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Department for Education

Academic year 2024/25

Further education workforce

This annual official statistics release includes data on the further education workforce and governors in England.

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This release improves how FE workforce data is produced, giving a more accurate picture. However, these changes mean the historical (back series) figures will not match those published in earlier releases, due to [method and data improvements](#).

Headline facts and figures

Estimated headcount of the further education workforce: 209,500 across all roles, up 2.3% from 2023/24 How are estimates calculated??	Estimated FTE of the further education workforce: 156,400 on permanent or fixed term contracts, up 4.3% from 2023/24 What does FTE mean??	Proportion of the workforce on permanent contracts: 85.1% Up from 84.3% in 2023/24 What is a non permanent contract??
Teaching positions vacant: 3.5 per 100 by the end of the 2024/25 academic year, down from 3.9 per 100 in 2023/24 What is an unfilled vacancy??	Management / leadership positions vacant: 1.9 per 100 by the end of the 2024/25 academic year, the same as 2023/24 What is a management position??	Median annual FTE salary of teaching staff: £37,600 on permanent or fixed term contracts in General Further Education Colleges including Tertiary (GFECs), up from £36,100 in 2023/24 What is FTE salary??

Figures provided are [estimates](#) based on the providers that returned data.

Headcount of the further education workforce increased

There were an estimated 209,500 ([headcount](#)) staff working in the further education sector in the 2024/25 academic year, which is an increase from 204,800 in 2023/24. This includes:

- 81,800 teaching staff, up from 80,900;
- 53,600 support staff, up from 51,900;
- 47,200 admin staff, up from 45,300;
- 19,600 management staff, down from 19,700;
- 7,300 leadership staff, up from 6,900.

Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) of further education workforce increases slightly

The estimated [Full-Time Equivalent \(FTE\)](#) of the further education workforce on permanent and fixed term contracts has increased from 149,900 in 2023/24 to 156,400 in 2024/25.

The statutory sector includes General Further Education Colleges including Tertiary (GFECs) and sixth form colleges and employs 67% of teaching staff (headcount) in the further education sector.

The FTE of teaching staff on permanent and fixed term contracts in the statutory sector has increased from 36,800 in 2023/24 to 38,100 in 2024/25.

Proportion and number of the further education workforce on permanent contracts increases

The proportion and number of the further education workforce on permanent contracts has increased to 85.1% (178,300) in 2024/25 from 84.3% (172,700) in 2023/24.

Median annual FTE salary of teaching staff increases

In 2024/25, the median FTE average salary for members of the workforce on permanent or fixed term contracts for teaching staff was:

- £37,600 in General Further Education Colleges including Tertiary (GFECs), up from £36,100 in 2023/24, a 4.1% increase;
- £49,700 in sixth form colleges, up from £47,100 in 2023/24, a 5.5% increase;
- £32,000 in Independent Training Provider (ITP), up from £31,200 in 2023/24, a 2.6% increase;
- £33,700 in Local Authority with an Education Remit, up from £32,400 in 2023/24, a 4.2% increase;
- £32,500 in Special Post-16 Institutions, up from £31,000 in 2023/24, a 5.0% increase;
- £49,700 in school based providers, up from £47,100 in 2023/24, a 5.5% increase;
- £33,900 in other provider types, up from £30,000 in 2023/24, a 13.1% increase;

Unfilled vacancies

- 3.5 per 100 teaching positions were vacant at the end of the 2024/25 academic year, down from 3.9 per 100 teaching positions in 2023/24.
- 1.9 per 100 management and leadership positions were vacant at the end of the 2024/25 academic year, the same as 2023/24.
- 6.6 per 100 governor positions were vacant at the end of the 2024/25 academic year, the same as 2023/24.

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About these statistics

Data for the 2024/25 academic year was collected in the Further Education Workforce Data Collection (FEWDC) between October 2025 and January 2026.

The FEWDC collects information on the further education workforce and vacancies from the following providers:

Statutory FE sector:

- General Further Education Colleges (GFECs), including tertiary colleges;
- Sixth form colleges.

Non statutory FE sector:

- Independent Training Providers;
- Local Authorities;

- Special Post-16 Institutions;
- School based providers e.g. 16-19 Academy Convertors & 16-19 Free Schools;
- Other FE providers e.g. Third Sector and Voluntary organisations.

The following further education providers are not in scope:

- Employer providers - an employer that pays the apprenticeship levy;
- Schools and academies (including multi-academy trusts) whose staff are included in the Schools Workforce Census;
- HE institutions who return the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) staff record.

The FEWDC also collects data about governors from GFECs (including tertiary colleges) and sixth form colleges, including designated institutions.

The data collection was split into three parts, which could be completed separately by further education providers.

1. Further education workforce

A higher proportion of the statutory FE sector returned data, compared to the non statutory sector. This means we have a higher confidence in the figures reported for the statutory sector.

The proportion of providers that returned data has decreased, from 84.8% of 1,562 providers in scope in 2023/24 to 73.3% of 1,683 providers in scope in 2024/25.

We assess data returned from providers for data quality issues. Where a [significant data quality issue exists](#), data from a provider may not be able to be used for analysis. Overall, we were able to analyse data from all 73.3% of the 1,683 further education providers in scope for the 2024/25 FEWDC.

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73.3% of providers returned data to the workforce data collection that was used for analysis

		Total providers asked to return data	Percentage of providers that returned data
Total		1,683	73.3%
Statutory sector	Total	214	99.1%
	General FE College incl Tertiary	176	100.0%
	Sixth Form College	38	94.7%
Non statutory sector	Total	1,469	69.5%
	Independent Training Provider (ITP)	848	82.4%
	Local Authority with an Education Remit	132	92.4%
	Special Post-16 Institution	125	90.4%
	School Based Providers	41	80.5%
	Other Provider Type	323	16.7%

[Show full screen table](#)

[Data symbols](#) ?

Footnotes

1. All percentages and rates are rounded to 1 decimal place. Where figures have rounded to 0.0%, this may not necessarily indicate zero staff present for this measure.

Source: Further Education Workforce Data Collection

Explore and edit this data online

Use our table tool to explore this data.

[Explore data](#)

2. Further education vacancies

This part of the data collection relates to teaching and management/leadership vacancies.

The proportion of providers that returned data for the vacancy data collection has decreased from 79.6% of 1,562 providers in scope in 2023/24 to 67.7% of 1,683 providers in scope in 2024/25.

The proportion of providers returning data to this part of the data collection was lower than that of the workforce data collection for all provider types. Throughout this publication we have not attempted to estimate the number of vacancies in providers that have not returned data. This is because it is not possible to determine if the vacancies in the providers that returned data are indicative of the vacancies in the providers that did not return data.

This means that vacancy figures shown in this release relate to only the 67.7% of providers that returned data and therefore could undercount the true number of vacancies in the further education sector.

[Export options](#)

67.7% of providers returned data to the vacancy data collection

		Total providers asked to return data	Percentage of providers that returned data
Total		1,683	67.7%
Statutory sector	Total	214	97.7%
	General FE College incl Tertiary	176	98.3%
	Sixth Form College	38	94.7%
Non statutory sector	Total	1,469	63.3%
	Independent Training Provider (ITP)	848	75.0%
	Local Authority with an Education Remit	132	87.9%
	Special Post-16 Institution	125	84.8%
	School Based Providers	41	70.7%
	Other Provider Type	323	13.3%

[Show full screen table](#)

[Data symbols](#) ?

Footnotes

1. All percentages and rates are rounded to 1 decimal place. Where figures have rounded to 0.0%, this may not necessarily indicate zero staff present for this measure.

Source: Further Education Workforce Data Collection

Explore and edit this data online

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3. Governors

This part of the data collection collected data from GFECs and sixth form colleges about the size and characteristics of their governing bodies.

Of the 214 colleges in scope for the 2024/25 governor data collection, 95.8% provided data. This is lower than the proportion of GFECs and sixth form colleges that returned data on the staff workforce data collection but an increase from 92.0% from the previous governor collection.

► [Export options](#)

Approximately 95.8% of colleges responded to the governor data collection

		Total providers asked to return data	Percentage of providers that returned data
Total		214	95.8%
Statutory sector	General FE College incl Tertiary	176	96.6%
	Sixth Form College	38	92.1%

[Show full screen table](#)

[Data symbols](#) ?

Footnotes

1. All percentages and rates are rounded to 1 decimal place. Where figures have rounded to 0.0%, this may not necessarily indicate zero staff present for this measure.

Source: Further Education Governor Data Collection

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Size of the further education workforce

Data in this section has been [scaled](#) to provide national estimates.

Data is provided for a staff member's [main role](#).

From the 2023/24 academic year to the 2024/25 academic year:

- The headcount of the further education workforce has increased;
- The FTE of the further education workforce on permanent and fixed term contracts has increased.

Headcount

There were an estimated 209,500 ([headcount](#)) staff working in the further education sector in the 2024/25 academic year, which is an increase of 2.3% from 204,800 in 2023/24.

Most staff were employed by General Further Education Colleges including Tertiary (GFECs) (61.5%) and Independent Training Providers (ITPs) (17.1%).

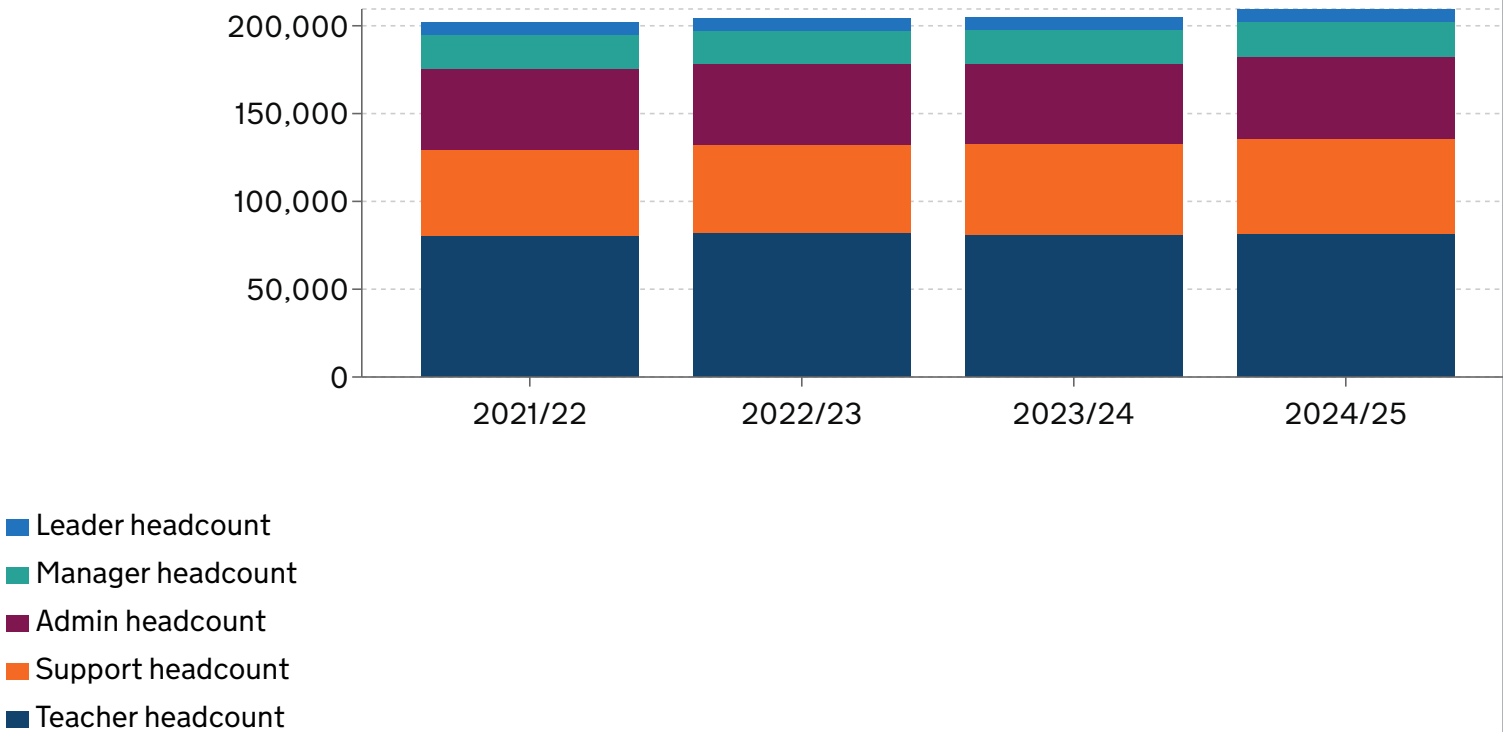
Chart

[Table](#)

[Export options](#)

The total headcount of the FE workforce in England has increased from 201, 800 in 2021/22 to 209,500 in 2024/25.

Headcount is reported for staff on all contract types



Footnotes

- 1. This release shows data for further education providers in England. The location that a provider is based in has been determined from the main site/head office recorded in the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) database in the Department for Education. This records the main site only and may not cover all locations or regions that a provider operates.
- 2. National figures have been scaled to account for providers who did not respond to the Further Education Workforce Data Collection. Therefore national figures are an estimate. Regional figures have not been scaled and are based on responding providers only.

[Show 1 more footnote](#)

Source: Further Education Workforce Data Collection

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Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)

[Full-Time Equivalent \(FTE\)](#) is able to provide a more accurate estimate of the size of the FE workforce for staff on permanent or fixed term contracts as it best reflects the varied working patterns that the workforce may have.

FTE is **only** collected for staff on **permanent or fixed term** contracts.

FTE is not collected for staff on zero hour, variable hour or other contract types because staff on these contracts will not ordinarily work a regular number of hours per week.

There are an estimated 185,700 headcount staff on permanent or fixed term contracts, up from 179,900 in 2024/25.

There are an estimated 156,400 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) staff on permanent or fixed term contracts working in the further education sector in 2024/25, up from 149,900 in 2023/24.

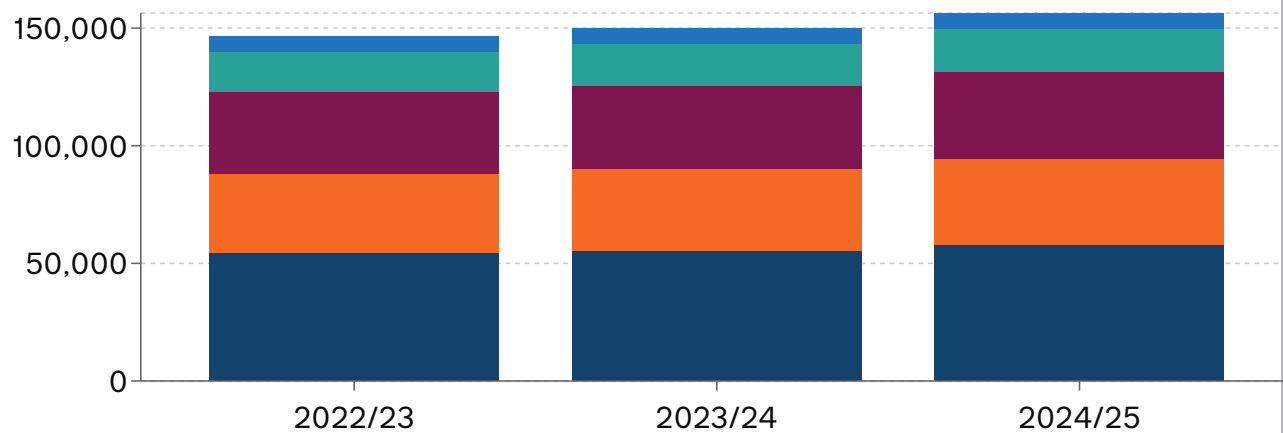
Chart

Table

[Export options](#)

The total FTE of the FE workforce in England has increased from 146,600 in 2023/24 to 156,400 in 2024/25.

FTE is reported for staff on permanent or fixed term contracts only



- Leader Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)
- Manager Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)
- Admin Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)
- Support Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)
- Teacher Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)

Footnotes

1. This release shows data for further education providers in England. The location that a provider is based in has been determined from the main site/head office recorded in the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) database in the Department for Education. This records the main site only and may not cover all locations or regions that a provider operates.
2. National figures have been scaled to account for providers who did not respond to the Further Education Workforce Data Collection. Therefore national figures are an estimate. Regional figures have not been scaled and are based on responding providers only.

[Show 1 more footnote](#)

Source: Further Education Workforce Data Collection

Explore and edit this data online

Use our table tool to explore this data.

Explore data

Working patterns and contract types

Providers were asked to report information on an individual's [main contract](#) only.

Data in this section has been [scaled](#) to provide national estimates.

Working patterns

Working patterns were only collected for staff who had [permanent or fixed term contracts](#).

In the 2024/25 academic year, two thirds of the workforce (67.4%) that had permanent or fixed term contracts worked [full time](#), similar to last year (67.7%). The workforce in the [non statutory FE sector](#) were more likely to work full time than in the [statutory FE sector](#).

In the 2024/25 academic year, most of the workforce in leadership, management, teaching or admin roles worked full time:

- 65.5% of teaching staff worked full time, up from 65.4% in 2023/24;
- 52.9% of support staff worked full time, down from 53.5% in 2023/24;
- 74.2% of admin staff worked full time, down from 74.9% in 2023/24;
- 86.6% of management staff worked full time, up from 86.0% in 2023/24;
- 91.8% of leadership staff worked full time, down from 91.9% in 2023/24.

By comparison, [ONS \(opens in new tab\)](#) data shows that 77% of working age people (16 to 64 year olds) who were employed in 2021 worked full time and 23% worked part time.

A further breakdown is available for [working patterns by provider type and roles](#).

Contract types

The proportion of staff on permanent contracts has increased over the previous four academic years from 82.0% in 2021/22 to 85.1% in 2024/25. The use of zero hour or other contracts types has decreased over the previous four academic years. The largest decrease is in the use of variable hour contracts.

Staff in management and leadership roles were most likely to have a permanent contract, and teaching staff the least likely:

- 81.6% of teaching staff had permanent contracts, up from 79.9% in 2023/24;
- 85.2% of support staff had permanent contracts, up from 84.8% in 2023/24;

- 84.3% of admin staff had permanent contracts, down from 84.5% in 2023/24;
- 96.9% of management staff had permanent contracts, down from 96.9% in 2023/24;
- 97.3% of leadership staff had permanent contracts, up from 96.9% in 2023/24.

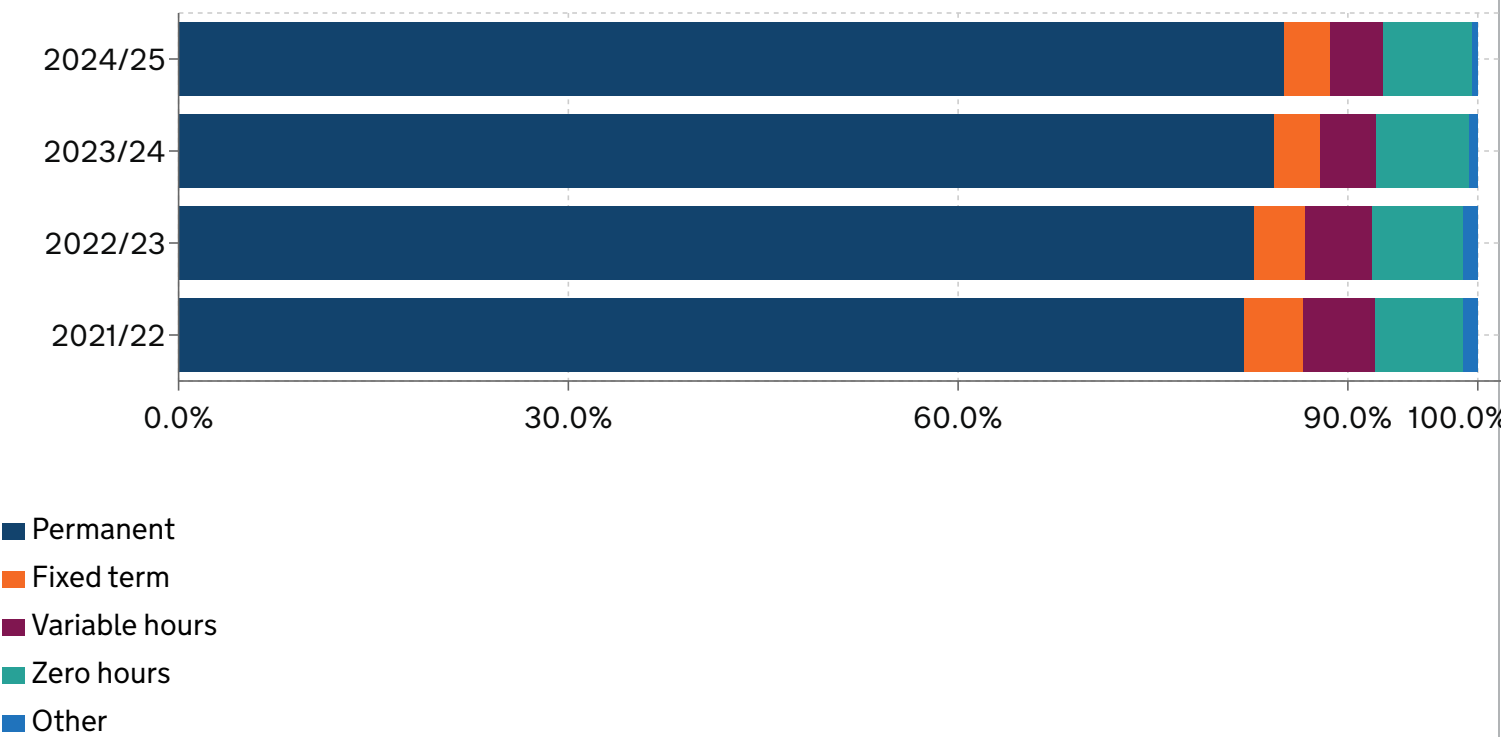
A further breakdown is available for [contract types by roles](#).

Chart

Table

[Export options](#)

The proportion of staff on permanent contracts has increased over the previous four academic years



Footnotes

1. This release shows data for further education providers in England. The location that a provider is based in has been determined from the main site/head office recorded in the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) database in the Department for Education. This records the main site only and may not cover all locations or regions that a provider operates.
2. All percentages and rates are rounded to 1 decimal place. Where figures have rounded to 0.0%, this may not necessarily indicate zero staff present for this measure.

[Show 3 more footnotes](#)

Source: Further Education Workforce Data Collection

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Workforce characteristics

We discuss [headcount](#) in this section, rather than Full-time Equivalent (FTE). This is so that we can consider the characteristics of the workforce without differences in working patterns influencing the figures.

Data in this section has been [scaled](#) to provide national estimates.

Data is given for a staff member's [main role](#).

Roles

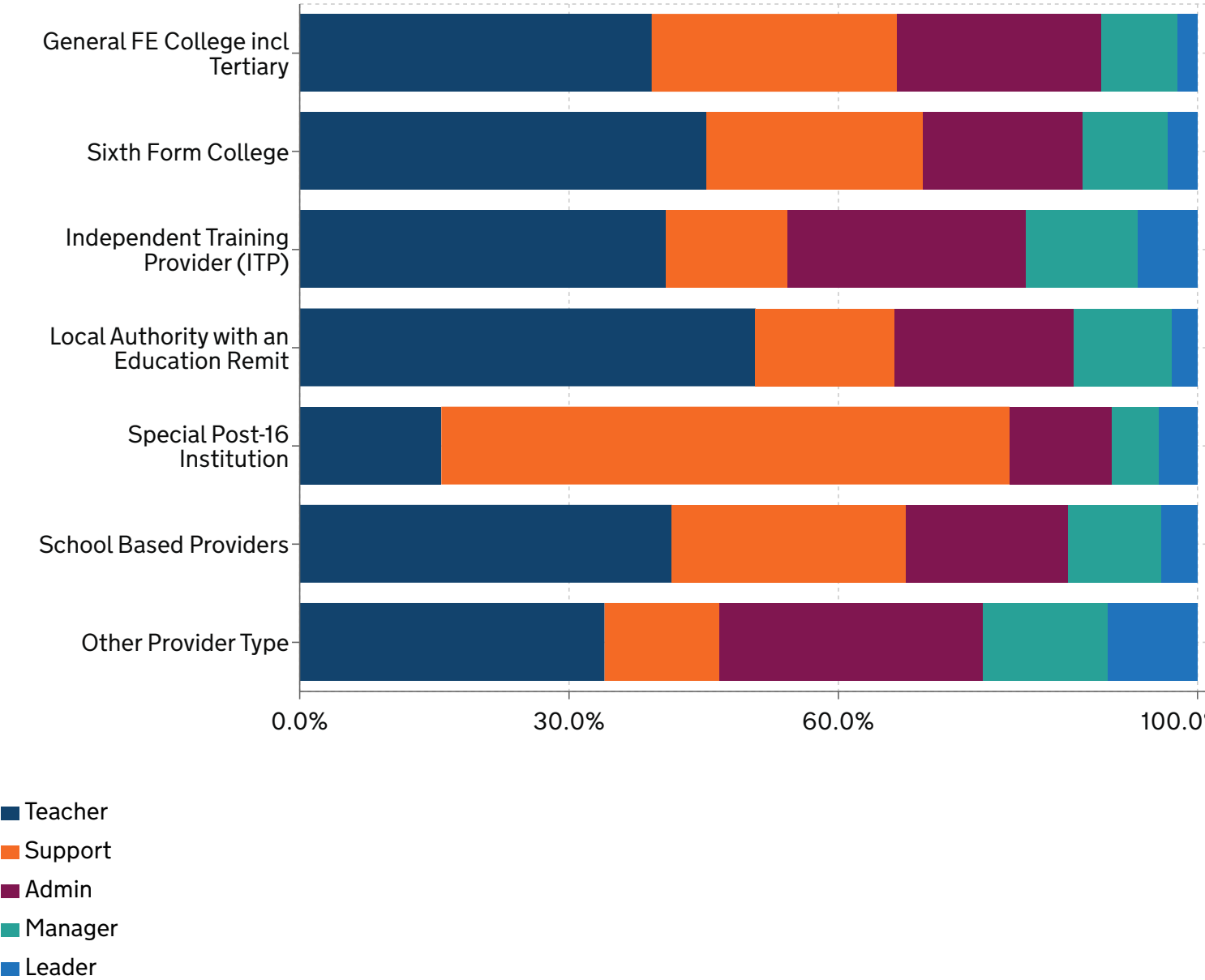
Local Authorities with an education remit employ the highest proportion of teaching staff (50.8%). Special post-16 institutions have proportionally more support staff (63.3%) than other provider types.

Chart

Table

[Export options](#)

Roles in the FE sector by provider type



Footnotes

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2. All percentages and rates are rounded to 1 decimal place. Where figures have rounded to 0.0%, this may not necessarily indicate zero staff present for this measure.

[Show 2 more footnotes](#)

Source: Further Education Workforce Data Collection

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Explore data

Gender

Gender make up of the further education workforce has remained fairly consistent for the previous four academic years, and is predominantly (65.2%) female in 2024/25. While this is true across all role types, it is particularly prominent in admin and support roles.

Three out of every five (58.8%) further education teachers are female. The proportion of male teachers has been slowly increasing from 38.9% in 2021/22 to 40.0% in 2024/25.

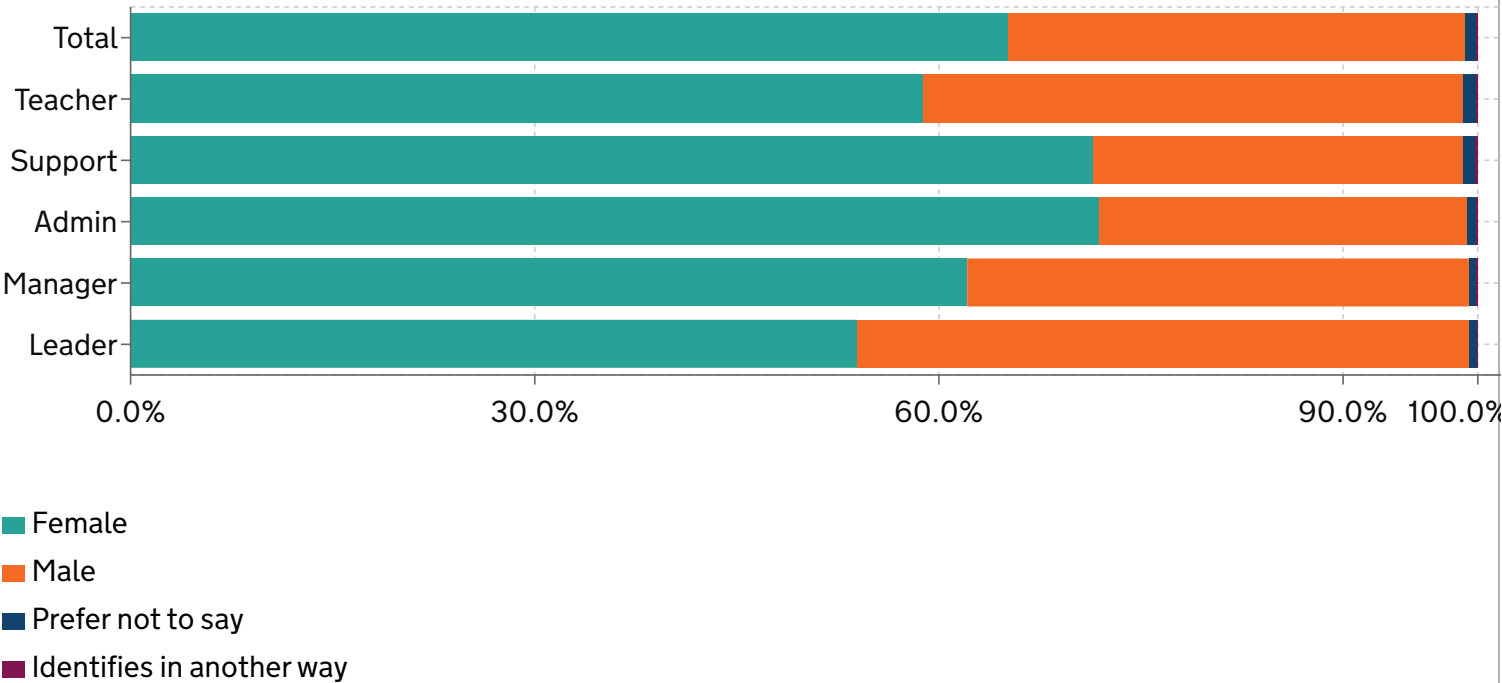
A further breakdown is available for [gender by individual provider types and roles](#).

Chart

Table

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The further education workforce is predominantly female.



Footnotes

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2. All percentages and rates are rounded to 1 decimal place. Where figures have rounded to 0.0%, this may not necessarily indicate zero staff present for this measure.

[Show 3 more footnotes](#)

Source: Further Education Workforce Data Collection

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Ethnicity

In the 2024/25 academic year, 23.7% of the further education workforce identified as belonging to an ethnic minority group. This is an increase from 21.9% in 2023/24.

Some 7.4% of the workforce identified as Asian or Asian British in 2024/25, up from 6.8% in 2023/24. 8.0% identified as white minority groups, up from 7.2% in 2023/24 and 4.6% as Black or Black British, up from 4.3% in 2023/24.

By comparison, 10.1% of the working age population were recorded as Asian or Asian British, 8.8% white minority groups and 4.4% Black or Black British in the [2021 Census \(opens in new tab\)](#).

Staff identifying as belonging to an ethnic minority group are not equally represented at leadership positions, compared to 23.7% of the total workforce belonging to an ethnic minority group. In the 2024/25 academic year, 14.4% of further education leaders identified as belonging to an ethnic minority group, up from 13.8% in 2023/24. In 2024/25, 4.1% of further education leaders identify as Asian or Asian British and 2.1% as Black or Black British.

A further breakdown is available for [ethnicity by individual provider types and roles](#).

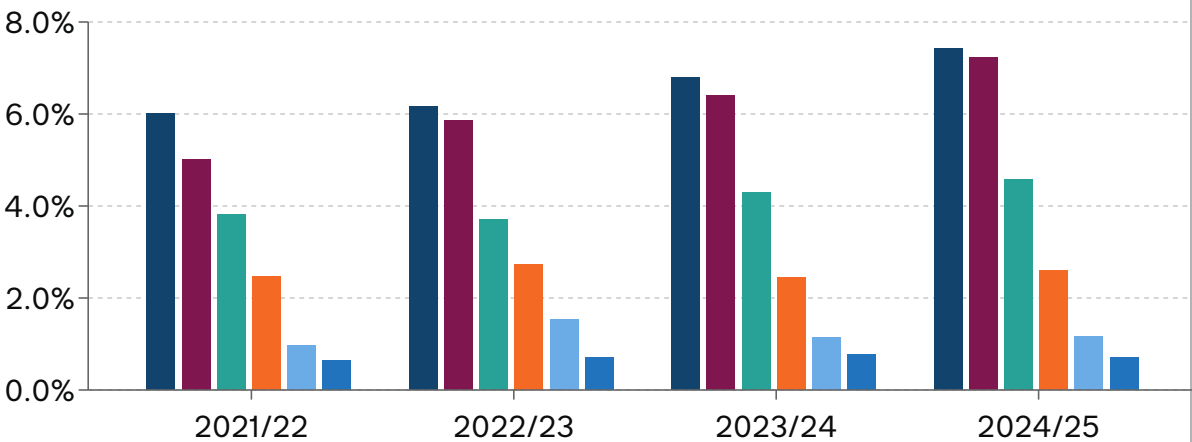
Chart

Table

[Export options](#)

23.7% of the further education workforce identified as belonging to an ethnic minority group.

This chart shows the proportion of staff belonging to each ethnic minority group



- Asian / Asian British
- White - Any other White background
- Black / African / Caribbean / Black British
- Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups - All mixed / multiple ethnic groups
- Other ethnic group
- White - Irish

Footnotes

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2. All percentages and rates are rounded to 1 decimal place. Where figures have rounded to 0.0%, this may not necessarily indicate zero staff present for this measure.

[Show 1 more footnote](#)

Source: Further Education Workforce Data Collection

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Explore data

Age

Over the previous four academic years, the proportion of staff in the under 25 category has been slowly decreasing and the proportion of staff in the over 60 category has been slowly increasing. In the 2024/25 academic year, the median age of staff in the further education sector was 46, the same as in 2023/24 and 2022/23.

By role:

- Leadership staff median age was 50, the same as 2024/25;
- Management staff median age was 47, the same as 2024/25;
- Teaching staff median age was 47, the same as 2024/25;
- Support staff median age was 45, the same as 2024/25;
- Admin staff median age was 42, the same as 2024/25.

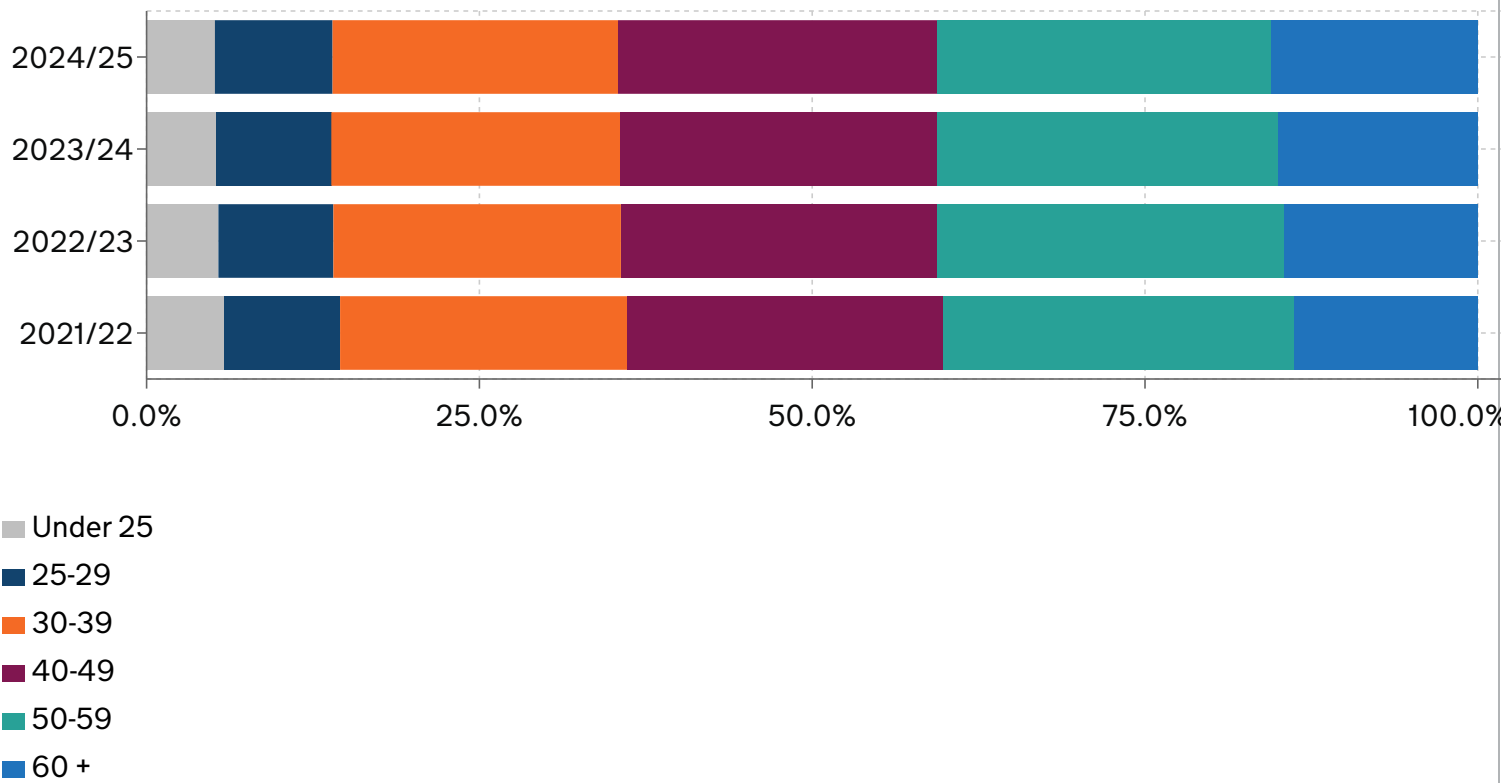
A further breakdown is available for [age by individual provider types and roles](#).

Chart

Table

[Export options](#)

Proportion of staff in the under 25 category is decreasing and the proportion of staff in the over 60 category is increasing.



Footnotes

- 1. This release shows data for further education providers in England. The location that a provider is based in has been determined from the main site/head office recorded in the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) database in the Department for Education. This records the main site only and may not cover all locations or regions that a provider operates.
- 2. All percentages and rates are rounded to 1 decimal place. Where figures have rounded to 0.0%, this may not necessarily indicate zero staff present for this measure.

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Source: Further Education Workforce Data Collection

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Explore data

Disability status

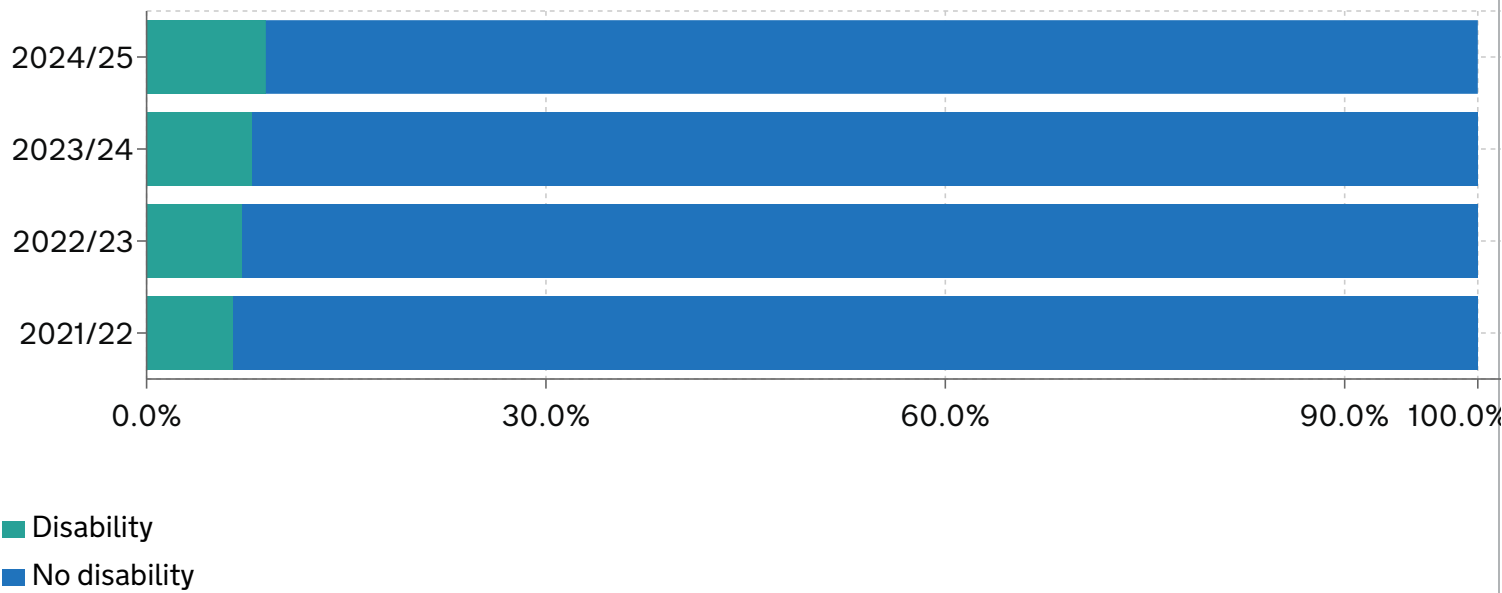
In the 2024/25 academic year, 9.0% of the further education workforce identified as having a disability, up from 8.0% in 2023/24. This varied by role with staff in support roles more likely to identify as being disabled (10.7%) than staff in leadership roles (6.0%)

A further breakdown is available for [disability status by individual provider types and roles.](#)

Chart	<u>Table</u>
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The percentage of the further education workforce identifying as having a disability is increasing. This is seen across all roles.



Footnotes

- 1. This release shows data for further education providers in England. The location that a provider is based in has been determined from the main site/head office recorded in the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) database in the Department for Education. This records the main site only and may not cover all locations or regions that a provider operates.
- 2. All percentages and rates are rounded to 1 decimal place. Where figures have rounded to 0.0%, this may not necessarily indicate zero staff present for this measure.

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Source: Further Education Workforce Data Collection

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Further education workforce pay

Full-time Equivalent (FTE) salary

What is Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) salary?

FTE salary includes both full time staff as well as part time staff that have had their part time salary scaled up to an FTE salary.

Which staff have been included in annual salary calculations?

Only staff who are employed on a permanent or fixed term contract have been included in annual salary calculations. Staff employed on zero hours, variable hours, or other contract types are not included in workforce pay calculations. Since staff on these contracts work different hours each year, making an accurate estimate of the annual salary for these staff members is not possible.

Approximately 185,700 (89%) of all individuals recorded in the data collection have a permanent or fixed term contract and were therefore included in FTE salary analysis presented below.

Providers in scope for salary calculations

The average (median) salary has not been scaled to account for providers who did not return data. Therefore, estimates for provider types with a lower response rate are likely to be less accurate.

Pay by role

In 2024/25, the median FTE average salary for members of the workforce on permanent or fixed term for teaching staff was:

- £37,600 in General Further Education Colleges including Tertiary (GFECs), up from £36,100 in 2023/24;
- £49,700 in sixth form colleges, up from £47,100 in 2023/24;
- £32,000 in Independent Training Providers (ITPs), up from £31,200 in 2023/24;
- £33,700 in local authorities with an education remit, up from £32,400 in 2023/24;
- £32,500 in special post-16 institutions, up from £31,000 in 2023/24;
- £49,700 in school based providers, up from £47,100 in 2023/24.
- £33,900 in other providers, up from £30,000 in 2023/24.

Further breakdowns are available for:

- [Full time equivalent \(FTE\) salaries for staff on permanent or fixed term contracts by role and provider type](#)
- [Full time equivalent \(FTE\) salaries for staff on permanent or fixed term contracts, by gender, for individual provider types and roles](#)
- [Full time equivalent \(FTE\) salaries for staff on permanent or fixed term contracts, by age group, for individual provider types and roles.](#)

Pay by region for teaching staff

Pay by region is based on the location of the provider, as recorded in the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) database. Further education providers may operate across multiple locations and regions. Therefore staff recorded as employed by a provider may not necessarily be working in the region that the college has been allocated to.

GFECs providers have the smallest range of FTE salaries between regions for teaching staff; from £35,500 in Yorkshire & the Humber to £42,900 in London, a 20.9% difference.

Local Authorities with an Education Remit have the largest range of FTE salaries between regions for teaching staff; from £27,600 in East Midlands to £56,200 in London, a 103% difference.

A further breakdown is available the the [FTE salary of all roles across regions](#).

Pay by subject

Average salary has not been reported for subjects with 25 or less teachers on permanent or fixed term contracts since smaller numbers are likely to make the data less representative.

Average salary is based on the [main subject](#) that each teacher teaches.

The top ten highest-paid subjects are all [academic](#) subjects. There was a £14,200 (45.3%) difference between the highest and lowest paid average salary by subject. Teaching staff teaching Philosophy as their main subject had the highest median annual salary of £45,600 and staff teaching Retail and Commercial Enterprise as their main subject had the lowest annual salary of £31,400.

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Subjects taught by teaching staff

The Further Education Workforce Data Collection asked providers to select the [main subject](#) taught by each member of their teaching staff from a list of options

If a provider cannot allocate a member of their teaching staff to any of the named subjects, they are advised to select “Other” as the main subject taught. The most commonly subject selected for teachers was “Other” (10.4% of teaching staff).

Data in this section has been [scaled](#) to provide national estimates.

Subject types

In the 2024/25 academic year, teaching staff taught the following [subject types](#):

- 53.0% of teaching staff taught vocational subjects, up from 51.3% in 2023/24;
- 25.0% of teaching staff taught academic subjects, up from 22.0% in 2023/24;
- 22.0% of teaching staff taught other subject types, down from 26.7% in 2023/24.

A further breakdown is available for [subject types taught in each provider type](#).

Main subject taught

In the 2024/25 academic year, the following subjects were most commonly reported as [main subject](#) taught:

- Construction, Planning and the Built Environment 6.2%;
- Health and Care Services 6.0%;
- Business Management and Administration 5.6%;
- Engineering and Manufacturing 4.8%;
- Mathematics 4.7%.

A further breakdown is available for the [main subject taught by teaching staff in each provider type](#).

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Retention of staff in the statutory sector - Official Statistics in Development

Official Statistics in Development

These statistics are undergoing a development. They have been developed under the guidance of the Head of Profession for Statistics and published to involve users and stakeholders at an early stage in assessing their suitability and quality.

Find out more about the standards we follow to produce these statistics through our [Standards for official statistics published by DfE guidance \(opens in new tab\)](#).

What do we mean by retention?

Retention measures the percentage of staff who remain in the sector from one academic year to the next.

For example, if all staff who were working in the 2023/24 academic year were still working in the sector in 2024/25, the retention rate would be 100%.

What provider types are included in retention figures?

Retention has only been calculated for staff working in the [statutory sector](#). This includes staff employed by:

- General Further Education Colleges;
- Sixth Form Colleges.

The statutory sector is used because response rates are significantly higher than in the non-statutory sector, making the data more reliable.

Why is a range provided for the retention figures?

Not all [statutory sector](#) providers returned data in both the 2023/24 and 2024/25 data collections. When a provider does not return data, we cannot confirm whether their staff remained in the sector the following year. This uncertainty affects the retention calculation.

To account for this, we present retention as a range:

- **Lower estimate:** Assumes that providers who did not return data in 2024/25 lost all their staff;
- **Upper estimate:** Assumes that providers who did not return data in 2024/25 retained all their staff.

This approach reflects the uncertainty caused by missing data while showing the potential impact on retention rates.

Between 84.9% and 85.2% of teaching staff remained in the statutory further education sector from the 2023/24 academic year to the 2024/25 academic year. Retention is highest for managers and leaders and lowest for admin staff.

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Unfilled teaching and management / leadership vacancies

Vacancy rates have not been scaled

We have [not attempted to scale](#) these figures to provide an overall estimate for all providers due to potential bias in the data return.

Unfilled teaching and management/leadership vacancy figures are based only on the 67.7% of further education providers in scope and who returned both the vacancy data collection and the workforce data

What do we mean by unfilled vacancy rate?

The unfilled vacancy rate shows the number of unfilled vacancies by the end of the 2024/25 academic year, per 100 positions. An example calculation is shown in the [methodology](#).

Unfilled teaching vacancies

National

By the end of the 2024/25 academic year 3.5 per 100 teaching positions were vacant, down from 3.9 per 100 teaching positions in 2023/24.

School based providers (1.1 per 100) had the lowest unfilled vacancy rate for teaching staff and other provider type the highest (9.2 per 100).

Regional

We determined providers' region using the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) database. Further education providers may operate across multiple locations and regions. Therefore some vacancies recorded by a provider may not necessarily be for positions in the region that the college has been allocated to.

Regions with less than 50 staff or less have been excluded from these figures since smaller numbers are likely to make the data less representative.

Unfilled teaching vacancy rates at the end of the 2024/25 academic year vary by region.

The highest vacancy rate for:

- GFECs was in East of England;
- Sixth form colleges and Local Authorities with an education remit was in Yorkshire & the Humber;
- Independent Training Providers (ITPs) was in London;
- Special Post-16 Institution was in West Midlands;
- School based providers was in North East;

By subject

We have [not attempted to scale](#) these figures up to provide an overall estimate for all providers due to potential bias in the data return.

The subjects with the highest rate of teaching positions that were vacant by the end of the 2024/25 academic year were:

- SEND (Communication) (9.3 per 100);

- Construction, Planning and the Built Environment (7.2 per 100);
- Economics (6.6 per 100);
- Engineering and Manufacturing (6.4 per 100).

Unfilled management and leadership vacancies

Vacancy figures shown in this section are based only on the 67.7% of further education providers in scope and who returned both the vacancy data collection and the workforce data collection. Therefore we have reported vacancy figures as a rate, rather than the number of vacancies. This is because there could be potential bias in the data return. For example, a provider with many/few vacancies may be less/more likely to return data.

National

By the end of the 2024/25 academic year, 1.9 per 100 management and leadership positions were vacant, the same as 2023/24. School Based Providers (0.5 per 100 positions) had the lowest unfilled vacancy rate for management and leadership staff and General FE College incl Tertiary the highest (2.5 per 100).

Regional

We determined providers' region using the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) database. Further education providers may operate across multiple locations and regions. Therefore some vacancies recorded by a provider may not necessarily be for positions in the region that the college has been allocated to.

Regions with less than 50 staff or less have been excluded from these figures since smaller numbers are likely to make the data less representative.

By region, at the end of the 2024/25 academic year, the highest proportion of leadership and management positions still unfilled for:

- General Further Education Colleges including Tertiary (GFECs) was London (5.9 per 100);
- Sixth form colleges was East of England (2.4 per 100);
- Independent Training Providers (ITPs) was South West (1.6 per 100);
- Local Authorities with an Education Remit was Yorkshire & the Humber (3.8 per 100);
- Special Post-16 Institutions was North East (3.4 per 100);
- School based providers was South East (0.7 per 100);

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Number of governors

The figures provided here are [estimates](#) of the number of governors in General Further Education Colleges including Tertiary (GFECs) and sixth form colleges. Unscaled data are available in the data catalogue.

What is a governor?

College governors are volunteers. Very much like a non-executive director sitting on boards, college governors oversee the operations of an FE institution, as well as the financial performance of the organisation. They bring their expertise, skills and experience to a college, helping shape the future direction of the institution.

In 2024/25, we estimate that there were 3,600 (headcount) governors serving in colleges, down from 3,700 last year:

- 3,000 governors in GFECs,
- 600 governors in sixth form colleges.

Under the [Further and Higher Education Act 1992 \(opens in new tab\)](#), the members of the governing body of a college corporation must include staff and students and, in the case of sixth-form college corporations, parents of students under 19. Although this is not a requirement, it is common for the principal/CEO to also be a member of the governing body.

Types of governors

The makeup of governors has remained similar for the previous three academic years. Nearly three quarters (74.2%) of governors in GFECs were independent governors, which was higher than the 66.8% reported in sixth form colleges. However unlike GFECs, sixth form colleges must have parent governors. In total, parent governors accounted for 6.7% of all sixth form college governors.

Length of time in role

The [FE governance guide \(opens in new tab\)](#) says in the section on Terms of office (under Recruiting and developing governors): "All the governance codes used by corporations emphasise the value of board membership being refreshed at intervals."

Just over two thirds (69.7%) of governors had been in their role for four years or less. Sixth form colleges have a higher proportion of governors who have been in their role for 12 years or longer, 7.9% compared to 2.4% in GFECs (including tertiary). This is an decrease from 10.0% for sixth forms and a decrease for GFECs from 2.6% in 2023/24.

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Governor characteristics

Data in this section has **not** been scaled to account for colleges that have not responded to the data collection. This is because we do not have any previously collected datasets about governor characteristics to compare the scaled figures against. Therefore figures provided are for responding providers only.

Gender

There are more male than female governors in colleges; in 2024/25, 52.3% were male. Since 2021/22, the proportion of governors that are female has slightly increased from 43.0% in 2021/22 to 45.7%.

Ethnicity

In the 2024/25 academic year, 19.8% of college governors identified as belonging to an ethnic minority group, up from 17.5% in 2021/22.

Some 7.8% of governors identified as Asian or Asian British, 4.3% as white minorities, and 4.2% as Black or Black British.

By comparison the [2021 Census \(opens in new tab\)](#) shows, 10.1% of the working age population were Asian or Asian British, 8.8% white minority groups, and 4.4% Black or Black British.

Age

The age breakdown of governors has remained broadly similar in the past four academic years. In the 2024/25 academic year, approximately two thirds of governors (68.2%) in further education colleges were aged 45 or older. Sixth form colleges had a higher percentage of governors in the 16-18 age group, 8.8% compared to 5.0% in GFECs.

The governing bodies of colleges must contain some student governors. Typically, sixth form student governors will fall into the 16-18 age group, whereas student governors in GFECs are drawn from a wider age range. This is likely to explain why sixth form colleges have a higher proportion of governors in the 16-18 age group, compared to GFECs.

Disability status

In the 2025/25 academic year, 7.1% of governors in further education colleges identified as having a disability, up from 6.0% in 2023/24. A higher proportion of governors in GFECs identify as having a disability (7.0%) compared to sixth form colleges (7.7%).

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Unfilled governor vacancies

Vacancy rates have not been scaled

We have [not attempted to scale](#) these figures to provide an overall estimate for all providers due to potential bias in the data return.

Unfilled teaching and management/leadership vacancy figures are based only on the 95.8% of colleges in scope who returned data.

What do we mean by unfilled vacancy rate?

The unfilled vacancy rate shows the number of unfilled vacancies by the end of the 2024/25 academic year, per 100 positions. An example calculation is shown in the [methodology](#).

Overall, 6.6 per 100 governor positions were unfilled by the end of the 2024/25 academic year. Sixth form colleges had a higher rate of unfilled governor positions, at 9.3 per 100 positions, compared to 6.0 per 100 in GFECs.

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Contact us

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