to:

- colleges of further education
- community learning and development centres (sometimes known as adult education centres)
- sixth form colleges (not schools)
- work-based learning providers (learning at work).

Most people who teach in the further education sector are people just like you: people who have followed their profession and gained on-the-job knowledge and skills beyond their initial qualifications.

Labour market information tells us that there are not enough teachers or assessors to teach and develop those who want to enter a career in certain industries. These are known as 'shortage subjects' and people who can teach them may be able to access a number of financial incentives. We'll go into more detail about that later.

We hope that this guide includes everything you'll need to know about working as a teacher or assessor, or that we can signpost you to other sources of information. You'll see from the contents page what's included and it's our intention that you can be selective and draw on that information which is useful to you.

It may be that you already know about the further education sector or have some experience of teaching or assessing...

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Passing on your skills by working in the further education sector

What exactly is the further education sector?

The further education sector can be described as anywhere that learning takes place other than pre-school, school or university.

Have a look at opportunities for learning in your area through your county council – you'll find this on their website or through council publications. You may find that there is provision through a college of further education as well as through community development and learning or adult education centres.

You'll probably find a wide choice of subjects and types of courses on offer, ranging from the academic to learning for pleasure, self-improvement or work. You'll also find that these courses take place in a wide variety of locations that meet the needs of the local community as well as widening participation.

The further education sector also includes work-based learning – literally meaning students learn in their place of work.

This can make good sense for both employer and employee alike. Employers are keen to increase the skills and knowledge of their employees, thereby increasing productivity. But this can be costly in terms of travel to a learning provider such as a college. It's more efficient if learning can be organised in the workplace.

The employee benefits from learning that is specifically tailored to the job, and they can then apply new knowledge and skills to their own working context. You may well have experience yourself of learning in the workplace. Qualifications up to degree level can be awarded.

We asked some teachers and assessors in the further education sector to briefly tell us where they work and who their learners are. You'll find case studies giving more details of their activities on the next few pages.

Sarah: I teach on a CACHE course, which is a basic level award for people who want to work with children. I work in my local adult education centre and my learners are mainly young – probably aged about 16-20 years – and want to go on to work with young children. I teach for three hours a week and work the rest of the time for another employer in a day nursery.

Mike: I teach NVQs at levels 2 and 3 in Retail Skills. I'm working in the training centre at a major airport. The training centre is there to provide training for anyone who works in the airport. My learners may work front of house in retail outlets or in catering. They are all ages – from 16-60.

Ahmed: I teach engineering in my local further education college. I work full-time so my learners range from those on pre-apprenticeship courses to those studying for a degree. I also work with older learners who are undertaking further professional qualifications for their job.

Riz: I'm employed by a college, but some of the time I'm working in a prison with women offenders who need to upgrade their numeracy skills so they'll have a better chance when they come out. As you can imagine, they can be any age.

Maria: I am a registered nurse and work in a nursing home where I'm responsible for training. I work as an NVQ assessor and spend a lot of my working day observing candidates going about their daily work – so it's anyone of working age who's doing a qualification in Health and Social Care.

Megan: I teach literacy. That means working with adults who need help brushing up their reading and writing skills. I work in community development. The local primary school has given us a classroom where I teach the parents once they have dropped their kids off at school. They are all ages.

Brian: I teach science in a sixth form college. This is a college which caters for young adults, aged 16-19. The atmosphere tends to be a bit more relaxed than school and there's a wider choice of subjects available.

So, as you can see, the further education sector can offer you a wide and varied range of teaching opportunities.

What kind of work do teachers do?

Let's pick up on Megan's story. She works in a full teaching role, employed as a full-time teacher at the local adult education centre.

'I've been working as a teacher for about six years now. Before that I worked for an insurance company but it wasn't really a job I enjoyed. The local adult education centre was advertising for a Skills for Life literacy teacher to work an evening class for three hours a week. I've always enjoyed reading and writing and I'd had experience as a volunteer at my son's school, listening to the children read. So I put in an application and got the job.

Once I started teaching, I also began a Diploma teacher training course. My learners were all adults and from all walks of life - sometimes I wondered who learnt the most, them or me. But what they all had in common was a desire to read and write better. I did this for about a year - still working full-time for the insurance company, and teaching in the evening once a week.

As I got more confident, I found that I was enjoying teaching more than my day job. Yes, it can be hard work but it's difficult to describe the feeling you get when you see your learners able to do more because of what you've taught them. And for mine, that might mean getting a better job or being able to help their children with homework. It really gives you a sense of achievement.

Towards the end of my first year, my department leader told me that they were going to advertise a full-time post and that she'd be glad to see me apply. I did and I got the job. That's when the fun really started! When you work full-time, you get involved in a lot more things than just teaching. I have a certain number of hours when I'm in the classroom - it's about 23 a week - and the rest of the time is spent doing all sorts of things.

It really is a varied job and I teach in a number of learning centres in my area. Last week was enrolment week, so I was involved in interviewing learners, giving them tests and deciding which course would be best for them. It was very interesting as I'd worked on designing the tests and it was good to see how they worked.

There's also quite a lot of admin involved and, at some times of year, I do find I'm catching up with it in the evenings at home. Things like marking learners' work and tracking their progress over the year, or preparing teaching sessions and writing lesson plans. But would I go back to insurance? No, never. I won't say that teaching's easy - sometimes you'll do a bad lesson, sometimes the learners will muck around and waste your time - but I just love the variety and sense of achievement that it gives me.'

Teachers do some or all of the following, depending on their role:

- plan and prepare for teaching
- teach practical and theory classes
- set and mark work and tests
- keep records on how well learners are doing
- interview people before a course to make sure it's the right one for them
- act as personal tutors to support learners and help them with their learning
- work with colleagues to design and arrange courses.

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What kind of work do assessors do?

Let's pick up on Maria's story. She works as an assessor.

'I worked as a nurse in the NHS but then left to join a national company in the healthcare sector. I'm currently Deputy Manager of a nursing home, where I'm responsible for training.

Part of my work is as an NVQ assessor and I meet NVQ candidates from other branches of the organisation. They are healthcare professionals who are working towards a qualification. What I love is the variety that this gives me. No two days are the same and that's what I like about the job. As an assessor, I check to make sure that candidates are meeting industry standards.

I do a lot of travelling. That's because I need to see candidates undertaking real tasks in their place of work. They are all undertaking an NVQ in Health and Social Care at either level 2 or 3. They are a completely mixed bunch but all want to provide the best possible care for their service users. NVQs are about industry standards and what someone who achieves the award can be expected to be able to do or be competent in.

First, I'll have a conversation with the candidate to try and establish where evidence of the competency can be found in their work. As I want to see my candidates actually doing their job, I sometimes have a very early start or late finish. You have to be flexible.

When I've done the observation, I write up what I've seen and make a judgement as to whether the competency has been achieved against the national standards. I'll then meet the candidate again and provide feedback on my observation and tell them whether the competency has been achieved or not. If it has, then I'm as delighted as they are - we need to encourage and support members of our profession so we ensure that we continue to provide high-quality care.

If a candidate is not successful, well, then I'll explain my judgement and discuss how they might do better next time. You need to be sensitive but objective, giving them clear goals to aim for and achieve. Yes, there's paperwork and sometimes it's tiring, but I love the variety of the job as well as the insight it gives me as to what's going on in other workplaces.

And I'm proud of my profession and want to contribute to the development of workers in it.'

Assessors:

- visit candidates in their place of work to see what they can do and whether their work meets national occupational standards for a particular skill
- look at candidates' portfolios of evidence
- question candidates about their skills and knowledge and provide constructive feedback
- record progress and sign off units as they are completed
- work out future plans with candidates
- submit the evidence to the organisation which awards the qualification (awarding body)
- meet other assessors to ensure that standards are understood and maintained
- maintain accurate records detailing a candidate's progress.

We hope the information on pages 7-12 will have given you a flavour of the variety that you'll find teaching or assessing in the further education sector. As you can see, teaching and assessing can take place in a wide variety of locations and organisations. And the learners are just as varied.

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What are the working conditions like?

What hours could you work?

You'll find assessing and teaching can be very flexible and your pattern of work will depend on the employer and whether you decide to work full or part-time. There may be some evening or weekend working.

Here are some examples of how you might work:

- **A permanent, full-time job**, where you'll work for about 37 hours a week. Some of the time will be spent teaching or assessing, with the rest of the time for you to prepare work or deal with the other responsibilities of the job. You're also likely to find that you'll do some additional work at home during busy periods.
- **A permanent, part-time job** (sometimes referred to as fractional), for example if you took a 0.5 job, then you'd work up to 18.5 hours a week - half of the full-time 37 hours. Some people prefer this option as it means that they can teach or assess for part of the week while continuing to work in their profession. Others find that it provides flexibility around other life responsibilities.
- **A variable hours job**, which could be temporary or permanent. Your hours vary according to the teaching schedule and you'll be paid by the hour.
- **A temporary contract**, often but not always, through an employment agency. This is not permanent and could be full or part-time hours. If you are employed by an agency you will usually be paid by the hour. If you are employed directly by an employer they might pay you differently, for example with a pro rata salary.

Your entitlement to sick pay and holiday pay and access to pension scheme depends on whether you are employed directly or through an agency and varies between employers.

How much could you earn and what are the chances of promotion?

Teachers

Rates of pay differ between employers but, depending upon your qualifications and experience, you are likely to earn between £18,000-£22,000 as an unqualified teacher, or up to £35,000 as a qualified teacher in a full-time, permanent teaching role. Higher rates of up to £39,000 are possible if you take on extra responsibilities. If you take part-time work, you'll find hourly rates vary depending on the way the rate is calculated, but generally start at around £18 per hour. Higher rates are possible if you take on extra responsibilities.

Most people who work in more senior positions in education and training started their careers as teachers. When you have had some experience teaching, you may want to consider taking on extra responsibilities or moving into a management role. Some people will go on to extend their experience and skills by becoming an assessor.

Depending on the subject area you specialise in, you could also consider progressing your career by becoming a secondary school teacher, though you would typically need a relevant level 4 qualification.

You can find the recommended salary scales for unqualified and qualified teachers, advanced teaching and training, and leadership and management grades available for the further education sector on the University and College Union website at: www.ucu.org.uk

Please note pay scales are determined by colleges at local level.

Assessors

Again, pay will differ between employers and will depend upon your qualifications and experience. You are likely to earn between £15,000 and £23,000 in a full-time, permanent job, and higher rates are possible if you take on extra responsibilities. In a part-time job, you are likely to earn £12-£15 per hour. You'll also get a travel allowance to cover the journeys you make between candidates.

Some people who go into assessing will then decide to become teachers and can undertake both roles with the relevant qualifications.

If you'd like to talk to an adviser to discuss your personal circumstances or find out more, then please contact the free Information and Advice Service offered by Lifelong Learning UK. Telephone **020 7936 5798** or email: advice@lluk.org Alternatively, you'll find further sources of information on page 69 of this guide.

What qualifications and training will you need?

Subject qualifications

If you want to teach or assess, you'll need a minimum of a level 3 qualification in the subject you want to teach - sometimes it's called a subject specialism.

The certificate you received for your award may show the level on it. Some of the more common level 3 qualifications are A' levels, Advanced Certificates of Education, Advanced GCEs, Advanced GNVQs, BTECs (including Nationals), the International Baccalaureate, Key Skills level 3, NVQs level 3 and OCR Nationals.

If there is a particular demand for your knowledge and skills, some employers will consider you if you have substantial professional experience, or a level 2 qualification for some construction courses. You'll also need good reading and writing skills.

If you're still not sure or want more information about levels, then the following is a useful website. It also provides signposting to other useful agencies who can provide you with information and advice relating to changing your career:

www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/QualificationsExplained

If you know the name of your qualification but are not sure of its level, you can search on this website:

www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk

If you did your qualification some time ago, it may not be on this list. In this case, you'll need to contact the awarding body (the organisation or institution which gives the qualification) to find out the level. You'll find their name on the certificate.

Teaching or assessing qualifications

Just as you need a qualification to work in your profession, you'll need a qualification to work as either an assessor or teacher on a publicly funded course. The requirements are different so we've detailed each in a separate section below.

Teaching

Take, for example, Megan and Sarah's stories. Both are responsible for making sure their learners learn and both are expected to provide teaching of an equally high standard. But their employers have decided that their jobs have different responsibilities. Let's see what that means in terms of the teaching qualifications they need.

Megan works in what is known as a 'full teaching role'. This is because she teaches Skills for Life literacy. For example, she is involved in designing the tests that learners do when they apply for a course, she has a group of learners she mentors during their studies and she is involved in developing and producing the teaching materials used on the course. Many employers refer to people undertaking this role as teachers or lecturers.

Sarah works in what is known as an 'associate teaching role'. This means that her employer has determined that her role has fewer responsibilities than Megan's. For example, Sarah does not develop or produce the teaching materials that she uses. The Health and Social Care department she works in has a range of teaching and learning materials available and she chooses from these to use in her class. Many employers refer to people undertaking this role as instructors, trainers or technicians.

It doesn't matter whether you have a full or part-time job or how many hours you teach. The teaching qualification you'll need will depend on the responsibilities of the role, and an employer will be able to tell you what they'll expect you to achieve.

If you would like to find out more about what it's like to teach before getting a teaching job, you can do a short, introductory course called Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning sector (PTLLS).

If you work in an associate teacher role, you'll need to get the Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (CTLLS).

If you work in a full teaching role, you'll need to get the Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTLLS). This qualification is mandatory for everyone who teaches Skills for Life - that's to say, literacy and numeracy. Skills for Life teachers also need to achieve a specialist qualification in the subject they wish to teach and this can be studied at the same time. Plus they'll need to show that they can work at level 3 in English and maths.

Look on page 67 for more information about Skills for Life and why you may want to consider teaching it as well as your own subject specialism.

You can achieve the teaching qualification you'll need in a variety of ways – the routes are very flexible and designed to meet a wide range of needs.

For example, you can:

- complete the qualification in one academic year before you start working as a teacher. You won't be paid to teach during this time but financial assistance may be available to you. More on this later
- complete the qualification in two academic years on a part-time basis while you are working and being paid as a teacher
- complete the qualification through modular learning. You're allowed one year from beginning employment to attain the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector qualification, and up to five years to attain the Certification in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector or Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector, depending on your role.

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What will you learn as a trainee teacher?

The qualifications are very practical and will teach you everything you'll need to know to do the job. Depending on your role, you'll learn, amongst other things:

- how to plan and prepare for teaching
- ideas about how people learn
- how to make sure people learn and find out if they have through assessment
- how to manage a group of learners
- how programmes of learning are designed
- about your professional role as a teacher and your continuing professional development.

Both associate and full teaching role qualifications begin with a short introduction to teaching, sometimes referred to as Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS).

This will give you everything you'll need to get you started. The rest of the course will extend and expand on this and give you the opportunity to develop your skills and knowledge. You'll be able to put this new knowledge into practice with your own learners and you'll be given advice and feedback to improve your teaching.

Whatever profession you teach, your learners will need to read and understand texts, produce written materials for assessment and use the internet or other technology. Some but certainly not all learners in the further education sector don't find information technology, literacy and numeracy so easy.

There's a lot of help available to them from teachers who specialise in these subjects but all teachers are expected to be able to help their learners as and when things come up.

The teacher training course will raise your awareness of how you can do this. You may hear this referred to as the Minimum Core.

For example, you'll learn how you can best:

- look at teaching and learning materials and decide whether there's a lot of difficult or technical language in them which may need explaining before you start the main point of your teaching
- explain to someone how to use a computer to search the worldwide web for information
- explain simple calculations which may be necessary in your profession, e.g. a carpentry teacher may have to explain how to calculate angles in order to construct a joint.

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How is the training organised?

If you choose the full-time route, then you may follow a programme offered by a training provider, a college of further education or a university. You'll spend part of your time in the classroom learning the theoretical and practical aspects of teaching. You'll spend the rest of your time putting this into practice, teaching people who want to enter your profession.

If you choose the part-time route, the patterns of the courses are very flexible and are offered by a number of different providers, including further education colleges and universities.

Some teacher training providers offer day or evening courses and may offer blocks of intensive learning. Others may provide shorter periods of learning but spread out over a number of weeks.

Again, you'll spend part of your time in the classroom learning the theoretical and practical aspects of teaching. You'll spend the rest of your time putting this into practice, teaching people who want to enter your profession.

Your teacher trainer will also come to see you teaching your learners and will provide you with feedback on your progress. It's a good opportunity to discuss your work with a more experienced colleague.

If you want to find out who offers this training in your area, please contact the free Information and Advice Service offered by Lifelong Learning UK. Telephone **020 7936 5798** or email: advice@lluk.org

You'll need to contact the training provider directly to find out more about the pattern they use to deliver their courses.

Professional development and the Institute for Learning

We all know that learning to do our job doesn't stop when you get the qualification. Teaching is exactly the same and the Institute for Learning is the professional body for those working as teachers in the further education sector, and supports their professional practice. You must join if you teach in a further education college, sixth form college or independent specialist college, or on a course that is funded by the Learning and Skills Council.

Depending on where the funding for the course you are teaching comes from, membership may be free. The Institute for Learning is responsible for the registration and regulation of teachers in the further education sector as well as providing a lot of support for the professional development of its members.

You can see the benefits it offers here:

www.ifl.ac.uk/membership/member-benefits

Everyone who enters the profession after September 2007 will need to become a licensed practitioner through membership of the Institute for Learning. You'll have five years to do this from the start of your first paid teaching job.

If you are undertaking a full teaching role, you'll need to achieve Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills. If you are working in an associate role then you'll need to achieve Associate Teacher Learning and Skills. This shows that you've developed beyond the initial teaching qualification, keeping your skills and knowledge up to date. This is called continuing professional development (CPD).

You can find out more about what the Institute for Learning says about this here:

www.ifl.ac.uk/qtls-atls

Or you can call for more information on [0844 815 3202](tel:08448153202).



One of the conditions for achieving licensed practitioner status is that you have skills in literacy and numeracy at level 2. Remember that a level 2 qualification is at 'O'/GCSE/NVQ 2 levels. You might already have such a qualification and it might have the words English, communication, literacy, maths or numeracy in the title.

We know that the names of qualifications change over time, so if you need to check the level of any such qualifications that you hold, please visit this site:

www.standardsverificationuk.org/evidencing-general-information-on-levels.htm

It doesn't matter if the qualification is no longer available or how long ago you achieved it. You just need to show that you have the skills at level 2.

If you achieved a numeracy, maths, literacy or English qualification abroad, you may need to contact the National Recognition Information Centre. They will be able to compare your overseas qualification with the equivalent English one and tell you what level it's at.

You can find them here:

www.naric.org.uk

If you can't show that you have the necessary skills, then you may wish to consider the National Tests in Adult Literacy and Numeracy at level 2. These are available throughout the country and you can get help if you need to brush up your skills and knowledge before taking the test.

Look at this website for examples of the test and also places where you can take it:

www.dcsf.gov.uk/readwriteplus/learning

You may find that your employer will help you to gain these qualifications.

Recognising other teaching or training qualifications

Perhaps you have done a training qualification in the past. You may be given some credit for this against the new qualifications.

Visit: www.tariff.svuk.eu

This is a tool which equates post-16 initial teacher training qualifications available in England prior to September 2007 with the new teaching and training qualifications. You can use this to try and negotiate some exemption from parts of the qualifications. This is known as accreditation of prior learning.

We asked Ahmed to tell us about the teacher training course he's following.

Ahmed is doing the qualification while working and being paid as a teacher. His employer gives him time to do his studies. He could have taken the qualification as a one year full-time course but decided not to do this as he has a family to support.

'I'm a chartered engineer and I was travelling a lot away from home. With a young family, I needed to make some changes. I'd been thinking of teaching for a while - I'd worked with some apprentices at my company and had really enjoyed showing them how to do something.

I saw a job advertised for a full-time lecturer at my local college. At first, that put me off as, to me, lecturers are people in universities. But a few days later, I looked on the college website and found the details. It seemed a pretty varied job and they mentioned a number of the courses they wanted someone to teach - right from level 1, basic beginner stuff, up to Higher National Certificate level. The conditions were good too, with long holidays that meant I could spend more time with the kids. I put in an application and got the job.

They'd told me at the interview that I'd have to get a teaching qualification. Mine is the Diploma as I'm in a full-teaching role. I joined the college at the beginning of September, before the teaching had begun. There were lots of other new teachers as well and the college had arranged a full week's teacher training to get us up and running before we moved into the classroom. I could have done the same thing spread over ten weeks, but I did the week course to be as best prepared as possible. The course

was six hours a day spread over five days. This gave me the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector qualification.

It was hard work and really intensive but I enjoyed it and it really gave me a lot of confidence for my first teaching session. It was very interactive and we spent a lot of time discussing ideas around what had been taught – it was a good way to learn. We learnt a mixture of things – both theory and practical stuff. For example, we learnt how to write lesson plans – that’s the plan that sets out what you’re going to do in a teaching session. We learnt how to make our teaching interesting through the activities we wanted our learners to do. And then we learnt how to make sure that they had learnt something – that’s called assessment.

At the end, you put it all into practice in a microteach – it makes me laugh now when I hear myself using teaching jargon but a microteach is basically a 15-minute session where you teach your fellow learners something. One of my hobbies is rock climbing, so I taught my group how to tie a bowline knot.

When you do your microteach, your teacher will make notes on how well you do and then give you feedback at the end. One of the things you’re encouraged to do is to think about the things you did that went well and the things that you might need to change next time, so it was a useful learning point for me and one I could really put into practice with my own lesson planning. I suppose I was thinking about how long it would take me to do, rather than my learners who’d never done it before. At the end, we had to write up our microteach, which was the assessment for that bit of the course.

After that, the Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector course was part-time and I studied for three hours a week. I did it one afternoon a week although I could have chosen a morning or evening session. There’s extra stuff to do as well such as reading and research and each module has a written assignment at the end. I’ve also learnt a lot from the other trainee teachers in my group – although they teach different subjects we come across a lot of the same challenges and it’s a good place to thrash them out.

I’m nearly at the end of the first year now, so I have just one more year to do. The course very much expands on what I learnt on the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector but goes into much more detail. It’s still very practical and your tutor will come to see you teach your own learners to make sure that you’re putting what you learn into practice.

It's really useful for someone with more experience to see you teach - it gives you confidence to know you're doing things OK - and I get a lot of useful advice and tips. Some of the modules are chosen for you but you are able to choose others, depending on what interests you. I have to say, I'm really enjoying it.'

If you'd like to discuss a teacher training course further, call the free Lifelong Learning UK Information and Advice Service. It's staffed by experienced teacher trainers who can give you more information.

They can also provide you with information about providers in your area and you can call them direct: telephone [020 7936 5798](tel:02079365798) or email: advice@lluk.org

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Assessing

NVQ stands for National Vocational Qualification and it's based on the idea that someone studying for a qualification award will show that they are able to perform an activity against the standards for that industry or occupation. They can be achieved at different levels.

People who are following an NVQ are known as candidates, and can be learning their profession anywhere in the further education sector and putting it into practice in their place of employment. If you work as an assessor, you'll be the person who assesses and supports candidates to make sure they meet the occupational standards needed to achieve the NVQ.

Go back to Maria's story on page 11 if you want to remind yourself what an assessor does. Some assessors, like Maria, will assess as part of their job within one organisation. Others will work across many different organisations in their professions.

What will you learn as a trainee assessor?

As well as a level 3 qualification or above in your professional qualification – look at page 15 if you need to remind yourself about these – you'll also need either an A1 or A2 award. These are the nationally recognised qualifications for an assessor. The one you'll need will depend on the type of assessing you're doing and it's something that a provider of the award will discuss with you.

A1 Assess candidates using a range of methods

(If you are going to assess people using several methods)

In this unit, you'll learn how to assess and make judgements about your candidate's knowledge, skills and understanding through a range of methods, including judging evidence against agreed standards and questioning.

You will also learn how to evaluate any work or qualifications they've done in the past and see whether it satisfies any of the competencies you're assessing them against. This is so that people don't have to repeat work or qualifications unnecessarily.

An important part of assessing is making judgements about a candidate's work and giving them useful and helpful feedback on it, and you'll learn how to do this, too. You will also learn how your work feeds into the quality assurance processes within the organisation you're working for.

A2 Assess a candidate's performance through observation (If you are only going to assess people using this method)

In this unit, you'll learn how to assess your candidate's knowledge, skills and understanding through observation. You'll also learn how to plan an assessment and provide your candidate with the feedback that will let them progress and achieve.

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How is the training organised?

You can achieve the A1 or A2 award at a college or training centre. It's an on-the-job qualification so you'll be assessed working with candidates by your own assessor. You'll need at least two candidates to work with. These might be within your own place of work or some A1/A2 training providers will let you assess their own candidates.

The A1/A2 awards replace the previous D32/33 and D34/35. If you already hold any of these, then you should speak to the training provider about how you can update them without doing unnecessary further training.

You'll need to discuss the pattern of the training course with a provider but, typically, you'll have initial training to get you started which will be for about 12 hours. This may be organised flexibly over two days, or over four or five evenings.

After this, your personal assessor will observe you working with your own candidates and will provide feedback to help you develop your own skills as an assessor. You'll also need to provide a portfolio of evidence to show that you're achieving the necessary competencies to qualify as an assessor.

Will you get any help to pay for a training course?

If you follow an endorsed Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector course, you may be able to apply for the following funding and incentives:

- a non-repayable maintenance grant of £1,260. This can rise to £2,835 if your household income is less than £25,000 (a lot of people use this to pay for their course fees)
- a repayable loan to cover course fees
- a repayable loan to cover living costs.

To apply for funding, you'll need to apply to the Student Support Officer, asking for a PN1 form, at your local education authority.

You can find their contact details here:

www.dfes.gov.uk/localauthorities

It's quite a complex area and we'd recommend you contact the free Information and Advice Service offered by Lifelong Learning UK. Telephone [020 7936 5798](tel:02079365798) or email: advice@lluk.org They'll be able to provide you with personalised information and advice.

Shortage subjects

The UK government has identified a number of subjects where there aren't enough teachers and these are known as shortage subjects. New teachers to the further education sector who can offer these are able to access a number of financial incentives.

Bursaries

You may be able to apply to certain universities for a non-repayable bursary of £9,000 – if you follow a pre-service Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector course (where you do the teaching qualification before you take up paid teaching work) and you can teach:

- Construction
- Mathematics
- Science
- Skills for Life – Numeracy.

You may be able to apply to certain universities for a non-repayable bursary of £6,000 – if you follow a pre-service Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector course and can teach:

- Business Administration
- Design and Technology
- Engineering
- English, Media Studies and Performing Arts
- Health and Social Care
- Information and Communications Technology
- Public Services
- Skills for Life – Literacy.

Some of the above subjects are further broken down into sub sections – if you're not sure if your profession is included, call the free Information and Advice service offered by Lifelong Learning UK and they'll be able to tell you. Telephone [020 7936 5798](tel:02079365798) or email: advice@lluk.org

The number of bursaries available is limited and bursaries are only available to UK and EU residents.

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What financial incentives are there?

Key Worker Living Scheme

If you live in the East of England, South East of England or London, loans of up to £50,000 may be available to you to buy a home or extend your current one.

Golden Hello

In your second year of paid teaching, you may be able to apply for a Golden Hello of £5,000 if you teach:

- Construction
- Mathematics
- Science.

If you teach any of the other shortage subjects shown on the previous pages - with the exception of Business Administration - you'll be able to apply for £4,000.

To be eligible for this payment, you'll need a contract in a further education college, sixth form college or independent specialist college, and you must have gained or be following a course leading to the award of a Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector teaching qualification.

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Are there any other sources of funding?

If you follow a Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector or assessor's qualification, then you may find that your employer is willing to pay for the qualification. Otherwise, you may find that there is funding available to you locally and your employer or training provider should be able to tell you about this.

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Is teaching or assessing for you?

We hope this information has been useful to you and given you an idea about what teaching or assessing is like and the routes into the profession. You still may be thinking about whether you have the attributes to become a good teacher or assessor.

We asked some learners ‘What do you think makes a good teacher or assessor?’

This is what they told us:

‘They’re good at explaining things and know what they’re talking about.’

‘They’ll have a joke and a laugh with you.’

‘They’re fair and don’t have favourites.’

‘They really want you to do well and push you on.’

‘They’re good at getting their point across and you can understand what they’re saying.’

‘They make the work interesting so we want to learn.’

‘They let you know how you’re doing and give you pointers so you’ll do better next time.’

‘They listen to what you have to say.’

We’ve turned their answers into the following statements, describing the characteristics of a good teacher or assessor. Many of these skills are transferable – that’s to say, you may be already using them in your current job and could bring them into a new profession.

Can you think of examples of how you are doing this in either your work or personal life? If you can, note them down – we’ve done the first one as an example overleaf.

Good teachers	I do this when:
Have effective communication skills	Some of my clients don't speak English well. I make sure I speak clearly to them and then ask a question to check that they've understood.
Have a very good knowledge of their subject	
Are enthusiastic and able to motivate others	
Have a sense of humour	
Are fair and treat people equally	
Think of the best ways of doing something	
Are ambitious for their learners	
Are ready to listen and understand different points of view	
Are well organised and can prioritise work	

If you'd like to discuss your options further, you'll find agencies that offer careers guidance in the sources of useful information on page 69.

How can you find a job in the further education sector?

It can be a bit daunting stepping from one profession into another, and sometimes the way to find jobs and go about applying for them can differ. We hope to make the process a little easier for you by providing the following information. We've included some examples to get you thinking.

Where are jobs advertised?

Here are some examples of jobs that we found advertised:

Lecturer in Health & Social Care

Ref: LHS

Salary: £20,289-£34,407 pa (Inc. L/W)

We are seeking enthusiastic lecturers with the ability to teach Health and Social Care at a range of levels. Vocational experience is an advantage. Applicants should enjoy working collaboratively in teams and have a flexible approach to course delivery. The successful applicant should have the ability to relate to students from a variety of backgrounds and ages, and have an understanding of students' preferred learning styles and differentiation. Experience of planning and delivering courses in Health and Social Care is desirable, along with a commitment to working co-operatively as part of a team.

Lecturer in Electrical Installation

Salary: £27,988-£34,984 pa

The successful candidate will be expected to teach a variety of full-time, part-time and short courses that may be either dedicated to Electrical Installation or have an electrical content. A teaching qualification and appropriate assessor qualification would be an advantage, however, they are not essential as we can provide full training. You must, however, possess excitement and enthusiasm for your craft, combined with excellent communication skills and a desire to pass on your skills to others.

Lecturer in Engineering**Salary: £22,801-£28,933 pa**

We have a reputation for excellence in engineering education and teaching and are looking for an enthusiastic individual to build on our success. The post holder will teach across a range of engineering subjects and it is essential candidates have experience in the field of mechanical science engineering.

Lecturer in Numeracy**Salary: £24,260-£38,112 pa**

To work at our sixth form college, you will be committed to excellence in teaching and supporting students in achieving success. You will work well with 16-19 year-olds and contribute to a student-centred environment both inside and outside the classroom. We wish to appoint a teacher in our skills centre team whose delivery will be primarily numeracy and supporting students whose skills are below level 2.

Lecturer in Literacy**Day and evening sessions available, £24.36 per hour**

Literacy and/or Numeracy – Must have a teaching qualification or be working towards the specialist subject. Enhanced rates of pay available for experienced and qualified Numeracy tutors.

Assessor/Technician in Construction**Salary: £17,411 pa**

You will need broad experience of the construction industry with a specific qualification in carpentry/joinery. The post is permanent full-time, working 37 hours per week.

NVQ Assessor - Retail

Our client is a training provider looking for a permanent NVQ Assessor in Retail and Warehousing. The training provider will provide a bonus, laptop, mobile phone, subsidised broadband, child care vouchers, group life assurance and business mileage up to 35p per mile. The salary is £17,000 to £23,000, dependent on experience.

This is a selection of advertisements which appeared in the Times Education Supplement (TES) on Friday 17th October 2008 and Friday 16th January 2009 in the lecturers/other appointments section.

There are a number of newspapers and online sites to help you find your first job in the further education sector.

You'll find these on page 69 - it's not exhaustive but it's a good start.

You can also search the internet for those colleges, further education providers and large employers which may have their own training departments in your area. Look at their current vacancies, or email them with your details and ask if they are likely to have vacancies in the near future, and if so, how to make sure you know about them so you can apply.

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What is the application process like?

Some employers may want you to send them your CV; others will have their own application packs. You may already have a CV but it's always useful to see other examples. You'll find two example layouts of a CV below and overleaf, then we'll move on to look at the application pack.

Here's an example of a skills-based CV:

Your name:

Personal profile: This section should describe your strengths and attributes and also reflect the qualities that the employer is looking for. Create five or six such statements.

***For example:** A well-qualified social worker who is highly articulate, able to stimulate and motivate colleagues and with the ability to build rapport with a wide range of people.*

Experience/specialisms: This section describes what you can do and it should relate to what the employer is looking for. Create five or six such statements.

***For example:** Twenty years' experience as a front-line social worker in both statutory, voluntary and private provision. Deliver training in the workplace and motivate learners to achieve their NVQs.*

Achievements: These show what you have done and provide proof of what you have claimed above. Provide five or six such examples and try to show a variety in the types of achievement.

***For example:** Contributed to the development of a new housing project for autistic adults.*

Career history: Briefly list your past jobs, employers and dates, with the most recent first. Briefly state your responsibilities.

For example: June 2004-present – Social worker, Sheffield County Council.

Responsible for the implementation and co-ordination of complex assessments, the purchase of agreed packages of care, and the monitoring of service contracts in partnership with the client group and agencies and health professionals. Responsible for the provision of casework and other social work services.

References: You can choose to include your referees in your CV or say that they are available upon request.

Personal details: These may include name, address, phone numbers, email, driving licence.

Education and qualifications: These may include:

- school, college, university with dates
- qualifications
- other training
- key skills.

Outside interests: It is helpful to show interests, particularly if they reflect qualities which relate to the job requirements.

For example: *I am a Girl Guide Leader and regularly work with groups of young people.*

Here's an example of a chronological CV:

Personal details: These may include:

- your name
- address
- telephone numbers
- email
- driving licence.

Education and Qualifications: These may include:

- school, college, university with dates
- qualifications
- other training
- key skills.

Career history: This will include your past jobs, employers and dates, with the most recent first. Briefly state your responsibilities.

***For example:** June 2004-present – Social worker, Sheffield County Council.*

Responsible for the implementation and co-ordination of complex assessments, the purchase of agreed packages of care, and the monitoring of service contracts in partnership with the client group and agencies and health professionals. Responsible for the provision of casework and other social work services.

References: You can choose to include your referees in your CV or say that they are available upon request.

Outside interests: It is helpful to show interests particularly if they reflect qualities which relate to the job requirements.

***For example:** I am a Girl Guide Leader and regularly work with groups of young people.*

Tips for writing a successful CV

- A CV is your sales brochure and should show how you stand out from other applicants. Employers want to see a document which persuades them that you are the person worth investing their time in – the main question in their minds is: ‘What can you do for me/my organisation?’
- Employers look for CVs and covering letters which are tailored to their needs. Research your potential employer to find out what their key objectives are. They’ll be looking for people who will be able to help them achieve these. Show what you have already done, or have the potential to do, in line with their objectives.

- Use language which is positive and emphasises the impact of your work. If you're a health and social care worker, don't say that you 'helped the elderly with their personal hygiene' but that you 'were responsible for supporting the elderly so that they could live independently'. You need to show what you have achieved.
- Avoid clichés, especially those such as 'team player' or 'good communicator' – they have been used so often that they now mean very little. It's better to provide examples, such as, 'I have worked collaboratively with colleagues from different departments to agree a code of conduct.'
- If you are changing industry, it's particularly useful to think of your transferable skills. For example, if you are experienced in a particular IT package, your employer may not need it but they may be impressed that you are able to use that software.
- Don't leave unexplained gaps in your CV. Employers may be suspicious when these gaps are not clarified, so make sure you explain any in a positive way.
- Never lie, and only write of achievements that you are confident to talk about in an interview.

Limit your CV to two pages of A4. Keep to a simple and clear layout so that it is obvious to the reader where to find the information they are looking for. Use only one typeface, such as Arial or Times New Roman, which is easy to read. Use highlighting with care and only to focus on headings or key points. Use font size 11-point or 12-point.

- Be relevant, concise and avoid very long sentences or paragraphs. The purpose of a CV is to encourage a potential employer to offer you an interview where you can explain in detail your experience and achievements.
- Avoid jargon, abbreviations or specialist language unless you are sure a potential reader will understand them. This is particularly true if you are crossing from one profession to another.
- Edit your CV carefully and check the spelling and grammar. Many spellcheckers are set to American settings – if you're not sure, look it up in a dictionary. Poor writing skills create a bad impression.
- Ask someone you respect to read it through for you.

- Avoid mentioning any sort of failure e.g. in exams or business.
- Keep a copy of your CV which you can take to interviews but don't send photocopies to employers – it can look as if you're not bothered who employs you.
- Keep your CV up to date.

Covering letters – the speculative approach

One way to find work is to send a speculative CV to potential employers, even if they are not advertising at that point. Many will keep a file of people who can offer the skills and experience they need for when a vacancy arises.

Whether you send your application by post or electronically, a covering letter gives you the opportunity to write a few key words that will entice a potential employer to take a detailed look at your CV. It often helps to send the letter to the head of the department you would like to work in.

Covering letters must look professional, be perfectly presented and word-processed unless an employer asks for it handwritten. Use good quality paper and ensure that the name and address are personalised for the recipient of the letter – this is particularly important if you are making multiple approaches.

Remember to include your contact details and ensure that you research the name of the person to whom it should be addressed. (Remember, if you know the name of the person you are writing to, sign off 'Yours sincerely' but if you address the letter to 'Dear Sir/Madam', you sign off 'Yours faithfully'.)

The main bulk of your experience and abilities are in your CV, so keep the letter concise. An example is given opposite:

Your address

Date

Name and address of employer

Dear Mr Smith

Teaching/assessing opportunities in Retail Services

I am very interested in any opportunities in teaching or assessing Retail Services at (add the name of the organisation/company) and enclose my CV.

You will see that I am a highly qualified member of my profession and would like to pass on my knowledge and experience to the next generation. I believe that I can make a significant contribution to an organisation such as your own, in particular, (briefly state two or three of your attributes).

I can be contacted by phone on (your number) or email (your email). I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angela Jones". The script is cursive and fluid.

Angela Jones

Covering letters – in response to an advertisement

When your covering letter is being sent with a job application form or CV, it is important to ensure that you identify the job you are applying for, either by title or reference number. You will know from the job application pack or advertisement what the employer is looking for so it is also useful to draw the recipient's attention to your skills, knowledge and experience, showing how your profile satisfies their requirements.

An example is given opposite. This was sent to an organisation which stated that they wished to employ a teacher/assessor in Retail Services who was qualified to level 3, with a wide experience of employment and who would bring their enthusiasm to teaching/assessing.

Covering letters must look professional, be perfectly presented and word-processed unless an employer asks for it handwritten. Use good quality paper and ensure that the name and address are personalised for the recipient of the letter – this is particularly important if you are making multiple approaches. Remember to add your contact details.

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Your address

Date

Name and address of employer

Dear Mr Smith

Teacher/assessor in Retail Services Ref: EXD3987

I am enclosing my application form/CV (as appropriate) for the post of teacher/assessor in Retail Services as advertised in (name journal/website).

You will see that I hold a degree in Retail Management as well as a number of other professional qualifications in the subject. I have many years' experience gained with a range of both public and private employers.

More recently, I have been involved with the training of apprentices - a role which I very much enjoyed. I can be contacted by phone on (your number) or email (your email). I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angela Jones". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Angela" and "Jones" being capitalized and prominent.

Angela Jones

More about applying for a job

Application forms

Some employers will want you to complete their own application forms. This is often because they want to ensure that all applicants submit the same information in the same format. What is sent to applicants and what they are required to do will vary between employers. However, you'll find below an example of the kinds of materials that may be sent to you.

These include:

- a job description and person specification
- advice on how to complete the application form
- a request for personal information in order to satisfy equality and diversity monitoring
- a request to disclose criminal convictions, cautions, reprimands, etc. Many employers state that having a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to employment but failure to disclose such information will be
- information about the conditions of employment such as annual leave, pension and salary
- the application form.

The job description and person specification are likely to include:

- something about the employer and what they do
- a description of the person they want to employ in terms of their qualifications and experience
- the responsibilities and duties of the job
- any other relevant additional information.

Examples of these documents are given on pages 47-50 in an abridged form to give you an idea of what you might receive.

Job description and person specification

Example style

Teacher/assessor - Plumbing

We are a successful and expanding provider of post-16 education and training in the North West. Our courses encompass a wide range of levels from pre-entry level through to specialised Professional and Higher Education courses, often in conjunction with local universities. Full and part-time learners enrol each year in area subjects including Engineering, Art and Design, Construction and the Built Environment, Performing Arts, Health and Social Care, and Travel and Tourism. Our learners regularly win regional and national awards and we have achieved the status of 'Centre of Vocational Excellence' in two areas of the curriculum.

The faculty

The Construction and Built Environment section has grown rapidly through the growth of both its part and full-time courses. The current provision includes courses from level 1-3 as well as a range of apprenticeships and professional qualifications.

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Person specification

Qualifications and experience

Candidates will hold a level 3 or professional qualification in Plumbing. They should also have a teaching/assessing qualification or be prepared to achieve one. The successful candidate will fulfil the following requirements:

	Essential	Desirable
Hold a level 3 or professional qualification in Plumbing	X	
Hold an assessing or teaching qualification or be willing to achieve one	X	
Have experience of working in the Construction/Built Environment sector	X	
Have a detailed approach to administration	X	
Be a good communicator and able to work independently and as part of a team	X	
Have good IT skills or a willingness to gain them	X	
Clean driving licence	X	

Main responsibilities and duties

The post holder will be expected to engage fully with all aspects of work, which may include out-of-hours activities such as open evenings and enrolments.

The post holder will be expected to:

- plan and design teaching and learning materials which are stimulating and engage learners
- teach one or more courses and complete the administrative work associated with their teaching
- assess learners' work and sign off on the NVQ
- keep abreast of new developments in their curriculum area
- work co-operatively with colleagues and other departments
- review and evaluate courses on which she/he teaches
- undertake pastoral and tutorial responsibilities.

Additional information

Salary scale £21,000-£39,000 per annum

References

An offer of employment is subject to two satisfactory references. One must be from your last or present employer.

Qualifications

If offered employment, you will be asked to show us original copies of all certificates of qualifications listed on your application form.

Application Form– Assessor/Teacher

Post: Teacher/Assessor Reference: CCF034		
Personal Details		
Surname _____		Initials _____
Address _____		Postcode _____
Tel. _____		National Insurance No. _____
Do you require a Work Permit or Visa? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		If yes, please indicate duration of current permit:
Education and Qualifications		
School	Address	Dates
A Level/NVQ	Educational establishment	Dates
First Degree/Diploma/Subject	Educational establishment	Dates
Higher Degree/Diploma/Subject	Educational establishment	Dates
Teaching Qualification/Other Qualifications	Educational establishment	Dates
Present or Last Employment		
Name and address of employer:		
Position Held:	Full-time/Part-time (delete as applicable)	From: To:
Salary:	Notice period required:	
Previous Employment		
Name and address of employer:		
Position Held	From	To
1.		
2.		
3.		
Previous Teaching or Assessing Experience (if any)		
1.		
2.		

Supporting Statement

Please describe in detail the type of work you have undertaken relevant to this post. Please use the job description and person specification to help you. We shortlist candidates according to how well your knowledge, skills and experience match our requirements.

Tips on completing the application form

The application form shown on page 50 is an example only and you may find that actual forms differ, so it is very important to read the form through carefully before completing it.

Many employers make the application pack available electronically; in this case, you will be able to complete it using a word processor. This can be useful as it demonstrates that you are IT literate. If you complete the form by hand, use black ink, as an employer is likely to photocopy it.

Make sure that you complete all the sections; if a question does not apply, then mark it 'Not Applicable' rather than leaving it blank.

You'll see at the bottom of the example application form on page 50 that the employer is asking for a supporting statement. This is a very important part of the application form and it gives you the chance to really show why you deserve an interview.

The application form provides a basic outline of your career and qualifications but does not always give you the opportunity to show why you are the best candidate for the job.

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Supporting statement

The following is designed to show you how a supporting statement should be tailored to the job description and person specification. It is only an example and any supporting statement should be more detailed and specific than this.

This is the supporting statement Bob wrote when he applied for a job as a teacher. He looked at the person specification shown on page 48 and thought about how he could respond to each of the employer's requirements.

As shown on my application form, I have a level 3 qualification in Plumbing, the City and Guilds level 3 award in Plumbing and Commercial Installation. I am a member of the Chartered Institute of Plumbing and Heating Engineering and a registered Master Plumber. Although I don't yet hold an assessing or teaching qualification, I know that, as a professional, I need to have the right qualifications and will look forward to doing the course. I have over 20 years' experience working in plumbing and heating and have worked for companies on a self-employed basis.

My work means that I have to solve problems creatively. When I arrive at a job, I never know what I'm going to find. For example, on one job a lady wanted a shower fitted but she lived in a dorma bungalow and the roof was too low. We talked through the other options and came up with an answer. I have to be able to talk to people from all walks of life, and get on well with them. On a lot of jobs, I work with other construction professionals such as carpenters or bricklayers and we have to work together to get the job done. I have to accurately estimate and price materials and the time it will take to do a job. I have to keep records of anything I buy for a job as well as doing the paperwork for one. I am well organised and plan my day efficiently, making sure I have all the necessary tools and materials before I set off in the morning. I keep up to date with new developments in my trade and have done a number of training courses as needed when something new comes in.

My employer has asked me to oversee the work of trainees in the company and this meant that I've kept an eye on them as they did their work. I've enjoyed showing them how to do things and answering their questions. I use IT in my job as a lot of blueprints for plumbing systems are now computerised. I also use IT for stock control on parts and materials, and regularly use the internet and email. I have a clean driving licence and am prepared to travel as needed.

When you have read the supporting statement, see if you can identify where Bob, who hasn't taught before, has tried to show that he matches the requirements of the job description and person specification as set out below:

- hold a level 3 qualification in plumbing
- hold a teaching qualification or be willing to achieve one
- have experience of working in the plumbing sector
- have good IT skills or a willingness to gain them
- plan and design teaching and learning materials which are stimulating and engage learners
- assess learners' work
- teach on one or more courses and complete the administrative work associated with their teaching
- keep abreast of new developments in their curriculum area
- work co-operatively with colleagues and other departments
- have a clean driving licence.

This is what you may have found:

- Hold a level 3 qualification in plumbing

Bob provides and names his level 3 qualification. He also shows he is committed to a professional approach to his work through membership of an institute.

- Hold a teaching qualification or be willing to achieve one

Bob is clear that he doesn't have a teaching qualification but shows that he understands that professionals need to be qualified and that he's keen to work towards one.

- Have experience of working in the plumbing sector

Bob's application form shows his working experience but he underlines it by saying how long he's worked as a plumber - both on an employed and self-employed basis.

- Have good IT skills or a willingness to gain them

Bob gives examples of how he uses IT.

- Plan and design teaching and learning materials which are stimulating and engage learners

Bob hasn't taught before but he shows that his work requires him to work creatively. He gives the example of the shower installation to show how he identifies what needs doing and then how he sets about doing it best. Teaching can be like this. He also shows how he employs problem solving skills. He shows that plumbers, like teachers or assessors, need to be well organised and prepared before starting a job.

- Assess learners' work

Bob gives examples of how he has mentored and supervised trainees.

- Teach on one or more courses and complete the administrative work associated with their teaching

Bob states he has to keep accurate records of purchases he makes and the work he does.

- Keep abreast of new developments in their curriculum area

Bob shows that he keeps his knowledge and skills up to date through taking new courses.

- Work co-operatively with colleagues and other departments

Bob describes how he works co-operatively with other construction professionals to complete a job.

- Have a clean driving licence

He confirms he does.

You have seen earlier that employers decide who to shortlist depending on how well an applicant shows that they match the job description/ person specification.

This is, therefore, a vital part of the application process and one that it's well worth spending time on. It's also useful to show how your experience and skills match the duties and responsibilities of the job. This can be from any area of your professional or personal life. Even if you haven't taught before, you may have engaged in a similar activity. Employers know that a lot of skills are transferable.

Of course, your experience, skills and knowledge will be from your own profession and not necessarily plumbing.

Criminal Records Bureau check

When you take up a job, your employer will need to do a Criminal Records Bureau check (CRB). The following information is taken from the Criminal Records Bureau website and explains the purposes of the check which will be carried out by each new employer. You can access the information at www.crb.gov.uk

What is the Criminal Records Bureau check?

The Criminal Records Bureau is an Executive Agency of the Home Office and provides wider access to criminal record information through its disclosure service. This service enables organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors to make safer recruitment decisions by identifying candidates who may be unsuitable for certain work, especially that involving children or vulnerable adults. The Criminal Records Bureau was established under Part V of the Police Act 1997 and was launched in March 2002.

The Criminal Records Bureau service at a glance

The Criminal Records Bureau acts as a 'one-stop shop' for organisations, checking police records and, when relevant, information held by the Department of Health (DH) and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). There are two levels of CRB check currently available - Standard and Enhanced Disclosures.

The two CRB checks are available in cases where an employer is entitled to ask exempt questions under the Exceptions Order to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974. This includes any organisation whose staff or volunteers work with children or vulnerable adults. They are issued free to volunteers.

Standard Disclosure

This is primarily available to anyone involved in working with children or vulnerable adults, as well as certain other occupations, and entry into professions as specified in the Exceptions Order to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974. Standard Disclosures show current and spent convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer. If the post involves working with children or vulnerable adults, the following may also be searched:

- Protection of Children Act (POCA) List
- Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) List
- information that is held under Section 142 of the Education Act 2002 (formerly known as List 99).

Enhanced Disclosure

This is the highest level of check, available for anyone involved in regularly caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children or vulnerable adults. It is also available for certain licensing purposes and judicial appointments. Enhanced Disclosures contain the same information as the Standard Disclosure but with the addition of any relevant and proportionate information held by the local police forces.

The CRB recognises that the Standard and Enhanced Disclosure information can be extremely sensitive and personal, therefore it has published a Code of Practice and employers' guidance for recipients of Disclosures to ensure they are handled fairly and used properly. A copy of the Standard or Enhanced Disclosure is sent out to the applicant as well as the Registered Body.

Preparing for the interview

We thought it would be useful here to provide you with some information and advice about the interview process. Of course, as a working professional, you'll already have been successful at interview but we thought it wouldn't hurt to remind you of the more important points.

Here are some useful things to think about and do once you know you've been offered an interview.

Before the interview

- Research the employer. Use the internet or other media to find the core objectives of the employer. Many employers are happy to have an informal discussion with you before application – take advantage of this and make yourself more memorable in the interview. You could ask whether it's possible to visit the place of work to get a feel for it and see what resources are available to learners and employees alike. Try to find out how many learners complete their courses and what the achievement rates are. It may be useful to have a look at OFSTED reports to see how well the employer is doing and how this compares to other organisations you may be considering making an application to.
- Find out more about what you'll be teaching. The employer will be able to tell you who accredits the qualifications they offer and from this you can find more information about the syllabus or detail of what will be taught.
- Find out the typical format of the interview. Is it a question and answer format or do you have to make a presentation or undertake any tasks? You'll find useful advice about preparing a presentation on page 64. Will PowerPoint and flipchart paper be available? Can you bring examples of your work or provide handouts? The HR or personnel department should be able to tell you.
- Review your application form so you can remember what you said. You can always take a copy with you.
- Prepare answers to questions which you think may arise.
- Prepare any questions you may want answers to.
- Practical issues. What will you wear? Do you know the address of the venue and how to get there? How long will the journey take? Will you need additional time to find parking if you drive?

Preparing interview questions

Interview questions vary but are usually around:

- tell us about yourself
- why do you want to work for us?
- what can you offer us?
- what are your strengths and weaknesses?
- a question to do with equality and diversity.

Can you tell us something about yourself?

This is usually an opening question and one designed to settle you down into the interview process. However, first impressions count so you should prepare for it. Keep your answer to less than five minutes. You can give an overview of your qualifications and employment career as given in your CV, tailoring your answer to respond to the requirements of the job description and person specification.

Why do you want to work for us?

The interviewer may be trying to find out how much research you have done into the organisation and how determined you are to get the job. In your preparation before the interview, you should have developed good knowledge of its values and mission statement. You may have found information relating specifically to the department you want to work for and the courses that you hope to teach on. Show how your ambitions match those of the organisation.

What can you offer us?

Again, refer to the job description/person specification to see what the employer is looking for. Here is an example from the one you looked at earlier:

- Keep abreast of new developments in their curriculum area

Even if you have not taught before, you could talk about how you regularly update your subject knowledge and have a good history of continuous professional development. You can talk about the courses and qualifications you have undertaken throughout your career.

What are your strengths?

Look at the job description and person specification and choose the three attributes which you think will get you the job. Talk about these and how you have demonstrated them in your current or previous jobs. What is your unique selling point? Try to think of something that will make you stand out from the other applicants.

What is your greatest achievement so far?

Again, try to tailor your answer so that it demonstrates the skills, knowledge and attributes which the employer is looking for. It may be better to talk about a lesser achievement which demonstrates these than a greater one which does not. Your answer should also demonstrate the aspects which have provided you with the greatest satisfaction.

In your CV, you say you are... Can you give an example of this?

It is important that you don't make claims in your CV which you cannot provide examples for. Ideally, in your CV or supporting statement you will already have provided examples of your knowledge, skills and experience, so use these in your answer. Try to have them on the tip of your tongue - it doesn't look good if you have to think a long time about them.

A question to do with equality and diversity

Many employers will ask you a question which requires you to demonstrate how you have implemented equality and diversity into your professional practice. You need to provide an example which shows how you may have treated an individual differently in order for them to access a service or product in the same way as the majority. For example, if you have a client whose first language is not English, you may need to speak more slowly to them or provide them with an interpreter. Can you think of examples of where you've changed the way you communicate to help someone who may have a physical or learning disability, be of a different sexual orientation to yourself or be from a different cultural background?

Questions to ask at the end of the interview

There are no right or wrong questions - just some you need to use your judgement about and be tactful around. Having questions to ask shows that you are interested in the job and the employer. You should prepare these before the interview and aim to ask between one and three.

Here are some examples:

- What is the working environment like?
- Who will I be working with and what are their relationships to me?
- What will a typical day be like?
- Is there any introductory training or induction process into the organisation?
- What training or professional development does the organisation offer?

Questions to avoid or be very careful about

- What does the job pay? (You should have either already found this out or avoid the question until you are made an offer of employment. Otherwise it makes it sound as if you are only interested in the money.)
- Avoid negative questions or focusing on possible problems.
- Avoid questions about things which have already been covered or that you should already know from your research.

How will your answers be judged?

The interviewers are likely to make notes while you talk to them. They will be noting down your answers and judging how well you answered in terms of relevance, content and detail. They'll usually give a score to each question. At the end of all the interviews, these scores will be added together and the candidate with the highest score is likely to be offered the job.

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During the interview

- Body language – look positive. Smile, make eye contact with your interviewers, lean slightly forward to show interest.
- Use your voice to show your enthusiasm. Try to modulate it so that it is not flat and just one tone.
- Make sure you focus on your strengths and give plenty of examples of how you satisfy the employer's requirements.
- If you don't understand the question, then ask the interviewer to repeat it or explain it in another way. It's better to do this than guess what you think they want and give an unsatisfactory answer.
- Answer as fully as possible.
- Relate your answers to your own knowledge, skills and experience. Provide detailed examples from your professional or personal life.
- Show you are willing to acquire new skills. Give examples of how you already do this.
- If you think you may be nervous, take a paper and pen to note down questions.
- Ask the questions you need answers to about the job or employer.

After the interview

We hope very much that you'll be offered the job and that you'll want to accept it. If so, the next part should be pretty easy. Your new employer will write to you, confirming the terms and conditions of your employment, subject to satisfactory references. If you haven't already done so, it's a good idea to alert your referees that they'll be contacted shortly.

You may also be asked to let your new employer see originals of your qualifications, so it's worth making sure you know where they are. We explained the Criminal Records Bureau check earlier and you'll need to complete the paperwork for this.

Even if you're not successful, you'll have gained a lot of useful experience at the interview and it's a good idea to use this to improve your chances next time.

- Assess your performance. As soon as possible after the interview, make notes on where you think you performed well and anything that wasn't so successful. For example, were you unprepared for some questions? Did nerves get in the way so that you didn't produce your best?
- Ask for feedback. Many employers will provide you with feedback on your interview performance. Think of two or three questions. For example, what experience, knowledge or skills does the successful candidate have that you do not?

With this information, you'll be able to improve your performance next time. There are a number of books available from good booksellers which provide advice and model answers to interview questions and you may want to look at these.

Choosing a referee

Your referees play a vital part in the decision as to whether the employer offers you the job or not. Your referees will be able to confirm the claims you made in your CV/application form and your interview. It is therefore vital that you choose the right ones.

Below you will find some things to think about.

- Choose people you've worked closely with. They'll need to know your work and your strengths. They'll need to show how you applied your knowledge, skills and experience in the workplace. Your line manager may be a suitable person.
- You may wish to consider a referee from your current post and one from previous employment.
- It's good practice to ask your potential referee if they are willing to act on your behalf before you provide their details to an employer.
- Good references take time to prepare so it's a good idea to let your referees know that they may be contacted in the near future. At this point you can usefully check that their contact details are still up to date.
- Brief your referees on the type of work or position you are applying for. Provide them with a shortlist of the qualifications, characteristics and experience that you feel are essential for the role. You could also send them your CV or the application form to remind them of your achievements.
- Show you appreciate their efforts by letting them know the outcome of any interview.
- Remember to provide the employer with full details of your referees' names, titles, company details and contact numbers.

Presentation skills

Some employers may ask you to give a short presentation as part of the interview process. This may seem a little daunting, especially if you're not used to it. But it's an employer's opportunity to see how well you're able to relate to a group and communicate your message – important abilities for anyone who wants to work in teaching or assessing.

They'll tell you in advance what they'd like you to speak about and for how long, so you'll have time to prepare.

The first thing to understand about a presentation is that it puts you on display. Your audience needs to see evidence that it is worth their while to listen and concentrate on what you have to say. Below are some key points to keep in mind:

- **Careful and detailed planning.** The starting point is to decide what you want to cover and whether you'll have time to do so. Don't try to put in too much or you'll sound hurried and the audience won't take everything in.
- **Structure.** A presentation without structure can quickly become confusing and repetitive. A useful rule is to tell listeners what you're going to tell them, tell them and then finish by telling them what you've told them. This is a simple yet effective method where you have a beginning, a middle and an end.
- **Visual aids.** When you give a presentation, your main way of communicating is through speech. However, people don't just learn by listening; they also learn through seeing and doing. In fact, research shows that 87% of information reaches our brain through our eyes but only 9% through our ears. Visual aids include handouts, the use of an overhead or data projector, the whiteboard, examples of actual products, charts and posters, or anything else which appeals to the visual senses. Check with your interviewers in advance what materials you can bring and what technology is available to you.
- **Your eyes.** These are also a powerful tool which you can use to get across your enthusiasm and confidence in what you are saying. You can increase your rapport with your audience by ensuring that you make frequent eye contact with each one.

- **Your voice.** When you are presenting to a group, the simple rule is not to speak too quickly. You can adjust the speed by watching your audience and seeing how well they are paying attention. It's also important to vary the pitch of your voice so that it doesn't become monotonous. It's useful to show when you are moving from one point to another by preceding each new topic with a brief pause.
- **Your face.** An audience will watch your face. If you look bored, then they are unlikely to be interested in what you are saying. However, if you look animated and enthusiastic, then they are likely to listen to find out what it is that interests you so much.
- **Stance.** Your posture says a great deal about you and you need to ensure that the way you stand doesn't, at the very least, indicate boredom. Some people find it difficult to know what to do with their hands when they are speaking and develop habits such as fiddling with a pen or the coins in their pockets, which is very distracting to listeners. However, your hands can be used to emphasise what you are saying.

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What further support is available?

You'll have seen throughout this guide that we encourage you to contact the free Information and Advice Service, offered by Lifelong Learning UK. This service is always available to you. You can call them on [020 7936 5798](tel:02079365798) or email advice@lluk.org

The Information and Advice Service provides advice on aspects of working in the lifelong learning sector and is staffed by experienced teachers and teacher trainers.

You can speak to an adviser about

- careers in the lifelong learning sector
- the qualifications you'll need and what it's like to be a teacher, tutor or trainer
- the reform of initial teacher/tutor/trainer education from September 2007
- teacher training and professional development
- learning support
- continuing professional development for teachers of literacy, numeracy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and teachers of areas of specialism
- working in further education.

You can also find details of other agencies on page 69 (sources of useful information) that can provide you with careers advice.

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Skills for Life

There are a substantial number of people in the UK who are not able to read, write or calculate at a level which allows them to fully engage with life and society. Research shows that up to seven million adults have literacy skills below those expected of an average 11 year-old, and even more have problems with numeracy. This significantly disadvantages them, their families and the economy.

Skills for Life teaching seeks to improve these people's literacy and numeracy skills and knowledge. You may have heard this referred to as Basic Skills.

As well as teaching your own subject or specialism, you could also consider qualifying as a Skills for Life teacher. Depending on the training provision in your area, it may not take you any longer than qualifying to teach your own subject, and may offer you more opportunities for finding work.

This is how it might work

To undertake a full teaching role, teaching your own specialism, you need:

- a level 3 or above qualification in your subject (or substantial professional experience if there is a particular demand)
- a Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector teaching qualification.

To undertake a full teaching role, teaching either literacy or numeracy, you need:

- a subject specialism in either literacy or numeracy
- a Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector teaching qualification.

The advantage of training to teach a Skill for Life is that you will gain the Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector teacher training qualification which will allow you to also teach your own subject.

Let's imagine that you currently have qualifications in Engineering and you train to teach either literacy or numeracy. When you finish the qualifications, you will be able to teach both Engineering and a Skill for Life.

If you want to teach either literacy or numeracy, you'll need to demonstrate to a training provider that you have level 3 personal skills in either literacy or numeracy. (Look at page 67 if you need to remind yourself of the levels.)

They may want to test you themselves or you may be able to provide evidence from your own work. For example, if you have a qualification in Engineering, this will probably contain a significant element of maths.

Skills for Life are considered 'shortage subjects' and there are financial incentives attached to training to teach literacy or numeracy. You can find these on page 29. You should note that the value of the incentives varies across subjects or specialisms and it may not be in your best financial interest to teach a Skill for Life.

If you'd like to talk to an adviser about training to teach Skills for Life, please call the free Lifelong Learning UK Information and Advice Service on [020 7936 5798](tel:02079365798) or email advice@lluk.org

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Sources of useful information

Lifelong Learning UK Information and Advice Service

Offers free, confidential, specialist advice on all aspects of working in the further education sector. Call [020 7936 5798](tel:02079365798) or email advice@lluk.org

Careers Advice Service

Offers free, confidential advice and can help with developing your CV and interview skills. Call [0800 100 900](tel:0800100900) or visit www.careersadvice.direct.gov.uk

Your local further education college

Offers free information, advice and guidance on careers and courses. You can find your local further education college at: www.schoolswebdirectory.co.uk/fecolleges.php

This site lists details of organisations and services in the further education and work-based learning sector: www.feevents.co.uk/searchfe

Next Step

Offers free, face-to-face careers advice. This website will provide you with information for your local centre: www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/AdultLearning/DG_071762

Training Reference

Offers information on developing your CV as well as links to other agencies offering jobs: www.trainingreference.co.uk/resources/jobs.htm

Job advertisements

Here are some of the sites where you'll find jobs advertised. It is also useful to search a potential employer's website. Many online sites allow you to refine your search according to subject, geographical area, etc. Some sites allow you to register your interest with them and they will then send you an alert when a job matching your requirements becomes available.

The Times Educational Supplement published on Friday or at: www.tes.co.uk

The Guardian newspaper education section published on Tuesday or at:
www.jobs.guardian.co.uk/jobs/education

www.jobs.ac.uk

www.fecareers.co.uk

www.fejobs.com

www.nvqjobs.com

www.protocol-national.co.uk

www.teachFE.com

Information and advice

Other websites where information and advice can be found which are referred to in this document:

Lifelong Learning UK, for free information and professional advice:
www.lluk.org

Standards Verification UK (SVUK) is responsible for endorsing generic initial teacher training (ITT) qualifications and those for Skills for Life practitioners in ESOL, literacy and numeracy for the lifelong learning sector in the UK:

www.standardsverificationuk.org/evidencing-general-information-on-levels.htm

The national agency which is the only official source of information on international qualifications for those wishing to work or study in the UK:

www.naric.org.uk

The Institute for Learning is the professional body for teachers and trainers in further education (FE) and skills:

www.ifl.ac.uk/membership/member-benefits

The Institute for Learning also manages the process whereby teachers and trainers can gain Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) or Associate Teacher Learning and Skills (ATLS) status:

www.ifl.ac.uk/qtls-atls

Read Write Plus is based in the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills, and is responsible for ensuring efforts to improve literacy, language and numeracy skills at national and local level are consistent and well co-ordinated:

www.dcsf.gov.uk/readwriteplus/learning

The Tariff of Initial Teacher and Training Qualifications is managed by Standards Verification UK, and sets out the value of qualifications awarded prior to September 2007 that are held by members of the FE sector workforce:

www.tariff.svuk.eu

The criminal record bureau, CRB, is an Executive Agency of the Home Office set up to help organisations make safer recruitment decisions:

www.crb.gov.uk

The link to the section of the Directgov website helps explain the differences between qualifications and where you can find advice to help you pick a qualification that's right for you:

www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/QualificationsExplained/DG_10039017

This database is where you can search for details of current and expired accredited qualifications:

www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk

Please note: Lifelong Learning UK is not responsible for the content or availability of external websites.

For more information about working
in the further education sector
call **020 7936 5798** or email **advice@lluk.org**

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