Further Education and Work-Based Learning Education Workforce Survey Report 2023

Mae'r adroddiad yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

JOINT TRADE UNIONS WALES
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ColegauCymru
CollegesWales

Cyngor y Gweithlu Addysg
Education Workforce Council

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Executive summary

Overview

1. This report presents findings from the 2023 Further Education and Work-Based Learning Education Workforce Survey carried out between the 17 January 2023 and 31 March 2023 by the Education Workforce Council (EWC) on behalf of the national FE lecturer workload steering group (Welsh Government, ColegauCymru and the Joint Trade Unions).

2. The steering group agreed that four categories of staff would be included in the survey. This comprised three categories that are registered with the EWC: FE teachers, FE learning support workers, and work-based learning practitioners; and business support staff in FE institutions. Each set of survey questions were designed and agreed by the national workload steering group.

3. An invitation to complete an online questionnaire via the EWC website was issued to registered practitioners (further education teachers, further education learning support staff and work-based learning practitioners) in Wales for whom an email or postal address was held on the Register of Education Practitioners (the Register). Business support staff are not required to register with the EWC, consequently they were provided with a link to their survey directly by their employer.

4. Registered respondent information was matched to the Register in order to verify responses and facilitate additional analyses relating to other variables, in particular age, gender and employment description. Where possible, a comparison to the 2021 survey results has been made.

5. It is important to note that the survey did not aim to secure a representative sample of responses based on the characteristics of the workforce. In terms of the characteristics of those who did respond, the gender balance of respondents is broadly similar to the profile on the Register. The age breakdown differs slightly with an older respondent age profile in comparison to the Register.

6. Of those registrants in the FE and WBL sector who have declared an ethnicity, it is predominantly White (FET 76.1%; FELSW 79.9%; WBLP 81.7%) and is broadly similar to the respondent profile (FET 72.3%; FELSW 78.9%; WBLP 83.1%). Ethnicity is further broken down by registrant group in each section which also includes the percentage where the ethnicity is unknown. These should be considered as part of any further analysis.

7. In the 2021 National Education Workforce Survey[1], workload concerns were raised as a common issue. Since then, the national workload steering group has been undertaking work to address those concerns. The working group wanted to assess the progress made to date and this survey was undertaken to help assess that progress.

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[1] The National Education Workforce Survey 2021

Key findings

8. Note: for the purpose of this report the following acronyms apply:
   - FET - further education teacher (1,413 responses)
   - FELSW – further education learning support worker (355 responses)
   - WBLP – work-based learning practitioner (419 responses)
   - BSS – business support staff (931 responses)

9. Further education (FE) lecturers are known in legislation as FE teachers and therefore the legislative terminology has been used in this report.

10. The summary of key findings from the survey across the registrant groups as well as for BSS are set out in the Executive Summary. Individual summaries can be found in sections 3.0 to 6.0 and the open text responses have been collated in section 7.0

Role and career

- The highest number of responses in each survey group to the question about how registrants felt their career would change in the next three years was to *continue to develop their practice* WBLP 65.2%, FET 58.7% and FELSW 54.1%. This was also the most selected response in the 2021 survey.

Working patterns and workload

- Full-time FET respondents indicated that they regularly work, on average, 49 hours during a typical working week (50.5 hours in 2021). FELSW respondents recorded an average of 43.2 working hours (40.8 average hours in 2021) whilst WBLP respondents recorded 47 average working hours (43.5 average hours in 2021). Please view Annex A for further information regarding how this was calculated.

- FET and WBLP respondents stated that they spent the most time on *assessment and marking, administration and paperwork, and planning and preparation* in terms of the number of hours spent over and above core work activities e.g. teaching, supporting learning. In addition, *non-learning support activities relating to learners* featured heavily for FELSW respondents

- Being able to *effectively manage workload within contracted hours* continues to be an issue across all survey respondents. 75.3% of FET (64.8% in 2021) *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* that they were able to *effectively manage their workload within the contracted hours* compared to 44.1% of WBLP (25.0% in 2021), 27.6% FELSW (16.5% in 2021) and 26.2% of BSS. Please note that 'neither agree nor disagree' was an option in 2021 but removed for the 2023 survey.

- When asked if the respondents had seen a *positive impact on their workload over the last 12 months* in relation to their college action plan, WBLP respondents had the highest positive response with 45.1% *agreeing* or *strongly agreeing*. Conversely 14.5% of FET respondents said they *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that they had seen a positive impact.

Wellbeing

- Across all groups, over 50% responded that they were *not very anxious* or *not anxious at all* with

regards to job security over the last 12 months. 62% of BSS, 59.7% of WBLP (43.5% in 2021), 54.1% of FET (57.7% in 2021), 53.3% of FELSW (56.5% in 2021).

- Workload remains a cause of anxiety or stress for respondents with FET recording the highest response at 82.1% and FELSW reporting the lowest at 46.5%. 64.9% of WBLP and 53.3% of BSS responded that they were either *fairly anxious* or *very anxious* about their workload.

- A range of different wellbeing activities are offered by FE institutions with *wellbeing days or activities* being the option that the highest percentage of respondents have made use of across most of the respondent groups (17.2% of BSS, 15.8% of WBL, 15.5% of FELSW and 13.9% of FET). WBLP had the highest response for making use of *training courses on managing their wellbeing* at 20.8%.

Professional learning

- Over 75% of FELSW, WBL and BSS respondents had undertaken some professional learning in the past 12 months. WBLP recorded 86.2%, followed by BSS at 77.7% and FELSW reporting the lowest percentage at 76.3% (compared with WBLP 95.7% and FELSW 87.7% undertaking professional learning in 2021).

- Attending *internal CPD training sessions including e-learning* was the most commonly selected form of professional learning undertaken in the last 12 months (FET 76.4%, WBLP 69.2% and FELSW 59.7%).

- As with the 2021 survey, in 2023, *conflict with work, not enough time* was one of the main barriers from accessing professional learning. 77.4% of FET (62.9% in 2021), 61.6% of WBLP (43.1% in 2021), 43.1% of FELSW (36.2% in 2021) and 52.5% of BSS. *Home, family, personal commitments* also featured highly amongst the respondent groups at 41.1% of FET, 35.2% of FELSW, 31.3% of WBLP (FET 30.0%, FELSW 28.4%, WBLP 25.3%, in 2021) and 27.3% of BSS.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This survey was commissioned by the national workload steering group who are made up of:
- Welsh Government;
- ColegauCymru; and
- The Joint Trade Unions Wales.

1.2 The EWC's role was to coordinate the survey, analyse the results and draft the resulting report on behalf of the national workload steering group.

1.3 EWC's role as an independent regulator, is formally prescribed within the Education (Wales) Act 2014. Regulations require a practitioner to be registered in the category or categories for the work that they undertake or intend to undertake resulting in some practitioners being registered in multiple categories. More information available at www.ewc.wales.

1.4 The findings of the report are set out as follows:
- section 2.0 outlines the methodology undertaken for the survey;
- sections 3.0 to 6.0 provide the results of the data tabulation and additional comments from the survey questions;
- section 7.0 provides the open text analysis for the survey which has been collated by theme.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 The initial research group invited to respond to the survey consisted of registered practitioners and unregistered business support staff broken down by the following categories:

Table 1: Breakdown of registered practitioners

Survey group	Number invited to respond	Base number of registrants for response rate calculation (see 2.2)
Further education teacher	6,735	5,149
Further education learning support worker	6,020	2,790
Work-based learning practitioner	3,270	2,745
Business support staff	4,478	N/A

2.2 A small number of registrants without a valid email or home address (therefore uncontactable) are not included in the above table. Practitioners may be registered in more than one category and therefore were invited to complete all applicable surveys. Where multiple category registrants only completed one survey response, they have been included in the base number for that registrant group and removed from the others. Where multiple category registrants did not respond at all they have been included in the base number of the category most relevant to their employment as recorded on the Register. 8 respondents chose to complete more than one survey.

2.3 The invitations to complete the surveys were issued to registrants by email (or post where no email addresses were held) on the launch date of 17 January 2023. FE institutions were provided with bilingual posters to print and publicise the survey. They included a QR code for easy access to the surveys.

2.4 Business Support Staff were provided with the link to their survey directly by their employer.

2.5 The invitation directed registrants to a bilingual online questionnaire available from our website. The surveys were published jointly by members of the steering group.

2.6 Reminders were sent throughout the period from January to March 2023 to those individuals who had not responded by e-mail or post as applicable. Regular social media reminders were also sent via our Twitter and Facebook platforms. Partners also issued regular reminders using their social media, newsletters and website communications.

2.7 Note some percentages in this report may not sum to 100 due to:
- Rounding;
- some questions allowed for multiple responses.

2.8 Duplicate, unverified responses and other anomalies such as false names were excluded. The response rates are calculated based on the number of verified responses divided by the base number of registrants (table 1) invited to respond, which is broken down as follows:

Table 2: Breakdown of responses

Survey group	Verified responses	% response rate[2]
Further education teacher	1,413	27.4
Further education learning support worker	355	12.7
Work-based learning practitioner	419	15.3
Business support staff	931	20.8

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[2] The response rate has been calculated by dividing the number of verified responses by the base number of registrants invited to respond

3.0 Results – further education teacher

3.1 Respondent profile[3]

In term of the representativeness of respondents, the gender balance is broadly similar to the profile on the Register. The age breakdown differs to the profile on the register with a slightly higher proportion of respondents in the 50 and above age groups.

Table 3: Gender balance of respondents to the FE teacher survey

	Respondents		Profile on the Register[4]	
	Number	%	Number	%
Female	820	58.0	3,996	59.3
Male	593	42.0	2,739	40.7
Total	**1,413**	**100**	**6,735**	**100**

Table 4: Age range of respondents to the FE teacher survey

	Respondents		Profile on the Register	
	Number	%	Number	%
29 and under	50	3.5	472	7.0
30 to 39	239	16.9	1,397	20.7
40 to 49	382	27.0	1,763	26.2
50 to 59	543	38.4	2,056	30.5
60+	199	14.1	1,047	15.5
Total	**1,413**	**100**	**6,735**	**100**

Table 5: Ethnicity of respondents to the FE teacher survey

	Respondents		Profile on the Register	
	Number	%	Number	%
White	1,022	72.3	5,125	76.1
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	9	0.6	51	0.8
Asian/Asian British	16	1.1	113	1.7
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	9	0.6	67	1.0
Other ethnic group	4	0.3	44	0.7
Does not wish to record an ethnic group	37	2.6	175	2.6
Unknown	316	22.4	1,160	17.2
Total	**1,413**	**100**	**6,735**	**100**

Of the 6,735, 3,666 are registered only as an FET, 3,069 are registered in more than one category of registration.

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[3] 1,388 (98.2%) registrants completed the survey through the medium of English and 25 (1.8%) through the medium of Welsh.
[4] Based on data extracted from the Register on the 31 March 2023 which also applies to the profile of each section.

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Table 6: Breakdown of respondents to the FE teacher survey by FE Institution[5]

	Respondents	Profile on the Register	Respondents by Profile on the register	Respondents by Base number
	Number	Number	%	%
Adult Learning Wales	33	176	18.8	19.9
Bridgend College	85	328	25.9	26.7
Cardiff and Vale College	178	547	32.5	33.5
Coleg Cambria	98	482	20.3	21.2
Coleg Gwent	128	598	21.4	22.5
Coleg Sir Gâr	121	434	27.9	29.2
Coleg y Cymoedd	121	392	30.9	31.8
Gower College Swansea	47	429	11.0	11.4
Grŵp Llandrillo Menai	190	692	27.5	29.1
NPTC Group	172	362	47.5	48.5
Pembrokeshire College	45	200	22.5	23.8
St David's Catholic College	18	95	18.9	19.1
The College Merthyr Tydfil	63	136	46.3	46.7
Total in employment	1,299	4,871	26.7	27.8
Others in service	25	623	4.0	20.3
Others out of service	89	1,241	7.2	25.8
Total	**1,413**	**6,735**	**21.0**	**27.4**

Respondents % column shows the percentage of respondents who answered the survey from each institution according to their employment record on the Register.

Where multiple category registrants only completed one survey response, they have been included in the base number for that registrant group and removed from the others. Where multiple category registrants did not respond at all they have been included in the base number of the category most relevant to their employment as recorded on the Register. 21 FE teachers have also completed another survey.

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[5] The EWC is reliant on the employer and the practitioner to update this information. Registration Rules: '17- (1) A registered person shall notify the Council within a period of one month of any change to any particulars recorded in the Register in relation to him or her', however not all practitioners adhere to this timescale.

'Others in service' includes supply, registrants on maternity leave and those working in a FE teacher role outside one of the listed FE institutions. 'Others out of service' includes retired, registrants without a current employment record and those not employed as an FE teacher.

3.2 Key findings: further education teachers (FET)

Role and career

- Just over half of FET respondents (52.4%) were employed on salaried full-time-permanent contracts (46.2% in 2021).

- In terms of career development, 58.7% of FET respondents indicated they intended to continue to develop their practice over the next 3 years, (a decrease of 7.7% since 2021). 27.9% of respondents stated they intend to mentor or support less experienced colleagues (24.2% in 2021).

Working patterns and workload

- During an average working week, on average, full-time FET (contracted to work for 37 hours or more) respondents stated that they worked 49 hours (50.5 hours in 2021). The common contract suggests there to be no more than 24 hours a week of teaching and 20 minutes per teaching hour of prep and marking, a total of 32 hours a week. Most hours were spent on;
  - *teaching (and/or providing cover – if applicable)* – 22.0 average hours (20.7 hours in 2021);
  - *assessment and marking* – 5.4 average hours (6.0 hours in 2021);
  - *planning and preparation* – 5.4 average hours (5.6 hours in 2021).

- Workload remains a concern for FET respondents, 75.3% either *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* that they were *able to manage their workload within the agreed working hours* (64.8% in 2021) Please note that 'neither agree nor disagree' was an option in 2021 but was not included in the 2023 survey.

- 70.0% of FET respondents stated there had been an overall increase in their *2022/23 workload when compared to 2021/22*. 31.8% of respondents stated that they had seen a *significant increase* in their workload.

- Over half, 53.3%, of FET respondents *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* they were *aware of their college's action plan to help tackle workload issues.* 18.0% of respondents *strongly disagreed.* 66.1% of respondents said they had not been *directly involved in actions their employer is taking to help tackle workload issues*. Whilst 72.3% of respondents *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* to seeing *a positive impact on their workload over the last 12 months* in relation to their college action plan, 14.5% respondents had seen a positive impact.

Wellbeing

- Most FET respondents stated they were *fairly anxious* or *very anxious* in relation to the following areas:
  - *workload* 82.1% (77.9% in 2021)
  - *cost of living* 80.5%
  - *Covid-19 in general* 48.5% (75.3% in 2021)
  - *job security* 44.7% (38.2% in 2021)

- Respondents recognised that a range of support for wellbeing is on offer from their institution with the most frequently identified being *wellbeing support* 85.2%, *training courses on managing wellbeing* 60.9%, *wellbeing days or activities* 48.6%. 12.2% had made use of the *wellbeing support*, whilst 11.7% had attended the *training courses on managing wellbeing* and 12.0% had used the *dedicated staff space away from their workroom*.

Professional learning

- 86.6% of respondents spent time in *college-led professional learning in the last 12 months*. 76.9% of respondents participated in *self-directed professional learning in their own time, outside of work in the last 12 months*. Of those, 31.1% said that they had spent 30 or more hours on professional learning in their own time.

- A range of activities had been undertaken to *enable individuals to develop their practice and support learners*. The most popular activities were *attending internal CPD training sessions including e-learning* 80.5%, *collaborating with colleagues* 67.4% and *informal discussions with colleagues/managers about teaching and learning* 66.9%.

- The main barriers to accessing professional learning were *conflict with work/not enough time* 77.4% (62.9% in 2021), followed by *home, family, personal commitments* 41.1% (30.0% in 2021) and *cost* 33.8% (22.5% in 2021). 15.1% of FET respondents felt there were *no barriers to accessing their professional learning needs over the last 12 months* (27.9% in 2021).

3.3 Tabulation of responses - further education teacher survey

The 'No response' figures in a table record that an individual has answered some, but not all of the questions asked. Where a 'No response' figure is shown it meant that those individuals did not answer that particular question.

Role and career

Table 7 Question 1: Which of the following best describes your contract of employment as an FE teacher? (Select one)

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Salaried full time – permanent	741	52.4
Salaried fractional – permanent	370	26.2
Part-time, hourly paid – permanent	85	6.0
Salaried full-time – fixed term	51	3.6
Part-time, hourly paid – fixed term	50	3.5
Management salaried-fractional – permanent	47	3.3
Salaried fractional – fixed term	27	1.9
Other (please state)	40	2.8
No response	2	0.1
Total	**1,413**	**100**

Table 8 Question 2: How do you see your teaching career changing in the next three years? (select all that apply)

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Continuing to develop and strengthen your practice as a lecturer	829	58.7
Mentoring or supporting less experienced colleagues	394	27.9
Reducing your working hours	270	19.1
Leaving teaching	270	19.1
Increasing your working hours	199	14.1
Progressing to become a middle or senior manager	161	11.4
Retiring	157	11.1
Moving to a different educational setting (e.g. school, HE)	102	7.2
Moving to a different FE college	89	6.3
Other (please state)	50	3.5
Total	**2,521**	
Base - total number of respondents	**1,413**	

As respondents were able to select all answers which apply, included in table 8 are: 744 registrants who selected 1 response option; 362 who selected 2options; 201 who selected 3 options; 78 who selected 4 options; 17 who selected 5 options; 6 who selected 6 options; 1 who selected 7 options and 1 who selected 10 options. 3 registrants did not respond and are not included in the above table.

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Working patterns and workload

Table 9 Question 3a: Please confirm the number of hours (numerically) you are contracted to work per week

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Over 30	784	55.5
26-30	127	9.0
21-25	136	9.6
16-20	140	9.9
11-15	34	2.4
6-10	34	2.4
5 and under	33	2.3
No hours provided	110	7.8
FTE figure (e.g 0.6)	9	0.6
N/A (e.g too many hours)	6	0.4
Total	**1,413**	**100**

Table 10 Question 3b: During an average working week how long do you spend on the following? Pleasestate number of hours (numerically). Include tasks that take place outside of teaching hours, including during weekends and evenings. Round to the nearest half an hour.

	Average number of hours worked per week	Average contracted hours
Full-time	49	37.4
Part-time	33.9	20.4
Other	33.8	21.8

Based on contract information provided in question 1	Full-time Average hours		Part-time Average hours		Other Average hours	
	Per week	%	Per week	%	Per week	%
Activities related to supporting colleagues (e.g. management, coaching, mentoring)	3.0	5.5	1.7	4.3	4.2	8.8
Administration, paperwork and budgets	4.5	8.1	3.0	7.7	4.6	9.7
Assessment and marking	5.4	9.9	4.0	10.0	3.8	8.0
Non-teaching activities relating to learners (e.g. welfare, safeguarding, extracurricular activities, parental contact)	3.0	5.5	2.2	5.6	2.9	6.2
Planning and preparation	5.4	9.8	4.7	11.9	3.6	7.7
Preparing resources specifically for digital learning including converting existing teaching content	2.8	5.1	2.1	5.4	1.5	3.1
Professional learning	2.1	3.9	1.7	4.3	2.1	4.4
Receiving support from line manager, mentor or supervisor	0.7	1.3	0.5	1.3	1.1	2.3
Reflecting on practice	1.3	2.4	1.4	3.5	1.7	3.6
Teaching (and/or providing cover – if applicable)	22.0	40.0	14.9	37.6	14.3	30.0
Other	4.6	8.3	3.3	8.4	7.7	16.3
Total	**55.0**	**100**	**39.6**	**100**	**47.5**	**100**

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Not all answers inputted by respondents have been included in the analysis in table 10. 15 respondents did not log any hours against the activities. Some declared total weekly hours worked which ranged from 2 to 162 hours per week. 2 respondents logged hours which totalled over 168 hours. These anomalies have not been included and a further explanation regarding the calculation of the hours worked is available in Annex A.

Based on the information provided in 3a and 3b, in an average week, 73 (11.1%) full-time FET respondents logged hours against activities that were less than their contracted hours, 54 respondents (8.2%) logged activities that matched their contracted hours and 524 respondents (79.6%) logged activities that totalled more than their contracted hours. 7 respondents did not answer this question (1.1%) and are not included in the table 10 responses.

Based on the information provided in 3a and 3b, in an average week, 73 (11.5%) part-time FET respondents logged hours against activities that were less than their contracted hours, 33 respondents (5.2%) logged activities that matched their contracted hours and 523 respondents (82.2%) logged activities that totalled more than their contracted hours. 7 respondents did not answer this question (1.1%) and are not included in the table 10 responses.

Table 11 Question 4: To what extent do you agree or disagree that you are able to effectively manage your existing workload within your contracted working hours? (Select one)

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Strongly agree	43	3.0
Agree	294	20.8
Disagree	524	37.1
Strongly disagree	540	38.2
No response	12	0.8
Total	**1,413**	**100**

Table 12 Question 5: My overall workload in 2022/23 when compared with 2021/22 has:

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Decreased significantly	17	1.2
Decreased slightly	77	5.4
Neither increased or decreased	312	22.1
Increased slightly	540	38.2
Increased significantly	449	31.8
No response	18	1.3
Total	**1,413**	**100**

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Table 13 Question 6: Please rate the following statements about your employer's approach to tackling staff workload:

	I am aware of my college's action plan to help tackle workload issues		I am or have been directly involved in actions my employer is taking to help tackle workload issues	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
Strongly agree	75	5.3	52	3.7
Agree	375	26.5	264	18.7
Disagree	499	35.3	587	41.5
Strongly Disagree	254	18.0	348	24.6
Not sure or no response	210	14.9	162	11.5
Total	**1,413**	**100**	**1,413**	**100**

	My college considers the workload implications of any new processes or other changes it introduces		I have seen the positive impact on my workload over the last 12 months	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
Strongly agree	42	3.0	35	2.5
Agree	281	19.9	170	12.0
Disagree	477	33.8	577	40.8
Strongly disagree	331	23.4	445	31.5
Not sure or no response	282	20.0	186	13.2
Total	**1,413**	**100**	**1,413**	**100**

Wellbeing

Table 14 Question 7: Over the last 12 months, please rate your levels of anxiety or stress in relation to any of these areas.

	Cost of living		COVID-19 in general (including concerns about your own health orthose close to you, and/or impact on your working patterns)	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
Not anxious at all	38	2.7	183	13.0
Not very anxious	213	15.1	527	37.3
Fairly anxious	620	43.9	461	32.6
Very anxious	517	36.6	224	15.9
Don't know	25	1.8	18	1.3
Total	**1,413**	**100**	**1,413**	**100**

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	Your job security		Your workload	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
Not anxious at all	191	13.5	28	2.0
Not very anxious	573	40.6	191	13.5
Fairly anxious	434	30.7	585	41.4
Very anxious	198	14.0	575	40.7
Don't know	17	1.2	34	2.4
Total	**1,413**	**100**	**1,413**	**100**

Table 15 Question 8: Does your college offer any of the following types of support for your wellbeing? (Select all that apply)

	My college offers this support		I have made use of this support	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
Wellbeing support (for example, counselling, mental health first aiders, wellbeing champions)	1,204	85.2	173	12.2
Dedicated staff space away from your workroom	562	39.8	170	12.0
Employee assistance programme	497	35.2	53	3.8
Flexibility to manage caring responsibilities	544	38.5	138	9.8
Staff wellbeing representative through trade union structures	675	47.8	74	5.2
Training courses on managing your wellbeing	860	60.9	165	11.7
Wellbeing breaks during the working day	250	17.7	61	4.3
Wellbeing days or activities	687	48.6	197	13.9
Other support [please specify]	32	2.3	18	1.3
Total	**5,311**		**1,049**	
Base - total number of respondents	**1,413**		**1,413**	

Support offered:
As respondents were able to select all answers which apply: 91 registrants did not respond to this question and are not included in the above table; 144 registrants selected 1 response option; 204 selected 2 options; 270 selected 3 options; 223 selected 4 options; 160 selected 5 options; 134 selected 6 options; 57 selected 7 options; 116 selected 8 and 14 selected 9.

Made use of support:
As respondents were able to select all answers which apply: 897 registrants did not respond to this question and are not included in the above table; 222 registrants selected 1 response option; 153

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selected 2 options; 79 selected 3 options; 39 selected 4 options; 10 selected 5 options; 6 selected 6 options; 1 selected 7 options; 3 selected 8 options and 1 selected 9 options. 36.5% of respondents have made use of one or more of the types of support for wellbeing that is on offer.

Professional learning

Table 16 Question 9: If you have been employed for 12 months or more, please provide an estimate of:

	How many hours you have spent in college-led professional learning in the last 12 months?		How many hours of your paid time you have spent in self-directed professional learning in the last 12 months?	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
30 hours or more (or proportionate amount if part time)	418	29.6	211	14.9
Less than 30 hours (or proportionate amount if part time)	805	57.0	684	48.4
None	190	13.4	518	36.7
Total	**1,413**	**100**	**1,413**	**100**

	How many hours of your own time, outside work, you have spent in self-directed professional learning in the last 12 months?	
	Number of responses	% of respondents
30 hours or more (or proportionate amount if part time)	439	31.1
Less than 30 hours (or proportionate amount if part time)	647	45.8
None	327	23.1
Total	**1,413**	**100**

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Employed for less than 12 months or are not currently employed	84	5.9
No response	1,329	94.1
Total	**1,413**	**100**

Table 17 Question 10: In the last 12 months have you been able to choose the scope of professional learning you have undertake

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Yes	374	26.5
No	278	19.7
Some of the time	725	51.3
No response	36	2.5
Total	**1,413**	**100**

Further education teacher

Table 18 Question 11: Please tick any of the following you have participated in and indicate the impact of each of these in enabling you to develop your practice and support your learners

	Attending an accredited training course		Attending internal CPD training sessions including e-learning	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
I participated in this	666	47.1	1,080	76.4
High	309	21.9	192	13.6
Moderate	212	15.0	478	33.8
Low	89	6.3	303	21.4
No impact	56	4.0	107	7.6
Base number of respondents	**1,413**		**1,413**	

	Attending training/workshops from external speakers		Coaching or mentoring	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
I participated in this	910	64.4	508	36.0
High	205	14.5	152	10.8
Moderate	390	27.6	180	12.7
Low	231	16.3	102	7.2
No impact	84	6.0	74	5.2
Base number of respondents	**1,413**		**1,413**	

	Collaborating with colleagues		Guidance/support from line manager	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
I participated in this	981	69.4	843	59.7
High	560	39.6	344	24.3
Moderate	325	23.0	311	22.0
Low	76	5.4	127	9.0
No impact	20	1.4	61	4.3
Base number of respondents	**1,413**		**1,413**	

Further education teacher

	Industry placement/upskilling		Informal discussions with colleagues/managers about teaching & learning	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
I participated in this	371	26.3	999	70.7
High	117	8.3	522	36.9
Moderate	83	5.9	348	24.6
Low	65	4.6	97	6.9
No impact	106	7.5	32	2.3
Base number of respondents	**1,413**		**1,413**	

	Peer observation		Undertaking own reading	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
I participated in this	701	49.6	902	63.8
High	230	16.3	526	37.2
Moderate	266	18.8	302	21.4
Low	139	9.8	53	3.8
No impact	66	4.7	21	1.5
Base number of respondents	**1,413**		**1,413**	

	Working on own area of interest through action research or Professional Learning and Development processes (PLDP)	
	Number of responses	% of respondents
I participated in this	582	41.2
High	302	21.4
Moderate	177	12.5
Low	63	4.5
No impact	40	2.8
Base number of respondents	**1,413**	

Further education teacher

Table 19 Question 12: What do you think are the main barriers or obstacles stopping you accessing professional learning? (Select all that apply)

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Conflict with your work, not enough time	1,094	77.4
Home, family, personal commitments	581	41.1
Cost	477	33.8
The professional learning on offer is not of sufficient quality or is not relevant	366	25.9
Lack of support from your college and / or manager	189	13.4
You do not have the required pre-requisites (e.g. qualifications, experience, seniority)	18	1.3
No barriers, you have accessed the professional learning needed in the last 12 months	213	15.1
Other (Please state)	29	2.1
No response	25	1.8
Total	**2,992**	
Base - total number of respondents	**1,413**	

As respondents were able to select all answers which apply, included in table 19 are: 443 registrants selected 1 response option; 487 who selected 2 options; 317 who selected 3 options; 110 who selected 4 options; 28 who selected 5 options; 2 who selected 6 options and 1 who selected 7 options.

4.0 Results – further education learning support worker

4.1 Respondent profile[6]

In terms of the representativeness of respondents the gender balance differs to the profile on the register, with a slightly lower proportion of male respondents. There are also fewer younger respondents particularly in the 29 and under category.

Table 20: Gender balance of respondents to the further education learning support worker survey

	Respondents		Profile on the Register	
	Number	%	Number	%
Female	257	72.4	4,130	68.6
Male	98	27.6	1,889	31.4
Not specified	0	0.0	1	0.0
Total	**355**	**100**	**6,020**	**100**

Table 21: Age range of respondents to the further education learning support worker survey

	Respondents		Profile on the Register	
	Number	%	Number	%
29 and under	42	11.8	1,249	20.7
30 to 39	72	20.3	1,374	22.8
40 to 49	69	19.4	1,300	21.6
50 to 59	102	28.7	1,312	21.8
60+	70	19.7	785	13.0
Total	**355**	**100**	**6,020**	**100**

Table 22: Ethnicity of respondents to the further education learning support worker survey

	Respondents		Profile on the Register	
	Number	%	Number	%
White	280	78.9	4,807	79.9
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	4	1.1	69	1.1
Asian/Asian British	8	2.3	200	3.3
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	4	1.1	100	1.7
Other ethnic group	1	0.3	47	0.8
Does not wish to record an ethnic group	6	1.7	150	2.5
Unknown	52	14.6	647	10.7
Total	**355**	**100**	**6,020**	**100**

Of the 6,020, 2,129 are registered only as a FELSW, 3,891 are registered in more than one category of registration.

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[6] 348 (98.0%) registrants completed the survey through the medium of English and 7 (2.0%) through the medium of Welsh.

Further education learning support worker

Table 23: Breakdown of respondents to the further education learning support worker survey by FE Institution[7]

	Respondents	Profile on the Register	Respondents by Profile on the register	Respondents by Base number
	Number	Number	%	%
Adult Learning Wales	1	16	6.3	7.1
Bridgend College	11	200	5.5	6.4
Cardiff and Vale College	37	248	14.9	15.7
Coleg Cambria	18	325	5.5	6.0
Coleg Gwent	22	283	7.8	9.8
Coleg Sir Gâr	42	210	20.0	25.0
Coleg y Cymoedd	17	292	5.8	6.1
Gower College Swansea	7	218	3.2	3.4
Grŵp Llandrillo Menai	30	418	7.2	8.2
NPTC Group	43	226	19.0	20.0
Pembrokeshire College	15	200	7.5	10.7
St David's Catholic College	2	35	5.7	5.7
The College Merthyr Tydfil	17	58	29.3	29.8
Total in employment	262	2,729	9.6	10.9
Others in service	23	1,181	1.9	23.0
Others out of service	70	2,110	3.3	25.1
Total	**355**	**6,020**	**5.9**	**12.7**

Respondents % column shows the percentage of respondents who answered the survey from each institution according to their employment record on the Register.

Where multiple category registrants only completed one survey response, they have been included in the base number for that registrant group and removed from the others. Where multiple category registrants did not respond at all they have been included in the base number of the category most relevant to their employment as recorded on the Register. 13 FELSW registrants have also completed another survey.

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[7] The EWC is reliant on the employer and the practitioner to update this information. Registration Rules: '17- (1) A registered person shall notify the Council within a period of one month of any change to any particulars recorded in the Register in relation to him or her', however not all practitioners adhere to this timescale.

'Others in service' include supply, those on maternity leave or working in FE support worker role outside the listed FE institutions. 'Others out of service' include retired, registrants with no current employment record and those not employed as FE learning support worker.

4.2 Key findings: further education learning support workers (FELSW)

Role and career

- *Salaried full-time-permanent contracts* was the most common contract for FELSW respondents at 33.8% (the same as in 2021).

- *Continuing to develop their practice over the next 3 years* was the most popular response in termsof career development 54.1% (60.9% in 2021)

Working patterns and workload

- Full-time FELSW respondents (contracted to work for 37 hours or more) stated that they that they worked on average 43.2 hours perweek (40.8 hours in 2021). Most hours were spent on:
    - *administration, paperwork* – 10.6 average hours (10.2 hours in 2021);
    - *non-learning support activities relating to learners (e.g. welfare, safeguarding, extracurricular activities, parental contact)* – 8.5 average hours (4.0 hours in 2021);
    - *activities related to supporting colleagues (e.g. management, coaching, mentoring)* – 6.4 average hours (5.5 hours in 2021);
    - *demonstrating, instructing* – 6.7 average hours (5.2 hours in 2021).

- 70.1% of respondents either *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that they were able to *manage their workload within the agreed working hours* (61.2% in 2021). Please note that 'neither agree nor disagree' was an option in 2021 but removed for the 2023 survey.

- Just under half of FELSW respondents said that they were aware of their *college's action plan to help tackle workload issues* (45.4%). 53.8% of respondents stated that they had not been *directly involved in actions their employer is taking to help tackle workload issues*. 33.2% of respondents had seen a *positive impact on their workload over the last 12 months* in relation to their college's action plan.

Wellbeing

- Most FELSW respondents stated they were *fairly anxious* or *very anxious* in relation to the following areas:
    - *cost of living* 83.4%. 45.4% of all respondents were very anxious.
    - *Covid 19 in general* 48.7% (75% in 2021)

    However, around half of respondents stated that they were *not anxious at all* or *not very anxious* in relation to the following areas:
    - *job security* 53.3% (56.5% in 2021)
    - *workload* 48.2% (47.2% in 2021)

- Respondents recognised that a range of wellbeing support is on offer from their institution with the most frequently identified being *counselling support* 78.6%, *training courses on managing wellbeing* 65.6%, *wellbeing days or activities* 61.4%. 14.6% of respondents have used the *counselling support* while 14.4% of respondents had attended *training on managing their wellbeing*

Further education learning support worker

and 15.5% had participated in *wellbeing days or activities*.

Professional learning

- 76.3% of respondents stated that they had undertaken some *professional learning in the past 12 months* (87.7% in 2021). 33.5% of respondents stated that they have *undertaken 30 hours or more (or proportionate amount if part time)*, (43.4% in 2021). 42.8% indicated that they have *undertaken less than 30 hours (or proportionate amount if part time)* of professional learning (44.3% in 2021). Only 8.5% of respondents stated that they had not undertaken any professional learning over the past 12 months (7.2% in 2021).

- 30.1% of FELSW respondents stated they have been able to *choose the scope of their undertaken professional learning in the last 12 months*. 27.0% stated that they did not have a choice and 36.9% selected that they had a choice *some of the time*.

- A range of professional learning activities has been undertaken; with the highest response activity being *attending internal CPD training sessions including e-learning* 59.7%, followed by *guidance/support from line manager* 56.9% and *informal discussions with colleagues/managers about learning support* 55.2%.

- The highest response from respondents who felt there were *barriers to accessing the required professional learning* was *conflict with your work, not enough time* 43.1% (36.2% in 2021). This was followed by *home, family, personal commitments* 35.2% (28.4% in 2021). A proportion of FELSW, 28.2%, felt there were *no barriers to accessing professional learning in the last 12 months* (41.2% in 2021).

4.3 Tabulation of responses - further education learning support worker survey

The 'No response' figures in a table record that an individual has answered some, but not all of the questions asked. Where a 'No response' figure is shown it meant that those individuals did not answer that particular question.

Role and career

Table 24 Question 1: Which of the following best describes your contract of employment as an FE learningsupport worker? (Select one)

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Salaried full time – permanent	120	33.8
Salaried full-time – term time only	57	16.1
Salaried fractional – permanent	45	12.7
Part-time, hourly paid – term time only	40	11.3
Part-time, hourly paid – permanent	30	8.5
Salaried full-time – fixed term	18	5.1
Salaried fractional – fixed term	13	3.7
Part time, hourly paid – term time only	1	0.3
Other (please state)	30	8.5
No response	1	0.3
Total	**355**	**100**

Table 25 Question 2: How do you see your career changing in the next three years? (Select all that apply)

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Continuing to develop and strengthen your practice as a learning support worker	192	54.1
Mentoring or supporting less experienced colleagues	72	20.3
Progressing to become a lecturer or qualified school teacher	54	15.2
Reducing your working hours	46	13.0
Retiring	42	11.8
Leaving further education	32	9.0
Increasing your working hours	32	9.0
Moving to a different educational setting (e.g. school, HE)	26	7.3
Moving to a different FE college	14	3.9
Other (please state)	30	8.5
Total	**540**	
Base - total number of respondents	**355**	

As respondents were able to select all answers which apply, included in table 25 are: 223 registrants who selected 1 response option; 84 who selected 2 options; 31 who selected 3 options; 9 who selected 4 options; 4 who selected 5 options. 2 registrants who did not respond are not included.

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Working patterns and workload

Table 26 Question 3a: Please confirm the number of hours (numerically) you are contracted to work per week

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Over 30	164	46.2
26-30	55	15.5
21-25	32	9.0
16-20	33	9.3
11-15	12	3.4
6-10	2	0.6
5 and under	2	0.6
No hours provided	51	14.4
N/A (e.g too many hours)	4	1.1
Total	**355**	**100**

Table 27 Question 3b: During an average working week how long do you spend on the following? An 'average' week is one that is not shortened by breaks, public holidays, sick leave etc and does not include exceptional circumstances such as qualification examinations Please state number of hours. Include tasks that take place outside of your usual working hours, including during weekends and evenings. Round to the nearest half an hour.

Based on the contract information provided in question 1.	Average number of hours worked per week	Average contracted hours
Full-time	43.2	37.3
Part-time	27.6	19.4
Other	44.8	26.6

Based on contract information provided in question 1	Full-time Average hours		Part-time Average hours		Other Average hours	
	Per week	%	Per week	%	Per week	%
Activities related to supporting colleagues (e.g. management, coaching, mentoring)	6.4	10.6	3.1	7.2	4.6	7.8
Administration, paperwork	10.6	17.8	3.8	8.9	3.2	5.3
Assisting with the preparation of digital learning resources or supporting digital delivery	2.3	3.8	2.0	4.5	1.0	1.7
Contributing to assessment and marking	1.5	2.5	1.5	3.6	0.9	1.5
Demonstrating, instructing	6.7	11.2	4.3	10.0	11.7	19.8
Non-learning support activities relating to learners (e.g. welfare, safeguarding, extracurricular activities, parental contact)	8.5	14.3	3.3	7.6	7.2	12.2
Planning and preparation	4.0	6.8	2.3	5.3	4.2	7.2
Professional learning	1.9	3.2	1.8	4.1	2.5	4.2
Receiving support from line manager, mentor or supervisor	1.5	2.6	0.9	2.2	4.1	7.0
Reflecting on practice	1.9	3.2	1.3	3.0	1.8	3.0
Supporting teaching with learners and / or providing cover supervision	4.3	7.2	13.0	30.1	16.8	28.5
Other (stated in open text tab)	10.0	16.7	5.9	13.7	1.0	1.7
Total	**59.6**	**100**	**43.3**	**100**	**58.9**	**100**

Further education learning support worker

Not all answers inputted by respondents have been included in the analysis in table 27. 27 respondents failed to log any hours against the activities. Some declared total weekly hours worked which ranged from 1 to 155 hours per week. 3 respondents gave hours which were over 168 hours. These anomalies have not been included and a further explanation regarding the calculation of the hours worked is available in Annex A.

Based on the information provided in 3a and 3b, in an average week, 18 (13.8%) full-time FELSW respondents logged hours against activities that were less than their contracted hours, 64 respondents (49.2%) logged activities that matched their contracted hours and 41 (31.5%) logged activities that exceeded their contracted hours. 7 respondents did not log any activities and are not included in table 27 (5.4%).

Based on the information provided in 3a and 3b, in an average week, 31 (18.2%) part-time FELSW respondents logged hours against activities that were less than their contracted hours, 66 respondents (38.8%) logged activities that matched their contracted hours and 62 (36.5%) logged activities that exceeded their contracted hours. 11 respondents did not log any activities and are not included in table 27 (6.5%).

Table 28 Question 4: To what extent do you agree or disagree that you are able to effectively manage yourexisting workload within your contracted working hours? (Select one)

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Strongly agree	64	18.0
Agree	185	52.1
Disagree	73	20.6
Strongly disagree	25	7.0
No response	8	2.3
Total	**355**	**100**

Table 29 Question 5: Please rate the following statements about your college's approach to tackling staff workload:

	I am aware of my college's action plan to tackle workload issues		I am or have been directly involved in action my college is taking to help tackle workload issues	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
Strongly Agree	34	9.6	23	6.5
Agree	127	35.8	70	19.7
Disagree	93	26.2	145	40.8
Strongly Disagree	25	7.0	46	13.0
Not sure or no response	76	21.4	71	20.0
Total	**355**	**100**	**355**	**100**

Further education learning support worker

	My college considers the workload implications of my new process or other changes it introduces		I have seen a positive impact on my workload over the last 12 months	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
Strongly Agree	27	7.6	26	7.3
Agree	114	32.1	92	25.9
Disagree	85	23.9	120	33.8
Strongly Disagree	34	9.6	39	11.0
Not sure or no response	95	26.8	78	22.0
Total	**355**	**100**	**355**	**100**

Wellbeing

Table 30 Question 6: Over the last 12 months, please rate your levels of anxiety or stress in relation to anyof these areas

	Cost of living		Covid-19 in general (including concerns about your own health or those close to you, and/or impact on your working practices)	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
Not anxious at all	12	3.4	56	15.8
Not very anxious	32	9.0	114	32.1
Fairly anxious	135	38.0	123	34.6
Very anxious	161	45.4	50	14.1
Don't know or no response	15	4.2	12	3.4
Total	**355**	**100**	**355**	**100**

	Your job security		Your workload	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
Not anxious at all	56	15.8	43	12.1
Not very anxious	133	37.5	128	36.1
Fairly anxious	101	28.5	101	28.5
Very anxious	52	14.6	64	18.0
Don't know or no response	13	3.7	19	5.4
Total	**355**	**100**	**355**	**100**

Further education learning support worker

Table 31 Question 7: Does your college offer any of the following types of support for your wellbeing?(Select all that apply)

	My college offers this support		I have made use of this support	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
Counselling support	279	78.6	52	14.6
Dedicated staff space	154	43.4	51	14.4
Employee assistance programme	162	45.6	15	4.2
Flexibility to manage your caring responsibilities	186	52.4	41	11.5
Staff wellbeing representative through trade union structures	197	55.5	21	5.9
Training courses on managing your wellbeing	233	65.6	51	14.4
Wellbeing breaks during the working day	131	36.9	28	7.9
Wellbeing days or activities	218	61.4	55	15.5
Other support [please specify]	14	3.9	6	1.7
Total	**1,574**		**320**	
Base - total number of respondents	**355**		**355**	

Support offered:
As respondents were able to select all answers which apply: 22 registrants did not respond; 29 registrants selected 1 response option; 50 selected 2 options; 47 selected 3 options; 37 selected 4 options; 34 selected 5 options; 37 selected 6 options; 36 selected 7 options; 55 selected 8 options and 8 selected 9 options.

Made use of support:
As respondents were able to select all answers which apply: 203 registrants did not respond; 67 registrants selected 1 response option; 42 selected 2 options; 21 selected 3 options; 13 selected 4 options; 4 selected 5 options; 2 selected 6 options; 2 selected 7 options and 1 selected 8 options. 42.8% of respondents made use of one or more of the types of support for wellbeing that was on offer.

FE learning support worker

Professional learning

Table 32 Question 8: If you have been employed for 12 months or more, how many hours of professional learning do you estimate you have undertaken in the past 12 months? (Select one)

	Number of responses	% of respondents
30 hours or more (or proportionate amount if part time)	119	33.5
Less than 30 hours (or proportionate amount if part time)	152	42.8
None	30	8.5
Employed for less than 12 months or are not currently employed	41	11.5
No response	13	3.7
Total	**355**	**100**

Table 33 Question 9: In the last 12 months have you been able to choose the scope of professional learning you have undertaken?

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Yes	107	30.1
No	96	27.0
Some of the time	131	36.9
No response	21	5.9
Total	**355**	**100**

Table 34 Question 10: Please tick any of the following you have participated in and indicate the impact of each of these in enabling you to develop your practice and support your learners.

	Attending an accredited training course		Attending internal CPD training sessions including e-learning	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
I participated in this	173	48.7	212	59.7
High	75	21.1	67	18.9
Moderate	66	18.6	92	25.9
Low	17	4.8	32	9.0
No impact	15	4.2	21	5.9
Base number of respondents	**355**		**355**	

	Attending training/workshops from external speakers		Coaching or mentoring	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
I participated in this	181	51.0	124	34.9
High	61	17.2	29	8.2
Moderate	72	20.3	39	11.0
Low	29	8.2	19	5.4
No impact	19	5.4	37	10.4
Base number of respondents	**355**		**355**	

FE learning support worker

	Collaborating with colleagues		Guidance/support from line manager	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
I participated in this	194	54.6	202	56.9
High	115	32.4	107	30.1
Moderate	54	15.2	64	18.0
Low	17	4.8	18	5.1
No impact	8	2.3	13	3.7
Base number of respondents	**355**		**355**	

	Industry placement/upskilling		Informal discussions with colleagues/managers about learning support	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
I participated in this	102	28.7	196	55.2
High	13	3.7	92	25.9
Moderate	31	8.7	69	19.4
Low	22	6.2	23	6.5
No impact	36	10.1	12	3.4
Base number of respondents	**355**		**355**	

	Peer observation		Undertaking own reading	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
I participated in this	122	34.4	171	48.2
High	38	10.7	73	20.6
Moderate	36	10.1	65	18.3
Low	19	5.4	12	3.4
No impact	29	8.2	21	5.9
Base number of respondents	**355**		**355**	

	Working on own area of interest through action research or Professional Learning and Development processes (PLDP)	
	Number of responses	% of respondents
I participated in this	127	35.8
High	55	15.5
Moderate	32	9.0
Low	13	3.7
No impact	27	7.6
Base number of respondents	**355**	

FE learning support worker

Table 35 Question 11: What do you think are the main barriers or obstacles stopping you accessing professional learning? (Select all that apply)

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Conflict with your work, not enough time	153	43.1
Home, family, personal commitments	125	35.2
Cost	110	31.0
No barriers, you have accessed the professional learning needed in the last 12 months	100	28.2
The professional learning on offer is not of sufficient quality or is not relevant	68	19.2
Lack of support from your college and / or manager	35	9.9
You do not have the required pre-requisites (e.g. qualifications, experience, seniority)	15	4.2
Other (Please state)	12	3.4
No response	7	2.0
Total	**625**	
Base - total number of respondents	**355**	

As respondents were able to select all answers which apply, included in table 35 are: 176 registrants who selected 1 response option; 93 who selected 2 options; 59 who selected 3 options; 15 who selected 4 options; 4 who selected 5 options and 1 who selected 6 options.

5.0 Results – work-based learning practitioners (WBLP)

5.1 Respondent profile[8]

In terms of the representativeness of respondents the gender balance differs to the profile on the register, with a slightly lower proportion of male respondents. There are also fewer younger respondents.

Table 36: Gender balance of respondents to the work-based learning practitioner survey

	Respondents		Profile on the Register	
	Number	**%**	**Number**	**%**
Female	283	67.5	2,072	63.4
Male	136	32.5	1,198	36.6
Total	**419**	**100**	**3,270**	**100**

Table 37: Age range of respondents to the work-based learning practitioner survey

	Respondents		Profile on the Register	
	Number	**%**	**Number**	**%**
29 and under	15	3.6	306	9.4
30 to 39	68	16.2	780	23.9
40 to 49	119	28.4	886	27.1
50 to 59	135	32.2	811	24.8
60+	82	19.6	487	14.9
Total	**419**	**100**	**3,270**	**100**

Table 38: Ethnicity of respondents to the work-based learning survey

	Respondents		Profile on the Register	
	Number	**%**	**Number**	**%**
White	348	83.1	2,670	81.7
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	1	0.2	24	0.7
Asian/Asian British	0	0.0	28	0.9
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	1	0.2	15	0.5
Other ethnic group	1	0.2	11	0.3
Does not wish to record an ethnic group	16	3.8	79	2.4
Unknown	52	12.4	443	13.5
Total	**419**	**100**	**3,270**	**100**

Of the 3,270, 1,957 are registered only as a WBLP, 1,313 are registered in more than one category of registration.

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[8] 414 (98.8%) registrants completed the survey through the medium of English and 5 (1.2%) through the medium of Welsh

Work-based learning practitioners

Table 39: Breakdown of work-based learning practitioner response rate by employer[9]

	Respondents	Profile on the Register	Respondents by Profile on the register	Respondents by Base number
	Number	Number	%	%
ACT Ltd	9	185	4.9	4.9
Cambrian Training Company	5	31	16.1	16.1
Cardiff and Vale College	22	55	40.0	40.0
Coleg Cambria	41	152	27.0	27.0
Educ8	35	156	22.4	22.4
Gower College Swansea	14	155	9.0	9.0
Grŵp Llandrillo Menai	43	143	30.1	30.1
ITEC Training Solutions Ltd	5	86	5.8	5.8
Pembrokeshire College	46	345	13.3	13.3
NPTC Group	28	112	25.0	25.0
Other sub-contractors	98	904	10.8	11.1
Total in employment	346	2,324	14.9	15.0
Others in service	9	202	4.5	16.7
Others out of service	64	744	8.6	16.5
Total	**419**	**3,270**	**12.8**	**15.3**

Respondents % column shows the percentage of respondents who answered the survey from each institution according to their employment record on the Register.

Where multiple category registrants only completed one survey response, they have been included in the base number for that registrant group and removed from the others. Where multiple category registrants did not respond at all they have been included in the base number of the category most relevant to their employment as recorded on the Register. 6 WBLP have also completed another survey.

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[9] The EWC is reliant on the employer and the practitioner to update this information. Registration Rules: '17- (1) A registered person shall notify the Council within a period of one month of any change to any particulars recorded in the Register in relation to him or her', however not all practitioners adhere to this timescale.

Please note, the employers listed in Table 39 are lead work-based learning contractors and that the figures include staff employed by their sub-contractors and consortium members.

'Others in service' includes those registrants on maternity leave or working on a supply basis. 'Others out of service' include registrants who are retired, those with no current employment record and those not undertaking the role as a WBLP.

5.2   Key findings: work-based learning practitioners (WBLP)

Role and career

- 69.5% of WBLP respondents were employed on a salaried full-time-permanent contract (62.7% in 2021).

- 76.6% of respondents delivered Apprenticeships (level 2/3).

- The highest response regarding WBLP career development was to *continue to develop their practice over the next 3 years* with 65.2% respondents (67.9% in 2021). 33.4% stated that they intend to *mentor or support less experienced colleagues* (28.5% in 2021).

Working patterns and workload

- During an average working week, full-time WBLPs (contracted to work for 37 hours or more) stated that they worked on average 47.0 hours (43.5 hours in 2021). Most hours were spent on:
  - *assessment (including workplace visits), marking, quality assurance, feedback, setting tests* - 12.0 hours, (11.2 hours in 2021);
  - *administration, paperwork, learner eligibility checks* - 8.6 hours (7.5 in 2021);
  - *teaching, tutoring and training* - 8.1 hours (6.6 hours in 2021).

- Over half of WBLP respondents were able to *manage their workload within the agreed working hours*. 53.9% either *agreed* or *strongly agreed* (50.5% in 2021). 44.1% however, either *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* (25.0% in 2021). Please note that 'neither agree nor disagree' was an option in 2021 but was not included in the 2023 survey.

- 58.0% of WBLP respondents *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that they had been *directly involved in actions their employer is taking to help tackle workload issues*. 45.1% of WBL respondents had seen a *positive impact on their workload over the last 12 months*. However, 41.8% stated that they *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed*, 15.8% of those answered that they *strongly disagreed* that they had seen a positive impact in relation to their employer's *approach to tackling staff workload*.

Wellbeing

- Most WBLP respondents stated they were *fairly anxious* or *very anxious* in relation to the following areas:
  - *cost of living* 81.8%
  - *workload* 64.9% (60.2% in 2021)
  However, most WBLP respondents stated that they were *not anxious at all* or *not very anxious* about
  - *job security* 59.7% (43.5% in 2021)
  - *COVID-19 in general* 56.3% (27.7% in 2021)

  Respondents recognised that a range of support for wellbeing is on offer from their institution with the most frequently identified being the opportunity for *counselling support* at 76.1% (68.7% in 2021), *training courses on managing their wellbeing* 66.8% (64.9% in 2021) and *flexibility to*

manage your caring responsibilities 57.8%. 7.6% of respondents had made use of *counselling support* (4.6% in 2021) and 20.8% had participated in *training courses on managing your wellbeing* (13.1% in 2021) with 14.8% making use of the *flexibility to manage their caring responsibilities*.

Professional learning

- 86.2% of respondents had *undertaken some professional learning over the past 12 months* (95.7% in 2021). 52.5% had completed 3*0 hours (full time equivalent) or more professional learning in the last 12 months* (52.1% in 2021). A range of activities had been undertaken; the highest response for activities were *attending internal CPD training sessions including e-learning* 69.2%, *collaborating with colleagues* 65.6% and *guidance/support from line managers* 63.2%.

- The highest response reason for those who felt there were *barriers to accessing the required professional learning* was *conflict with your work, not enough time* 61.6% (43.1% in 2021). This was followed by *home, family, personal commitments* 31.3% (25.3% in 2021). A proportion of FELSW, 29.1%, felt there were *no barriers to accessing professional learning in the last 12 months* (42.6% in 2021).

5.3   Tabulation of responses – work-based learning practitioner survey

The 'No Response' figures in a table record that an individual has answered some, but not all of the questions asked. Where a 'No response' figure is shown, it means that those individuals did not answer that particular question.

Role and career

Table 40 Question 1: Which of the following best describes your contract of employment as a work-basedlearning practitioner? (Select one)

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Salaried full time – permanent	291	69.5
Salaried fractional – permanent	35	8.4
Part time, hourly paid – permanent	21	5.0
Associate/Self-employed associate	19	4.5
Salaried full-time – fixed term	15	3.6
Management salaried-fractional – permanent	11	2.6
Part time, hourly paid – fixed term	9	2.1
Salaried fractional – fixed term	4	1.0
Other (please state)	14	3.3
Total	**419**	**100**

Table 41 Question 2: Which of the following do you deliver? (Please select all that apply):

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Apprenticeships (level 2/3)	321	76.6
Higher Apprenticeships (level 4 and above)	180	43.0
Jobs Growth Wales Plus	36	8.6
Other work-based learning programme (please specify)	83	19.8
No response	3	0.7
Total	**623**	
Base - total number of respondents	**419**	

Included in the above figures are: 237 registrants who selected 1 response option; 154 who selected 2 options and 25 who selected 3 options.

Work-based learning practitioners

Table 42 Question 3: How do you see your career changing in the next three years? (Select all that apply)

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Continuing to develop and strengthen your practice as a WBL Practitioner	273	65.2
Mentoring or supporting less experienced colleagues	140	33.4
Moving to a different role with your current employer (e.g. assessor to IQA)	83	19.8
Leaving WBL	66	15.8
Reducing your working hours	57	13.6
Progressing to become a middle or senior manager	45	10.7
Retiring	35	8.4
Increasing your working hours	31	7.4
Moving to a different education or training setting (e.g. school, FE, HE)	26	6.2
Moving to a different WBL provider	14	3.3
Other (please state)	13	3.1
Total	**783**	
Base - total number of respondents	**419**	

Included in table 42 are: 195 registrants who selected 1 response option; 115 who selected 2 options; 76 who selected 3 options; 30 who selected 4 options and 2 who selected 5 options. 1 registrant who did not respond is not included.

Working patterns and workload

Table 43 Question 4: Please confirm the number of hours (numerically) you are contracted to work per week

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Over 30	325	77.6
26-30	22	5.3
21-25	25	6.0
16-20	22	5.3
11-15	6	1.4
6-10	3	0.7
5 and under	9	2.1
No hours provided	7	1.7
N/A (e.g. too many hours)	0	0.0
Total	**419**	**100**

Table 44 Question 5: If you are an apprenticeship assessor; what is your usual caseload of learners? (n/a if not an assessor)

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Over 30	24	5.7
26-30	93	22.2
21-25	61	14.6
16-20	52	12.4
11-15	41	9.8
6-10	55	13.1
5 and under	0	0.0
No figures provided	93	22.2
Total	**419**	**100**

Table 45 Question 6: During an average working week how long do you spend on the following? An 'average' week is one that is not shortened by breaks, public holidays, sick leave etc and does not include exceptional circumstances such as qualification examinations.

Please state number of hours (numerically). Include tasks that take place outside of your normal working day, including during weekends and evenings. Round to the nearest half an hour.

Based on the contract information provided in question 1.	Average number of hours worked per week	Average contracted hours
Full-time	47.0	37.5
Part-time	29.3	21.7
Associate/Self-employed associate	30.9	20.1
Other	38.8	22.0

Work-based learning practitioners

Based on contract information provided in question1	Full-time Average hours		Part-time Average hours		Associate/ Self-employed associate - average hours per week		Other Average hours	
	Per week	%	Per week	%	Per week	%	Per week	%
Activities related to supporting colleagues (e.g.management, coaching, mentoring)	4.2	7.3	2.4	5.9	2.3	6.3	3.0	5.2
Administration, paperwork, learner eligibility checks	8.6	14.7	4.6	11.3	3.8	10.2	6.4	11.0
Assessment (including workplace visits), marking, quality assurance, feedback, setting tests	12.0	20.6	8.5	20.9	10.6	28.5	10.6	18.3
Non-training/assessing activities relating to learners (e.g. welfare, safeguarding, wellbeing)	2.4	4.1	2.0	4.8	2.4	6.4	2.9	5.0
Planning and preparation	5.1	8.7	3.2	7.8	3.7	9.8	4.5	7.8
Preparing resources specifically for digital learning including converting existing teaching content	1.9	3.4	1.3	3.1	1.5	4.1	2.0	3.5
Professional learning	1.7	2.9	1.5	3.6	1.3	3.5	1.9	3.4
Receiving support from line manager, mentor or supervisor	1.4	2.4	0.7	1.8	0.9	2.5	1.0	1.7
Reflecting on practice	1.6	2.7	1.6	3.8	1.1	3.0	1.5	2.6
Teaching, tutoring and training	8.1	13.9	4.7	11.6	3.8	10.2	13.3	23.0
Travel to and from employer premises to undertake workplace reviews/assessments	4.9	8.5	3.2	7.9	3.8	10.1	5.7	9.8
Other	6.2	10.7	7.2	17.5	2.0	5.4	5.0	8.7
Total	58.1	100	40.8	100	37.2	100	57.8	100

Not all answers inputted by respondents have been included in the analysis in table 45. 14 respondents failed to log any hours against the activities. Some declared total weekly hours worked which ranged from 2 to 150 hours per week. 3 respondents logged hours which totalled over 168 hours. These anomalies have not been included and a further explanation regarding the calculation of the above is available in Annex A.

Based on the information provided in question 4, in an average week, 23 (8.0%) full-time WBLP respondents logged hours against activities that totalled less than their contracted hours, 89 respondents (31.1%) logged activities that matched their contracted hours and 167 (58.4%) logged activities that totalled more than their contracted hours. 7 respondents (2.4%) did not respond to this question.

Based on the information provided in question 4, in an average week, 11 (8.8%) part-time WBLP respondents logged activities that were less than their contracted hours, 37 respondents (29.6%) logged activities that matched their contracted hours and 72 respondents (57.6%) logged activities that totalled more than their contracted hours. 5 respondents (4.0%) did not respond to this question.

Work-based learning practitioners

Table 46 Question 7: To what extent do you agree or disagree that you are able to effectively manage yourexisting workload within your contracted working hours? (Select one)

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Strongly agree	49	11.7
Agree	177	42.2
Disagree	120	28.6
Strongly disagree	65	15.5
No response	8	1.9
Total	**419**	**100**

Table 47 Question 8: Please rate the following statements about your employer's approach to tackling staff workload:

	I am or have been directly involved in actions my employer is taking to help tackle workload issues		My employer considers the workload implications of any new processes or other changes it introduces	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
Strongly agree	82	19.6	83	19.8
Agree	161	38.4	163	38.9
Disagree	97	23.2	84	20.0
Strongly disagree	39	9.3	53	12.6
Not sure or no response	40	9.5	36	8.6
Total	**419**	**100**	**419**	**100**

	I have seen a positive impact on my workload over the last 12 months	
	Number of responses	% of respondents
Strongly agree	65	15.5
Agree	124	29.6
Disagree	109	26.0
Strongly disagree	66	15.8
Not sure or no response	55	13.1
Total	**419**	**100**

Work-based learning practitioners

Wellbeing

Table 48 Question 9: Over the last 12 months, please rate your levels of anxiety or stress in relation to any of these areas. (Select one in each of the 6 areas)

	Cost of living		COVID-19 in general (including concerns about your own health of those close to you, and /or impact on your working practices)	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
Not anxious at all	10	2.4	55	13.1
Not very anxious	63	15.0	181	43.2
Fairly anxious	182	43.4	124	29.6
Very anxious	161	38.4	54	12.9
Don't know or no response	3	0.7	5	1.2
Total	**419**	**100**	**419**	**100**

	Your job security		Your workload	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
Not anxious at all	70	16.7	30	7.2
Not very anxious	180	43.0	110	26.3
Fairly anxious	120	28.6	157	37.5
Very anxious	45	10.7	115	27.4
Don't know or no response	4	1.0	7	1.7
Total	**419**	**100**	**419**	**100**

Work-based learning practitioners

Table 49 Question 10: Does your employer offer any of the following types of support for your wellbeing? (Select all that apply)

	My employer offers this support		I have made use of this support	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
Counselling support	319	76.1	32	7.6
Dedicated staff space	217	51.8	39	9.3
Employee assistance programme	213	50.8	17	4.1
Flexibility to manage your caring responsibilities	242	57.8	62	14.8
Staff wellbeing representative through trade union structures	200	47.7	6	1.4
Training courses on managing your wellbeing	280	66.8	87	20.8
Wellbeing breaks during the working day	197	47.0	63	15.0
Wellbeing days or activities	219	52.3	66	15.8
Other support [please specify]	21	5.0	6	1.4
Total	**1,908**		**378**	
Base - total number of respondents	**419**			

Support offered:
As respondents were able to select all answers which apply: 44 registrants did not respond; 26 registrants selected 1 response option; 46 selected 2 options; 35 selected 3 options; 50 selected 4 options; 48 selected 5 options; 47 selected 6 options; 32 selected 7 options; 80 selected 8 options and 11 selected 9 options.

Made use of support:
As respondents were able to select all answers which apply: 258 registrants did not respond; 67 registrants selected 1 response option; 33 selected 2 options; 23 selected 3 options; 21 selected 4 options; 12 selected 5 options; 3 selected 6 options and 2 selected 7 options. 38.4% of respondents made use of one or more of the types of support for wellbeing that was on offer.

Work-based learning practitioners

Professional learning

Table 50 Question 11: If you have been employed for 12 months or more, how many hours of professionallearning do you estimate you have undertaken in the past 12 months? (Select one)

	Number of responses	% of respondents
30 hours or more (or proportionate amount if part time)	220	52.5
Less than 30 hours (or proportionate amount if part time)	141	33.7
None	10	2.4
Employed for less than 12 months or are not currently employed	48	11.5
Total	**419**	**100**

Table 51 Question 13: Please tick any of the following you have participated in and indicate the impact of each of these in enabling you to develop your practice and support your learners.

	Attending an accredited training course		Attending internal CPD training sessions including e-learning	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
I participated in this	202	48.2	290	69.2
High	106	25.3	86	20.5
Moderate	60	14.3	141	33.7
Low	21	5.0	51	12.2
No Impact	15	3.6	12	2.9
Base number of respondents	**419**		**419**	

	Attending training/workshops from external speakers		Coaching or mentoring	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
I participated in this	225	53.7	150	35.8
High	65	15.5	53	12.6
Moderate	99	23.6	52	12.4
Low	48	11.5	27	6.4
No Impact	13	3.1	18	4.3
Base number of respondents	**419**		**419**	

Work-based learning practitioners

	Collaborating with colleagues		Guidance/support from line manager	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
I participated in this	275	65.6	265	63.2
High	168	40.1	133	31.7
Moderate	92	22.0	95	22.7
Low	10	2.4	25	6.0
No Impact	5	1.2	12	2.9
Base number of respondents	**419**		**419**	

	Industry placement/upskilling		Informal discussions with colleagues/managers about teaching and learning	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
I participated in this	128	30.5	262	62.5
High	46	11.0	129	30.8
Moderate	36	8.6	103	24.6
Low	21	5.0	23	5.5
No Impact	25	6.0	7	1.7
Base number of respondents	**419**		**419**	

	Peer observation		Undertaking own reading	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
I participated in this	202	48.2	228	54.4
High	86	20.5	110	26.3
Moderate	76	18.1	92	22.0
Low	27	6.4	18	4.3
No Impact	13	3.1	8	1.9
Base number of respondents	**419**		**419**	

	Working on own area of interest through action research or Professional Learning and Development processes (PLDP)	
	Number of responses	% of respondents
I participated in this	157	37.5
High	76	18.1
Moderate	53	12.6
Low	16	3.8
No Impact	12	2.9
Base number of respondents	**419**	

Work-based learning practitioners

Table 52 Question 14: What do you think are the main barriers or obstacles stopping you accessing professional learning? (Select all that apply)

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Conflict with your work, not enough time	258	61.6
Home, family, personal commitments	131	31.3
Cost	100	23.9
No barriers, you have accessed the professional learning needed in the last 12 months	122	29.1
The professional learning on offer is not of sufficient quality or is not relevant	65	15.5
Lack of support from your employment and / or manager	34	8.1
You do not have the required pre-requisites (e.g. qualifications, experience, seniority)	6	1.4
Other (please state)	10	2.4
No response	4	1.0
Total	**730**	
Base - total number of respondents	**419**	

Included in table 52 are: 201 registrants who selected 1 response option; 134 who selected 2 options; 68 who selected 3 options; 8 registrants who selected 4 options; 3 who selected 5 options and 1 selected 6 options.

6.0 Results – Business Support Staff

6.1 Key findings: Business Support Staff (BSS)

Role and career

- 67.6% of BSS respondents were employed on a *salaried full-time-permanent contract*.

- 37.8% of respondents stated they work in *administration*, 12.1% chose *student support/welfare/pastoral care* and 8.2% selected *MIS management/support*.

- *Continuing in your current role over the next 3 years* had the highest response regarding BSS career development at 62.0%, whilst 24.2% of respondents stated that they anticipate *seeking promotion with their college* and 12.9% selected *leaving their current college*.

Working patterns and workload

- 76.4% of BSS respondents are contracted to work over 30 hours per week.

- The majority of BSS respondents were able to *effectively manage their workload within the agreed working hours*. 72.3% either *agreed* or *strongly agreed*.

- 42.2% of BSS respondents *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that they were *directly involved in action their college is taking to help tackle workload issues*.

- Just under half of BSS respondents stated *their college considers the workload implication of any new process or other changes it introduces*. 49.0% *agreed* or *strongly agreed*.

- 44.2% of BSS respondents *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* to having *seen a positive impact on their workload over the last 12 months* in relation to their college's *approach to tackling staff workload.*

- 45.6% of BSS respondents have an *agreement with their college to work from home for part or all of the time*.
    - A majority of BSS respondents who have an agreement to work from home have said it has had a *very positive* or *quite positive impact on their workload* 73.0%.
    - 84.0% of BSS respondents who have an agreement to work from home have said it has had a *very positive* or *quite positive impact on their overall wellbeing*. 60.9% of those responded saying it had a *very positive* impact.

Business Support Staff

Wellbeing

- The areas where BSS respondents were most likely to state they felt *fairly anxious* or *very anxious* were:
  - *cost of living* 80.7%, with 38.3% stating they were *very anxious*.
  - *workload* 53.3%

  However a majority of BSS respondents stated that they were *not anxious at all* or *not very anxious* in the following areas:
  - *Job security* 62.0%
  - *COVID-19 in general* 53.1%

- Respondents recognised a range of support for wellbeing was offered with the most frequently identified being the *opportunity for counselling* 87.5%, *training courses on managing your wellbeing* 68.2% and *wellbeing days or activities* 61.9%. 12.1% of respondents had made use of *counselling support*, 14.1% of *training courses on managing wellbeing* and 17.2% had made use of *wellbeing days or activities*.

Training and development

- 77.7% of respondents had undertaken some professional learning in the past 12 months. 29.5% had completed *30 hours (full time equivalent) or more professional learning in the last 12 months* while 48.2% had completed *less than 30 hours of professional leaning in the last 12 months*. Only 13.1% had completed *none.*

- 65.6% of BSS respondents had participated in *training required by their college (for example, safeguarding, first aid, information security, manual handling)* with 48.1% stating it had a *high* or *moderate impact* in enabling them to develop their practice and support their learners.

- 57.3% of respondents participated in *training they have been able to choose for their own development to help them do their job better or for their career development*. 24.9% responded saying it had *high impact* in enabling them to develop their practice and support their learners.

- 60.0% of BSS respondents participated in *informal training like reading, support from their colleagues or line manager* with 23.8% saying it had *high impact* in enabling them to develop their practice and support their learners.

- The main barriers to accessing professional learning were *conflict with work/not enough time* at 52.5% followed by *home, family, personal commitments* 27.3%. However, 21.8% of BSS respondents also stated that the *training and development on offer was not of sufficient quality or is not relevant*. 31.1% felt there were *no barriers to undertaking professional learning over the last 12 months.*

6.2 Tabulation of responses – business support staff survey

The 'No Response' figures in a table record that an individual has answered some, but not all of the questions asked in the survey. Where a 'No response' figure is shown it meant that those individuals did not answer that particular question.

Role and career

Table 53 Question 1: Which of the following best describes your contract of employment as an FE business support worker? (Select one)

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Salaried full time – permanent	629	67.6
Salaried fractional/banded – permanent	102	11.0
Salaried full time – fixed term	59	6.3
Part time, hourly paid – permanent	52	5.6
Salaried full time – term time only	39	4.2
Part time, hourly paid – term time only	16	1.7
Salaried fractional/banded – fixed term	11	1.2
Agency worker	1	0.1
Other (please state)	21	2.3
No response	1	0.1
Total	**931**	**100**

Table 54 Question 2: Which of these best describes the type of work you do?

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Administration	352	37.8
Caretaking/Maintenance	18	1.9
Catering	14	1.5
Cleaning	25	2.7
Crèche/nursery worker	7	0.8
Facilities management/support	27	2.9
Groundskeeper/gardener	3	0.3
ICT management/support	51	5.5
MIS management/support	76	8.2
Reception	15	1.6
Security	0	0.0
Student support/Welfare/Pastoral Care	113	12.1
Other (please state)	229	24.6
No response	1	0.1
Total	**931**	**100**

Business Support Staff

Table 55 Question 3: How do you see your career changing in the next three years? (Select all that apply)

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Continuing in your current role	577	62.0
Increasing your working hours	40	4.3
Reducing your working hours	56	6.0
Moving to a different role with your college	112	12.0
Seeking promotion with your college	225	24.2
Leaving your current college	120	12.9
Retiring	61	6.6
Other (please state)	29	3.1
No response	4	0.4
Total	**1,224**	
Base – total number of respondents	**931**	

As respondents were able to select all answers which apply, included in table 55 are: 719 respondents who selected 1 response option; 138 who selected 2 options; 56 who selected 3 options; 13 who selected 4 options; 1 who selected 5 options.

Business Support Staff

Working patterns and workload

Table 56 Question 3: Please confirm the number of hours (numerically) you are contracted to work per week

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Over 30	711	76.4
26-30	61	6.6
21-25	63	6.8
16-20	39	4.2
11-15	13	1.4
6-10	3	0.3
5 and under	6	0.6
No hours provided	35	3.8
N/A (e.g too many hours)	0	0.0
Total	**931**	**100**

Table 57 Question 4: To what extent do you agree or disagree that you are able to effectively manage yourexisting workload within your contracted working hours? (Select one)

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Strongly agree	193	20.7
Agree	480	51.6
Disagree	180	19.3
Strongly disagree	64	6.9
No response	14	1.5
Total	**931**	**100**

Table 58 Question 5: Please rate the following statement about your college's approach to tackling staff workload:

	I am or have been directly involved in actions my college is taking to help tackle workload issues		My college considers the workload implications of any new process or other changes it introduces	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
Strongly agree	82	8.8	87	9.3
Agree	311	33.4	370	39.7
Disagree	278	29.9	201	21.6
Strongly disagree	118	12.7	120	12.9
Not sure or no response	142	15.3	153	16.4
Total	**931**	**100**	**931**	**100**

Business Support Staff

	I have seen a positive impact on my workload over the last 12 months	
	Number of responses	% of respondents
Strongly agree	70	7.5
Agree	271	29.1
Disagree	269	28.9
Strongly disagree	142	15.3
Not sure or no response	179	19.2
Total	**931**	**100**

Table 59 Question 6: Do you have an agreement with your college to work from home for part or all of the time?

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Yes	425	45.6
No	504	54.1
I am not currently employed	1	0.1
No response	1	0.1
Total	**931**	**100**

Table 60 Question 7: If the response was 'Yes', what impact has working from home had on:

	Your workload?		Your overall wellbeing?	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
Very positive	198	46.6	259	60.9
Quite positive	112	26.4	98	23.1
It hasn't had any effect	104	24.5	52	12.2
Quite negative	10	2.4	14	3.3
Very negative	1	0.2	2	0.5
Total	**425**	**100**	**425**	**100**

Business Support Staff

Wellbeing

Table 61 Question 8: Over the last 12 months, please rate your levels of anxiety or stress in relation to anyof these areas

	Cost of living		COVID-19 in general (including concerns about your own health orthose close to you)	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
Not anxious at all	35	3.8	145	15.6
Not very anxious	130	14.0	349	37.5
Fairly anxious	395	42.4	279	30.0
Very anxious	357	38.3	147	15.8
Don't know or no response	14	1.5	11	1.2
Total	**931**	**100**	**931**	**100**

	Your job security		Your workload	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
Not anxious at all	198	21.3	102	11.0
Not very anxious	379	40.7	310	33.3
Fairly anxious	226	24.3	333	35.8
Very anxious	113	12.1	163	17.5
Don't know or no response	15	1.6	23	2.5
Total	**931**	**100**	**931**	**100**

Business Support Staff

Table 62 Question 9: Does your college offer any of the following types of support for your wellbeing?(select all that apply)

	My college offers this support		I have made use of this support	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
Counselling support	815	87.5	113	12.1
Dedicated staff space	463	49.7	76	8.2
Employee assistance programme	517	55.5	40	4.3
Flexibility to manage your caring responsibilities	525	56.4	119	12.8
Staff wellbeing representative through trade union structures	476	51.1	24	2.6
Training courses on managing your wellbeing	635	68.2	131	14.1
Wellbeing breaks during the working day	351	37.7	82	8.8
Wellbeing days or activities	576	61.9	160	17.2
Other support [please specify]	31	3.3	9	1.0
Total	**4,389**		**754**	
Base – total number of respondents	**931**			

Support offered:
As respondents were able to select all answers which apply: 37 respondents did not respond; 61 respondents selected 1 response option; 98 selected 2 options; 115 selected 3 options; 132 selected 4 options; 114 selected 5 options; 124 selected 6 options; 73 selected 7 options; 159 selected 8 options and 18 selected 9 options.

Made use of support:
As respondents were able to select all answers which apply: 579 respondents did not respond; 152 respondents selected 1 response option; 86 selected 2 options; 60 selected 3 options; 35 selected 4 options; 11 selected 5 options; 4 selected 6 options; 2 selected 7 options; 1 selected 8 options and 1 selected 9 options. 37.8% of respondents have made use of one or more of the types of support for wellbeing that was on offer.

Business Support Staff

Training and development

Table 63 Question 10: If you have been employed for 12 months or more, how many hours of professional learning do you estimate you have undertaken in the past 12 months? (Select one)

	Number of responses	% of respondents
30 hours or more (or proportionate amount if part time)	275	29.5
Less than 30 hours (or proportionate amount if part time)	449	48.2
None	122	13.1
Employed for less than 12 months or are not currently employed	63	6.8
No response	22	2.4
Total	**931**	**100**

Table 64 Question 11: Please tick any of the following you have participated in and indicate the impact of each of these in enabling you to develop your practice and support your learners

	Training required by your college (for example safeguarding, first aid, information security, manual handling)		Training you have been able to choose for your own development to help you do your job better or for your career development	
	Number of responses	% of respondents	Number of responses	% of respondents
I participated in this	611	65.6	533	57.3
High	206	22.1	232	24.9
Moderate	242	26.0	175	18.8
Low	98	10.5	63	6.8
No impact	65	7.0	63	6.8
Base number of respondents	**931**		**931**	

	Informal training like reading, support from your colleagues or line manager	
	Number of responses	% of respondents
I participated in this	559	60.0
High	222	23.8
Moderate	179	19.2
Low	74	7.9
No impact	84	9.0
Base number of respondents	**931**	

Business Support Staff

Table 65 Question 12: What do you think are the main barriers or obstacles stopping you accessing training and development. (Select all that apply)

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Conflict with your work, not enough time	489	52.5
No barriers, you have accessed the professional learning needed in the last 12 months	290	31.1
Home, family, personal commitments	254	27.3
The training and development on offer is not of sufficient quality or is not relevant	203	21.8
Cost	163	17.5
Lack of support from your college and / or manager	90	9.7
You do not have the required pre-requisites (e.g. qualifications, experience, seniority)	33	3.5
Other (please state)	31	3.3
No response	26	2.8
Total	**1,579**	
Base – total number of respondents	931	

As respondents were able to select all answers which apply, included in table 65 are: 491 respondents who selected 1 response option; 236 who selected 2 options; 133 who selected 3 options; 34 who selected 4 options and 11 who selected 5 options.

7.0 Workforce survey 2023: Analysis of open text comments

Respondents were asked:

Question	Total number of open text responses by category			
	Further education teachers	Further education learning support workers	Work-based learning practitioners	Further education business support staff
Do you have practical suggestions on what changes would help to make your workload more manageable?	839	127	209	301
Do you have any additional comments to make about workload or wellbeing issues?	530	92	129	202

The main themes across all responses related to:
- Working hours, pay and conditions
- Administration and systems
- Organisational culture, leadership and management
- Support for staff wellbeing and health
- Issues around supporting learners

Working hours, pay and conditions

Many **FE teachers** cited the number of teaching hours as their biggest workload pressure. The contracted teaching hours for full-time FE lecturers are currently 24 per week; where respondents specified specific figures, it was felt that this should be reduced to around 21 hours per week. Respondents felt that this was necessary to allow them enough time for the planning, preparation, marking, administration and pastoral support they undertook as part of their roles.

My workload comes in peaks and troughs especially in terms of marking, it can be really busy at times of the year and it all seems to come at once. [FE teacher]

20 minutes per contact hour for planning, preparation and marking is laughable given the work required in order to keep up with the demands of awarding bodies, Estyn and internal quality systems [FE teacher]

Open text analysis

A number of respondents stated that in order to complete all of their tasks, they routinely work beyond their contracted hours, including evenings and weekends.

The role requires me to work outside of my contract hours every week (to prepare resources and keep on top of marking to ensure that deadlines are met). From speaking with colleagues, working outside contract hours is common and almost expected to keep on top of the workload and ensure high quality teaching. [FE teacher]

As an assessor I work a lot of hours in my own time in order to be able to mark and feedback to learners. Reviews are time consuming, if work placement officers completed these it would be a big help on time and case load. [Work-based learning practitioner]

For **work-based learning practitioners**, the key issue was the size of caseloads (the number of individual learners that each assessor is responsible for.

The quality can only be maintained with a lower case load. It is difficult to manage the amount of learners I have had, a lot of learners who are historic and unfunded or who have special needs, This puts a lot of pressure on you trying to keep track on all learners, However although I have level 2 and 3 I also have level 4/5 which needs more detailed planning. [Work-based learning practitioner]

Some respondents felt that the distribution of workload is not fair or transparent, with some staff having much more work than others. FE teachers and work-based learning practitioners often saw this as a reflection of the different demands of different subjects, qualifications, group sizes, and additional roles such as personal tutor.

Workload is unfairly distributed across programme areas. For example, some qualifications are externally assessed by one exam. Others are assessed by the tutor and they have a number of pieces of marking on a weekly basis. [FE teacher]

Individual programme areas should be looked at to determine the workload involved as different areas are very different. One size does not fit all with much more work required in some - therefore case loads should reflect these differences and ensure a level playing field for Tutors and Assessors. [Work-based learning practitioner]

For **learning and business support workers**, there were concerns around professional recognition, feeling valued, job security, and the number of contracted hours.

The limits given by being on a term time only contract I feel affect my wellbeing and workload in terms of the cost of living, travel and time to complete work. To me it also feels like being a less valued member of staff and puts me under more pressure in a number of ways. [FE learning support worker]

I feel the role is undervalued and the terms of contract eg. lower pay and holiday do not even closely resemble that of a lecturer - despite spending time in the classroom, preparing and delivering sessions to learners as well as planning and assessing assignments to further support their portfolio work. [FE learning support worker]

For me it's all about being able to manage your work load effectively without the strain of building up further work. Giving staff that option to be paid at periods of the year where the department operate on a more busier period of the year, avoids the burden of taking the hours off when it's a struggle to take annual leave as it is. [FE business support worker]

My workload and wellbeing issues are currently directly tied to the lack of job security in my role which has led other staff in the department to leave, and in turn increased the workload for everyone still there; job insecurity means that it has been difficult to recruit new staff to cover the gaps left by departing staff. [FE business support worker]

Respondents felt that timetables and physical spaces should be better planned to accommodate meetings, administration and wellbeing.

Time slots on timetables should be implemented so that we can gather and have important meetings about our subject areas as at the moment we have to leave classes to go to meetings. [FE teacher]

I would like to see an area where myself and colleagues can meet up. This would give us the chance to support one another and share good practice. At the moment we often work in isolation. [FE learning support worker]

Other suggestions made by respondents included:
- Support for the development of shared teaching resources and schemes of work, to reduce duplication and the burden on individual members of staff
- Improve timetabling strategy to better reflect the differences between course requirements (for example, submission dates for coursework; variations in assessment and marking requirements; differences between vocational and A level courses)
- Review learner caseloads for work-based assessors, and ensure that maximum caseload thresholds are adhered to
- More transparency on workload allocation
- Clearer documentation of responsibilities for tasks across teaching and support teams
- Consideration of electronic marking systems
- Recognition of travel time for staff who need to travel between sites during the working day
- Schedule training sessions into working hours rather than asking staff to attend during holiday periods
- Reallocate or re-prioritise work where there are staff vacancies
- Allow dedicated time for administration, assessment, preparation of resources, planning and pastoral support
- Ensure that annual planning takes account of workload across the whole year, including periods of high pressure and possible flexibilities across teams
- More structured and stable timetables, with timely communication of changes

Open text analysis

Administration and systems

Respondents in all categories felt that they spend a disproportionate amount of time on administrative tasks. These were often seen as not adding value for learners.

Each year there are more systems and procedures created that we have to follow and complete, some which merely serve as a tick list for the college. This significantly impacts our workload and stress levels. [FE teacher]

The expectation to complete all administration work, communicate with parents and learners, complete marking, give regular feedback and tutorials, undertake well-being and pastoral care, as well as plan lessons, resources and trips is completely unreasonable within the hours we get paid to do this. [FE teacher]

The main workload challenges are a lack of any administration time built into my daily timetable especially as so many emails need attention without time to do access them until the end of the day. [FE learning support worker]

Reduce unnecessary admin tasks that are box ticking exercise for management and Estyn and don't improve learner development. [Work-based learning practitioner]

Systems that are not user-friendly or integrated were another source of frustration for respondents, particularly systems for learner referrals, support and safeguarding.

Time could be saved by minimising the admin required to refer students for support. All the information existing on multiple systems and it is down to teaching staff to collect information. This could easily be done if the systems were combined. [FE teacher]

There has been too little help for digital transformation which will directly help to efficiency improvements. Moving to cloud should have helped, but nothing is joined up. Everything from registers, marking, following up, the use of printing and paper, to assessment standardisation is ad-hoc, across multiple disconnected systems. [FE business support worker]

There are too many IT systems to manage which impact workload and time management. [FE learning support worker]

Others commented about the distribution of responsibilities, with teaching staff commenting that they were undertaking tasks that they thought should be delegated to support staff. Some respondents suggested that dedicated administrative staff within departments would be more efficient.

We seem to be doing everyone else's jobs in addition to our own currently due to staff shortages which seem to be affecting every area. I'm spending less and less time teaching/marking, and more time administrating, completing spreadsheets and putting data on systems. [FE teacher]

Since the pandemic there has been a lot of 'job creep' and I feel management are more out of touch with the work entailed within the roles of my team. Admin responsibilities have increased

substantially - we need an admin team that is supportive and accessible to reduce the admin workload on me and my colleagues, so we can stick to assessing. [Work-based learning practitioner]

Other suggestions made by respondents included:
- Move responsibility for managing withdrawals and transfers to Student Services teams
- Increase administrative support to take on the burden of administrative tasks around attendance and exams
- Simplify paperwork and remove duplication
- Consider automating administrative tasks
- Reduce email traffic
- Increase flexibility to allow staff to work from home when undertaking administration, planning, preparation and marking
- Allocating more time for administrative tasks
- Consider review of annual contracts so that support staff are not employed in termtime only
- Reduce the number of open evenings
- Improve integration of systems particularly around learner referrals, support and safeguarding
- Provide comprehensive training on new IT systems, and provide opportunities for group support and sharing ways of working
- Improve document storage to make it easier to find key documents
- Eliminate duplication between systems and spreadsheets

Organisational culture, leadership and management

A number of respondents recognised that managers were making efforts to bring about change and there was some praise for direct line managers, but several respondents in all categories felt that senior leaders in particular did not understand the pressures experienced by frontline staff. Some felt that senior leaders should be more visible and more actively engaged in regular discussions with teaching staff.

Some progress and effort is being made, but those who are making the decisions actually have no idea what it's like for teaching staff. Management really need to get staff heavily involved, ask for ideas. [FE teacher]

Management seem very remote - the coalface workers feel alienated and undervalued. We do not see anyone from the upper management level unless there is bad news looming. People are getting worried about pay, cost of living and possible pending redundancies. [FE learning support worker]

I feel we are very well supported by our line manager to manage our workload, with support and advice offered on structuring working days across different areas of the job. I am always well supported in my well being and supported in regards to personal and family issues when they arise. [Work-based learning practitioner]

Open text analysis

Some respondents in the FE teacher, learning support worker and business support categories commented on how changes were managed and communicated in their institutions, and called for more engagement with frontline staff when planning changes to the curriculum, timetable or processes.

I find it disappointing when tasks are dumped onto colleagues and staff midway through the academic year without any prior consultation having taken place. We can manage our workloads so long as we are aware in advance of what expectations are. [FE teacher]

I would suggest that management consult with staff in order to ascertain whether extra workload is achievable prior to instructing the member of staff of the work. [FE learning support worker]

Each department is isolated within the College, it does not feel like one organisation working for the benefit of the student/community. There is a huge lack of strategy and planning in order to achieve the short term and long term goals. [FE business support worker]

Some FE teachers and learning support workers thought that managers were paying "lip service" to wellbeing and workload issues, rather than trying to understand and address the real concerns of staff.

No real action has been taken to address these issues over the past year. There have been many meetings and task and finish groups but these exist for their own sake - they are tick box activities that are not having any effect on overloaded staff. [FE teacher]

I think management think they are doing things for our wellbeing but putting out initiatives or surveys. However in real terms of the actions they do, such as not replacing staff, increasing workload, not looking at responsibility levels, gives the impression that they don't really care and it is just for show. [FE learning support worker]

Suggestions made by respondents included:
- Open and regular dialogue with staff to identify and address issues as they emerge
- Recruit experienced managers with direct experience of frontline teaching; senior managers to shadow frontline staff to understand the challenges they face
- Training for managers in planning, timetabling and organisation
- Better and earlier communication of changes, particularly around course and subject requirements
- Consult with staff before implementing or changing administrative processes; pilot and test new systems before rollout
- Better communication between departments to fully understand the overall picture of demands on staff
- More willingness of middle managers to convey staff concerns "up the line" to senior leaders
- Work with staff to decide investment priorities
- When something needs to be added to workload, something of equivalent size (or greater) should be removed rather than continually adding more requirements
- Increase recognition, acknowledgement and praise for staff efforts
- Establish a culture of openness where staff can raise their concerns safely and be confident that they will be listened to

Support for staff wellbeing and health

A number of respondents commented on their organisation's support for staff wellbeing. Business support staff and work-based learning practitioners were more likely to comment favourably on this support.

Wellbeing is great in the college. They offer a wide range of activities and have set days when these activities [take place]. My trouble is having the time to attend any, given that I work in a very busy department and feel that I'd be creating more work for myself if I did attend any activities. [FE business support worker]

At the moment things seem to have settled and I am able to manage my role much better as numbers are currently low. During Covid my line manager arranged counselling for me, I feel very supported here. [Work-based learning practitioner]

However, FE teachers and learning support workers who commented on wellbeing support felt that it was too difficult to access, either because of complex processes or because of lack of time to participate in the activities their employers provided.

It is very hard to access support in college for wellbeing and mental health. The right pathways or contacts are not made clear and it is incredibly anxiety inducing to try and contact unknown colleagues in different departments to try and understand what support might be offered. [FE teacher]

There is no point having wellbeing events when the time taken to attend these events has a big negative impact because I am already struggling to fit everything in. [FE teacher]

Occupation Health make recommendations which the line manager cannot adhere to as it is not practical for the business needs. I feel my workplace ticks all the correct boxes and shows that the policies and procedures are there. The policies and procedures are great until you need to make reference to any of them. [FE learning support worker]

Several respondents felt that wellbeing activities were of limited value unless fundamental issues around workload were addressed, and a few suggested that their employers' efforts in these areas were tokenistic.

I do not believe external support services through third party companies over the telephone count as supporting my wellbeing. Even though this programme is offered, I am unlikely to take it up, even when stressed, anxious and considering leaving my role, due to feeling overloaded with work. [FE teacher]

The college brought in a carers passport but when someone needs time off for elderly parents hospital appointments told that they will have to use annual leave. [FE business support worker]

Respondents in all staff categories felt that more flexibility to work from home during non-contact activities, and/or dedicated spaces for staff, would have a significant impact on their wellbeing at

work.

The staffroom that we use is for many different departments and so is constantly busy plus it is also the break and lunch room for staff. There is no alternative for staff to use for work or break times. This can affect concentration. It then means that I regularly work at home in the evening as it is there that I have peace and quiet. [FE teacher]

Would benefit from having a designated staff area/room to go to for lunch/break times. Currently not able to have any time away from learners who come in for support. Often rush to eat lunch, never really have a proper lunchbreak. [FE learning support worker]

Suggestions made by respondents included:
- Build dedicated time into the working day or week for wellbeing; ensure that activities are available at times when staff can access them
- Improve awareness and promotion of the full range of support available to staff in all roles
- Leaders to place stronger emphasis on the importance of wellbeing for staff, as well as learners
- Provide regular and informal opportunities to discuss wellbeing and workload concerns
- Recognise and acknowledge the root causes of wellbeing problems around workload and burnout
- Provide dedicated space for staff
- Consult with staff to better understand how wellbeing support can meet specific needs, eg those with caring responsibilities, menopause

Issues around supporting learners

Some respondents commented that they had seen a continued increase in learners' support needs, including for additional learning needs, mental health, wellbeing and behaviour. This increased workload for teaching staff, particularly personal tutors, and also affected staff's own wellbeing because they were worried about their learners.

…I often lie awake at night worrying about all the different issues that I have to deal with regarding the learners I am responsible for. I have a high number of complex learning needs students in one class and the large class sizes are just not manageable for one Personal Tutor. [FE teacher]

Student support hours have been cut back over the years but the students needs have grown. Allocated student hours are no longer enough to enable us to help students to reach their full potential without us working through lunch hours and breaks to assist this. [FE learning support worker]

WBL practitioners often work with the hardest to reach young people and are paid very poorly for it. [Work-based learning practitioners]

Managing learner attendance was identified as a particular concern for FE teachers, who suggested that chasing non-attendance should be the responsibility of support staff.

Open text analysis

> *Teaching has become more of an administrative role, this leaves little time to focus on the learning taking place, time is spent dealing with attendance issues, and behaviour issues, and reporting issues twice sometimes 3 times over to management. There is a system used where everything is recorded that managers can access, however spreadsheets have to also be filled out for management convenience, this impacts on our time. [FE teachers]*

Respondents perceived an increase in behavioural and disciplinary problems since the Covid-19 pandemic. A few felt that their institutions were not robust enough in supporting them to "draw the line" on learner discipline.

> *Learners appear to have more wellbeing needs, since Covid. They are more demanding of our time, and expect us to be working and available 24/7. [FE teacher]*

> *It is getting harder to teach as the behaviour of the majority students is deteriorating and they have a poor work ethic. More time is wasted controlling poor behaviour and less teaching. [FE learning support workers]*

Suggestions made by respondents included:
- Include a welfare hour within contact hours for course tutors
- Strengthen discipline policies and reinforce standards of acceptable learner behaviour
- Improve effectiveness and useability of systems for recording learner support and referrals
- Increase numbers of welfare officers
- Increase one-to-one support for learners with additional learning needs
- Shift responsibility for chasing non-attendance from lecturers to support staff

Annex A: Notes regarding calculation of hours table

In each registration category, there is a table showing a summary of hours and a further table showing a breakdown of tasks. Please note that the totals in these two tables may differ slightly due to rounding.

The two hours tables in each section are calculated using the followingprocess:

- Respondents that selected a "full time", "part time" or "other" response in question 1.
- Considering the answer in question 1, this was then checked against their answer in relation to the contracted hours.
- If the following was satisfied, their responses in relation to hours spent on each task was used:
  - For full time, respondents that stated their contracted hours were between 37 and 48 hours per week
  - For part time, respondents that stated their contracted hours were under 37 hours per week
  - For other, respondents that stated their contracted hours were between 1 and 48 hours per week

A check was then made against the contracted hours and total hours worked. As a result, responses were only considered where respondents stated that their total hours worked were the same or higher (up to 100 hours) than their contracted hours.

General notes
Issues in the completion of this question which need to be considered:
- incomplete or inaccurate information e.g. the contracted hours and/or total hours appearing low in comparison to contract type i.e. indicated they worked full-time but the sum of the declared total weekly hours worked was 2 hours.
- incomplete or inaccurate information in relation to breakdown of tasks e.g an amount entered which takes weekly hours total over the number of hours in a week.
- the complexity and variety of contracted hours e.g. fractional/zero hours contracts;

Responses that fell into the above bullets were not considered in the tables.

If a number and '+' was entered e.g. 5+, the basic number (i.e. 5) was accepted. Numbers entered in text were converted to a numerical figure and figures rounded to the nearest quarter of an hour for ease of analysis.