



National Research and Development Centre  
for adult literacy and numeracy

## **The Teacher Study**

The impact of the Skills for Life  
strategy on teachers

Research report

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## Key to quantitative data

All data in this report come from the Teacher Study. The data used for all statistical models and description are adjusted to represent the overall Skills for Life teaching workforce population using weights. All bases [N] given in the tables or figures are weighted and adjusted.

All percentages and absolute numbers are rounded to nearest whole and those below 0.5 are left in decimal form to one decimal place.

The percentages in the tables do not always add to 100 per cent due to rounding and, where percentages in the text differ to the sum of percentages in the tables, this too is due to rounding.

## Key to transcripts

I	Interviewer
T	Teacher
[Normal font]	Background information to clarify
[...]	Data that has been edited out
...	Pause in conversation

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# 1. Introduction

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This is a study of 1027 teachers<sup>1</sup> of literacy, numeracy and ESOL in England from 2004 to 2007. The teachers were interviewed in depth on at least three occasions during this period shedding light on all aspects of their professional life. The Teacher Study aimed to find out who these teachers were, what they do at work and what they think about their job. It has a particular focus on the impact of the Skills for Life strategy on them and their work.

I strongly support the Skills for Life strategy. However I am constantly frustrated by the level of bureaucracy within my organisation and the sector in general. I am convinced that processes and procedures could be simplified which would make all our lives easier and enable us to spend more time with learners – after all it is the learners we are supposed to be helping!

I think it is an absolutely great thing, that in particular, for me, Basic Skills is recognised by the government, possibly for the first time, as a subject that has great importance [Int41]

The Skills for Life agenda has made me feel part of a larger movement. I find this motivating.<sup>2</sup>

As these comments suggest, the impact of the Skills for Life strategy on those who teach and train Skills for Life learners is varied and multifaceted. For some teachers, the strategy has given a new standing and respectability to the field and the career in which they have worked for many years. Others perceive that the standards, targets and bureaucracy that have come with the initiative create administrative burdens and divert teachers from their commitment to social justice and their main business of improving learners' knowledge and skills. Many have welcomed the new professionalism that Skills for Life has brought; for others the strategy has emphasised divisions between different teachers in different education sectors.

The Skills for Life strategy was introduced in March 2001. It was formulated in response to *A Fresh Start* (1999), the report of the working group chaired by Sir Claus Moser. The report concluded that up to seven million adults (one in five of the adult population) in England had difficulties with literacy and numeracy – a higher proportion than in any other European country apart from Poland and Ireland. The strategy set out to improve the literacy, language and numeracy skills of 2.25 million adult learners by 2010, with interim targets of 750,000 by 2004 and 1.5 million by 2007; these were met. Its aim is to 'make sure that England has one of the best adult literacy and numeracy rates in the world', and, its long term vision is 'ultimately to eliminate the problem' of poor levels of adult literacy and numeracy [National Audit Office, 2004, p.20]. Skills for Life emphasises the needs of priority groups at risk of exclusion, including unemployed people and benefit claimants; prisoners and those supervised in the community; public sector employees; low-skilled people in employment, and younger adult learners aged 16–19.

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this report we use the terms 'teachers' and 'teacher' to refer to those who lead learning. In some of the quotes from teachers in this report they may be referred to as teachers, trainers, tutors or lecturers.

<sup>2</sup> Quotes 1 and 3 are open-box responses from teachers to the final question in the first survey (2004-2005), asking if they wanted to add anything about their work in the Skills for Life sector.

Undoubtedly, Skills for Life has raised the profile of adult literacy, language and numeracy learning among the general population. Many reports and press articles have been devoted to the UK's skills deficit. There has been a widespread advertising campaign designed to attract adults with poor literacy and numeracy skills into provision, and more recently debates over eligibility, funding and access for English for Speakers of Other Languages [ESOL] courses, and the *Leitch Review of Skills: Prosperity for all in the global economy – world class skills* [2006] with its emphasis on employability and improving the skills of the workforce, have ensured that the issue of adult basic skills retains its recently acquired high profile.

Less public attention has been paid to the teachers, tutors and trainers upon whose hard work and commitment the targets for improved skills depend. A core component of the Skills for Life strategy is to improve the quality of teaching and learning through a new national learning, teaching and assessment infrastructure. In 1999 the Minister for Education, Baroness Blackstone, announced that all post-16 teachers would need to be qualified and that basic skills teachers would also require a subject specific qualification. After 2002, the government developed mandatory teaching qualifications for new teachers, using a framework which recognised that adult literacy and numeracy were specialist subjects. As part of Skills for Life, new national literacy, numeracy and ESOL core curricula for adults have been introduced, based on national standards at each of five levels [Entry 1, Entry 2, Entry 3, Level 1, Level 2], as well as assessments, both diagnostic and summative, through the National Test. The aim of these has been to transform the quality of teaching by setting out the specific skills that need to be taught and learned at each level within the National Qualifications Framework [NQF]. The core curriculum for each subject area is designed to ensure consistency and continuity for the learner and help teachers using focused teaching methods to meet the needs of individual learners. This new approach has been supported by induction and training courses for teachers, new teaching standards, and a range of Continuing Professional Development [CPD] programs and initiatives have been offered at regional, national and local levels.

The Teacher Study was designed to find out more about the impact of these initiatives on Skills for Life teachers. One of the largest projects in the National Research Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy [NRDC] portfolio, its broad aims were to provide a picture of who Skills for Life teachers are and what they do in their working lives; to find out which kinds of teacher characteristics might affect responses to the strategy, and to trace how this effect changes over time.

The Teacher Study provides a rich picture of who Skills for Life teachers are; what qualifications they hold; how much CPD they undertake; what their employment status is; how many contact hours they have with students and much more. It then explores the relationship between this picture and the impact of the strategy, to identify areas of success and areas of concern. The analytical approach the Teacher Study takes recognises the pivotal role that teachers play in the implementation of educational reform. In essence our analysis addresses the question, how do teachers feel about or value the process of change? As an earlier article on the study's methodology [Giannakaki 2005] put it:

Having information about teachers' attitudes towards the new strategy, and about the factors shaping these attitudes, will allow proper measures to be taken to reduce resistance to change, increase teachers' personal commitment to the goals of the strategy, and ultimately, make implementation

easier and more effective. [p.324]

According to Fullan [1991] teachers are essential to the implementation of educational reform, because making changes to existing institutions, structures and classroom practices is impossible without teacher participation. From this, Fullan [1999] argues that for an education reform to be successful, teachers must feel they have a personal investment in its outcomes. In effect, teachers are required to become agents of change. The knowledge, skills and judgements that teachers bring to their role as 'change agents' [Sanders, 1999] have critical roles to play in educational change.

## **Note**

The questionnaire data in this report was collected in three phases: 2004 to 2005, 2006 and 2007. We refer to these three phases of data collection as Phase One, Phase Two and Phase Three.



## 2. Staff profile of Skills for Life teachers

This chapter introduces the teachers on which this report is based. It describes the general profile of teachers delivering to learners within Skills for Life and looks at which subjects they considered themselves specialists in, what sort of learners they taught and how they felt about their role in the organisations they worked in.

In order that findings from the Teacher Study should be representative of the Skills for Life workforce as a whole, the data were adjusted and weighted using the results of the 'Snapshot Survey' of all providers of Skills for Life, carried out by NRDC for LLUK [Carpentieri et al. 2007]. According to this 2006 survey, there were an estimated 18, 800 individuals teaching Skills for Life in England in 2004–2005. Table 2.1 below presents an overview of the socio-demographic and employment characteristics of the Phase One participants in the Teacher Study, both before and after weighting.

**Table 2.1: Characteristics of the Teacher Study sample, before and after weighting**

		% of Teacher Study sample	% of LLUK survey sample	% of weighted Teacher Study data
<b>Gender</b>	Female	77	75	<i>Not used for weighting</i>
<b>Age</b>	Under 30	7	10	10
	31–39	18	21	22
	40–49	36	33	35
	50–59	34	27	28
	60 and older	6	8	5
<b>Ethnicity</b>	British white	93	84	87
<b>Employment Status</b>	Full-time	59	33	33
	Fractional	27	21	21
	Hourly paid	14	46	46
<b>Contract Type</b>	Permanent contract	78	64	64
<b>Type of Employer</b>	FE College	72	56	54
	ACL	13	22	24
	Other	15	21	22
<b>Subject(s) taught</b> ( <i>adds to more than 100%</i> )	ESOL	71	51	51
	Literacy	33	44	44
	Numeracy	55	37	37
Total N (number of respondents)		1027	18800	1027

Some proportions in the weighted Teacher Study sample differ from those in the LLUK sample because data were weighted and adjusted according to all these characteristics simultaneously making it impossible to have exact proportions across all different groups

## Socio-demographic and employment characteristics

- Seventy-seven per cent of those in the Skills for Life teaching workforce were female
- On average, 13% of the Skills for Life teaching workforce came from minority ethnic backgrounds
- The two largest age-group bands were 40–49 years [35%] and 50–59 years [28%]: only 10% of Skills for Life teachers were under 30 years old. The mean age of a Skills for Life teacher was 45 years.
- Only 33% of Skills for Life teachers worked full-time; 21% had fractional contracts, and 46% were hourly-paid
- Sixty-four per cent of Skills for Life teachers had permanent contracts
- The majority of Skills for Life teachers [54%] were employed by FE Colleges. Slightly more than one-fifth [22%] worked for Adult and Community Learning [ACL] providers such as Local Education Authorities. Around the same proportion [21%] worked in 'other' types of provision, such as work-based learning or learndirect

In addition to previously mentioned employment characteristics, one-fifth of Skills for Life teachers had more than one job in the post-16 education and training sector and 13% had another job outside the sector. The mean figure for hours per week that Skills for Life teachers were contracted to work was 21.

On average, at the start of the project, Skills for Life teachers had been working in post-16 education and training for eight years; one-third of teachers had between one and four years' teaching experience, excluding a small proportion [7%] of new entrants to the profession. A substantial proportion [41%] of Skills for Life teachers also had experience in pre-16 education; on average these respondents had spent 5 years in the compulsory education sector. Nearly one-third of Skills for Life teachers had some experience in curriculum management, that is, experience in managing the provision of one or more subjects.

## Subject specialism

When asked to name what they considered their main teaching subject (see Table 2.2) 46% chose ESOL, 24% Literacy, 15% Numeracy, and 15% another, non-Skills for Life, subject. Teachers in this last group taught Skills for Life as either a secondary subject or often as part of a vocational or embedded programme. Around a quarter of the Teachers Study sample taught on embedded programmes in the three months prior to their Sweep One survey.

There is evidence to suggest that ESOL and numeracy are seen as more specialist areas. In the three months before the first set of interviews, only 85% of teachers who taught literacy considered themselves to be primarily teachers of literacy whereas the equivalent figure for ESOL was 96%. Non-specialists were also more likely to be teaching literacy than ESOL or numeracy. This could be due to literacy being taught by teachers who consider themselves to be 'English' teachers rather than literacy teachers.

**Table 2.2: Main Skills for Life subjects taught, 2005–05**

Subject	%	N	Main subject	%
Literacy	17	175	Literacy	85
			ESOL	1
			Other subject	15
Numeracy	13	130	Numeracy	89
			Literacy	4
			ESOL	1
			Other subject	6
ESOL	38	394	ESOL	96
			Literacy	1
			Other subject	3

It appears that it is common for Skills for Life teachers to cover more than one subject (see Table 2.3) – 28% taught two concurrently and 5% all three. Nineteen per cent taught both literacy and numeracy; interestingly, of these 44% were neither literacy nor numeracy specialists, whereas within the 8% who taught both ESOL and literacy, and the 1% who taught both numeracy and ESOL, this figure was far lower.

**Table 2.3: More than one Skills for Life subject taught, 2004–05**

Subject	%	N	Main subject	%
Literacy and numeracy	19	190	Literacy	33
			Numeracy	23
			Other subject	44
ESOL and literacy	8	78	Literacy	19
			ESOL	75
			Other subject	6
ESOL and numeracy	1	12	ESOL	71
			Numeracy	25
			Other subject	4
All three subjects	5	46	Literacy	30
			Numeracy	8
			ESOL	31
			Other subject	31
<b>Total</b>	100	1025		

For some teachers, assuming multiple teaching roles is a result of circumstances partly beyond their control such as staff shortages, particularly in smaller providers or rural locations. The extract below comes from an interview with a numeracy teacher working in an FE college:

I: So did you do literacy to help out?

T: I probably did it for over a year, filling in, or helping out.

I: Did you feel qualified to do that? To teach literacy for a year?

T: To that level, yes. And if I needed any help there were always other tutors around to ask and get ideas from. So that wasn't a problem. [Int33]

In some organisations an identity as a subject specialist teacher may have less currency than that of a 'basic skills' teacher, with a knock-on effect on teaching allocations. As one FE college teacher explained:

'I applied for [a job] as a basic skills tutor. And I went along and set my stall out, I said, you know, I am literacy. I had finished the Level 4 at that stage and knew that I had passed, although I didn't have my certificate, and that was it. I was given the job and that was great. But when I got there I discovered that their interpretation of basic skills tutors means you should be able to turn your hand to anything. Including their ICT, of course. So although I don't have any numeracy qualifications I had to learn pretty damn quick. Because that is what is expected. And when I voiced concerns about being asked to deliver something I had no knowledge of, and didn't feel confident to do, I was told – this is what it is like in Further Education colleges. It is not like Community Ed. where the disciplines are distinctly separate. You are expected to just do it.' [Int25]

For some teachers, this kind of situation was indicative of the differences between a job in Skills for Life and other teaching jobs:

'I am more qualified in literacy because I have done the Level 4. And this year I am intending to do the Level 3 in numeracy, and I will consider whether I will go on to do the Level 4 the year after [...] I would have liked to have just specialised in one thing [...] teachers at secondary school, they would not expect to teach Maths and English. There might be the odd one who does, but you would not expect them to specialise in both things. I think it is very difficult.' [Int4]

Others felt that there were positive sides to this educational culture:

'[I'm] Jack-of-all-trades. I think, actually, within Skills for Life you have to be very multi-skilled. I think it is an area you need to be, because I do specialise in numeracy, that is my field. But if the literacy tutor is off I am expected to step into her shoes. As long as it was a level I feel comfortable with. [...] I think it also expands your skills. I don't think it is a good thing to be blinkered and only do one area. Especially in the changing world of education, you definitely need to be multi-skilled.' [Int14]

## Teachers' workload

The mean number of contact hours respondents had with learners is 17 hours per week. On average, teaching groups contained 10 learners, and teachers reported that spare capacity, the maximum number of learners that the teachers felt was appropriate for teaching and learning, was an additional two learners per group.

Just over half [55%] of Skills for Life teachers taught learners aged 16–19 years in the three months prior to interview, although we are unable to say what percentage of these learners were in each class. For 77% of all teachers, fewer than half their learners across all classes they taught were aged 16–19.

A great many respondents also had experience of teaching learners who were identified on enrolment as having disabilities or learning difficulties. We are unable to report on the number of these learners within each class, but across all classes taught in the period of three months preceding the Phase One interview:

- 55% taught learners with specific learning difficulties (such as dyslexia)
- 38% taught learners with mental health problems

- 28% taught deaf or partial-hearing learners
- 20% taught blind or partially-sighted students
- 37% taught students with mobility problems or disabilities
- 12% taught learners with autistic spectrum disorders

## Attitudinal characteristics

The Teachers study questionnaire measured Skills for Life teachers' perceptions of the managerial support they received using 4 questions:

1. How much help and support do you receive from managers?
2. How much help and support do you receive from your line manager?
3. How much does your line manager value or recognise your work?
4. How well-informed is your line manager about your work and any problems you face?

Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from '0' for 'not at all' to 4 for 'a great deal'. Overall, 59% of Skills for Life teachers thought they received 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot' of help and support from managers in general and 66% thought they received 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot' of help and support from their line manager in particular. An even higher proportion [78%] thought that their line manager was informed 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot' about their work and any problems, and 82% believed their line manager valued and recognised their work 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot.'

Views on the extent of involvement in the employing organisation's decision-making process were measured in 8 different areas:

1. Allocation of financial resources
2. Selection/hiring of staff
3. Goals and policies of the organisation
4. Evaluation of organisational performance
5. Course design
6. Course evaluation
7. Content, topics and skills to be taught
8. Evaluation and assessment of learners

Once again, responses were recorded on a five-point scale ranging from '0' for 'not at all' to 4 for 'a great deal'. Unsurprisingly, teachers felt that they had far more involvement in decisions at course level [course design – 46%; course evaluation – 45%; content, topic and skills to be taught – 60%; evaluation and assessment of learners – 71%] than they did over wider college issues [evaluation of organisational performance – 20%; goals and policies of the organisation – 14%; selection/hiring of staff – 12%; allocation of financial resources – 7%].

Questions were also asked to measure the degree to which Skills for Life teachers collaborate with their colleagues. Four items were used to create an index of collaboration:

1. Extent of collaboration with colleagues who teach the same subjects
2. Extent of collaboration with colleagues who teach different subjects
3. I usually feel isolated from teachers in this organisation [reverse item]
4. Lack of collaboration with colleagues makes me feel as if I always have to reinvent the wheel [reverse item]

However, just 59% of teachers reported that they 'very often' or 'quite often' collaborated with colleagues in their subject area, and 23% answered likewise for collaboration with colleagues in different subject areas. Just over a fifth [22%] of teachers agreed that they felt isolated from other teachers in their organisation and a slightly higher proportion [27%] agreed that a lack of collaboration made them feel they were reinventing the wheel.

Teachers were presented with a series of statements for agreement and disagreement to measure their perceptions of the clarity of their professional role, and the conflicts they experience in their professional role. Two 5-point scales were used, with responses ranging from '0' for 'not at all' to 4 for 'a great deal', with '2' representing a neutral response.

The clarity of a teacher's professional role was measured through four statements:

1. I have clear, planned goals and objectives for my job
2. I know I have divided my time properly
3. I know exactly what is expected of me
4. Explanation is clear of what has to be done

Three-quarters of respondents agreed that they had clear, planned goals, and almost three-quarters [72%] agreed that they knew exactly what was expected of them. Just over half of respondents [54%] agreed that they knew they had divided their time properly and 61% agreed that they received clear explanations of what has to be done.

Conflict experienced in the teachers' professional role was measured through three statements:

1. I receive incompatible requests from two or more people
2. I do things that are apt to be accepted by one person and not by others
3. I receive a task without adequate resources and materials to complete it

One-third agreed that they received incompatible requests from two or more people, and one-third agreed that they did things that were apt to be accepted by one person and not by others. Slightly fewer teachers [31%] agreed that they received tasks without adequate resources and materials to complete them.

### 3. Teacher qualifications and training

---

This chapter focuses on teacher qualifications and professional development. It describes the levels to which Skills for Life teachers were qualified, both in general and in the subject(s) they taught, and analyses the factors that predict which teacher, teaching and employment characteristics influenced a teacher's qualification status. It also explores teachers' perceptions of the relationship between qualifications and teaching practice and looks at the professional development activities they engaged in.

#### Introduction

The average Skills for Life teacher was 45 years old and had eight years' experience in the field and they held a wide range of qualifications and combinations of qualifications. This reflects the variety of routes they have taken into employment and the different qualifications initiatives for literacy, numeracy and ESOL professionals that have formed the background to this period. Altogether this makes for a complicated qualifications profile and goes some way to explaining why notions of what it means to be 'a qualified SfL teacher' – both in terms of having subject specific knowledge and being qualified to institutional or governmental standards – cause confusion.

New Skills for Life teachers are expected to have a generic teaching qualification such as a Postgraduate Certificate in Education [PGCE] or Certificate in Education [CertEd] and a new Level 4 subject specialist certificate. Existing teachers are also being encouraged to take these qualifications and it is proposed that by 2010 almost all teachers in the post-16 sector will be fully-qualified.

Previous research shows that teacher quality is a powerful predictor of student performance. Darling-Hammond [2000] and Rivkin, Hanushek, and Kain [Many reports and press articles have been devoted to the UK's skills deficit.] concluded that the effects of well-prepared teachers on learner achievement can outweigh learner background factors such as poverty or minority status. Of particular interest is the impact of policy-relevant teacher qualifications such as generic teaching qualifications, and subject specific qualifications at degree level.

Recent studies of compulsory education have also suggested that there is a relationship between the subject a teacher teaches, the subject they gained their postgraduate qualification in, and student achievement. Many reports and press articles have been devoted to the UK's skills deficit. Goldhaber and Brewer (1997, 2000) and Rowan, Chiang, and Miller's (1997) found that student achievement in mathematics was positively associated with those assigned to teachers who earned their masters degree in mathematics. While a clear picture is beginning to emerge regarding the effect of teacher degrees and certification at the high school level, the evidence in the post-16 sector is virtually nonexistent. However, some initial analysis correlating data from the Teacher and Learner study suggests that the higher a teacher's level of qualification, the greater the learner's progress.

## Highest level of qualifications

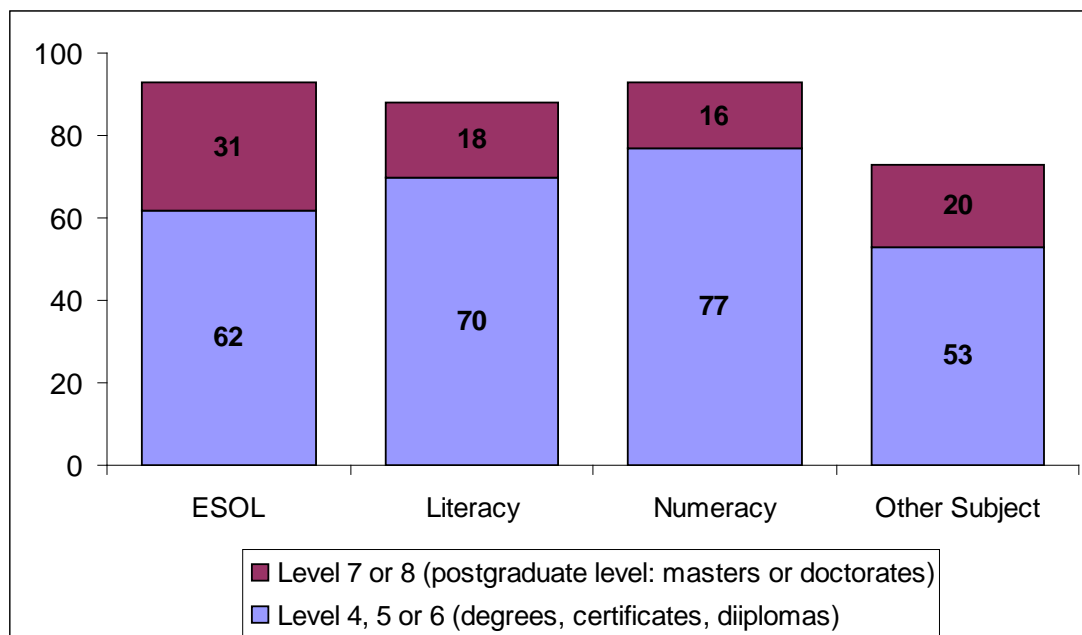
Respondents were initially asked about their highest level of qualification. [The National Qualifications Framework was revised in the course of this project. Appendix C outlines these changes.]

- Thirty-eight per cent of respondents were qualified to Level 7 or 8 [doctorate, masters degree, postgraduate certificate or diploma, including the PGCE].
- Thirty per cent were qualified to Level 6 [bachelor degree, graduate certificate or diploma, including the CertEd].
- Twenty-five per cent were qualified at Level 4 or 5 [diploma or certificate of higher and further education, foundation degree].
- Seven per cent were qualified to Level 3 or below.

Within this picture, teaching sector is relevant. Teachers working in FE Colleges were more likely to be qualified to Levels 7–8 than those in ACL and ‘other’ types of provision [28% compared to 22% and 15% respectively]. Those qualified only to Level 3 were more likely to be found in ‘other’ types of provision [12% compared to 4% of FE college teachers and 8% in ACL].

As Figure 3.1 shows, teaching subject is also pertinent. Respondents who selected ESOL as their main teaching subject were more likely to be qualified at Levels 7 and 8. Those who taught Skills for Life subjects but did not consider Skills for Life to be their main teaching subject [these respondents were predominantly vocational teachers] were less likely to be qualified at Levels 4 or above than those who chose literacy, numeracy or ESOL as their main teaching subject.

**Figure 3.1: Highest level of any qualification, by main teaching subject area [%] [N=1009]**



Of those who held postgraduate degrees, 42% did so in language and linguistics, 24% in the arts and humanities, and 4% in Mathematics. Literacy teachers gained postgraduate degrees primarily in the arts and humanities [43%], while



the majority [58%] of ESOL teachers with postgraduate degrees held these in language and linguistics (see Table 3.1).

**Table 3.1: Subject area of postgraduate qualification by subject taught [subjects taught can overlap]**

	All	Literacy	Numeracy	ESOL
Arts and humanities	24	43	26	21
Science	2	1	7	1
Social science	6	12	4	2
Language and linguistics	42	18	9	58
Mathematics	4	2	15	1
Other (incl. education)	22	25	38	19
<b>TOTAL</b>	100 [N=242]	100 [N=89]	100 [N=66]	100 [N=164]

When we looked at teachers' highest qualifications in mathematics and English (see Table 3.2), we discovered that overall Skills for Life teachers were higher qualified in English than they were in mathematics (only 3% below Level 2 compared to 14%). As might be expected, numeracy teachers were slightly higher qualified in mathematics (45% at Level 3 and above) than ESOL (31%) and literacy (16%) teachers. However, 50% of numeracy teachers only held a Level 2 qualification in mathematics, far lower than the 20% and 34% of ESOL and literacy teachers respectively whose highest qualification in English was at Level 2.

**Table 3.2: Highest qualifications in mathematics and English by subject taught [%] [subjects can overlap]**

	All		Literacy		Numeracy		ESOL	
	Maths	English	Maths	English	Maths	English	Maths	English
Level 7-8	1	11	1	9	2	3	2	19
Level 4-6	11	26	4	32	16	14	9	29
Level 3	22	28	11	21	27	21	21	30
Level 2	53	33	72	34	50	60	52	20
Level 1	7	1	4	1	2	1	9	1
None	7	2	8	3	4	1	9	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<b>L</b>	[N=102 7]	[N=102 7]	[N=44 3]	[N=44 3]	[N=34 3]	[N=34 3]	[N=49 0]	[N=49 0]

### Fully-qualified

To gain an overview of the extent to which teachers can be described as fully-qualified to teach in Skills for Life classes, they can be divided into four broad

groups and several subgroups. 'Fully-qualified' means teachers who had both of the qualifications expected of teachers in 2006, that is, a full generic teaching qualification [a Certificate in Education/PGCE or Level 4 Certificate in Further Education Teaching Stage 3] and a Level 4 subject specialist qualification. 'Part-qualified' in this report means that a teachers has one or other of these two qualifications, and 'unqualified' that they have neither. These 'unqualified' teachers may or may not have other qualifications. 'Part-qualified' can be further broken sown into four sub-categories, and 'unqualified' into six. For analysis, the category of 'unqualified' has been split into two sections based on the amount of training required to become fully-qualified. Whereas teachers who fall into the first four unqualified sub-categories need some training to become fully-qualified, those who fall into the last two are, in effect, starting from a low baseline and need full training.

It should also be noted that the first group of 'unqualified' teachers includes those who have ESOL Diplomas at National Qualifications Framework [NQF] Level 7 – teachers who can be thought of as very highly qualified indeed, but who still need some additional work for their qualifications to match current requirements. Throughout the following discussion, this group should be kept in mind, both in terms of overall qualifications levels in general and ESOL in particular.

### **1. Fully-qualified**

a. Teacher has both a generic teaching qualification (e.g. a PGCE) and a new Level 4 Subject Specialist qualification.

### **2. Part-qualified**

- a. Generic qualification only
- b. Generic teaching qualification, plus legacy subject specialist qualification (e.g. CELTA, C&G 9285)
- c. New subject specialist qualification only
- d. New subject specialist qualification, with legacy generic teaching qualification (e.g. C&G 7307, Stage 2)

### **3. 'Unqualified' – requiring some training or certification to become fully-qualified**

- a. ESOL Diploma at NQF Level 7
- b. Legacy subject specialism only
- c. Legacy generic teaching qualification only
- d. Legacy subject specialism and legacy generic teaching qualification

### **4. 'Unqualified' – requiring full training or certification to become fully-qualified.**

- a. Introductory qualifications only, (e.g. C&G 7307 Stage 1, C&G 9281 series)
- b. No qualifications

Table 3.4 shows a completed breakdown of qualification levels for literacy, numeracy and ESOL against these categories

**Table 3.4: Qualification levels of the Skills for Life teachers, 2005/6, all categories are exclusive by subjects taught [%] [subjects can overlap]**

Qualification level		Literacy	Numeracy	ESOL
<b>1. Fully-qualified</b>		<b>21</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>2. Part-qualified</b>	(a) Generic qualification only	30	28	21
	(b) Generic with legacy subject specialism	5	5	11
	(c) Subject specialist qualification only	19	4	9
	(d) Subject specialist with legacy generic	1	2	-
<b>Total part-qualified</b>		<b>55</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>3. 'Unqualified'</b> – requiring some training or certification to become fully-qualified	(a) ESOL Diploma at NQF Level 7	-	-	12
	(b) Legacy subject specialism only	1	1	14
	(c) Legacy generic teaching qualification	7	4	-
	(d) Legacy subject specialism and legacy generic qualification	0.4	2	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>4. Unqualified'</b> – requiring <i>full</i> training or certification to become fully-qualified	(a) Introductory qualifications only	10	7	2
	(b) No teaching qualifications	6	18	3
<b>TOTAL (absolute numbers)</b>		<b>443</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>490</b>

A number of figures stand out here. A higher proportion of literacy and numeracy teachers than ESOL teachers only had introductory qualification or none at all. In fact, among numeracy teachers this accounted for a worryingly high 25%. However, when only those teachers who taught numeracy and no other subject were included the figure fell to 7%. At the same time the figure for fully-qualified numeracy teachers rose from 29% to 57%. Together these figures imply that where numeracy provision was taught by numeracy specialists, the level of qualifications of the teachers was significantly higher than for literacy or ESOL, but that where provision was taught by non-specialists the opposite was the case. Among literacy and ESOL teachers this effect was less apparent. However, as a rule those who taught two or more subjects were less likely to be fully-qualified than those who taught only one subject (see Table 3.5 below).

**Table 3.5: Qualification status of Skills for Life teachers in England, by subjects and combinations of subject taught [%]**

Teacher's subject specialism	Subject of the qualification	Fully qualified	Part qualified – generic	Part qualified – subject specialism	Unqualified
Adult Literacy only		22	29	29	20
ESOL only		33	29	9	30
Adult Numeracy only		57	27	9	7
Adult Literacy and Numeracy	In both subjects	9	30	1	25
	In Adult Literacy	14		13	
	In Adult Numeracy	4		5	
Adult Literacy and ESOL	In both subjects	3	44	-	12
	In Adult Literacy	9		-	
	In ESOL	30		4	
Adult Numeracy and ESOL	In both subjects	-	33	-	25
	In ESOL	17		-	
	In Adult Numeracy	25		-	
All three	-	-	24	-	33

<sup>1</sup> represents too few cases for a robust estimation

Subject and subject combination categories are mutually exclusive – that is, individual teachers are represented in the table only once

Source: Carpentieri, J.D., Cara, O. & Casey, H. (2007a)

In more detailed analysis we looked more closely at the characteristics of the teachers who were fully-qualified. Turning firstly to socio-demographic characteristics, male teachers in all three subject areas were less likely to be fully-qualified. In ESOL and Literacy, teachers in their middle years were more likely to be fully qualified than those who were at the younger and older ends of the age scale.

Adding employment characteristics into the models, showed that in all three subject areas, part-time teachers who wanted to convert to full-time contracts were more likely to be fully-qualified and that teachers working in FE Colleges were also more likely to be fully-qualified.

The full range of predictors of fully-qualified status is presented in Table 3.6 below.

**Table 3.6: Predictors of fully-qualified status**

<b>Teacher characteristics</b>	<b>Literacy teachers having fully-qualified status with subject specialism in literacy</b>	<b>Numeracy teachers having fully-qualified status with subject specialism in numeracy</b>	<b>ESOL teachers having fully-qualified status with subject specialism in ESOL</b>
Gender	Male teachers less likely to be fully-qualified	Male teachers less likely to be fully-qualified	Male teachers less likely to be fully-qualified
Ethnicity	n/s	n/s	Minority ethnic teachers less likely to be fully qualified
Age	n/s	Younger and older teachers less likely to be fully-qualified compared to middle-aged teachers. Effect of age becomes insignificant when main subject and subject combination are introduced to the model	Younger and older teachers more likely to be fully-qualified compared to the middle-aged teachers
Experience	n/s	n/s	n/s
Tenure	n/s	n/s	n/s
Contract hours	n/s	n/s	n/s
Employment status	Teachers on fractional contracts who want a full-time position more likely to be fully-qualified compared to full-time teachers	Part-time teachers who do not want a full-time position less likely to be fully qualified compared to full-time teachers or those who want to become full-time. This effect becomes insignificant when contract type is in the model	Part time teachers who want a full-time position more likely to be fully qualified compared to full-time teachers or those who do not want full-time positions
Main subject	Teachers whose main subject is not literacy are less likely to be fully-qualified to teach it. This effect becomes insignificant when number of subjects taught is introduced into the model	Teachers whose main subject is not numeracy are less likely to be fully qualified to teach it	n/s
More than one subject	Those who teach more than one SfL subject less likely to be fully qualified than those who teach only literacy	Those who teach more than one SfL subject less likely to be fully qualified. This effect becomes insignificant when main subject is introduced into the model	Those who teach ESOL and numeracy in combination more likely to be fully-qualified compared to those who teach only ESOL
Provider type/sector	Teachers in FE Colleges more likely to be fully qualified	Teachers teaching in providers outside of FE Colleges or ACL less	Teachers in FE Colleges more likely to be fully

	compared to teachers in all other types of providers	likely to be fully qualified.	qualified compared to teachers in all other types of providers
Contract type	n/s	Those on permanent contracts more likely to be fully qualified.	n/s
Promotion to a managerial position	n/s	n/s	n/s
Managerial support	n/s	n/s	Those who receive less managerial support are more likely to be fully-qualified
Professional role clarity	n/s	n/s	The clearer a teacher's professional role the more likely they are to be fully qualified
Professional role conflict	n/s	n/s	The more a teacher perceives conflicts in their professional role the more likely they are to be fully-qualified
Job security	n/s	n/s	n/s
Career prospects	n/s	n/s	Those who are more satisfied with their job security are less likely to be fully qualified.

In the light of these figures it is interesting to note that over half of those interviewed who taught more than one subject felt that they did not require any additional training to teach these other subjects, particularly where they taught on lower-level courses. One respondent who taught all three Skills for Life subjects, said:

For the level I do I would say I have the knowledge for that. I have got no problems delivering those levels. If I was to have to deliver them at a higher level then there may be ones I would have to concentrate more on. [Int55]

However, those who either wanted to take on more teaching in their supplementary subject(s), or to teach these at a higher level, did see the value in additional training:

Literacy is probably the one I would need more training on, because my literacy itself is not ... I know my vowels are, and things like that, but delivering it to our students, I would want more training. [Int2]

Another factor may also be levels of job security; if teachers are unsure for how long, and for how many hours a week, they are going to be required to teach their secondary subject they are likely to remain reluctant to take qualifications in it.

I: So do you feel you need more training in numeracy?

T: I just wonder how long it is going to last. Because it is only one lesson a week. But if it is more than one lesson a week ongoing definitely, then perhaps I should consider taking a level three or something<sup>3</sup>. [Int31]

### **Subject specialist teaching qualifications**

Respondents were asked about their teaching qualifications in the subjects they taught. Sixty-three per cent of literacy and numeracy teachers and 48% of ESOL teachers had City & Guilds teaching qualifications, ranging from the very basic to more advanced levels such as the City & Guilds 9285. Fifty percent of ESOL teachers had a certificate (e.g. CELTA) and 20% a diploma (e.g. DELTA) in ESOL.

Overall 31% of those who taught literacy across all three phases [from 2004 to 2007] had the subject specialist qualification compared to 26% of ESOL teachers and 25% of numeracy teachers. Considering that these qualifications had only recently been introduced it could be argued that these figures are actually quite high.

As would be expected, teachers gave multiple and complex reasons for embarking on the Level 4:

I knew it was coming into being. I knew it was something that was likely to be required in the future. And I never took A-Level maths. So I didn't have that level of qualification. And I felt it would be useful for me to brush up my maths skills and get the qualifications I needed anyway, at some point. And it was being run in-house and the person who was responsible for it is the person I was talking to you about, who I have respect for. So I thought it was a good opportunity to do it. [Int28]

To understand why some teachers have gained these new qualifications and others have not, we looked firstly at the effect of socio-demographic characteristics – gender, ethnicity, age and teaching experience.<sup>4</sup> Male teachers in all three subject areas were less likely to have a Level 4 subject specialist qualification. Although older literacy teachers were more likely to have the qualification, this likelihood decreased the more experience they had, implying that age was less of a factor than how recently they gained their previous teaching qualifications.

Next the variables for employment status, number of paid hours and sector were entered into the models. Part-time teachers who did not want full-time contracts were less likely to have a subject specialist qualification than those who were either on full-time contracts or who wanted to change to full-time contracts. Indeed, this last group were the most likely to have the qualification. Both literacy and ESOL teachers who wanted to be promoted to a higher managerial position were much more likely to have the qualification. Both of these factors imply that the qualifications are perceived to have a high value in the field in terms of career development.

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<sup>3</sup> Although this ESOL teacher refers to a Level 3 qualification 'or something', he would have actually needed a subject specific qualification at Level 4.

<sup>4</sup> Models used only those variables that appeared to be significant in bivariate analysis.

There was little evidence that managers in education providers were pressurising teachers into taking the course; rather, teachers recognised the professional advantages of obtaining fully-qualified status by 2010. Those thinking of their longer-term career saw it as part of their professional development:

[The decision to do a Level 4 was] not because the government said we had to. But the writing was there that said we ought to. I thought it was a good idea and I thought it would benefit my teaching. And I would get some good ideas from it as well. [Int38]

When attitudinal variables were entered into the models, these suggested that literacy and ESOL teachers who believed they had a clear professional role and those who said they received less managerial support were more likely to have the qualification. These factors could be seen as related. Perhaps managers see these teachers as needing less support, firstly because their role is clear and secondly because as they have the qualification, their managers perceive them to be capable of working more independently. However, it could also be argued that gaining the qualifications has given these teachers an increased sense of professional worth and a greater understanding of the levels of support that they should get, leading to increased levels of dissatisfaction when these expectations are not met.

The full range of predictors of fully-qualified status is presented in Table 3.7 below.

**Table 3.7: Predictors of having a Level 4 subject specialist qualification**

<b>Teacher characteristics</b>	<b>Literacy teachers with subject specialist qualification in literacy</b>	<b>Numeracy teachers with subject specialist qualification in numeracy</b>	<b>ESOL teachers with subject specialist qualification in ESOL</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Female teachers more likely to have qualification	Female teachers more likely to have qualification	Female teachers more likely to have qualification
<b>Ethnicity</b>	White British teachers more likely to have qualification compared to minority ethnic teachers	-	Minority ethnic teachers more likely to have the qualification
<b>Age</b>	-	-	Younger and older teachers more likely to have qualification
<b>Experience</b>	-	-	-
<b>Tenure</b>	-	-	-
<b>Contract hours</b>	-	-	-
<b>Employment status</b>	Teachers on full time contracts or part-time staff who would like to work full time are more likely to have the literacy qualification compared to part-time teachers who do not want a full-time position	Teachers on full-time contracts more likely to have Level 4 numeracy compared to part-time teachers who do not want a full-time position	Hourly-paid teachers who want full-time contracts are more likely to have the qualification compared to full-time ESOL teachers.



<b>Main teaching subject</b>	Teachers whose main subject is literacy are more likely to have the qualification	Teachers whose main subject is numeracy are more likely to have the qualification	Teachers whose main subject is ESOL are more likely to have the qualification
<b>Teaching more than one subject</b>	Those who teach all three Skills for Life subjects are more likely to have the qualification. Those who teach both literacy and numeracy are less likely to have the qualification	Those who teach only numeracy are more likely to have the qualification	Those who teach both ESOL and numeracy are more likely to have the qualification than those who teach only ESOL
<b>Provider type/sector</b>	-	Those who teach in FE or ACL are more likely to have the qualification	Those who teach in FE colleges or ACL are more likely to have the qualification
<b>Contract type</b>	-	-	-
<b>Promotion to a higher managerial position</b>	Those who want promotion are much more likely to have the qualification	-	Those who want promotion are much more likely to have the qualification
<b>Managerial support</b>	Those who receive less managerial support are more likely to have the qualification	-	Those who receive less managerial support are more likely to have the qualification
<b>Professional role clarity</b>	Those who have clearer professional role are more likely to have the qualification	-	Those who have clearer professional role are more likely to have the qualification
<b>Professional role conflict</b>	-	-	The more a teacher perceives conflicts in their professional role the more likely they are to have the qualification
<b>Job security</b>	-	-	Teachers who are dissatisfied with their job security are more likely to have the qualification
<b>Career prospects</b>	Teachers who are satisfied with their career prospects are more likely to have the qualification	-	Teachers who are satisfied with their career prospects are more likely to have the qualification

'-' was not entered into the model because a variable was not significant in a bivariate analysis

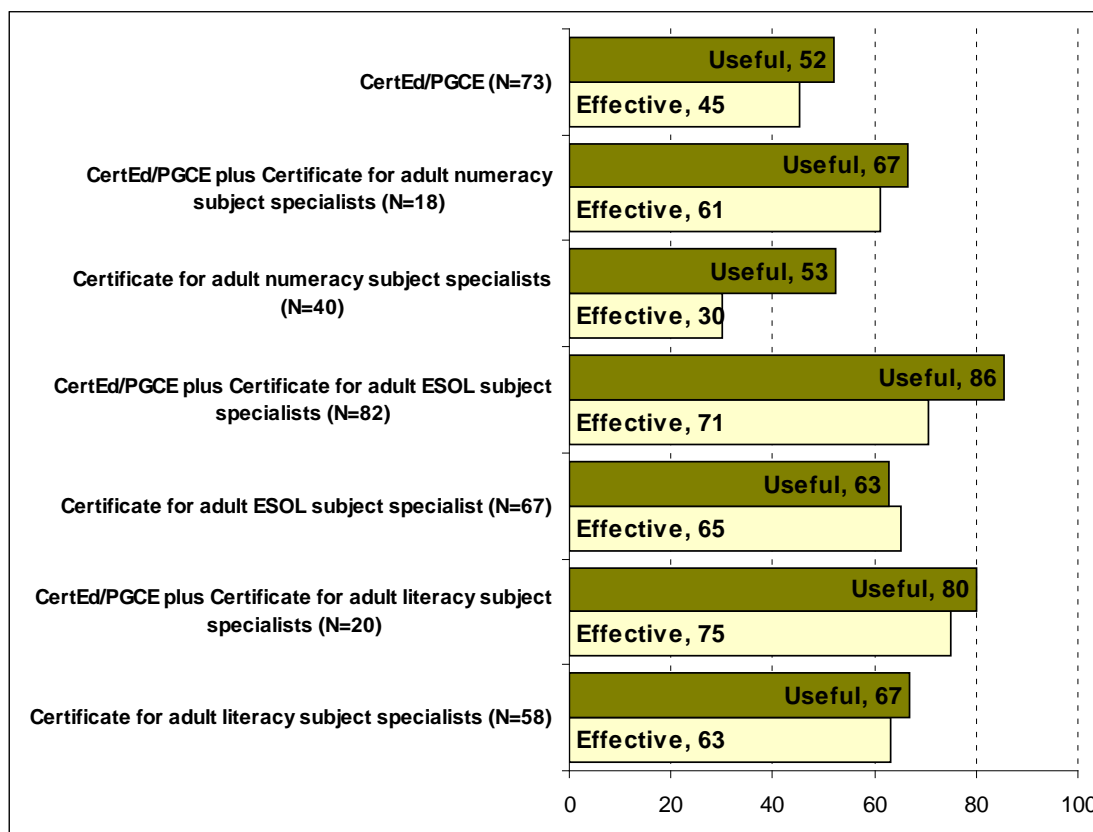
'n/s' = not significant

### Effectiveness of teacher training

Teachers were asked to rate the usefulness and effectiveness of the teacher training programmes they had taken (Figure 3.2). Overall course ratings were higher in terms of usefulness for professional development and lower for their effectiveness in preparing them to teach in a particular subject area. Integrated programmes rated higher than stand-alone subject specialist teacher training courses. Teachers judged the most effective course to be that which integrated

the subject specialist certificate for adult literacy with the Cert Ed/PGCE. The certificate for adult numeracy subject specialists emerged with the least effective rating. In terms of usefulness, teachers rated the integrated Cert Ed/PGCE with certificate for adult ESOL subject specialists the most useful and the Cert Ed/PGCE least useful.

**Figure 3.2: 'How effective and useful was your teacher training programme?', those who gained their qualification between Phases One and Three**



The majority of teachers who had gained at least one of the subject specialist certificates commented positively in interviews about their training. Those who had had positive experiences valued the educational theory content of the course which gave them a deeper understanding of learners' motivations and needs:

I learned some really helpful things, some methodology and some of the theories and stuff that I actually learned, that I am still trying to implement, things like Maslow and his hierarchy of needs. Making sure they are comfortable and everybody can hear me. [Int17]

Others spoke of the effect the course had on their pedagogical development and on improving their knowledge and skills:

There were a lot of sessions, a lot of input on teaching practice, learning techniques. I felt there was a lot of ... theory of writing and reading. And the thought process that we bring to reading and writing were really useful, and I think it really has improved my teaching skills. [Int45]

Those who had less rewarding experiences commented that courses repeated material they had already covered, sometimes on generic courses taught in conjunction with the subject-specific courses, and that the course teaching was

not always up-to-scratch. Others felt that the pedagogical content of the course gave insufficient insights into effective classroom strategies, or that the theoretical content was irrelevant to them: 'What's the point of me writing another essay on the socio-economical problems of people with poor numeracy problems?' [Int30].

From interviews, typologies of teacher responses to the subject specialist courses can be constructed (Table 3.8).

**Table 3.8: Teacher typologies – on subject specialist courses**

<b>Mainly positive responses to course</b>	<b>Mainly negative responses to course</b>
Enjoyed the theoretical and social side of the subject	Too much theory
Believed course helped improve general teaching skills, with ideas, insights and innovations	Not enough practical ideas or strategies for the classroom
Enjoyed working at higher levels in their subject	Poor course teaching / students on course at vastly different levels of experience
Enjoyed spending time with, and learning from, other teachers	Found the subject specific element very difficult
	Course was a big commitment and very hard work

### ***Choosing to take a subject specialist course***

We asked teachers why they did not have, or were not working towards, subject specific and generic teaching qualifications (Table 3.9). The most common reason given was the belief that their existing qualifications were sufficient; this is most likely a reference to the so-called 'legacy' qualifications gained in the past.

**Table 3.9: Why teachers did not have or were not working towards teaching qualifications [%]**

	Those without any subject specialist qualification		Those without a generic teaching qualification	
	SW2 (N=453)	SW3 (N=449)	SW2 (N=139)	SW3 (N=120)
I believe that I hold an equivalent qualification	36	22	-	-
I do not have the time	30	16	52	25
Too big a workload	26	17	39	14
Cannot get release time from work	7	6	7	7
No place available on an appropriate course	3	6	1	1
Too far to travel to suitable course	8	8	1	0
Unsuitable time of day or week for a course	11	9	16	9
Financial reasons	12	6	10	11
Lack of institutional support	6	5	7	5
Waiting to see if it is necessary	17	9	-	-
Qualification not required	15	3	11	51
Do not see the need to	12	8	22	21
Only work part time	11	9	15	10
Will retire soon	14	14	20	23

‘-’ Not applicable, was not one of multiple choice answers

Respondents could choose all applicable answers, so total percentages do not add up to 100

It was clear that there was some confusion among teachers about the new qualification requirements. For example, ESOL teachers with CELTA and DELTA qualifications were not always aware that they would need to take further courses, including ‘top-up’ and extension modules in order to have fully-qualified status. Other teachers who were highly qualified in their subject (including to masters level) wrongly assumed that this would negate the need to do a Level 4. Other teachers lacked conviction that the new courses would add to their knowledge or skills base.

If I could gain something from that so I could teach better, I would. With literacy I feel like I would have to be convinced I would learn enough to make it worthwhile [...] I have done a masters in English, and so I think I know most of the ins and outs of a lot of stuff. [Int20]

The next most popular reasons given were time constraints and balancing course demands with an existing heavy workload: ‘It’s in remission of your teaching time and getting cover while you are doing it is very difficult.’ [Int2] However, in this it was notable that there was a far greater reluctance among those who did not have a generic teaching qualification than among those who had a subject specialist qualification. This may be due to the fact that those who only had the generic qualification were closer to retirement. However, the comments below

question whether requiring experienced teachers to retrain sends out a negative message about their profession and could also impact on their reluctance:

It is very undermining to the profession. Forget what qualifications you had before, forget your teaching experience. Because this level four qualification isn't just going on the course and doing assignments, it is something like thirty hours of teaching practice and you have to be observed again, and, you know, it is like saying to an experienced teacher – you are starting from the beginning. [Int51]

## Professional development and training needs

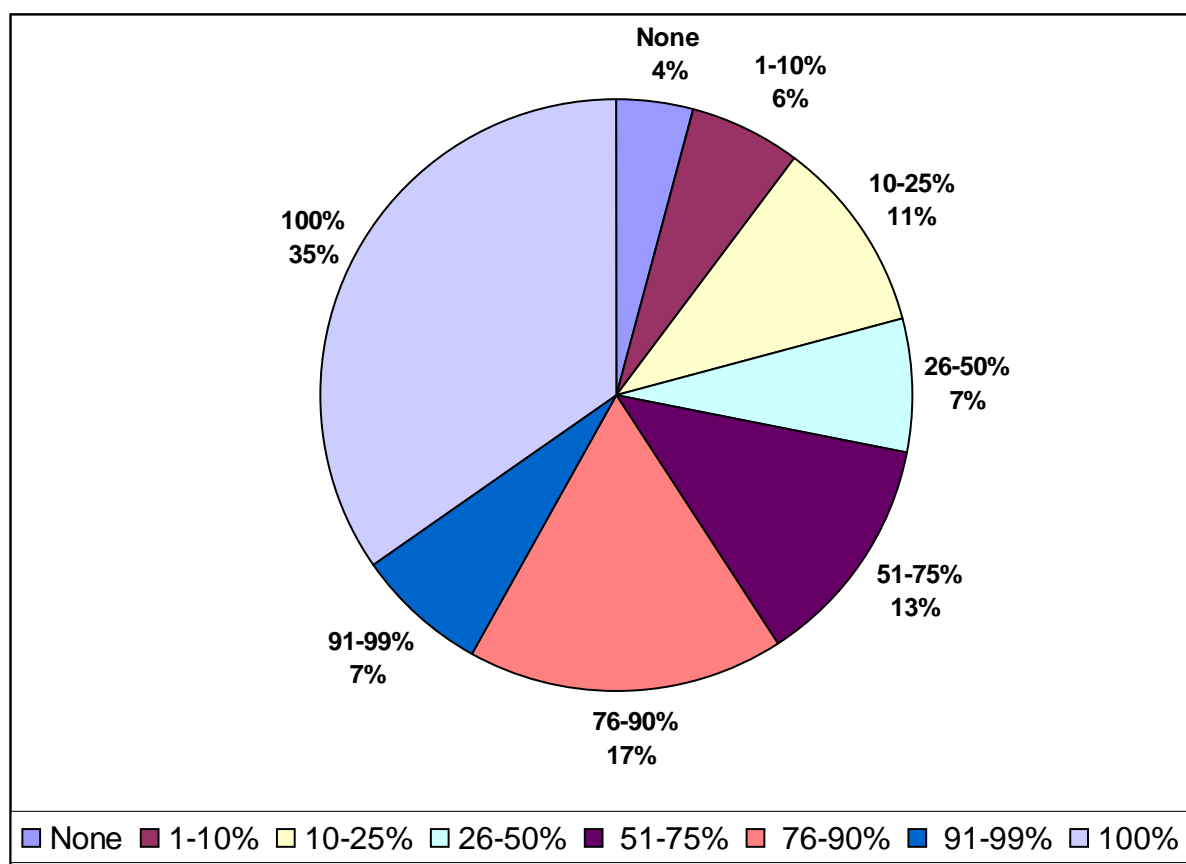
We asked teachers about their Continuing Profession Development (CPD) in Skills for Life. Between 2001–03, 64% of literacy teachers attended the core curriculum training in adult literacy; 55% of numeracy teachers attended the training in adult numeracy, and 64% of ESOL teachers participated in the ESOL training. In addition:

- 38% of all respondents attended the national training in the new diagnostic assessment tools
- 32% attended the national training in the new learning materials
- 18% attended the national training in using Access for All
- 12% of respondents attended the national training in the adult pre-entry curriculum framework
- 11% participated in professional development programmes or activities offered by the Key Skills Support Programme.

On average, respondents spent five days in CPD activities in the 12 months before they completed the Phase One questionnaire. Within this the range was wide, with some teachers engaging in no CPD at all, and others clocking up more than 30 days: 16% of respondents participated in more than 10 days. In Phase Two, respondents attended an average of five CPD days between in the 10 months between September 2005 and June 2006, with 13% attending more than 10 days. In Phase Three, respondents averaged four days of CPD in the eight months between September 2006 and April 2007, with 7% attending more than 10 days.

The Phase Three survey included a new question designed to find out what proportion of this professional development activity was specifically focused on Skills for Life teaching and learning activities, materials or tools. Results shows, for example, that only 4% of teachers did not attend any CPD that specifically focused on Skills for Life; 17% were present at sessions where between 76% and 90% of the time concentrated on Skills for Life teaching and learning activities, materials or tools; while 35% of teachers went to sessions where the whole training was devoted to these aspects of Skills for Life (Figure 3.3).

**Figure 3.3: Percentage of CPD days [September 2006–April 2007] specifically focused on Skills for Life [N=349]**



New questions also discovered more about where and how teachers accessed Skills for Life professional development programmes between Phase One and Two, and Phase Two and Three.

- One-quarter of respondents participated in national or regional CPD
- 20% participated in local CPD activities
- 53% participated in-house training
- 19% attended CPD funded or organised under the Skills for Life Quality Initiative
- 5% participated in CPD organised by the Skills for Life Strategy Unit
- 26% participated in CPD arranged by another national or regional funding body.
- One-quarter respondents did not know who funded/organised the CPD activities they attended.

The reasons that teachers who attended no CPD activities most commonly cited were lack of time [30%], a lack of appropriate courses [25%] and big workloads [22%], but teachers also mentioned problems of getting release from work (7%) and lack of managerial support (5%). Interestingly, 19% said they did not see the need to attend any CPD activities.

Table 3.10 presents more information about the focus of CPD activities, and about the areas in which Skills for Life teachers would like more professional development.

**Table 3.10: CPD focus: training undertaken and additional training required [%]**  
 [Phase Two and Phase Three]

	Phase Two		Phase Three	
	Training attended to date (N=522)	Would like additional training (N=737)	Training attended to date (N=349)	Would like additional training (N=546)
Use of ICT in teaching and learning	33	23	32	25
Core curriculum	6	4	5	3
Assessment	18	9	6	11
Initial / Diagnostic Assessment	14	14	22	14
ILPs	23	14	15	12
Embedding SfL	18	19	18	20
New Learner Qualifications and Examinations	13	10	10	7
Dyslexia (Awareness, Learner Support, Assessment and Teaching)	24	30	15	17
Disabilities and learning difficulties (Awareness, Learner Support, Assessment and Teaching)	9	13	6	14
Pre-entry learners	-	22	-	14
Leadership and Management	12	20	10	12
Family Learning	3	7	1	7
Whole Organisation Approach	11	11	10	10
Teacher Training and Qualifications	21	20	18	25
Time management	-	10	-	14
Administration and paper work	-	9	-	11
None at present	-	19	-	20
Other	16	6	13	3

## 4. Employment status and mobility

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This chapter analyses the employment status of the Skills for Life workforce and the employment mobility of the teachers in the Teacher Study sample. It examines teachers working on three types of job contracts – full-time, fractional and hourly-paid – and outlines the factors influencing employment status. It also looks at the relationship between employment status and job satisfaction.

The adult basic skills sector has historically been characterised by part-time and sessional work. For employers, a workforce that is mainly part-time allows for a flexible response to market fluctuations, especially those relating to insecurities in funding. For teachers, part-time work benefits those looking to work for a limited number of hours because, for example, they have other commitments, are not the main household earner or because teaching is not their first career.

The introduction of the Skills for Life strategy, however, raises questions about the relationship between the government's drive for a new professionalisation of the workforce in this sector and the capacities and capabilities of a workforce where the majority is employed on fractional or sessional contracts. One of the teachers we interviewed noted that an hourly-paid contract was at odds with the professionalism of sessional teachers:

'I am not in [Skills for Life] to earn "pocket money" or to "keep myself busy" but as a professional teacher.'

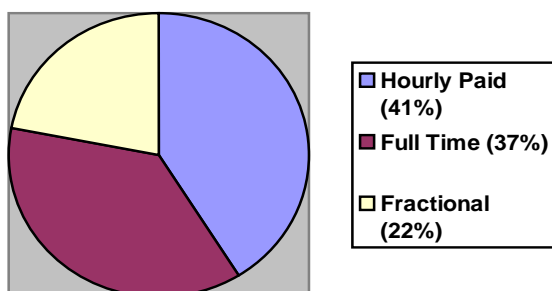
It can be argued that a professionalised Skills for Life sector needs more teachers who work both full-time and are on permanent contracts in order to move it more in line with the school sector. Educational researchers such as Gleeson et al. [2005] argue that not only can part-time work increase the distinctions between core and periphery teachers with knock-on effects in terms of pay, pensions and conditions of service, it can also cause difficulties with recruitment and retention.

### Employment status

As Figure 4.1 illustrates, on average in each of all three phases of the Teachers Study, 63% of Skills for Life teachers worked part time and 37% worked full time. A greater proportion of part-time contracts were hourly-paid than fractional – 41% compared to 22%.



**Figure 4.1: Employment status of Skills for Life workforce** [Pooled data from all three phases (2,310 observations)]

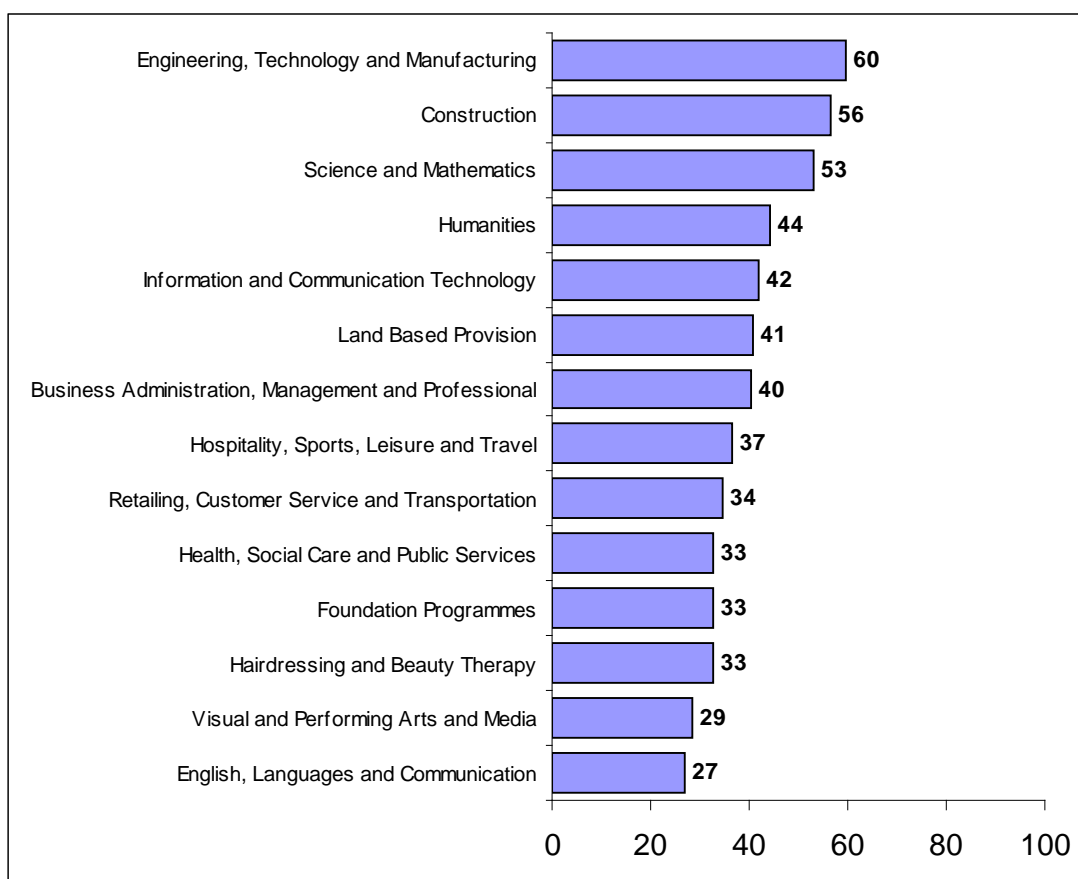


We can compare this picture of the Skills for Life workforce with a picture of all teachers employed in post-16 education and training. The Staff Individualised Record [SIR] dataset for 2004/05 shows that, on average, 38% of teachers in the post-16 sector employed had full-time contracts [see Figure 4.2]. Skills for Life teachers were perhaps less likely to have full-time contracts than those in 'Construction' and 'Engineering, Technology and Manufacturing', and more likely to have full-time contracts than those in 'English, Language and Communication' and 'Visual and Performing Arts and Media'.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Conclusions are tentative as there is no specific category for Skills for Life in this dataset: our analysis uses the category of 'Foundation Studies' [which includes teachers of literacy, numeracy, Basic IT, Access] but it is unlikely that Key Skills, GCSE and ESOL teachers are included in this category.

**Figure 4.2: Full-time teachers in the post-16 education and training sector, by subject taught [%] [SIR data, 2004/05]**



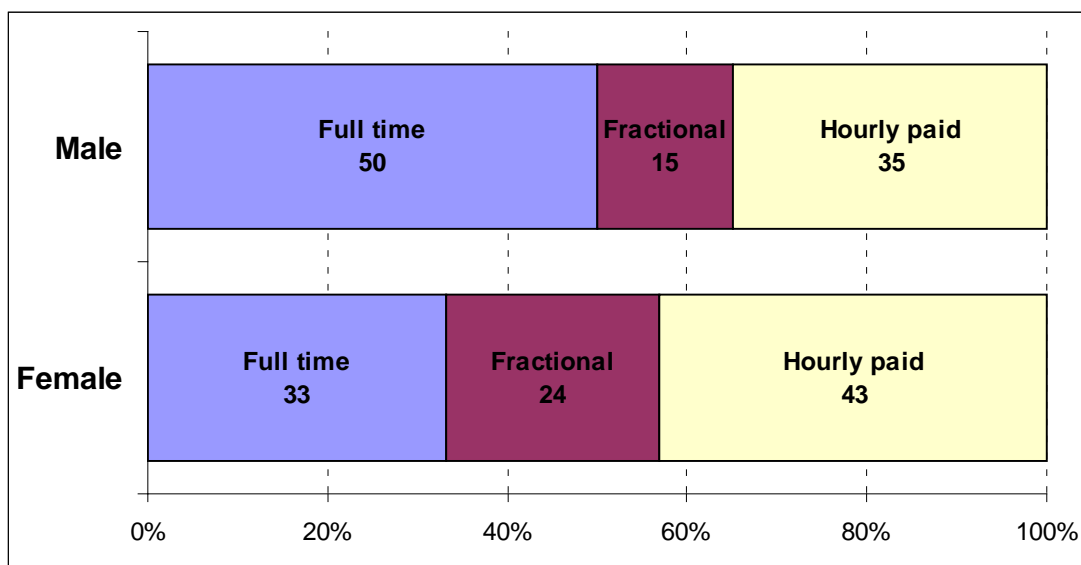
Data from the Labour Force Survey [LFS 2004/5] suggest that the Skills for Life sector is characterised by far fewer full-time contracts than in schools [37% compared to 77%].

### Employment status with main employing organisation

Looking more closely at the employment status of Skills for Life teachers, data from the Teacher Study suggest:

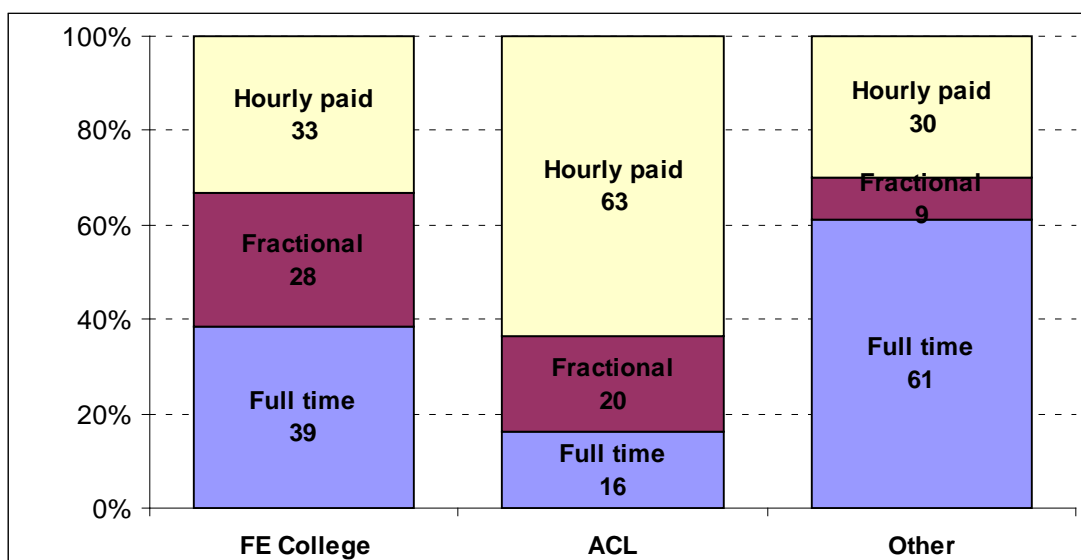
- Fewer female teachers than male teachers were employed on full-time contracts [33% and 50% respectively]. Female Skills for Life teachers were also more likely to be hourly-paid than their male counterparts [35% compared to 43%] – see Figure 4.3.

**Figure 4.3: Teacher contract types by gender [%]** [pooled data male N=521; female N=1789]



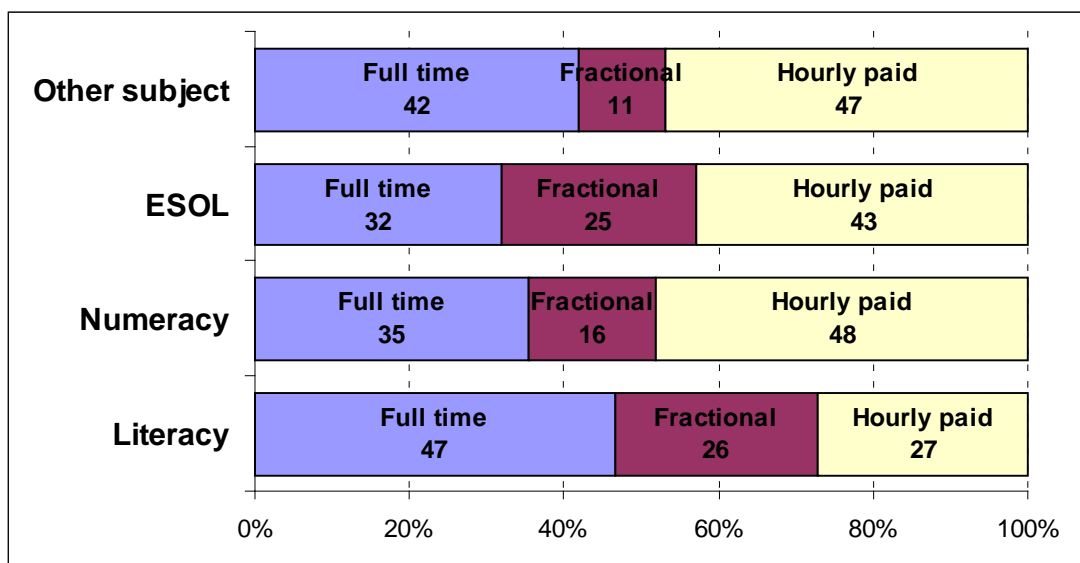
- Teachers on full-time contracts tended to be in their thirties. The 30 to 39 age band contained the highest proportion of teachers on full-time contracts [46%]; the second highest proportion was for teachers under 30 [37%].
- Full-time contracts tend to be less common in ACL. Across the three phases, the highest proportion of hourly-paid teachers [63%] and the lowest proportion of full-time teachers [16%] came from this sector (Figure 4.4).

**Figure 4.4: Teacher contract type by sector [%]** [pooled data FE College N=1222; ACL N=627; Other N=460]



- ESOL teachers were less likely to have full-time contracts than literacy or numeracy teachers. Literacy had the lowest proportion of hourly-paid teachers (Figure 4.5).

**Figure 4.5: Job contract type by main subjects taught [%]** [pooled data Literacy N= 565; Numeracy N=351; ESOL N=1090; Other subject N=262]



- On average, teachers on full-time and fractional contracts were characterised by both a longer period of teaching experience and longer service with their main employer than hourly-paid teachers (Table 4.1). [However, within the full-time and fractional categories there was a wider spread of service lengths than in the hourly-paid category.]

**Table 4.1: Teaching experience, service, contract hours and contact hours by employment status** [Pooled data from all 3 phases (2,061 observations)]

		Mean	Std. Deviation
Years of teaching experience in post-16 education	Full-time	8.26	6.82
	Fractional	9.53	6.98
	Hourly-paid	6.39	6.01
	All	7.82	6.81
Service (with main employing organisation)	Full-time	4.41	4.70
	Fractional	5.00	3.89
	Hourly-paid	3.34	2.66
	All	4.03	3.77
Hours per week paid for	Full-time	36.28	4.26
	Fractional	21.58	6.58
	Hourly-paid	12.03	6.89
	All	23.11	12.27
Contact hours per week	Full-time	19.48	8.24
	Fractional	13.30	5.07
	Hourly-paid	11.75	6.41
	All	14.95	7.74

- On average, fractional part-time staff were contracted to work more hours than hourly-paid teachers: for fractional teachers the average contract was for 22 hours per week and for hourly-paid teachers 12 hours per week. Full-time teachers were contracted to work an average of 36 hours per week. The average number of hours respondents were paid to work per week stayed the same across all three phases regardless of contract type.

### **Hourly rate**

On average, teachers on full-time and fractional contracts worked fewer contact hours than contract hours. For teachers on hourly-paid contracts, contact hours and contract hours were almost the same. Forty per cent of hourly-paid teachers were paid for some other duties associated with teaching separately to the rate they were paid per contact hour. New questions added in Phase Two probed what these hourly rates covered.

- Preparation time for lessons [81%]
- Time for paperwork [6%]
- Time spent marking tests outside class [57%]
- Annual leave [45%]
- Public holidays [38%]
- Attending administrative meetings [31%]
- Sickness pay [30%]
- Attending CPD [20%]

In Phase Three, a further question was added which asked Skills for Life teachers on full-time or fractional contracts if they worked more hours each week than they were contracted to: three-quarters [75%] said that they did so. Overall, the average figure for additional unpaid hours worked per week was 12, with full-time respondents working 13 extra hours, and teachers on fractional contracts, 10 hours per week.

Fractional teachers contracted to work a greater number of hours than average reported that they worked fewer additional hours of unpaid overtime, as did older teachers on fractional contracts. Teachers on fractional contracts who worked in ACL worked more additional hours than those employed by FE Colleges. Fractional teachers who had a higher proportion of learners aged 16–19 years old also worked fewer additional hours, but the more contact hours these teachers had with learners the more extra hours they reported working.

Full-time Skills for Life teachers employed by FE Colleges worked more additional hours on average [14 hours] than those who worked for 'other' providers [8 hours]. For full-time teachers, no effect on additional hours was observed for the variables for age, level of managerial responsibility, number of paid working hours and proportion of learners aged 16–19. However, the more learners full-time Skills for Life teachers taught, the more additional hours they reported working. This suggests that the additional hours teachers are working are integral to their teaching.

The subject of additional unpaid hours, or 'gift labour', was also explored in qualitative interviews, with two-thirds of interviewees [including hourly-paid teachers] reporting that they regularly worked more hours than they were contracted to, which for some represented a substantial increase in their workload. When probed about why they did so, the main reason respondents

gave was they wanted to be more prepared for their classes than their timetables allowed for.

‘I like to be on top of it. Once you are in the class all angles covered. In the sense that I have planned well, know what I am doing and I am not all over the place when I am in the class. So when learners are asking me for information it is all there. I am organised as well. That is what I can use, with myself, personally, if I am organised and planned well, I am OK.’ [Int29]

Others linked this preparation specifically to the needs and past experiences of Skills for Life learners:

‘I want to be well prepared, I think the students have been failed by the educational service once and I think they deserve the best.’ [Int34]

Although a number of teachers felt they were ‘always on the treadmill’ [Int32], most accepted that working extra hours on top of their contracted hours was part of the teacher’s job, whatever the education sector:

‘I think it is just part of life now. It is something you accept early on and you just get on with it, and just continue. To be honest I don’t really think about it.’ [Int12]

Table 4.2 summarises the observations of what possibly predicts which SfL teachers were more likely to have full-time contracts with their main employing organisation. All teacher characteristics and all main employing organisation characteristics are included in one model to reveal the true influence of each characteristic while taking into account all the others.

**Table 4.2: Predictors of teacher employment status, Phase One data** [statistically significant predictors only]

<b>Teacher and Employer Characteristics</b>	<b>Full-time compared to hourly-paid contract</b>	<b>Fractional compared to hourly-paid contract</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male teachers more likely to be employed full-time than female teachers	-
<b>Age</b>	Teachers under 39 years more likely to be employed full-time compared to all other age groups.	Teachers aged under 30 more likely to be employed on fractional contracts compared to teachers aged over 60
<b>Experience teaching in post 16 education and training sector</b>	The longer a teacher’s experience in post-16 education, the more likely they are to have a full-time not hourly-paid contract	The longer a teacher’s experience in post-16 education, the more likely they are to have a fractional not hourly-paid contract
<b>Qualifications</b>	Teachers with generic teaching qualifications are more likely to have full-time contracts than be hourly-paid	Teachers with generic teaching qualifications are more likely to have fractional rather than hourly-paid contracts. Teachers with subject specialist qualifications are more likely to have hourly-paid rather than fractional contracts

<b>Tenure</b>	The longer a teacher's service with their main employer the greater likelihood of a full-time rather than fractional contract	The longer a teacher's service with their main employer the greater likelihood a fractional rather than hourly-paid contract
<b>Sector</b>	Teachers working in FE are more likely to be in full-time employment than teachers in other sectors	Teachers working in FE Colleges are more likely to have fractional contracts than teachers in other sectors
<b>Subject</b>	Literacy teachers are more likely to have full-time not hourly-paid contracts than ESOL and numeracy teachers	Literacy teachers are more likely to have fractional not hourly-paid contracts than ESOL and numeracy teachers

### Other employment

In Phase One, 28% of part-time teachers had another job in post-16 education and training and 17% had another job outside the sector. In Phase Two these figures fell slightly, to 23% and 12% respectively. By the final fieldwork phase, 17% of part-time teachers had other post-16 education employment and 15% had additional employment outside the sector. In each phase a small percentage of teachers had at least one other job within the sector and one outside the sector [8% in the first phase and 2% in the second].

The likelihood of having more than one job was related to the type of part-time contract a teacher had. In Phase One, those on hourly-paid contracts were more likely to have other employment in post-16 education [31% compared to 22%] and those on fractional contracts were more likely to have employment outside the post-16 sector [22% compared to 15%]. In Phase Two, hourly-paid teachers were again more likely to combine two or more jobs in post-16 education [24% compared to 20%], but also more likely to have jobs outside the sector [13% compared to 9%]. In Phase Three, the same pattern was observed as in Phase One.

The qualitative data reveal some reasons why part-time Skills for Life teachers have more than one job. Interviewees spoke of how, in a sector characterised by a limited availability of full-time posts, having more than job allows teachers to make up a sufficient number of hours and wages to live on. As one teacher told us:

'A number of my colleagues, who are very well qualified, do part-time jobs where they might have to work at two or three colleges to make ends meet'. [Int6]

For a small number of interviewees, teaching Skills for Life was a second job that afforded them the chance to teach for a limited number of hours each week. One teacher spoke of her six weekly hours of college teaching as her 'refuge' and a 'break' from her main job. [Int17]

### Employment status and job satisfaction

The questionnaire also examined how satisfied Skills for Life teachers were with aspects of their job relating to working conditions and employment status.

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction (on five-point scales ranging from 'very satisfied' to 'very dissatisfied' or from 'a great deal' to 'not at all') with a series of items (Table 4.3).



**Table 4.3: Satisfaction with working conditions and employment status** [Pooled data from all 3 sweeps (2,310 observations)]

	Full time (N=854)			Fractional (N=513)			Hourly paid (N=943)		
	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied
Job security	12	16	72	21	16	63	32	22	46
Career prospects	26	37	37	27	47	26	38	36	27
Proportion of time spend on administrative tasks	54	20	26	65	21	14	70	16	15
Salary and other benefits	32	25	44	40	36	24	57	21	23
Support received from managers	22	19	59	21	25	54	22	19	59
Training and development opportunities	18	22	60	23	27	50	26	22	52
Availability of resources and facilities	15	28	58	20	27	54	25	22	53
Balance between work and personal life	32	21	47	34	24	43	35	27	39

### Administrative tasks

While a majority of all teachers, regardless of contract type, were dissatisfied with the proportion of time they spent on administrative tasks, dissatisfaction was higher among part-time than full-time teachers. Across all three phases, 65% of fractional, 70% of hourly-paid, and 54% of full-time teachers were dissatisfied.

A higher proportion of full-time Skills for Life teachers working in FE colleges were dissatisfied with the time they spent on administrative tasks than full-time teachers working in other sectors [59% compared to 45%]. By contrast, hourly-paid teachers in other sectors were more likely to be dissatisfied than those who worked on hourly-paid contracts for FE colleges [78% compared to 56%].

The qualitative data support the finding that most Skills for Life teachers felt they spent too much of their time on administration. Although such tasks were generally accepted as part and parcel of the job, several teachers referred to an increasing volume of paperwork and form filling, a phenomenon Bolton (2007: 14) refers to as 'administrative task creep'. Furthermore, interviewees spoke of their perception that the administrative burden was greater for part-time teachers:

They [management] keep on asking us to do more for less time [...] We are supposed to have done a lot more paperwork than we ever did in the old days and have to be kept up to date all the time, which is very time-consuming, particularly if you are part-time. It is all right for me, but people who are part-time, I think they must really struggle. [Int3]

### Salary

- A higher proportion of part-time teachers were dissatisfied with their salary and other benefits compared to full-time teachers. Across all three phases, 40% of fractional, 57% of hourly-paid and 32% of full-time teachers were dissatisfied.

One female teacher interviewed in the qualitative strand believed that some Skills for Life contracts were poorly paid for the level of responsibility required:

If you look at the jobs available in FE, there are a lot of jobs out there, but the pay is absolutely abysmal [...] I was looking at my local college, and they wanted somebody to actually be the coordinator and run the department, whatever, and they were only offering just under seventeen thousand a year<sup>6</sup>. [Int49]

### Support from managers

- No difference was observed between part-time and full-time teachers in their satisfaction levels with the general support they received from managers. Part-time and full-time teachers were also similarly satisfied with how their line

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<sup>6</sup> Although we cannot be sure of the exact year the teacher is talking about, she was interviewed in 2006. If we assume that she is referring to a gross annual average salary, secondary school teachers were earning £30428 in 2006 [Office for National Statistics, 2007].

managers valued and recognised their work [82% stated they were valued by their manager a 'great deal' or 'quite a lot'].

- Hourly-paid teachers reported that they received more support from their managers than did fractional and full-time staff [66% said they received a 'great deal' or 'quite a lot' of support compared to 53% of fractional and 54% of full-time teachers]. A higher proportion of hourly-paid Skills for Life teachers [29%] had mentors at work compared to fractional [20%] and full-time teachers [17%].

### **Resources and facilities**

- Satisfaction levels with the availability of resources and facilities were related to employment status. Only 15% of full-time teachers were dissatisfied with the availability of resources and facilities, but among part-time teachers the figure was slightly higher: 20% for fractional and 25% for hourly-paid teachers.
- Satisfaction levels were also related to teaching sector. Hourly-paid teachers in ACL were more dissatisfied than their full-time or fractional colleagues compared to the differences observed in FE colleges and 'other' types of provision.

One teacher spoke of the problems some part-time staff can face when accessing resources:

I think you do a lot more things in your own time. You don't have access to lots of things at work, like stationery or photocopying equipment as easily. I do a lot of photocopying at home [...] I know you can submit photocopying a week ahead, but it is often that things happen and you may want to do something quite topical. And it is not always able to be planned for in that way really. [Int40]

### **Job security**

- A higher proportion of part-time teachers were dissatisfied with their job security compared to full-time teachers. Across all three phases, 21% of fractional, 32% of hourly paid, and 12% of full-time teachers were dissatisfied.
- For full-time and hourly-paid staff, evaluation of job security was not related to the sector in which they work. Teachers on fractional contracts, however, were less likely to be dissatisfied with their job security if they worked in FE colleges than if they worked in other sectors [19% compared to 33%].
- Part-time teachers employed on fixed-term or casual contracts were particularly dissatisfied compared to part-timers on permanent contracts [39% compared to 14%].

Qualitative data highlight the job securities Skills for Life teachers face, and the implications for the profession of this, particularly where labour is casualised. Teachers whose employment breaks over the summer vacation, for example, lack job security for the coming academic year. One teacher recalled a social gathering for teachers who had taken a Level 4 course together:

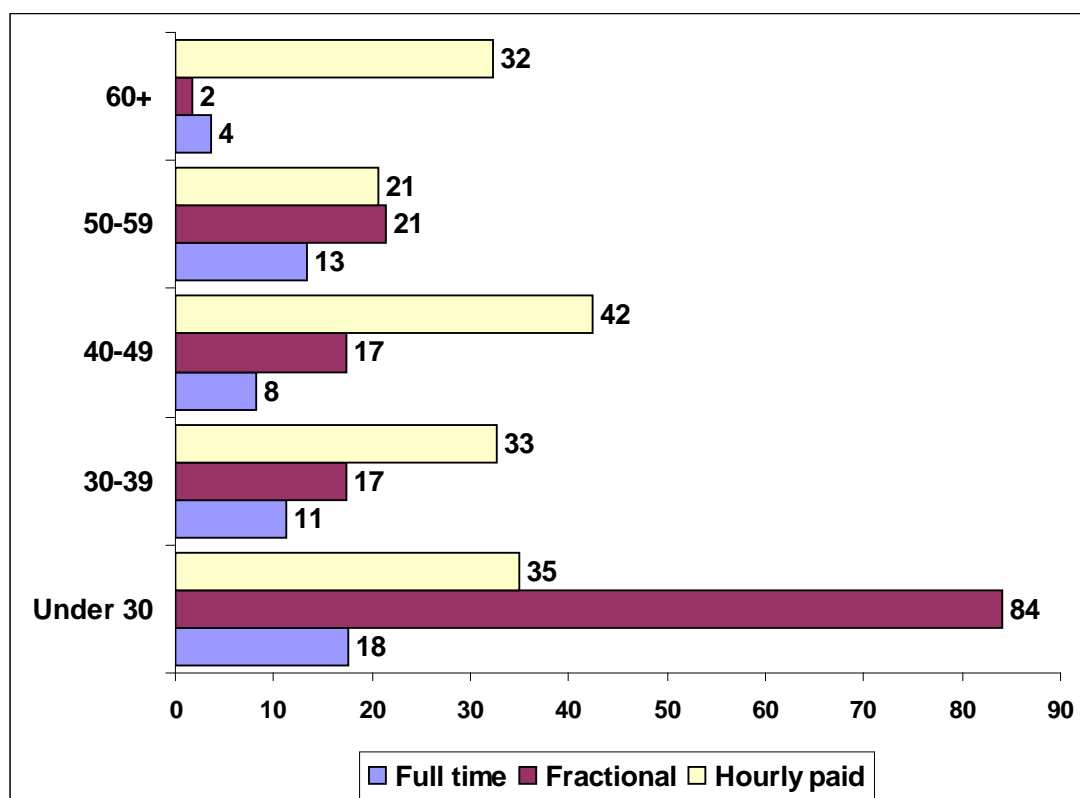
'I met with the tutors on the course, and my colleagues who had been on the course [...] And they were telling me [...] they had all received letters, the sessional tutors, saying there probably wouldn't be any work for them that

year, that term, that academic term, because [the college] was in financial difficulty. Well what kind of message does that give? I was one of those ladies. I have a mortgage to pay. What I used to do, in the holidays, was take temping work in offices. Now that is not being treated as a professional [...] that is all I can say. Because we are just treated like little ladies who want to earn a bit of pin money.’ [Int25]

This hints at an uneasy tension in the sector between the professionalisation brought by Skills for Life and an historic perception that ‘basic skills’ teachers are primarily older women engaged in a ‘spare time’ occupation.

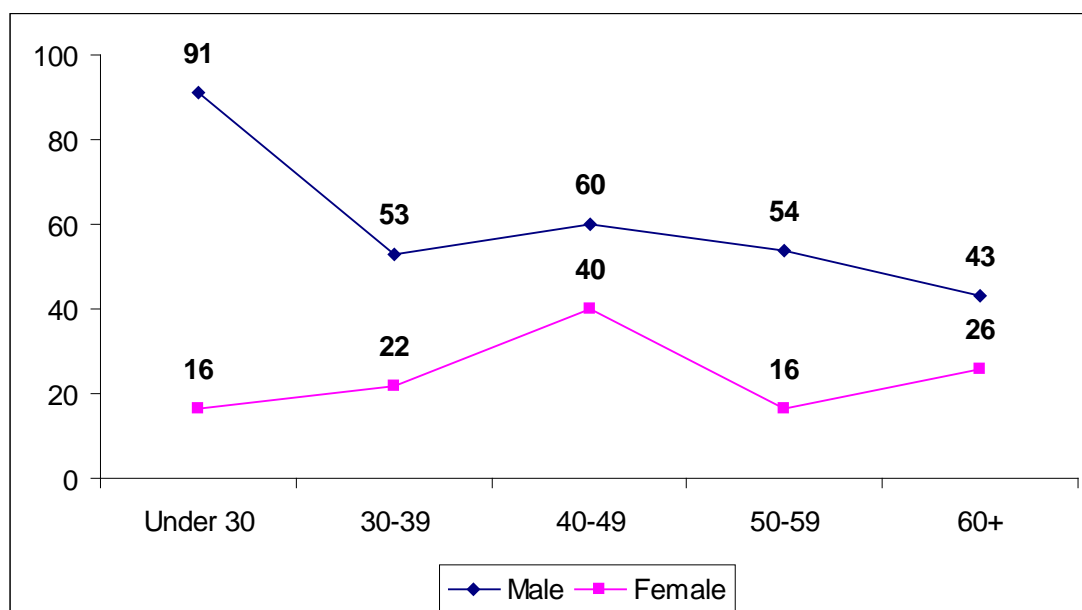
- A lower proportion of female teachers than male teachers on fractional and full-time contracts were dissatisfied with their job security [19% and 26% respectively for women and 32% and 38% for men].
- In terms of job security, the highest levels of dissatisfaction [84%] were for those teachers who were under 30 years of age and worked on fractional contracts [see Figure 4.6]. In all other age groups except teachers aged 50–59, a higher proportion of hourly-paid staff were dissatisfied compared to fractional or full-time staff.

**Figure 4.6: Percentage of teachers dissatisfied [i.e. ‘very dissatisfied’ and ‘dissatisfied’] with job security by age and employment status [%] [Pooled data from all 3 sweeps (2,061 observations)]**



Looking at hourly-paid teachers by combined gender and age [see Figure 4.7] younger and older female teachers did not differ greatly in how they perceived their job security, with the exception of women aged 40–49 years old who were twice as dissatisfied as all other age groups. Hourly-paid male teachers under 30 were not only much more dissatisfied than male teachers in other age bands they were also the group most dissatisfied overall with their job security.

**Figure 4.7: Percentage of hourly-paid teachers who were dissatisfied [i.e. 'very dissatisfied' and 'dissatisfied'] with job security by age and gender [%] [Pooled data from all 3 sweeps (N=2031)]**



### Work/life balance

- A lower proportion of hourly-paid teachers were satisfied with the balance between work and personal life than fractional or full-time teachers [39% compared to 43% and 47% respectively)].

In qualitative interviews, most teachers on fractional contracts told us that the number of hours they worked both suited their current life circumstances and led them to feel less pressurised:

‘Obviously I could do with more money, but I have the time to do what I need to do, without feeling stress’. [Int37]

- Teaching sector is related to satisfaction with work/life balance. In FE colleges, full-time and fractional teachers were somewhat less satisfied with their work/life balance than hourly-paid teachers [33% and 38% compared to 49%]. The reverse was the case in other sectors, with full-time and fractional teachers being more dissatisfied than their hourly-paid colleagues [57% and 59% compared to 32%].

### Collaboration with colleagues

- Hourly-paid teachers talked less often to their colleagues and were less likely to believe that they shared an understanding with them compared to full-time and fractional teachers.
- Part-time teachers collaborated less with their colleagues than full-time teachers and believed that they had less influence on the decision-making process. Although 61% of part-time teachers talk ‘very’ or ‘quite often’ with other teachers about practice issues and 69% agree that have a ‘shared

understanding' with their colleagues, these percentages were higher for full-time teachers [71% and 79%].

The qualitative data explain aspects of this part-time/full-time divide. One full-time teacher commented, with reference to her part-time colleagues:

'You don't feel included in the college. A lot of them say they just come in, they teach, and then off they go again. You don't get the rapport with the other staff that I have got. Sharing of ideas and good practice. You don't get that if you are part-time. You are very isolated, I think.' [Int5]

Moreover, deficiencies in collegiality may impact on teacher retention. One numeracy teacher told us:

'I am strongly debating whether or not to just resign altogether [...] this lack of consultation as to what they actually require from me, and why they have given me Application of Number, I have no idea. That is worrying, because I know from experience, if I am not comfortable delivering a course it is a waste of my time being there and a waste of the students time being there.' [Int35]

Differences in the views of full-time and part-time teachers concerning their influence on decision-making at their organisation, stem from disparities between full-time and hourly-paid teachers: there was almost no variation between fractional and full-time teachers. Also, the more hours a respondent was contracted to work, the more they perceived they had an influence on decision-making, regardless of employment status.

## Employment mobility

As longitudinal data were gathered over three fieldwork phases, NRDC could examine which teachers wanted to change their contracts; which teachers did change and what changes were made; and the factors which predicted change.

### Changing employment status

In Phase One, 35% of part-time Skills for Life teachers said they would like to change to full-time contracts. A number of factors distinguish those who would like to change to full-time work from those who did not. Teachers were more likely to want to change if they were:

- dissatisfied with their job security [34% compared to 23%].
- on hourly-paid contracts as opposed to fractional contracts [40% compared to 23%]
- on fixed-term or casual contracts as opposed to permanent contracts [45% compared to 23%].
- male rather than female [48% compared to 32%].
- under 30 [68% compared with 17% of those aged 30–39; 41% of those aged 40–49; and 27% of those aged 50–59]. This is particularly true among male teachers under 30 [86% compared to 59% for similarly aged female teachers].

We can speculate that willingness to change may be related to life-stage. Women with domestic commitments are more likely to work part-time; teachers in their thirties may be starting families or have young children; teachers in their twenties,

particularly men, may have fewer ties and a stronger desire to build careers. Qualitative data support this hypothesis, suggesting that different structural constraints at different life stages influence the employment decisions that teachers make. As a 40-year-old female teacher explained:

‘It is totally insecure and I think if I was the main wage earner I couldn’t have [made a career in teaching LLN] [...] So it wasn’t saying I would make a career out of it, because the only people who had the permanent contracts tend to be the full-timers, which at that point I wasn’t interested in doing. But now it would be of interest because I don’t have the same constraints at home.’ [Int40]

Another female teacher in her forties made the change from part-time to full-time work, partly because it afforded a career development opportunity, and partly because of financial considerations:

‘I was asked if I wanted to [work full-time], because they were taking on this family learning and they needed more tutors, and they said if I did that then I could use those extra hours for family learning. That was one reason. The other reason was the financial reason, because my daughter has started university and I wanted to be able to contribute towards the fees, didn’t want her to be massively in debt. That was the other reason.’ [Int4]

From the qualitative data typologies of teachers who wanted to change, or not change, their employment status can be constructed (Table 4.5).

**Table 4.5: Teacher typologies – changing employment status**

<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time</b>
<p><b>Wants to stay the same</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher who works full-time for financial reasons</li> <li>Teacher who works full-time because they enjoy their job</li> </ul>	<p><b>Wants to stay the same</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher who has taken the deliberate decision to work part-time for a greater work-life balance. Generally working in Skills for Life as a second career and are not the main wage earner.</li> <li>Teacher who has a second job which they enjoy outside Skills for Life</li> </ul>
<p><b>Discontented / wants to change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher who works full-time but would like to either leave, or downgrade to part-time work due to a heavy workload/high levels of stress, or general job dissatisfaction</li> <li>Teacher who works full-time is looking to downgrade to part-time work because life circumstances enable possibility of change</li> </ul>	<p><b>Discontented / wants to change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers who feel they have little job-security. Often sessional or hourly-paid. Want extra hours for more money or for the security of a longer contract, or for both these reasons.</li> <li>Teacher working for more than one employer to maximise earnings, but who would prefer more hours with one employer.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Teacher who has changed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher who was working full-time but has now downgraded to part-time work to achieve a better work-life balance</li> </ul>	<p><b>Teacher who is looking to change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher who is working part-time but changes in life-circumstances enable them to look for full-time work</li> </ul>

### Teachers who leave post-16 education and training

Sixty-two respondents [7%] in Phase Two and thirty-seven respondents [7%] in Phase Three were no longer worked in post-16 education and training. Younger Skills for Life teachers; those without generic teaching qualifications; those with

shorter service; ESOL teachers; and teachers whose main subject was not Skills for Life, were more likely to leave to work in another sector. Further information available for 89 of these 99 respondents revealed that:

- 40 were in other full- or part-time employment [22 in some other aspect of education]
- 15 had retired
- 5 were unemployed
- 10 were on maternity leave
- the remainder were not working – for health reasons [10], or because of family [6] or educational commitments [3].

In addition:

- 13 respondents stated that they intended to return to the post-16 education and training sector within 2 years
- 26 respondents were unsure if they would return in the next 2 years
- 22 stated that they would not return to the sector.

The most common reasons given by teachers [see Table 4.6] for leaving the post-16 education sector were fixed-term or temporary contracts coming to an end; a desire to pursue a new career; long working hours; the demanding nature of the job; and family commitments.

**Table 4.6: Reasons for leaving the post-16 education and training sector**

	<b>Absolute numbers</b>	<b>% of responses (based on number of answers)</b>	<b>% of cases (based on number of respondents)</b>
Fixed term or temporary contract ended	14	25	27
Wanted to pursue a new career	13	23	25
Long working hours	9	16	17
Demanding nature of the job	8	14	15
Family commitments	7	13	14
No suitable job vacancies in my subject areas	6	11	12
No suitable job vacancies in my geographical area	6	11	12
Insufficient job security	6	11	12
Made redundant	5	9	10
Few career opportunities	4	7	8
Low pay	4	7	8
Poor student motivation to learn	4	7	8
Lack of opportunities for professional development	3	5	6
Low professional status of teaching	2	4	4
Health reasons	2	4	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>179</b>



### Teachers who changed employer

Between Phases One and Two, 65 respondents changed their main employer and 32 did so between Phases Two and Three. On average, 7% of teachers in each phase continued to teach Skills for Life but changed their main employing organisation. Of the teachers who changed employers:

- On average, about half kept the same employment status with their new employer.
- Between the first and second phases, the same proportion [17%] upgraded their employment status when they changed employer [for example, from fractional to full-time] as downgraded<sup>7</sup> their employment status [for example, from full-time to hourly-paid].
- Between the second and third phase, five times as many teachers downgraded as upgraded their employment status when changing their main employer.
- Models controlling for gender, age, other teaching qualifications, and years of teaching experience in post-16 sector, show that White British teachers; teachers working outside of FE colleges; teachers whose service with their main employer had been shorter; and teachers who experienced less managerial support were more likely to change their main employer.
- Part-time teachers who did not want to change to a full-time position were more likely to change employing organisation compared to full-time teaching staff.
- Those working in FE Colleges were less likely to change sector when changing employer. After Phase One, 64% moved to other FE colleges; after Phase Two, the figure was 50%. Lower numbers of FE teachers moved to ACL [29% after Phase One and 36% after Sweep Two] and to other sectors [7% after Phase One and 14% after Phase Two].
- By contrast, more than half of ACL teachers who changed employer between Phases Two and Three moved to jobs in FE colleges.

### Teachers who changed employment status

Over the course of the study, looking only at those teachers who participated in all three surveys, the proportions of full-time and fractional teachers increased, and the proportion of hourly-paid teachers decreased [Tables 4.7 and 4.8]. We looked only at those teachers who participated in all three phases because attrition rates were higher for full-time teachers meaning it could not be assumed that teachers were simply upgrading from hourly-paid to fractional and full-time contracts.

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<sup>7</sup> The terms 'upgraded' or 'downgraded' are used here to mean that teachers changed their contractual status, for example, downgraded from full-time to hourly-paid or upgraded from part-time to full-time. The terms are used descriptively and not intended to signify that one is somehow 'better' or 'worse' than the other.

**Table 4.7: Attrition between phases by employment status [%]**

	<b>Phase Two Attrition</b>	<b>Phase Three Attrition</b>
<b>Full time</b>	28	24
<b>Fractional</b>	21	14
<b>Hourly-paid</b>	16	22
<b>Overall</b>	21	21

**Table 4.8: Employment status by sweep**

	<b>Phase 1 [N=1027]</b>	<b>Phase 2 [N=737]</b>	<b>Phase 3 [N=546]</b>
<b>Full time</b>	30	39	42
<b>Fractional</b>	22	24	26
<b>Hourly-paid</b>	49	37	32

A third [34%] of those who indicated in Phase One that they would like to change to full-time work did so. Female teachers, teachers under 30, and teachers aged 40–49 were more likely to change from part-time to full-time contracts. On average one in four part-time teachers changed their status between Phases One and Two. Teachers on fractional contracts were more likely to change to full-time positions than those who were hourly paid. Although in the first phase a higher proportion of hourly-paid than fractional teachers indicated that they were willing to change from part-time to full-time contracts, fractional teachers were almost 1.5 times more likely to do so.

Teachers who indicated they wanted to change to full-time contracts were 2.6 times more likely to change their employers after Phase One. This suggests that it may be hard to secure full-time work at the same organisation.

Table 4.9 illustrates changes in employment status for teachers who participated in all three phases. Sixty-eight per cent of teachers did not change employment status across the three phases:

- 26% stayed full-time
- 13% stayed fractional; and
- 29% stayed hourly-paid.

Twenty-six per cent changed their employment status upward:

- 11% from hourly-paid to full time
- 10% from hourly-paid to fractional; and
- 5% from fractional to full-time contracts.

Five per cent experienced a downward change in their employment status.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> This is a far smaller figure than the 17% who reduced their hours or moved from full-time to hourly-paid between the first two phases of the survey. This difference may be explained by the fact that those who remained in the study through the three phases were more likely to be in stable employment; those who changed employer and employment status were more difficult to track over the three years of the study.

**Table 4.9: Change in the employment status in different phases [%]** Respondents to all three phases only [N=546]

		Phases 1–2	Phases 2–3	Phases 1–3
<b>No change</b>	<b>Full-time</b>	27	39	26
	<b>Fractional</b>	14	19	13
	<b>Hourly-paid</b>	35	29	29
<b>Upward change</b>	<b>Hourly-paid to full-time</b>	9	2	11
	<b>Hourly-paid to fractional</b>	8	5	10
	<b>Fractional to full-time</b>	4	1	5
<b>Downward change</b>	<b>Fractional to hourly-paid</b>	2	3	2
	<b>Full-time to hourly-paid</b>	1	0.4	1
	<b>Full-time to fractional</b>	2	1	3
<b>Total</b>		100	100	100

Tables 4.10 summarises the model that predicts which type of teachers are more likely to change compared to not change their employment status. The model includes all teacher and employer characteristics in order to reveal the true influence of each characteristic while taking into account the others. The teachers who participated in all three sweeps were split into three groups: those who did not change their employment status; those who changed upward; those who changed downward.

**Table 4.10: Predictors of the change of the employment status of Skills for Life teachers** Respondents to all three phases only and significant predictors only

Characteristic	Upward change compared to no change	Downward change compared to no change
<b>Gender</b>	Male teachers are less likely to change upward than female teachers	-
<b>Age</b>	-	-
<b>Part time</b>	Control variable	
<b>Number of working hours</b>	-	-
<b>Experience teaching in post 16 sector</b>	Teachers with more years of experience in post-16 sector are more likely to have upward changes	-
<b>Qualifications</b>	Teachers with generic teaching qualifications and / or subject specialist qualifications are more likely not to change in their employment status.	
<b>Service at the main employing organisation</b>	The longer a teacher's service the less likely the teacher is to have upward change	-
<b>Sector</b>	-	Teachers working in FE colleges are more likely to change downward compared to teachers in all other teaching sectors

<b>Managerial experience</b>	Teachers with managerial experience are more likely to have upward changes	-
<b>Change of employing organisation</b>	Teachers who changed their employing organisation in the first or second phases were more likely to have an upward change	Teachers who changed their employing organisation in the second phase were more likely to have no change than to change downward

Overall, a higher percentage of teachers were dissatisfied with their job security and their career prospects in Phase Two than in Phase One. Teachers who changed from part-time to full-time contracts evaluated their job security more positively, and teachers who stayed on the same contract, or moved from full-time to part-time work, evaluated their job security more negatively. Those who changed from full-time to part-time or stayed the same were also more dissatisfied with their career prospects in Phase Two. No significant change was observed for teachers who changed from part-time to full-time contracts. Similar differences were observed in Phase Three.

### Constraints on change

The fact that two-thirds of the part-time teachers who indicated in Sweep One that they would like to change to full-time contracts did not do so is a reminder that there are limited opportunities for full-time employment within the Skills for Life sector. This is underscored by the qualitative data. For example, a 32-year-old male who found teaching work through an agency told us he 'would love to be working full-time' and that it would 'make a real difference' to his life and his financial security. However, he acknowledged that in his locale, the majority of opportunities were part-time and hourly-paid: 'It is very rare that a full-time job comes up, and when it does there is a lot of competition for them.' [Int32] Moreover, another young teacher, a 29-year-old woman, suggested that the lack of full-time, permanent positions discourages some young people from pursuing a career in Skills for Life.

'I think the part-time hours and the bits and pieces here and there are brilliant. And what they do attract is a lot of people who maybe have left the school sector, maybe retired from the school sector, and still want to do a little bit of work. And that is fantastic, but what it doesn't attract is people straight out of uni, who want full-time hours to run a house, support the family, and I think we lose a lot of people who would be really good at it [...] a temporary contract for eight hours a week. You just can't work to that. You need full-time, permanent jobs.' [Int8]

The qualitative data suggest that although Skills for Life teaching provides attractive opportunities for teachers who either want to work part-time or can afford to work part-time only, external employment constraints are problematic for those teachers, particularly younger teachers, who want to make Skills for Life their main career and need a full-time, permanent contract.

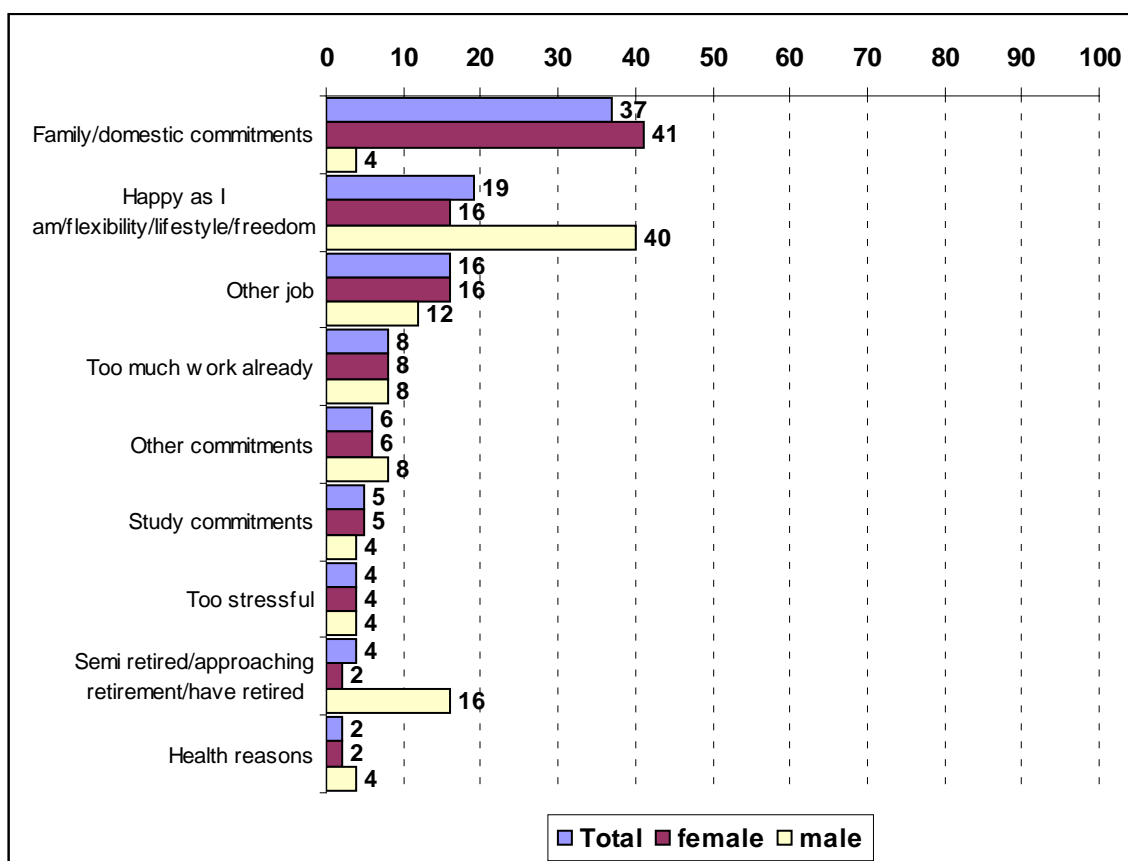
### Staying the same

The majority of teachers on fractional contracts who were interviewed for the qualitative strand were content with their employment status and had no plans to

change to full-time work: 'I was offered a full-time contract but I wanted to keep the balance with home life.' [Int 63]

In quantitative responses, female and male teachers gave different reasons why they did not want to change to full-time work [see Figure 4.8). Female respondents most commonly mentioned family commitments [40% compared to 4% of male respondents] whereas men emphasised that the flexibility of a part-time position allows them freedom and time for other things in life [40% compared to 16% of female respondents].

**Figure 4.8: Reasons why part-time teachers did not want to change to full-time contracts [%] [Data from Phase One N=239]**



## Conclusion

Data from the Teacher Study confirm that the Skills for Life sector is characterised by part-time contracts: the majority of the workforce do not teach full-time for one employer. Those teachers who work part-time are more likely to have hourly-paid contracts than fractional contracts, particularly if they work in learning sectors other than FE colleges, or if they teach ESOL. Data also suggest that many in the Skills for Life workforce welcome the availability of part-time contracts. The fact that teachers on part-time contracts tended to be female, or aged over 40, is a reminder that Skills for Life presents opportunities to those with childcare or other caring responsibilities, and those pursuing a secondary or pre-retirement career.

However, not all part-time teachers actively choose to work part-time. Teachers on hourly-paid contracts were more likely to have other jobs in education and more likely to want to change to full-time contracts than fractional staff. This may hint at particular levels of discontent within the hourly-paid cohort, a suggestion borne out by sessional teachers' dissatisfaction levels with their working conditions and job security. As one teacher put it:

'I, like many of my colleagues who are hourly-paid, feel that we are overworked and underpaid. [...] The workload has made people sick, both physically and mentally. [...] I could get the same money at Tesco for less stress.'

There was a perception among respondents that there were practical constraints on the changes they can be affected in a teaching environment where there are fewer full-time posts than would-be full-time teachers. Hourly-paid teachers may face particular challenges in upgrading their employment status to full-time.

However, for some teachers, change was indeed possible. Findings about job mobility over the course of the three phases were in tune with what Gleeson et al. [2005] term 'the long interview' [p. 450], that is, the process whereby teachers serve an apprenticeship of a number of years in part-time work before they achieve a full-time permanent position. Career pathways in Skills for Life are more possible for teachers who are employed on fractional contracts, have a number of years of experience, including some management experience, and are able to move to another employer. The theme of career pathways is discussed in the next chapter.

## 5. Teaching as a profession and a career

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This chapter examines motivated people to teach Skills for Life subjects and places these motivations into three broad categories: altruistic, intrinsic and extrinsic. It goes on to examine the extent to which Skills for Life teachers saw teaching Skills for Life as a profession; how they collaborated and how they were supported at work and the extent of their autonomy. It finishes by exploring how Skills for Life teachers viewed their future career prospects.

### Why teach SfL?

#### Context

A number of studies (for example, Kyriacou and Coulthard, 2000, Moran et al, 2001) have investigated what motivates people to become teachers. The main reasons can be split into three broad categories:

1. Altruistic reasons: those that are rooted in the perception that teaching is socially important, and where prospective teachers are motivated by their desire to help people as individuals and society as a whole.
2. Intrinsic reasons: those that are connected to components of the work itself, such as enjoyment of teaching, working with specific learner groups, interest in and knowledge of the teaching subject, a match with qualifications and experience, or the connection between the job and personal growth and development.
3. Extrinsic reasons: those that are related to the job but not inherent in the work itself, including lifestyle considerations such as holiday entitlement and flexibility, material benefits including level of pay, professional status, job availability of personal circumstances, and job security.

Of course, not all reasons or the same combination of reasons are important to all teachers. However, whatever the motivation, the degree of match between what people want from their job and the extent to which they think a particular job can offer this and continues to offer this has a crucial influence on their decision-making processes. In the context of this report, a greater understanding of what motivates people to teach Skills for Life serves a dual purpose for both policy-makers and providers: knowing what is attractive about the job supports recruitment and offsets attrition and teacher turnover.

In the Phase One questionnaire, respondents were asked to list in an open-box the main factors influencing their decision to teach Skills for Life subjects. Forty per cent of Skills for Life teachers mentioned only intrinsic reasons, 21% only altruistic reasons and 7% only extrinsic reasons: 16% gave a combination of altruistic and intrinsic reasons and 13% gave a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Table 5.1 summarises the profiles of teachers who are more likely to choose each type.

**Table 5.1: Reasons for teaching Skills for Life subjects** Bivariate analysis [N=1027]

<b>Altruistic</b>	<b>Intrinsic</b>	<b>Extrinsic</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Male</li> <li>• Ethnic minorities</li> <li>• Slightly younger</li> <li>• Less experience</li> <li>• Shorter tenure</li> <li>• Main teaching subject literacy</li> <li>• Full-time teachers and part-time teachers who would like to be full time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Female</li> <li>• White British</li> <li>• Slightly older</li> <li>• More experience</li> <li>• Longer tenure</li> <li>• Main teaching subject numeracy or ESOL</li> <li>• Part-time teachers who do not want to change to a full-time position</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethnic minorities</li> <li>• More experience</li> <li>• Main teaching subject – subjects other than other Skills for Life</li> </ul>

### **Intrinsic**

Just over 70% of respondents mentioned **intrinsic** reasons such as enjoyment of a subject [20%], enjoyment of teaching [8%] and, specifically, teaching adult learners who many perceived as more motivated than younger pupils [18%]. As one ACL teacher explained in interview:

‘I was convinced, from talking to people, and from my own experiences, that teaching was something that came naturally for me, and wanted to explore it further, but didn’t really have the confidence to cope with whole classes of children, so felt that working with adults, especially as I was approaching fifty, would be, perhaps, easier for me. Smaller classes and people who wanted to be there, and stuff. So that is the background and that is how it all came about.’ [Int. 50]

Some teachers viewed the job as a good fit for their experience and qualifications [17%] or a challenge for their personal development [4%]. Others expressed their desire to work with specific learner cohorts, such as foreign students [5%] or less-able/special-needs students [2%].

### **Altruistic**

Two-fifths [41%] of respondents gave altruistic reasons, linking their choice of profession to wanting to make a difference through helping people and improving society. As one ESOL teacher explained in an interview:

‘Well, it was really to do my bit to help people around the world who have kind of got a rough end of the deal, and since I am not very adventurous or interested in travelling abroad it was something I could do within my own country.’ [Int63]

### **Extrinsic**

Just under a quarter of respondents gave extrinsic reasons for teaching Skills for Life: 10% mentioned long holidays, flexible working hours, and the opportunities the sector offers for part-time work, as well as salary and job security; 8% said their decision was influenced job availability in Skills for Life; and 5% were told to do it or guided by their managers because it was part of funding or government



directives. The following example from the interview with an ESOL teacher illustrates an extrinsic motivation for joining the profession:

'I found out that there were basic skills when I was on the general 7307 course and I remember saying, because it sounded like I could get a proper job in it, and I just remember saying – how can I teach it? I wasn't inspired. It was completely practical. I wanted money.' [Int23]

Teachers responding to extrinsic motivations showed themselves to be pragmatic in the face of organisational change. For example, one male teacher moved from teaching IT to numeracy.

'At the time the college was making huge reductions in its IT [...] So basically I chose something where provision at the time was growing. So it struck me as a more secure field to specialise in.' [Int12]

This perception that the stature of the basic skills specialism was growing – the new prioritisation that came with the introduction of Skills for Life – is matched by a perception among some respondents that, for those disillusioned with school teaching [due, for example, to increasing amounts of paper work, a lack of resources, large class-sizes, poor pupil behaviour, and stress], the sideways shift to adult basic skills is a pragmatic response to transferring existing skills to a different context.

Of course, for some teachers, their path to Skills for Life is less about career strategy and more about serendipity or circumstance, with 'no real thought process behind it'. [Int17] As one teacher recalled:

'I just sort of fell into it really [...] my youngest child was four and going to playgroup, and it was an old school, and across the yard from the playgroup building there was something going on, which was training. And I just popped in and said – I hang around for my daughter for half an hour, can I come in and do some volunteer reading? And they said that was great. So I went in as a volunteer and within about a term they said – we have spoken to the LSC and we can actually run a course teaching literacy and numeracy, would you be interested in teaching it one day a week? [...] So I started teaching there a day a week, continued with doing supply teaching, going into schools, and home tuition for disaffected kids as well, and then that tailed off and the other stuff took on more time.' [Int44]

From the qualitative data a series of typologies of routes into Skills for Life teaching can be constructed (Table 5.2).

**Table 5.2: Teacher typologies – routes into Skills for Life (listed in order of frequency, most common response first)**

<b>Typology</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Became Skills for Life teacher after period as a volunteer	Tend to be at mid- or late-career stage, and women substantially outnumber men
Worked in teaching, but not in schools, before teaching Skills for Life	Come from a broad range of teaching backgrounds in adult education, tend to be at mid- or late-career stage, and include both male and female teachers
Worked as school teacher before transferring to Skills for Life teaching	Tend to be at mid- or late-career stage, and include both male and female teachers
Had prior career outside teaching before teaching Skills for Life	Tend to be at mid- or late-career stage, and include both male and female teachers
ESOL teachers working in Skills for Life who previously worked overseas	Tend to be at mid- or late-career stage, and include both male and female teachers
Became Skills for life teacher after period as a Learning Support Practitioner	Tend to be at early- to mid-career teachers, and are mainly women
Skills for Life teaching is first career	Are younger, and include both male and female teachers

In qualitative interviews teachers were also asked if they had role models or key individuals who had influenced their career choices: their decision to enter the profession, their pedagogy, or their practice. Around three-quarters of respondents named role models and a quarter said that they had not been influenced by a particular person. Interestingly, in terms of professional identity, the most commonly cited role model was a fellow basic skills teacher, where teachers had been inspired by seeing their classroom practice and/or their interpersonal relations. This had either been in the past, or they were working alongside them at the moment. Managers, of various levels, and teacher educators also featured prominently.

## **Skills for Life teaching as a profession**

Whatever an individual's reasons for their career choices, the extent to which their chosen job fulfils their personal and professional expectations impacts on both job satisfaction and professional identity. When that job, or the context of that job, changes – in this case, through a major educational policy initiative – the issue of the match between expectations and reality becomes more acute.

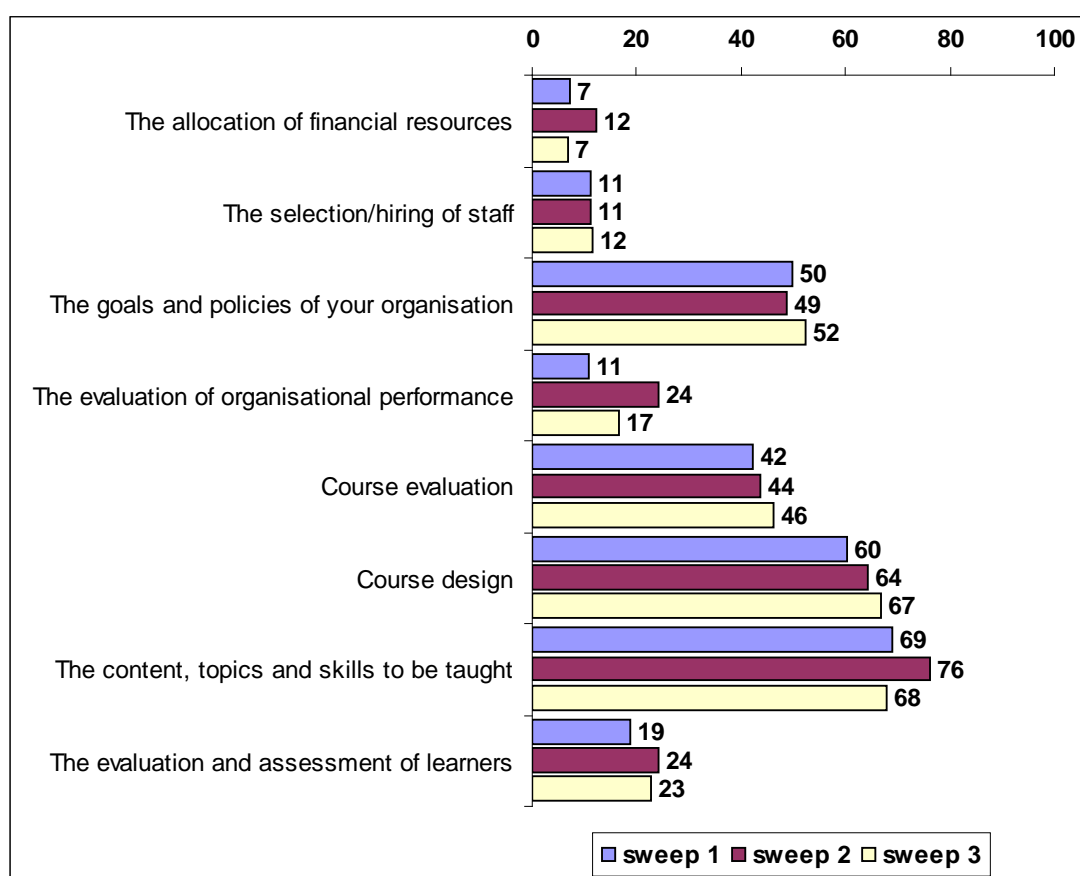
### **Teacher autonomy in the classroom**

Existing research [Shain and Gleeson, 1999; Gleeson et al. 2005; Locke et al., 2005] suggests that autonomy has a critical role to play in a teacher's job satisfaction and the professionalisation process. Turnbull [2002] found that teachers are more likely to support reform when they not only have adequate training, resources, helpful support, but also participate in decisions and have control over the implementation of reform in their own classrooms. This suggests that for teachers, part of their professionalism is linked to having a degree of autonomy in implementing these educational changes in the classroom. In essence, part of a teacher's professionalism lies in integrating aspects of reform with their existing knowledge of their learners, of their subject and of their subject pedagogy. If teachers do not trust educational reform to effect meaningful change

for their learners, there is a negative impact on the altruistic aspects of their professional identity.

As Figure 5.1 shows, the Teacher Study data suggest that for Skills for Life teachers the highest levels of control and autonomy are experienced in relation to classroom practice, including skills to be taught and topics to be taught, course design and course evaluation. On average, only a fifth of teachers thought they had influence on the evaluation and assessment of learners. Whereas in course design and evaluation an increasing proportion of teachers in each phase agreed they were influential, in areas where teachers perceived that they have the least influence – the hiring of staff, the allocation of financial resources, or the evaluation of performance – there was no significant change over time.

**Figure 5.1: Autonomy and control – participation in decision-making ('strongly agree' + 'agree') by sweep [N=476]<sup>9</sup>**



Respondents were also asked about the areas in which they would like to have more influence. The most frequently mentioned answers were:

- size of classes [40%]
- timetabling [32%]
- the goals and policies of their organisations [32%]
- appropriate qualifications for learners [30%]
- selection and recruitment of learners [27%]

<sup>9</sup> These figures are for respondents participating in all three phases only.

- allocation of financial resources [27%]
- choice of examination boards [26%].

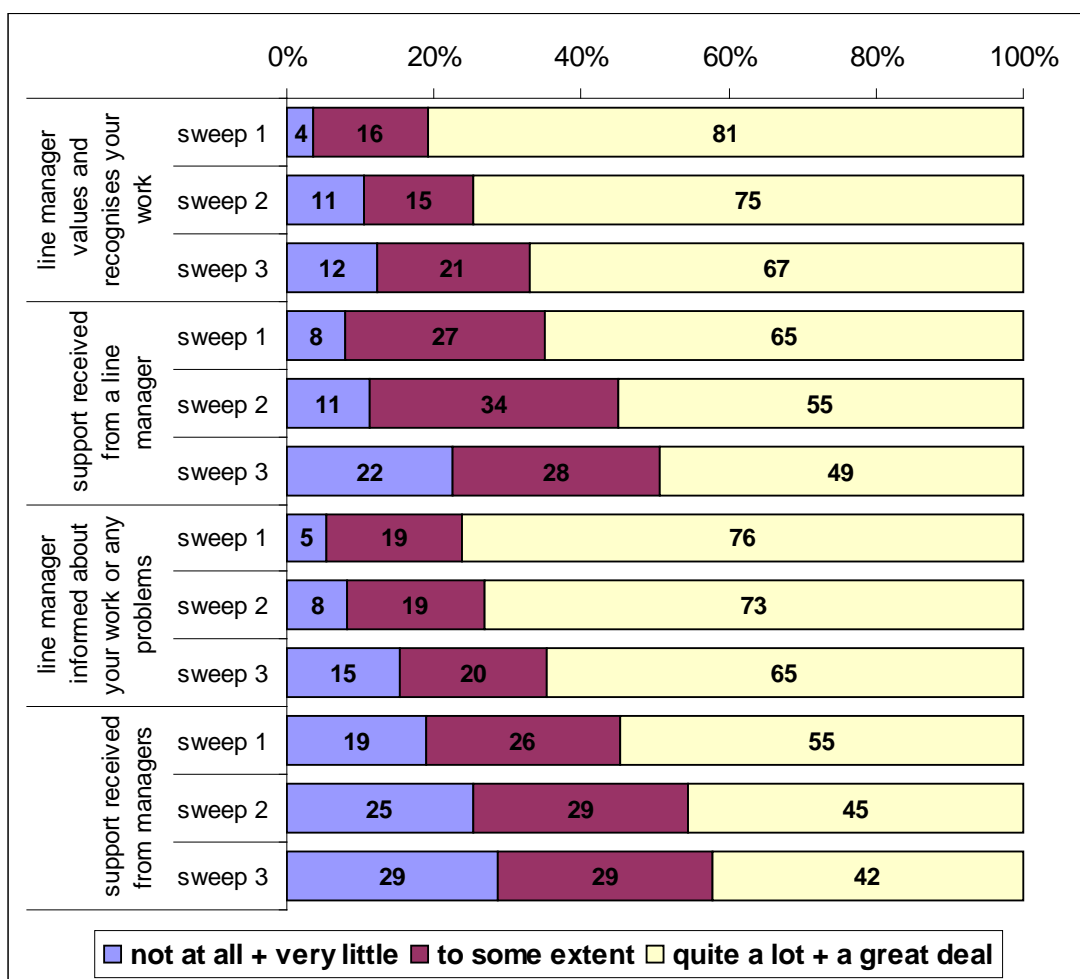
### **Managerial support**

Autonomy means not complete freedom from any restraints, but rather active involvement in decision-making processes and educational reforms through networking. Accordingly, one way of assessing the impact of an educational reform on teacher autonomy – and in particular the impact of a new culture of national standards, qualifications, and targets – is to examine teacher collaboration. Collaboration is not the antithesis of individual freedom. As Locke et al. outline, collaborating with other teachers and colleagues beyond one's own classroom can be viewed as part of, in Hoyle's terminology, an 'extended professionalism' (p. 559) that fosters both altruism and professional knowledge.

One aspect of collaboration – remembering that autonomy is not confined solely to the narrow sphere of the classroom – is managerial support. Existing research demonstrates that the degree of managerial support a teacher receives can influence both their job satisfaction and career decisions (Currivan, 2000; Evans, 1998; Shain and Gleeson, 1999; Tsui and Cheng, 1999; Gaertner, 2000; Turnbull, 2002; Gleeson et al., 2005; Locke et al, 2005). The role of managers is vital to ensuring that teachers feel they have a role to play in shaping change, rather than having reform imposed upon them, and the degree of managerial support a teacher receives can influence both their job satisfaction and career decisions.

Overall, those teachers who participated in all three phases of the Teacher Study perceived that they received 'quite a lot' of managerial support and felt valued by their line managers: relatively few teachers reported that they received 'very little' or 'no' support. Yet, as Figure 5.2 illustrates, over the course of the three phases there was a downward trend in teachers' views about managerial support. A decreasing proportion of teachers stated that they received support from their managers and their line managers, that they felt valued and recognised by their line manager, and that their line manager was informed about their work and any problems they were experiencing.

**Figure 5.2: Managerial support and appreciation by sweep [%] [N= 476]<sup>10</sup>**



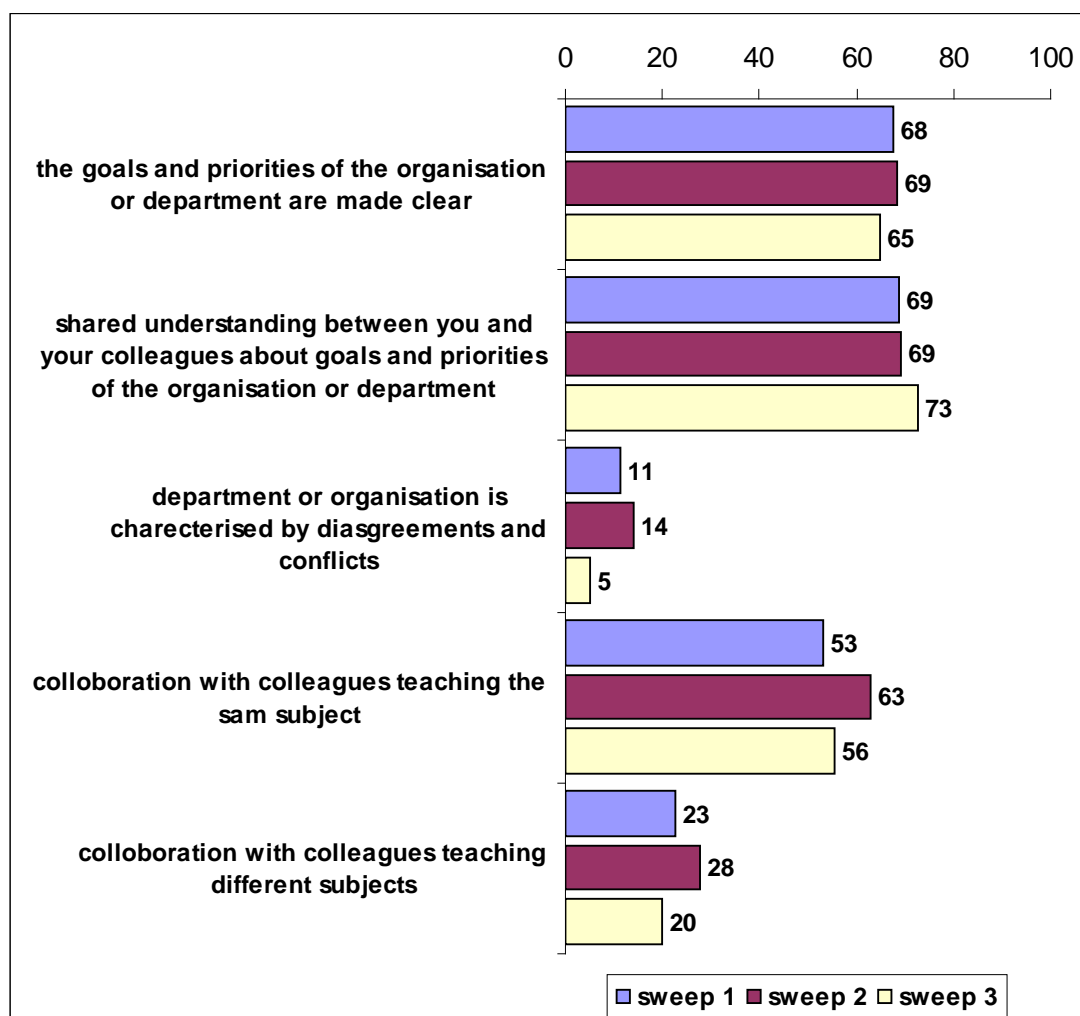
### Collaboration

Figure 5.3 presents a summary of data on collegial networks, in this case, collaboration with colleagues, and shared goals and visions at an organisational level. More than two-thirds of Skills for Life teachers suggested that there was ‘a great deal’ or ‘quite a lot’ of shared understanding and clarity of organisational goals and priorities. Very few teachers believed that their organisation could be characterised by conflicts and disagreements. Indeed, the proportion of respondents who believed their organisation was characterised by conflicts reduced by half by the third phase of the survey.

Although collaboration between colleagues who taught the same subjects was quite widespread [more than half of respondents did this ‘a great deal’ or ‘quite a lot’ across all three phases], networking among teachers who taught different subjects was far less frequent: slightly more than one-fifth of respondents did this ‘a great deal’ and ‘quite a lot’ across all three phases.

<sup>10</sup> These figures are for respondents participating in all three phases only.

**Figure 5.3: Collegial networks: collaboration and shared goals ('a great deal' + 'quite a lot'), by phase [%] [N=476]<sup>11</sup>**

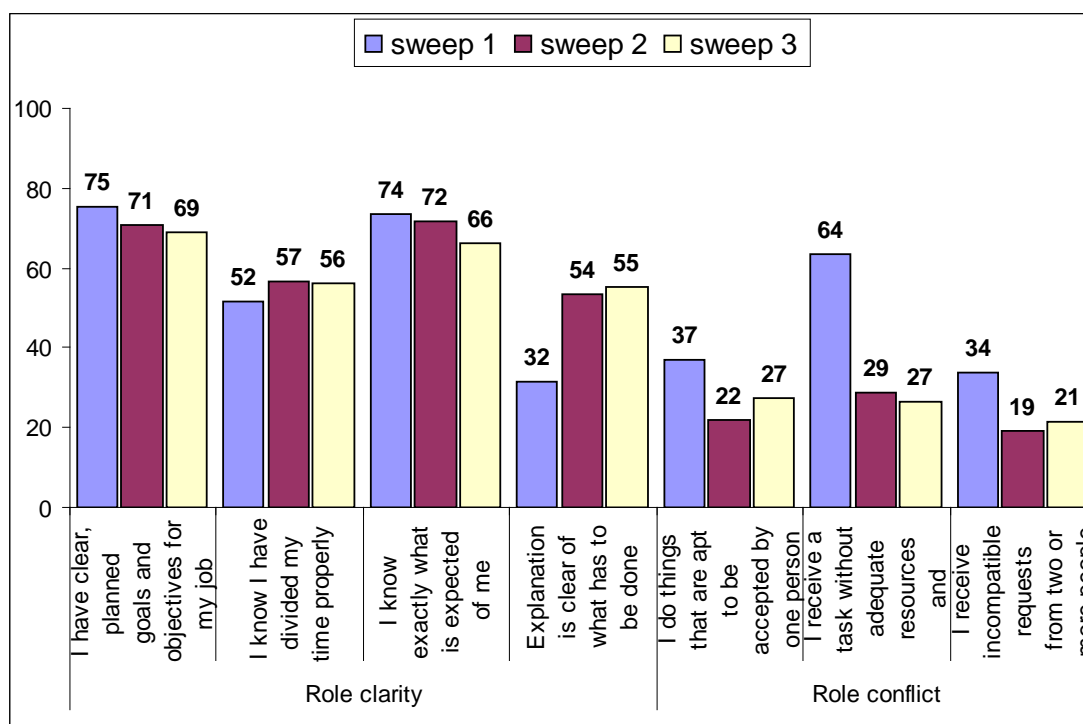


### Clarity of professional role

Turning to the clarity of their professional role, about two-thirds of respondents believed that they had clear, planned goals and objectives for their job and knew what is expected from them in their work. Slightly more than half believed they knew how to divide their time properly. In Phase One, one-third [32%] of Skills for Life teachers agreed that they received clear explanations of what had to be done at work: this proportion increased up to 55% by the third phase. As Figure 5.4 illustrates, professional role clarity [how clearly teachers feel about their professional role] improved slightly over time, and the proportion of teachers who agree that there were conflicts in their professional role decreased quite dramatically.

<sup>11</sup> These figures are for respondents participating in all three phases only.

**Figure 5.4: Professional role clarity and conflict (strongly agree + agree), by phase [%] [N=476]<sup>12</sup>**

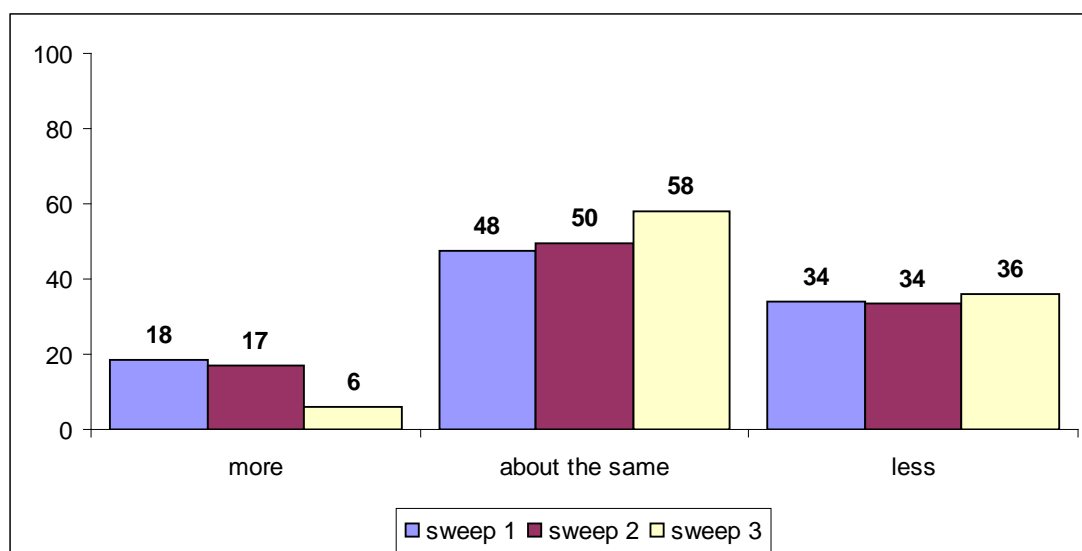


### Feeling valued

Professional identity is also related to external perceptions. The questionnaire asked Skills for Life teachers how valued they felt they were compared to other subject specialists working in the post-16 sector. As Figure 5.5 illustrates, about half of respondents felt they were valued the same as other subject specialists in post-compulsory education, and around one third felt that their work was less valued. Once again, over the course of the study a negative trend was observed, with the proportion of Skills for Life teachers who felt more valued than other subject specialists dropping from 18% in Phase One to 6% in Phase Three.

<sup>12</sup> These figures are for respondents participating in all three phases only.

**Figure 5.5: Felt valued in comparison with other subject specialists in post-16 education and training, by phase [%] [N=476]<sup>13</sup>**



In interviews, one numeracy teacher told of the hierarchies in teaching that divide her from other teachers:

T: That is proper maths, this is what I get called all the time. This is proper maths, you are just numeracy.

I: By who?

T: Our GCSE staff in college. Other teachers, quite a few of my friends teach in various parts of the country, and college teachers, in their opinion, aren't teachers. Even though I defend us to the hilt, and say we deal with more than they do, and of course the money, there is a frighteningly big difference between what I earn and what they earn.

I: So there is a definite hierarchy even in the college?

T: Yeah, between GCSE and numeracy, yeah [...] we are not seen as equal.

Davidson [1999] argues that one factor affecting teachers' job satisfaction is the feeling of recognition, self-worth or value. The Teacher Study data demonstrate that most teachers felt valued and appreciated by their learners: overall, only one tenth of the sample was 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' with the appreciation of their work by learners. However, the proportion of teachers satisfied with the appreciation of their work by learners dropped slightly across the three phases: from 91% in the first to 88% in the second and 85% in the third.

In interviews teachers expressed dissatisfaction with external perceptions of the teaching sector in which they worked and of Skills for Life teachers. One spoke of FE teachers feeling like 'second class citizens' [Int5]; another, ESOL, teacher referred to how 'basic skills is the Cinderella of FE and ESOL is the Cinderella of basic skills' [Int23]. Those who expressed particular feelings of being undervalued usually did so with reference to the general population at large. One teacher reflected that 'people don't realise what we do' [Int20]. Certainly Skills for

<sup>13</sup> These figures are for respondents participating in all three phases only.



Life teachers have a lower profile than school teachers, but it seems that they may face particular challenges in being valued because of ignorance about their job. An ESOL teacher working with Entry Level 2 learners in ACL has to provide a lot of explanations.

## Career pathways

If Skills for Life teaching is to be viewed as a 'profession' in the same way that school teaching is, there need to be clear pathways that all teacher are able to access for career advancement. If teachers perceive that a job offers only limited possibilities for advancement then understandably there may be an impact on both recruitment and retention.

## Managerial posts

Across all three phases, 38% of teachers indicated that they were willing to be promoted to a managerial or higher managerial post. Certain factors influence a teacher's willingness to be promoted (Table 5.3). Younger teachers were more likely to want to be promoted to a managerial position as were teachers on permanent contracts. The more managerial support Skills for Life teachers received and the higher the level of clarity they had about their professional role, the greater the likelihood of them wanting a managerial position. However, part-time Skills for Life teachers who did not want to change to a full-time position were less likely to want to be promoted to a managerial post compared to teachers who worked full-time.

**Table 5.3: Predictors of willingness to managerial promotion** [All valid observations from 3 phases are included (N=1937). Findings significant at 10%, 5% or 1% in multivariate analysis are included.]

Characteristics	Effect
Age	Younger teachers more likely to want to be promoted to managerial positions
Employment status	Part-time teachers who do not want to change to full-time positions were less likely to want to be promoted to managerial posts compared to teachers who work full-time
Contract type	Teachers on permanent contracts much more likely to want to be promoted to managerial positions
Number of paid contract hours	The more hours Skills for Life teachers work the more likely they were to want to be promoted to managerial positions
Number of contact hours	The more contact hours teachers had the less likely they were to want to be promoted to a managerial position
Main teaching subject	Teachers whose main subject was literacy were more likely to want a managerial promotion than ESOL teachers
Qualifications	Respondents with generic teaching qualifications were less likely to want a managerial post
Managerial support	The more managerial support teachers receive the greater the likelihood of wanting promotion to managerial positions

Professional role	Teachers who wanted to be promoted to managerial positions had a higher level of clarity about their professional role
Satisfaction with learners	Teachers who wanted to be promoted to a managerial position were more satisfied with the aspects of their job related to learners

### Dissatisfaction

Over a quarter [28%] of respondents were dissatisfied with their career prospects. A slightly lower proportion of full-time teachers were dissatisfied with their career prospects [22%] than part-time teachers [31%]. Hourly-paid part time teachers were more often dissatisfied with their career prospects [33%] than teachers on fractional contracts [27%]. Male part-time teachers were more dissatisfied than female part-time teachers with their career prospects [38% compared to 29%]. The gap in satisfaction levels between part-time and full-time teachers with their prospects for career advancement was also greater in teaching sectors other than FE.

Among younger part-time teachers, the proportion of respondents dissatisfied with their career prospects was far higher than that seen in all other age groups [71% compared to less than 30% on average] and than in young teachers who worked full-time [18%].

A number of teachers interviewed believed that it was easier to make a career as a basic skills teacher now than it was prior to Skills for Life. Around a third of the teachers thought that it was possible to make a career as a Skills for Life teacher, and that the structures and pathways were in place to facilitate this:

‘If you can get a decent college, and you have got yourself a fairly water-tight contract, it is a good profession’. [Int35]

Such teachers tended to be on either fractional or full-time contracts and only one of these teachers was hourly-paid.

### Permanent contracts

Many qualitative interviewees made the connection between career progression opportunities and the lack of availability of full-time permanent contracts: the options open to teachers depend on where they work and what sector they work in. To progress teachers must be highly-motivated, appropriately-qualified, flexible enough to change employer, possibly train in more than one subject specialism, and be prepared to replace some of their teaching hours with managerial activities.

Career paths in Skills for Life can follow different trajectories. As the teachers’ reasons for joining the profession illustrate, some begin at a volunteer level and progress through learning support to teaching. For those in teaching, progression may involve spending less time in the classroom and more time in curriculum management, department management, or teacher training. For those unwilling to take on managerial responsibilities or who are committed to remaining in the classroom, the promotional options are more limited:

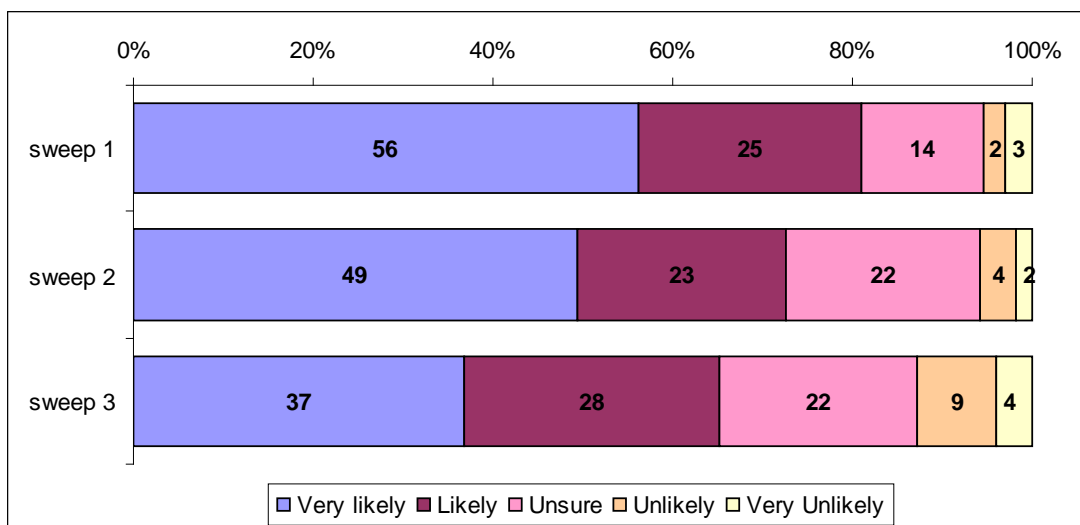
‘The higher up you go, with FE, or the higher up you go at our place, anyway,

the less teaching it involves and it is more managerial stuff, which is not what I want to do, it is not what I am there for.’ [Int19]

### Retention

Turning to retention, three-quarters of teachers across all three quantitative phases believed that they will be teaching Skills for Life subjects in post-16 education and training sector in 1–2 year’s time; 18% were unsure about their future prospects, and 7% said they were unlikely to be teaching Skills for Life subjects in the next 1–2 years (Figure 5.6).

**Figure 5.6: ‘How likely are you to stay teaching the subjects you are teaching now in post-16 education and training?’**, % by phase [Phase 1 N=1027; Phase 2 N=737; Phase 3 N=546]



Two-thirds of those who said in Phase One that they were unlikely to be teaching Skills for Life subjects in 1–2 years’ time participated in the Phase Two survey, compared to 82% of those who intended to remain in profession and 69% of those who said they were unsure. Of those who participated in Phase Two, 5% of those who intended to remain had left the post-16 education sector, compared to 6% of those who were unsure, and 13% of those who said they unlikely to continue teaching Skills for subjects.

This situation had changed slightly by Phase Three. A greater proportion [85%] of those who said in Phase 2 that they were unlikely to continuing teaching Skills for Life subjects participated in Phase 3 [compared to 80% of those who intended to remain in the profession and 65% of those who were unsure about their future]. Of those who participated in Phase Three, 1% of those who intended to remain had left the post-16 education sector, compared to 3% of those who were unsure, and 14% of those who said they unlikely to continue teaching Skills for Life subjects.

We used a logistic regression models to compare teachers who said they were likely to remain in the profession with teachers who said it was unlikely, to assess the factors that influence how teachers see their future. The results show which teachers, controlling for all the included variables, are more likely to stay in the profession for the next one or two years (Table 5.4).

**Table 5.4: Predictors of staying in the profession for the next 1–2 years** [Panel data analysis: all available observations from 3 phases are included (N=1937)]

Skills for Life teachers more likely to stay in the profession:

- male teachers compared to female teachers
- older teachers compared to younger teachers
- teachers who do not have a generic teaching qualification compared with those who do
- teachers contracted to work a greater number of hours
- teachers contracted to work a greater number of contact hours with learners
- teachers on permanent contracts compared to teachers on fixed-term or casual contracts
- hourly-paid teachers who would like to change to a full-time position compared to full-time teachers
- teachers whose main subject is literacy compared to ESOL (no differences observed for numeracy teachers)
- teachers who work in FE colleges compared to 'other' types of provision
- teachers with a clearer professional role
- teachers more satisfied with the progress and development opportunities at their main employing organisation
- teachers who collaborate with colleagues

## 6. Job satisfaction

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This chapter asks how satisfied teachers were with their professional roles and explores the factors that influenced this, both positively and negatively.

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with key aspects of a Skills for Life teacher's job. Three sets of questions were used. In Set A, respondents rated eleven items on a five-point scale, where answers could range 'very satisfied' to 'very dissatisfied':

1. Learner behaviour
2. Job security
3. Learner progress and achievement
4. Proportion of time on administration
5. Salary and related benefits
6. Training and development opportunities
7. Balance between work and personal life
8. Support and help received from managers
9. Appreciation of work by learners
10. Availability of resources and facilities
11. Prospects for career advance

In Set B, respondents used a five-point scale ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' allowed to rate two items:

1. I am satisfied with the range of learning materials and equipment in this organisation
2. The range of learning resources in this organisation facilitates differentiated teaching

In Set C, respondents rated four items on a five-point scale, with answers ranging from very good to totally inadequate:

1. The physical environment
2. ICT infrastructure
3. Quality of other teaching materials and equipment
4. Administrative support

### Data analysis

Factor analysis of the index revealed four dimensions of job satisfaction (see Table 6.1):

1. Job satisfaction related to learners (items 1, 3 and 9)
2. Job satisfaction related to career and development opportunities (items 2, 5, 6 and 11)
3. Job satisfaction related to support within the working environment (items 4, 7, 8, 14 and 17)
4. Job satisfaction related to resources, equipment and facilities (items 10, 12, 13, 15 and 16)

**Table 6.1: Items in four dimensions of job satisfaction**

Satisfaction related to learners	Satisfaction related to career and development opportunities	Satisfaction related to support within the working environment	Satisfaction related to resources, equipment and facilities
1) Learner behaviour	2) Job security	4) Proportion of time on administration	10) Availability of resources and facilities
3) Learner progress and achievement	5) Salary and related benefits	7) Balance between work and personal life	12) The range of learning materials and equipment in your organisation
9) Appreciation of work by learners	6) Training and development opportunities	8) Support and help received from managers	13) Learning resources in the organisation facilitate differentiated teaching
	11) Prospects for career advance	14) The physical environment in which you teach	15) ICT infrastructure
		17) Administrative support	16) Quality of other teaching materials and equipment

These four dimensions, and an overall job satisfaction index, were treated as outcome variables, that is, a variable of interest to examine the effect of various teacher and employment characteristics on it. The Teacher Study dataset are panel data containing observations on multiple phenomena observed over multiple time periods. The models predicting overall job satisfaction and the four dimensions of job satisfaction took panel data into account, making it possible to reduce the omitted or unmeasured variable bias. In other words, analysis was able to control for repeated measures and in that way for some observed differences that stay constant over time such as gender and ethnicity, or for some unobserved ones, such as psychological characteristics like an individual respondent's underlying pessimism.

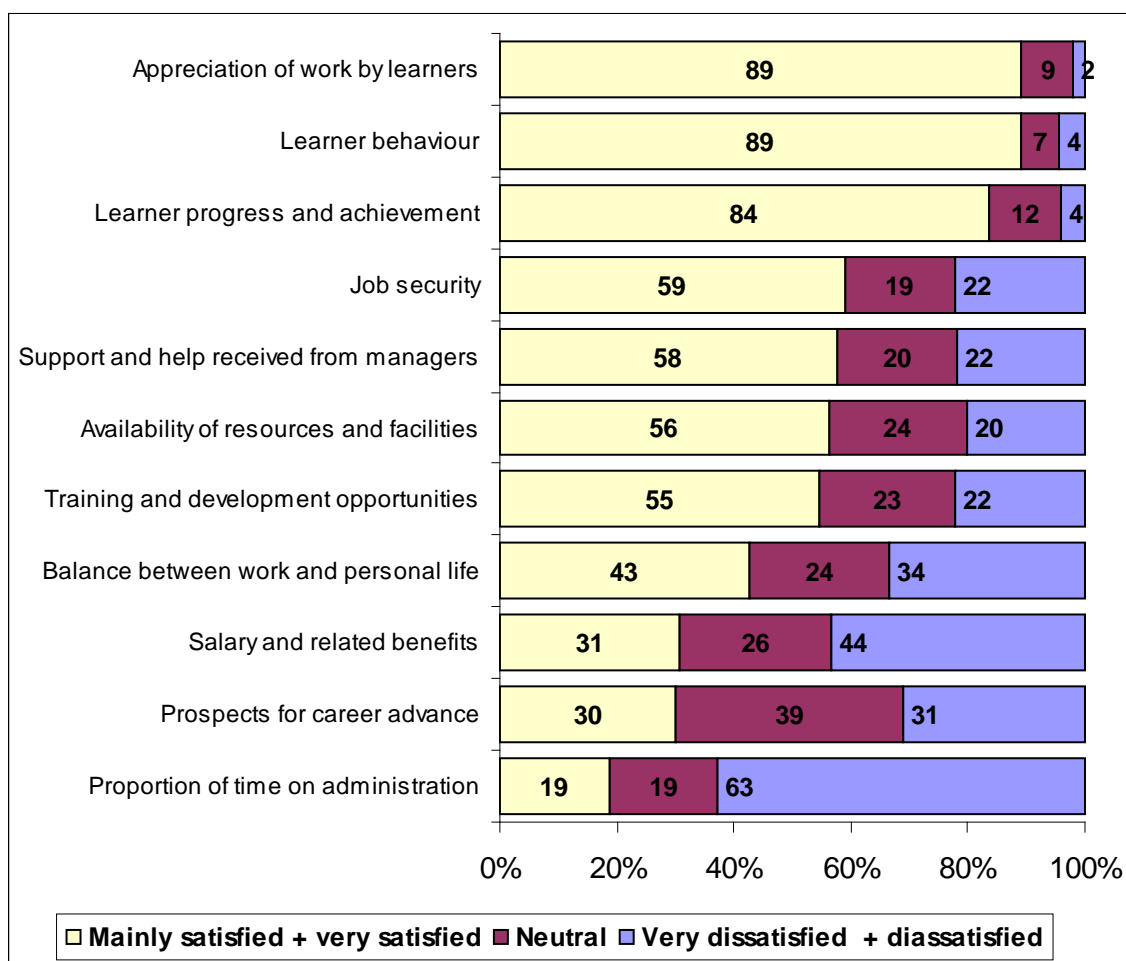
As previous research has shown, different factors can influence teacher's job satisfaction including age, experience, promotional chances, peer support, supervisory support, role conflict, role ambiguity and control or autonomy of the teaching practice and environment (Evans, 1998; Currivan, 2000; Gaertner, 2000). In our analysis, we firstly looked at the effect of socio-demographic characteristics – gender, age, ethnicity, and qualifications – and secondly at employment characteristics: contract type; employment status; years of experience in post-16 education; contracted hours per week; contact hours per week; and teaching sector. No strong effect was observed when length of service was added to the models, possibly because those most dissatisfied with their employer would have changed job. Variables were also added for teachers who were 'under-worked' (that is, teachers with part-time contracts who wanted full-time contracts); main teaching subject; proportion of learners aged 16–19; and willingness to be promoted to a higher managerial position. Lastly, attitudinal and motivational variables were added, such as motivations for teach Skills for Life; the extent of collaboration with colleagues; the level of managerial support received; the level of teacher involvement in the decision-making process; the

clarity of a teacher’s professional role, and the extent of profession conflict at their organisation.

**Learners**

The main areas where teachers expressed their satisfaction across all three sweeps [see Figure 6.1] were ‘appreciation of your work by learners’ [89% very or mainly satisfied]; ‘learner progress and achievement’ [84%]; and ‘learner behaviour’ [89%].

**Figure 6.1: Satisfaction with aspects of teaching job with main employer [Set A] [%]**  
[pooled data N=2310]



In qualitative interviews, the link between teaching, learners and job satisfaction was a recurrent theme; as one teacher expressed it, ‘we are so lucky to have this opportunity to teach these people and make such a difference to their lives’. For this teacher, satisfaction came partly from a ‘contract’ developed with learners:

‘I am driven. I have to be completely prepared when I go in the classroom. I have to be organised and I expect my students to work hard and they expect me to work hard. I work really hard for them. We are on a joint project, me and my students.’ [Int27]

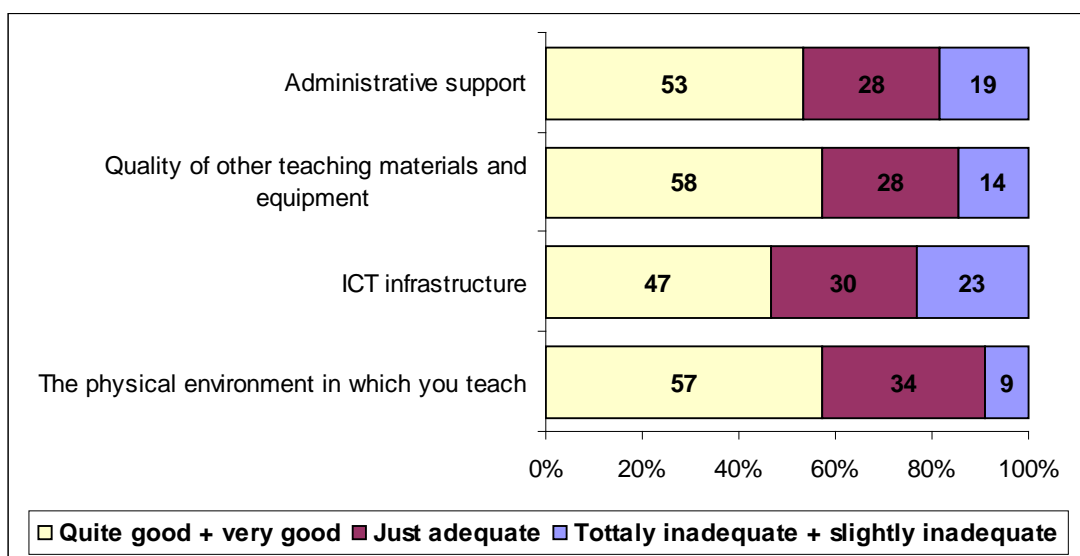
For other teachers, satisfaction was derived from the very visible progress that learners made. The quotation below comes from a teacher working in the prison sector:

‘I got more and more into it, it interested me more and more, especially the success stories that came about with the learners, especially with offenders, you see a great change in their lives. Just to see them for three months, even, it had a great impact on them, especially gaining qualifications, some had got jobs from this, when they finished their probationary period, and others moved on to do courses at the college, so there was a great insight there.’ [Int29]

### Resources

Figure 6.2 shows that around half of all teachers perceived the physical environment, the ICT infrastructure, the teaching materials and equipment, and the administrative support at their employing organisation as being very good or quite good.

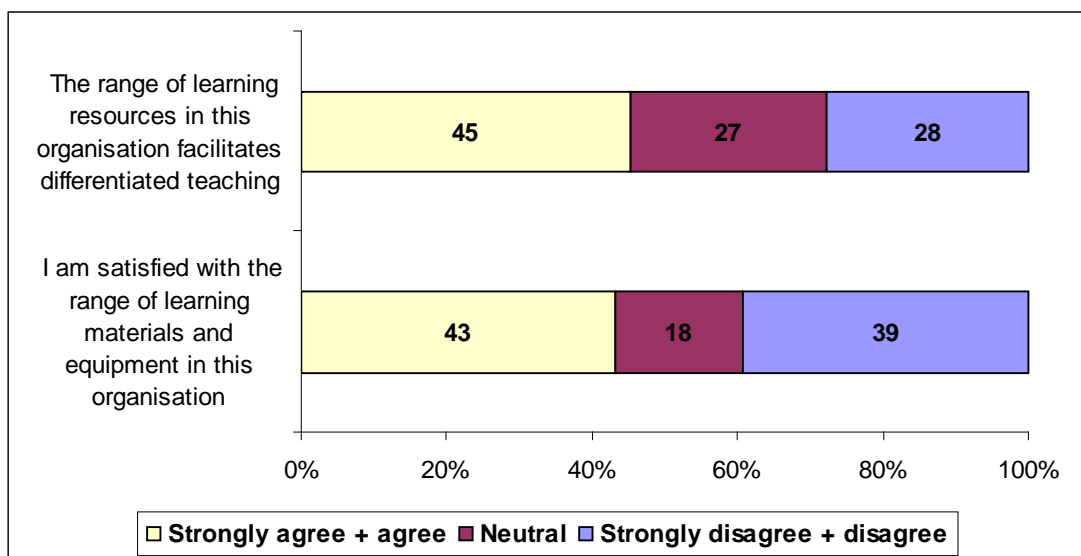
**Figure 6.2: Satisfaction with aspects of teaching job with main employer [Set C] [%]**  
[pooled data N=2310]



As Figure 6.3 illustrates, there was also some dissatisfaction with the resources available to teachers – 39% felt that the range of learning resources did not facilitate differentiated teaching.



**Figure 6.3: Satisfaction with aspects of teaching job with main employer [Set B] [%]**  
 [pooled data N=2310]



However, the satisfaction teachers derived from their work with learners could outweigh any negative aspects of their job. According to one teacher: 'Working with the learners and seeing how they progress makes it all worthwhile. I love my job, despite the infuriating lack of facilities'.

In summary, Skills for Life teachers were most satisfied with aspects of their job related to learners and least satisfied with their career and development opportunities (see Table 6.2)

**Table 6.2: Descriptive statistics of the job satisfaction indexes**

	No. of items	Range	Mean of an index	SD
<b>Satisfaction with learners</b>	3	0–12	9.70	1.82
<b>Satisfaction with career and development opportunities</b>	4	0–16	8.66	3.52
<b>Satisfaction with supportive environment</b>	5	0–20	11.00	3.85
<b>Satisfaction with resources</b>	5	0–20	11.62	3.85
<b>N of valid cases</b>			2310	

Within the four job satisfaction dimensions, a number of characteristics seem to have an effect.

**Socio-demographic characteristics**

- Older Skills for Life teachers experienced greater job satisfaction with learners than younger teachers.
- White British teachers were more satisfied with learners than BME teachers.
- Skills for Life teachers with ESOL certificates and diplomas experienced greater job satisfaction in relation to learners.
- Male teachers were less satisfied than female teachers with career and development opportunities.

- Skills for Life teachers with generic teaching qualifications were particularly dissatisfied in relation to career and development opportunities.
- Younger teachers were more satisfied than older teachers with the support environment at work.
- Younger teachers were more satisfied than older teachers with resources, equipment and facilities.
- Skills for Life teachers with a subject specialist qualification were slightly less satisfied with available resources, equipment and facilities, as were teachers with ESOL certificates and diplomas.

### **Employment characteristics**

- Hourly-paid teachers (both those who are 'under working' and those who are not) were more satisfied in relation to learners than full-time teachers.
- Respondents on temporary contracts were more likely to be dissatisfied in relation to learners.
- Teachers working for 'other' types of providers were more likely to be satisfied with learners.
- Those teaching a higher proportion of learners aged 16 to 19 were slightly less satisfied with learners.
- Teachers who have worked for longer in post-16 education and training were slightly less satisfied with career and development opportunities.
- Part-time teachers were less satisfied with career and development opportunities than full-time teachers. The negative effect of having a part-time contract remains even when sector, contract hours, contact hours and tenure are taken into account.
- Hourly-paid teachers were more likely to be dissatisfied than fractional teachers
- Respondents on temporary contracts were more likely to be dissatisfied with development opportunities.
- Skills for Life teachers with more contract hours were less satisfied with career and development opportunities but those with more contact hours were slightly less dissatisfied. (The effect of both contract and contact hours was significant but small, and can be explained by the presence of employment status and contract type in the model.)
- Teachers working in ACL were less satisfied than FE teachers with career and development opportunities.
- Respondents whose main teaching subject was numeracy were especially dissatisfied with development opportunities compared to those whose main teaching subject was literacy. Those whose main teaching subject was not a Skills for Life subject were also more dissatisfied than literacy teachers.
- Teachers contracted to work more hours were slightly more satisfied with the support environment. Those with more contact hours were slightly less dissatisfied with the support they received at work. (Again, these effects can be explained by the presence of employment status and contract type in the model.)
- ESOL teachers were less satisfied with the support they received at work than literacy teachers.

- Teachers with longer service in post-16 education and training were more satisfied with the available resources, equipment and facilities.
- Part-time teachers were less satisfied with resources, equipment and facilities than full-time teachers; hourly paid teachers were the most dissatisfied. Once again, the negative effect of having a part-time contract remains even when sector, contract hours, contact hours and tenure are introduced.
- Teachers on permanent contracts were less positive about resources, equipment and facilities.
- ACL teachers were less satisfied than FE teachers with resources, equipment and facilities. Teachers who worked in 'other' sectors were the most satisfied.
- ESOL teachers were less satisfied than literacy teachers with resources, equipment and facilities.
- Those whose main teaching subject was not a Skills for Life subject were more dissatisfied with the available resources, equipment and facilities compared to literacy teachers.
- Those respondents teaching a higher proportion of learners aged 16 to 19 were slightly less satisfied with resources, equipment and facilities.

### **Attitudinal/motivational**

- Teachers motivated to join the profession for intrinsic reasons experienced greater job satisfaction in relation to learners.
- Teachers motivated to join the profession for extrinsic and altruistic reasons were especially unhappy with their career and development opportunities.
- Those who collaborated with their colleagues more, perceived that they were receiving more managerial support, were clearer about their professional role, and experienced less professional conflict at their organisation, were more satisfied with their career and development opportunities.
- Teachers motivated to join the profession for intrinsic reasons were more satisfied with the support environment at work.
- Those who perceived that they received more managerial support, who were more involved in decision making, were clearer about their professional role, and experienced less professional conflict at their organisation, were more satisfied with the support they received.
- Those who collaborated more with their colleagues, who perceived that they were receiving more managerial support, who were clearer about their professional role and who experienced less professional conflict at their organisation, were more satisfied with resources, equipment and facilities.

### **Age and experience**

Older teachers and those with more post-16 experiences, as well as those who are more qualified, were less satisfied with their job overall. It may be that this group of teachers have been through a number of different periods of reorganisation and change during their careers, have less enthusiasm for the new processes and infrastructure of Skills for Life. They may also be uncertain about the changes brought about by Skills for Life and their own position within it, in particular whether the investment they have made in their career is being undermined. As we have seen, 60% of Skills for Life teachers are over 40 years old; some many resent the challenge to their established practices or even hark

back to a golden age before the resources and attention brought by Skills for Life. This again underlines for policy-makers the importance of engaging a new generation of Skills for Life teachers.

### **Career advancement**

One area where dissatisfaction was revealed was prospects for career advancement; this was only rated positively by 30% of respondents. In qualitative interviews, several teachers linked the opportunities available to them in their career as linked to the context they worked in:

‘We are a very small college and there is nowhere for me to go here. So if I want to get a promotion I will have to leave this college, which is unfortunate.’ [Int8]

One teacher who moved from a work-based learning employer to a FE college noted the differences this made to her career prospect:

‘I think, first of all [the main difference is] the size of the organisation. It is a lot bigger at college. And one of the reasons why I decided to make this move is again, for progression routes, because I feel there are a lot more opportunities available, in terms of my own development.’ [Int43]

There was a perception that some organisations were restructuring in order to offer clearer and more effective progression strategies:

‘Now they have actually put extra stepping stones in for people. There is supposedly a promotion ladder, which there wasn’t before. So I think the college is valuing the area more than it previously did.’ [Int14]

For some respondents this clarity of career opportunity was explicitly linked to the changes the Skills for Life strategy had brought to the sector:

‘I was amazed, all the training [the college] got me, and put me on a PGCE as well, while I was on basic skills, it was excellent for me, felt like it was fast-track. And all the training support within the department, because the department was quite close. It was great and you could see ways of moving up within the college anyway.’ [Int29]

### **Teaching environment**

Those who work outside FE colleges were among the most dissatisfied. In qualitative interviews, one teacher expanded on the reasons why those teaching outside larger FE colleges can struggle to find the right support:

‘It is small. And it can be isolating. But we do have network meetings and things like that, where we can share good practice. Although we find everybody tends to be doing their own different things. Even though we are doing the same thing.’ [Int9]

In qualitative interviews, teachers linked the physical and emotional support environment at work with feeling of dissatisfaction and isolation, and highlighted how this varies between learning context:

‘You see your colleagues on a day-to-day basis [in FE Colleges]. You share

an office, there is professional support from line managers, because you see them. In ACL you are really out on a limb, and unless you go to the main centre you very rarely have any kind of support or leadership. You are just battling away by yourself and you may be doing it wrong, but you don't know that you are doing anything wrong until you get observed once a year [...] And you carry about your classroom and office in the back of the car. You haven't got a base to work from or an office to use.' [Int45]

Even teachers working in larger colleges can find that, as one part-time ESOL teacher told us, 'the work environment is not very conducive to working':

'There are thirty-eight computers in one room. And it is all open-plan. And some of the computers are shared, so you can have up to fifty five members of staff in one staffroom, and it gets extremely noisy.' [Int10]

A workforce that is predominantly part-time can struggle to find office space and access facilities. However, comments from other teachers also demonstrated that shared facilities could impact positively on job satisfaction:

'The staffroom is quite compact, and although there are quite a lot of us in there, we do share resources. We have a numeracy room and a literacy room, where all the resources are. But we also talk to one another. All the numeracy people get together and say – we did this. We tried this out. So we do share good practice quite a lot.' [Int14]

### **Administration**

Many teachers recognised there is a need for planning and record systems and that these can be beneficial to both teacher and student. However, the qualitative data reveal that many teachers also believed that the level of their administrative workload detracted from the efficacy of their teaching, and some were suspicious of a perceived culture of accountability.

'It is all down to accountability. At the end of the day does it make me a better teacher? Am I improving the learning of my students? And a lot of the time you have to say – no, this is just form filling. I am covering my back and everybody else's along the way. And that is what I found quite irritating really.' [Int49]

This is not just an issue in Skills for Life but also in other educational sectors (IRS, 2000; PriceWatersCoopers, 2001; Smithers and Robinson, 2001, 2003). Some respondents made the link between administrative demands and job satisfaction:

'allow us to do what most of us are good at and enjoy – that is teaching and helping learners to learn.'

### **Changes in job satisfaction**

Table 6.3 presents data on changes in levels of job satisfaction changes over the course of the study. In three of the four job satisfaction dimensions (learners, development opportunities, and support environment), there was a statistically significant negative change: by contrast, there was a slight increase in satisfaction with available resources, equipment and facilities.

**Table 6.3: Descriptive statistics of job satisfaction indices by phase, all data included**

	No. of items	Range	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3	
			Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Satisfaction with learners	3	0–12	9.80	1.78	9.71	1.81	9.52	1.92
Satisfaction with career and development opportunities	4	0–16	8.96	3.45	8.54	3.67	8.27	3.40
Satisfaction with support environment	5	0–20	11.06	3.79	11.24	3.97	10.57	3.78
Satisfaction with resources, equipment and facilities	5	0–20	11.60	4.28	11.54	4.59	11.76	4.77
<b>N of valid cases</b>			1027		737		476	

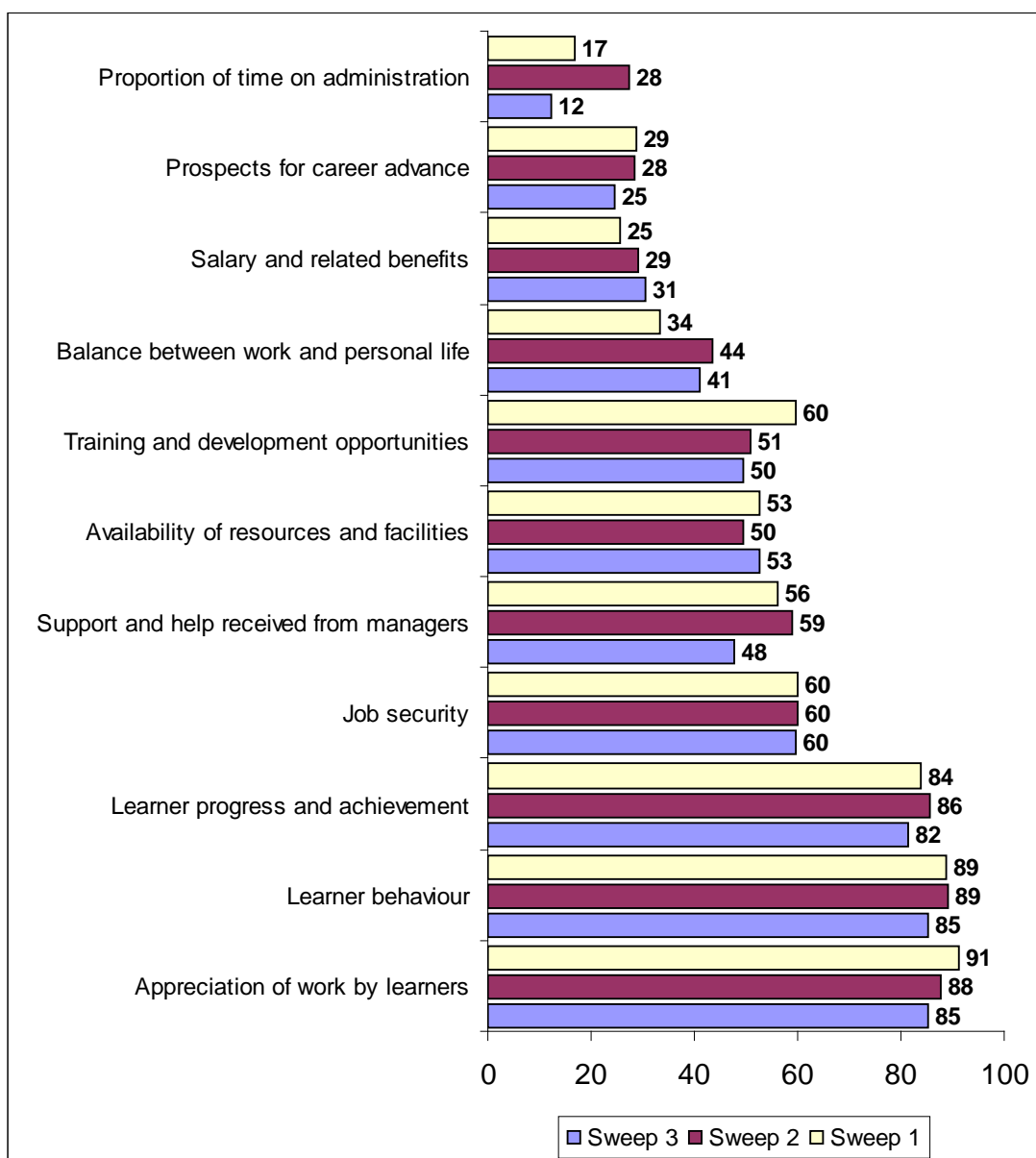
The above table shows data for all the teachers involved in each survey. However, it is also vital to examine differences in job satisfaction taking account of survey attrition between phases. As Table 6.4 shows, Skills for Life teachers who completed the first but not the second survey were slightly more satisfied with the support environment and the available resources. Those who completed the first and second surveys but not the third were less satisfied with their learners and development opportunities, but slightly more satisfied with the support environment and the available resources. These differences between those who leave and those who stay mean that analysis of changes in job satisfaction must use only data from teachers who participated in all three sweeps [N=476].

**Table 6.4: Descriptive statistics for job satisfaction and attrition [standard deviation in brackets]**

	Range	Mean	Left	Stayed	Left	Stayed
Satisfaction with learners	0–12	9.80 (1.78)	9.76 (1.72)	9.81 (1.79)	9.59 (1.78)	9.74 (1.82)
Satisfaction with development opportunities	0–16	8.96 (3.45)	8.72 (3.84)	9.02 (3.33)	8.16 (3.50)	8.64 (3.72)
Satisfaction with supportive environment	0–20	11.06 (3.79)	12.23 (3.73)	10.75 (3.75)	11.43 (3.57)	11.18 (4.08)
Satisfaction with resources	0–20	11.60 (4.28)	12.56 (3.72)	11.34 (4.38)	11.70 (4.21)	11.49 (4.69)
<b>N of valid cases</b>		1027	263	748	154	507

Between the first and third questionnaires, there was a slight decrease in the proportion of teachers satisfied with 'support and help received from managers', 'development and training opportunities', 'prospects for career advance', and 'time spent on administration'. By contrast, the proportion of teachers satisfied with 'salary and related benefits' and 'balance between work and personal life' grew [Figure 6.4].

**Figure 6.4: Satisfaction with different aspects of teaching job, by phase [N=476]<sup>14</sup>**



There was a slight decline in three dimensions (satisfaction with learners; with development opportunities, and with the support environment) but a slight increase in teachers satisfaction with the resources available at their employer (see Table 6.5).

<sup>14</sup> Only those who have participated in all three phases are included

**Table 6.5: Descriptive statistics of job satisfaction by phase [N=467]<sup>15</sup>**

	Range	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
<b>Satisfaction with learners</b>	0–12	9.76	1.77	9.74	1.80	9.52	1.92
<b>Satisfaction with development opportunities</b>	0–16	8.90	3.15	8.65	3.69	8.27	3.40
<b>Satisfaction with supportive environment</b>	0–20	10.39	3.72	11.17	4.06	10.57	3.77
<b>Satisfaction with resources</b>	0–20	11.26	4.57	11.44	4.73	11.77	4.77

However, in gauging changes in job satisfaction, and what influences these changes, it is important to consider gross change as well as net change. If some teachers become more satisfied and others less satisfied the result will be minor net change, even though large numbers of participants have in fact changed. To determine satisfaction changes for the panel, individual differences in the four satisfaction dimensions between the first and third phases were calculated.

These variables were then used to assess the influences on change. In this, two different sets of potential influences were considered: changes in the practice environment (including change of employment status, main employer, working hours, and characteristics of their learners) and changes in perception and attitudes (including views on the support received, and on personal influence and autonomy).

An examination of bivariate relationships produced the results summarised in Table 6.6 and identified the variables not significantly related to job satisfaction. (These were not used in subsequent multivariate models.)

**Table 6.6: Results of the bivariate analysis between change in job satisfaction and change in practice environment / change in perceptions and attitudes**

	<b>Satisfaction with learners</b>	<b>Satisfaction with development opportunities</b>	<b>Satisfaction with support environment</b>	<b>Satisfaction with resources</b>
<b>Range of job satisfaction scales</b>	0–12	0–16	0–20	0–20
<b>Range of changes in job satisfaction between Phases 1 and 3</b>	–10 to +7	–14 to +10	–12 to +12	–13 to +11
<b>Change of main employer</b>	Both teachers who change their main employer and those who do not	Teachers who stay with the same employer experienced a slight decrease in satisfaction	There was a quite big average increase in satisfaction with the support	Both teachers who change main employer and those who do not experienced a

<sup>15</sup> Paired t-tests showed that all differences between Phases 1 and 3 and Phases 2 and 3 are significant, with the exception of satisfaction with resources. All differences between Phases 1 and 2 are statistically not significant, with the exception of satisfaction with the support environment. Only those who have participated in all three sweeps are included.



	experienced a slight decrease in satisfaction with learners (-0.3 and -0.2 respectively)	with development opportunities (-0.9) compared to those who change (+0.8)	environment for teachers who changed their main employer (+5) compared to those who did not (-0.9)	slight increase in satisfaction with the available resources (+0.6 and +0.4 respectively)
<b>Change of employment status</b>	All groups experienced a slight decrease (-0.2) in satisfaction with learners	Teachers whose employment status changes downward experienced the biggest decrease in satisfaction with development opportunities (-2) compared to those who stay the same (0.7) or change upward (-0.2)	Teachers who did not change employment status experienced a slight decrease in satisfaction with the support they receive (-0.5) compared to those who changed upward (+1.6) or downward (+1.1)	Teachers who did not change employment status experienced a slight increase in satisfaction with the available resources (+0.8), compared to a decrease for those who had an upward change (-0.2) or downward change (-0.1)
<b>Change in contracted hours</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Change in contact hours</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Change in number of learners</b>	The greater the change in average number of learners per class the more likely a teacher was to have a decrease in their satisfaction with learners	-	-	-
<b>Change in proportion of learners aged 16 to 19</b>	The greater the change in the proportion of learners aged 16-19 the more likely a teacher was to have a negative change in their satisfaction with learners	-	-	-
<b>Change in perception of managerial support</b>	-	Positive change in perception of managerial support was related to positive change	Positive change in perception of managerial support was related to positive change	Positive change in perception of managerial support was related to positive change

		in satisfaction with development opportunities	in satisfaction with support environment	in satisfaction with available resources
<b>Change in collaboration with colleagues</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Change in perception of influence on decision making</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Change on professional role clarity</b>	-	Increase in role clarity was associated with increase in satisfaction with development opportunities	Increase in role clarity was associated with increase in satisfaction with support environment	-
<b>Change in role conflict</b>	-	Increase in professional role conflict was associated with the decrease in their satisfaction with development opportunities	Increase in role conflict was associated with decrease in satisfaction with the supportive environment	Increase in role conflict was associated with decrease in satisfaction with the available resources

<sup>15</sup> were not included in the analysis because did not show significant association with dependent variable in bivariate analysis

As this demonstrates, changes in employment and attitudes relate to changes in job satisfaction in general. However, multivariate analysis is required to assess the true impact of each factor and control for all others. In addition to the employment characteristics and perceptions tested in bivariate analysis, multivariate models control for age, gender, ethnicity, and years of experience in post-16 education, base job satisfaction in Phase One and job satisfaction in Phase Two.

The most consistent predictors of changes<sup>16</sup> in job satisfaction were factors related to attitudes: change in teachers' perceptions of the managerial support they receive and their professional role. Increases in managerial support and clarity of professional role, and a decrease in perceived conflict at an organisation, were strongly related to an increase in job satisfaction, when all other factors and previous job satisfaction were controlled for.

Socio-demographic characteristics did have a part to play. Male teachers were more likely to experience negative changes in their satisfaction with learners and resources. Older teachers were more likely to experience negative change in their satisfaction with development opportunities and available resources. Skills for Life teachers with more years of experience in post-16 education were more likely to experience positive change in their satisfaction with their development opportunities, when controlling for age. White British teachers tended to

<sup>16</sup> This is judged only in terms of the factors we have measured. Other factors which could have an impact we could not or did not measure.

experience an increase in their satisfaction with development opportunities, the support environment, and resources.

Teachers who had an upward change in their employment status experienced a slightly negative change in their satisfaction with the support environment and with available resources compared to those who did not change their status. In addition, those making a downward change in status experienced a positive change in their satisfaction with the support environment compared to those who did not change their employment status.

## **Conclusion**

To find that teachers were most satisfied with their learners' behaviour and appreciation and least satisfied with the proportion of time they spend on administration is perhaps unsurprising. Further analysis shows that managerial support, collaboration with colleagues, involvement in decision-making and a clear professional role had a positive effect on the job satisfaction of the Skills for Life teaching workforce. These factors are all related to teachers' sense of professional autonomy; they allow teachers a stake in the ownership of the processes that affect them and their learners. Policy-makers and managers of Skills for life teachers need to involve teachers in decision making and provide the support they need to enable them to focus their attention on the needs of their learners and facilitate collaboration among them. This would appear to have a positive effect on teachers' satisfaction and makes the profession more attractive, thus aiding retention of existing teachers as well as attracting the new generation of Skills for Life teachers that is urgently needed.

## 7. Teacher attitudes to Skills for Life

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Research suggests that those seeking to instigate educational changes that teachers feel negatively about, or exhibit behavioural resistance towards, face serious obstacles.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, it is essential to consider teacher attitudes towards any educational reform they are involved in and to identify the factors that are associated with the attitudes teachers express. This chapter examines teacher attitudes toward six different aspects of the Skills for Life strategy including the curricula, teacher qualifications, national tests, inspections, assessment and the Skills for Life infrastructure, and gives an overview of the aspects of the strategy that teachers regard as positive and negative.

### Attitudes to Skills for Life

Skills for Life has invested heavily in innovative marketing, notably the Gremlins campaigns, to raise awareness of the strategy amongst the general public and to encourage learner participation. There has also been a major investment in development activities and learning materials to ensure that practitioners know about the different elements of the strategy and are able to take advantage of them. It appears that this has been successful; overall 63% of respondents stated that they were very well or quite well informed about Skills for Life initiatives.

Using bivariate analysis to examine what types of teachers did not consider themselves to be well-informed, shows that, across all three phases, a higher proportion of male teachers [17%] compared to their female teachers [7%] did not consider themselves to be well-informed, as well as a higher proportion of teachers aged 30 and under [19%] compared to all other age groups [8%]. Hourly-paid teachers [13%] were less likely to consider themselves well-informed compared to full-time [7%] and fractional teachers [6%] and those on hourly-paid contracts who did not want full-time position were the least informed overall [17%]. Numeracy teachers [12%] and those whose main teaching subject was not a Skills for Life subject [22%] considered themselves less well-informed than literacy [5%] and ESOL teachers [7%].

Below we have outlined how positively respondents felt toward five different aspects of the Skills for Life strategy and the changes they have brought:

- The Skills for Life curricula and other initiatives
- New Skills for Life teacher qualifications
- National tests and learner morale
- Inspections/quality assurance
- Use of Skills for Life infrastructure

Respondents' attitudes toward these different aspects were measured on a five-point scale, with answers ranging from 'strongly disagree' for 'strongly agree'.

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<sup>17</sup> Hargreaves [1998]; McNess et al. [2003]; Van den Berg et al. [1999].

These results presented below come from panel data analysis using pooled data from all three phases.

Further information on the scales used in the questionnaire, and findings on a sixth aspect, the validity of assessment, are included in Appendix B.

To explore the factors that influenced teacher attitudes we considered:

- socio-demographic characteristics (age, gender, ethnicity)
- employment characteristics (teaching experience, tenure, employment status, contract type, provider type, number of paid hours, managerial experience)
- teaching practice (number of contact hours, number of learners, proportion of 16–18 learners, main subject and number of SfL subject taught, collaboration with colleagues) characteristics
- qualifications and professional development
- attitudinal variables such as degree of managerial support, influence on the decision-making, clarity of professional role, and conflict in professional role
- dimensions of job satisfaction.

### **The Skills for Life curricula and other initiatives**

Teachers were asked to assess whether the Skills for Life curricula had:

- given them confidence and helped them to be innovative and creative;
- expanded the range of teaching techniques they used and improved their teaching; rendered the teaching of adult literacy, ESOL, and numeracy more interesting as a job;
- provided development opportunities to make teachers feel valued.

They were also asked about the extent to which they felt that Skills for Life initiatives had brought down barriers to learning and enabled providers to attract more learners from hard-to-reach social groups while taking account of the needs of lower ability learners. Overall 60% of respondents reported positive attitudes to these aspects of the strategy and its impact.

Teachers who were more positive about the Skills for Life curricula and other initiatives:

- were older, but with a slight decrease in positive attitudes after the age of 50
- had fewer years' teaching experience<sup>18</sup>
- had been employed by their main employer for a shorter time
- had shorter paid working hours
- were in full-time employment
- were employed in 'other' types of provision, compared to FE colleges or ACL
- were literacy teachers compared to ESOL teachers
- had fewer contact hours with learners and fewer learners
- collaborated more often with their colleagues (this effect becomes non-significant when degree of managerial support is added to the model)

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<sup>18</sup> When main teaching subject was entered into the model this effect lost its significance, but when degree of managerial support was entered it became statistically significant again.

- were qualified to Level 4, as opposed to having their highest qualification below or above Level 4 (when degree of managerial support is entered)
- perceived they received more managerial support (when availability of resources is entered)
- had a clearer professional role
- were more satisfied with their learners, with development opportunities and the availability of resources and facilities

The model did not show any statistically significant effect for other variables including gender, ethnicity, generic teaching qualifications, participation in decision making, and proportion of learners aged 16–19 years.

In the telephone interviews, 26 teachers referred to the Skills for Life curriculum, although they were not asked any direct questions about this; the great majority spoke of the Skills for Life curriculum in positive terms. Those commenting positively drew attention to the fact that not only did the curriculum provide them with ideas, it also offered a framework that gives structure and focus to teaching, and outlined what it expected for each subject and each level. For teachers with longer experience in the field, these aspects of the curriculum were a welcome contrast to life prior to 2001:

‘When the core curriculum came out it gave it [the curriculum] all a bit more focus. It was a bit woolly and a bit loose really before that.’ [Int59]

Those teachers who raised the topic of the curriculum were probed about how they used it in their teaching. Almost all stressed that they viewed the curriculum as a framework rather than a prescriptive tool, and that they adapted it to the needs of their learners and their own teaching practices:

‘So long as I’m following the guidelines laid out by the curriculum, I can do it as and when I want to, and how I want to.’ [Int64]

For some, this framework brought the benefits of standardisation, to both learners and teachers:

I think it is useful to have that framework because it means we are all singing from the same song sheet. We are all doing the same things, which makes the skills that the students learn more transferable. A lot of our students move around a lot, they travel for work, and if they are halfway through a maths course here they can pick it up at another college quite easily now because it is the same curriculum. It is not just me teaching them what I think they want to know, it is me teaching them what I should be teaching them. [Int8]

If you are covering for somebody as well, you know exactly where they are up to. And you can just deliver more or less ... if you have got three English classes you are delivering more or less the same. [Int18]

### **New Skills for Life teacher qualifications**

Teachers were asked if they thought that the new Level 4 qualification would fill important knowledge gaps and whether those achieving the qualification would be better prepared to deal with the realities of teaching adults with poor literacy or numeracy skills. They were also asked to assess whether the new requirements

are driving many excellent teachers out the profession or undermining the employability of many experienced teachers. Overall 45% had positive views on these questions, significantly less than viewed the Skills for Life curricula and other initiatives positively.

Teachers who were more positive about the new Level 4 qualifications:

- were more likely to be female
- were older teachers, but with a slight decrease in positive attitudes after the age of 50
- had been employed by their main employer for a shorter time
- did not have curriculum management experience
- were more likely to work in FE Colleges than in ACL [effect disappears when qualifications are added to the model]
- were on full-time contracts but contracted to work fewer hours [e.g. full-time contract was for 32 rather than 37 hours per week]
- were literacy teachers compared to either numeracy teachers or those whose main teaching subject was not a Skills for Life subject.
- Were satisfied with their learners, with development opportunities and available resources, and those with a clearer professional role.

Skills for Life teachers with a generic teaching qualification and teachers who were qualified to Level 3 [compared to those with a degree] were slightly more negative about the new qualifications, perhaps pointing to insecurities brought about among teachers who had previously considered themselves to be adequately qualified and resented or felt threatened by the new requirements. On the other hand, Skills for Life teachers who had gained a new Level 4 qualification were more positive, suggesting that the courses they had taken had increased their confidence in their ability to meet the requirements of their job roles.

### **National tests and learner morale**

The new national tests in literacy and numeracy have been a focal point of much debate amongst teachers and others involved in Skills for Life. We asked respondents to assess how far they agreed or disagreed that the tests motivate learners to attend and study, and that they increase the self-esteem of disaffected people, and conversely whether learners find them daunting and may be deterred from enrolling onto programmes. Overall, 60% had positive views on these issues.

Respondents with a more positive attitude:

- were older teachers, but with a slight decrease in positive attitudes after the age of 50
- had been employed by their main employer for a shorter time
- were on full-time contracts but contracted to work fewer hours
- worked for providers other than FE colleges
- taught a higher proportion of learners aged 16–19 [a very small effect, but statistically significant nonetheless]
- had a new Level 4 qualification
- collaborated less with colleagues

- perceived that they received more managerial support and had a clearer professional role [the effect of managerial support disappears when satisfaction with development opportunities is added to the model]
- were more satisfied with development opportunities

In the course of qualitative interviews, 22 teachers mentioned the national tests for learners. Some listed the benefits to learners when they gained a national qualification, perhaps for the first time:

‘I like the national tests for one reason; because I have seen how much learners get from that, the qualification.’ [Int4]

Teachers reported that gaining qualifications boosts learner confidence and self-esteem, and that the prospect of getting a certificate was often a motivation for learners taking the course in the first place.

However, enthusiasm for the national tests was more muted when teachers viewed these from their own rather than the learner perspective. For some teachers, the tests were a curb on their teaching: in effect some felt that class work had become

‘geared towards cramming, teaching strategies for cramming them for the test.’ [Int22]

Others questioned the relationship between a test-focused system and improving skills:

That [teaching towards a test] isn’t what I would call Skills for Life work. That is not proper basic education. That is not actually moving people’s skills forward a great deal. It is getting them through a piece of accreditation. [Int34]

A common issue that teachers pointed out was that the Level 1 and 2 tests do not contain an element that requires a written response and instead contain multiple choice questions:

‘The biggest problem with it is that it is essentially a reading test, something that is computer marked, that you can do in an hour, has to be a reading test. And it doesn’t test what a lot of people really want to do, which is their writing skills and spelling skills, that is what they want to work on.’ [Int34]

There was a perception among some teachers that national tests might not carry currency with employers, and that there was a mismatch between the skills that people needed to learn and what the tests examined:

‘[The tests] are clocking up markers, but it is not really teaching or educating or whatever, helping that person to do things they would like to do or need to do. So it is a misleading sense of achievement to people as well.’ [Int22]

### **Inspections and quality assurance**

Every learner has the right to expect that they will receive high quality learning which is appropriate to their needs and circumstances. One mechanism for ensuring this is the inspection regime. In the period of the Teacher Study survey this was carried out by the Adult Learning Inspectorate and is currently a



responsibility of OFSTED. We asked teachers whether they agreed that the judgements of external inspectors were objective and contributed to raising standards of teaching and whether they had any hesitation in trusting the knowledge and experience of external inspectors. We also asked whether they felt that there was a hidden agenda in external inspections.

Only 25% of teachers answered the questions positively, perhaps reflecting the pressure that inspection naturally brings to teachers, particularly in the light of the number of negative inspection reports in Skills for Life areas in recent years.

Teachers who had positive views about inspections and quality assurance:

- had worked for their main employer for a shorter period
- had no managerial experience
- worked for 'other' types of providers than FE colleges or ACL
- had fewer contract hours, and fewer contact hours
- had fewer learners in their teaching groups, and a lower proportion of learners aged 16–19

Those teachers who had taken part in more CPD were more positive about inspections, and those who perceived that they were receiving more managerial support and collaborate more with colleagues, also had a more positive attitude towards these inspections. These findings suggest that where teaching teams had been given the opportunity to work together with the support of their managers and prepare effectively for inspection they were less threatened by the experience.

### **Use of Skills for Life infrastructure**

The survey also asked teachers about their use of the Skills for Life infrastructure: diagnostic assessment tools, Individual Learning Plans [ILPs], core curricula, Access for All, and the new Skills for Life learning materials. Overall the data show a moderate usage of these by respondents: on average, the most popular answer teachers gave when asked about how often they used these resources was 'to some extent'. More experienced teachers and those who taught for providers other than FE colleges used the Skills for Life infrastructure slightly less often. Teachers with a higher the proportion of learners aged 16–19 in their classes used the Skills for Life infrastructure less. Teachers selecting numeracy as their main subject used the Skills for Life infrastructure slightly more than literacy teachers did, and literacy teachers used it slightly more often than those who had either ESOL or non-Skills for Life subjects as their main teaching subject.

A positive effect was observed from CPD: the more days a respondent had spent in CPD, the more often they used the Skills for Life infrastructure, highlighting the importance of development activities in introducing elements of the infrastructure and allowing teachers to consider ways in which to incorporate these in their professional practice. Interestingly, the opposite effect was observed for collaboration with colleagues: the more Skills for Life teachers collaborated, the less often they used the SfL infrastructure, perhaps suggesting that those teachers who were able to work closely with colleagues were more likely to produce locally generated materials and processes to meet the specific needs of their learners.

In telephone interviews, teachers made a number of comments about the Skills for Life infrastructure when they were asked about the impact of the SfL strategy on their teaching practice. While some used diagnostic materials and assessments with all their learners on enrolment, others relied more on their professional judgement and experience, often using the materials in conjunction with tests they had developed themselves.

'We use it [a diagnostic test] with every student, so when they come in, it is part of the screening process, after we have chatted to them we use the initial assessment and diagnostic assessment. A great tool. A great tool It is more often than not right on the nose, the diagnostic is very good because it helps you with these spiky profiles where they are strong in one area and weak in another. It saves a lot of time cut out of your learning plans for the students when you are trying to work out what you are going to teach them for the next several weeks.' [Int9]

Others were more circumspect, and spoke of the limitations of using generic tools. As one ESOL teacher explained:

'If they are used properly they are very useful. Like all these things, if you bother to move to support materials, and you use them properly, they are fantastic. Unfortunately a lot of people don't. They just go through the motions, as they are required by the college. [...] A tool is only as good as the person using it.' [Int6]

Turning to the use of ILPs, some teachers commented that these were a useful way to record learner progress and to involve learners in this process. However, the majority of teachers who spoke about ILPs held far more negative views, particularly those who taught ESOL. For some teachers ILPs appeared to be more to do with a target culture than improving teaching and learning. One aspect of this is the amount of class time and overtime ILPs can take up if a teacher wants to do the resource any kind of justice:

'At the moment I think I have got seventy four students across my groups. That is seventy four ILPs. Seventy four of everything I have to do. You know, guidance and planning and tracking and all the rest of it. So it is a lot of work. And you run out of time. At five o'clock you run out of time. You end up doing some of it at home. And I do it at weekends as well.' [Int18]

Over half the teachers interviewed commented on the Skills for Life teaching materials. Although some teachers thought they were of a good quality and some judged them so poor that they did not use them, the majority were rather ambivalent. One teacher commented that, although the Skills for Life materials are not perfect, 'The fact that they exist is a good platform for a lot of teachers.' [Int41] Others said that 'They provide some great shortcuts and a great skeleton but don't go far enough.' [Int23]

And:

'They are not bad. It is very difficult to design materials that suit every teacher in every context, but given those limitations they have done pretty well.' [Int31]

As with the curriculum, teachers who had longer experience in the field drew attention to the difference from professional life before 2001 when, 'There was no standardisation, no quality control, some tutors produced very good material,

some very bad material.' [Int6] ESOL teachers drew attention to the impact of their changing learner cohort:

[The materials] could be improved greatly [...] the influx of the East Europeans [...] I think they need to be adapted to suit those [new learners]... because all the stories seem to be coming from Bangladesh and India, and the Vietnamese, Chinese, African, why aren't there any stories about something totally different? Lithuanian culture or the break up of the Russian states? [Int47]

## Changes in attitudes

Over the course of the Teacher Study there was a slight decrease in positive views on the Skills for Life curricula and other initiatives (Table 7.1).

**Table 7.1: Descriptive statistics of attitudinal scales by sweep**

	Range	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3		Growth over 3 phases
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
<b>(1) Skills for Life Curricula and other initiatives</b>	0–36	19.78	6.88	19.39	5.64	20.16	5.82	n/s
<b>(2) New Skills for Life teacher qualifications</b>	0–16	7.57	3.81	7.77	3.10	7.59	3.27	n/s
<b>(3) National tests and learners' morale</b>	0–16	8.30	2.44	9.60	2.26	9.53	2.29	An increase**
<b>(4) Inspections/ quality assurance</b>	0–16	9.44	2.62	7.90	2.67	7.91	2.59	A decrease**
<b>(5) Use of Skills for Life infrastructure</b>	0–20	9.89	3.28	10.27	3.76	10.06	4.40	A slight increase***

Notes: only those present in each of 3 sweeps are included, N=476 respondents: \*\*\* significant at 1%, \*\*significant at 5% paired t-test results

As Table 7.2 shows there are statistically significant factors that affect both a teacher's use of the Skills for Life infrastructure and a teacher's attitudes towards different aspects of the Skills for Life strategy and its initiatives.

**Table 7.2: Results of the bivariate analysis between change in the attitudes towards the Skills for Life Strategy and its initiatives and change in practice**

	<b>Inspections/ quality assurance</b>	<b>National tests and learner morale</b>	<b>Use of Skills for Life infrastructure</b>
<b>Range scales</b>	0–16	0–16	0–20
<b>Range of changes</b>	–12 to +12	–14 to +10	–16 to +18
<b>Subject specific teaching qualifications</b>	n/s	n/s	Teachers with a subject specialist qualification by Phase 3 have a slight decrease (–0.4) in use of the Skills for Life infrastructure compared to those who do not have this qualification (+1.2)
<b>Generic teaching qualifications</b>	n/s	n/s	Teachers with a generic teaching qualification by Phase 3 have a slight decrease (–0.4) in the use of the Skills for Life infrastructure compared to those who do not have this qualification (+1.2)
<b>Change in number of CPD days</b>	An increase in the number of CPD days has a negative correlation with change in views about inspections and quality assurance.	An increase in the number of CPD days has a positive correlation with change in views about the influence of national tests on learners.	n/s
<b>Change of main employer</b>	n/s	Teachers who stay with the same employer experience positive change in their views of the influence of national tests on their learners (+1.6) compared to those who change main employer (–0.3)	Teachers who change employer slightly decrease their use of the Skills for Life infrastructure (+0.6). Those who stay with the same employer tend to have a slight increase in their use of the Skills for Life infrastructure (–0.5)
<b>Change in contracted hours</b>	n/s	An increase in working hours has a negative correlation with change in the views about the influence of national tests on learners	n/s

<b>Change in contact hours with learners</b>	An increase in contact hours has a negative correlation with change in views about inspections and quality assurance.	n/s	n/s
<b>Change in number of learners</b>	n/s	An increase in number of learners has a negative correlation with change in views about the influence of national tests on learners	n/s
<b>Change in collaboration with colleagues</b>	n/s	n/s	
<b>Change in satisfaction with the received support</b>	n/s	Change in satisfaction with support has a negative correlation with change in views about the influence of national tests on learners	n/s
<b>Change in satisfaction with available resources</b>	There is a positive correlation between change in satisfaction with available resources and change in views about inspections and quality assurance.	n/s	n/s
<b>Change in role conflict</b>	n/s	Change in role conflict has a positive correlation with change in views about the influence of national tests on learners.	Change in role conflict is positively associated with change in use of the Skills for Life infrastructure.
<b>Change in attitudes towards Curricula and Skills for Life initiatives</b>	n/s	n/s	Change in attitudes towards the Skills for Life curriculum and other initiatives is positively associated with change in the use of the Skills for Life infrastructure

<b>Change in attitudes towards validity of assessment</b>	Change in attitude towards inspections is positively associated with change in view about the validity of assessments.	n/s	n/s
<b>Change in attitudes towards national tests and learners' morale</b>	Change in attitude toward inspections is negatively associated with change in view about the influence of national tests on learners.	-	n/s
<b>Change in attitudes towards new Skills for Life teaching qualifications</b>	n/s	Positive change in views about the influence of national tests on learners is related to positive change in views about the new Skills for Life teaching qualifications	n/s
<b>Change in attitudes towards inspections/quality assurance</b>	-	Change in views about the influence of national tests on learners is negatively correlated to change in attitudes towards inspections.	n/s
<b>Change in feeling informed about the new Skills for Life initiatives</b>	n/s	n/s	There is a positive correlation between change in the use of the Skills for Life infrastructure and change in feeling informed about the new Skills for Life initiatives.

Notes: only those present in each of 3 sweeps are included, N=476 respondents

Multivariate analysis was carried out to assess the true impact of each factor and control for all others. In addition to changes in attitudes and perceptions tested in bivariate analysis, multivariate models control for age, gender, ethnicity, and years of experience in post-16 education; main subject taught and base attitudes taken from Phases One and Two.

Changes in teachers' views on how national tests influence learner morale were positively related to:

- being a male teacher
- being a White British teacher
- the number of years of teaching experience

Teacher attitudes are negatively related to:

- their age
- change in their attitudes towards inspections.

Changes in the Skills for Life teachers' attitudes towards inspection and quality assurance after controlling for all other variables were positively related to:

- being a male teacher
- change in their satisfaction with available resources
- change in the attitudes towards the validity of assessments.

Teachers' attitudes were negatively related to:

- an increase in the number of CPD days
- an increase in number of contact hours with learners
- change in their views of how national tests influence adult learners.

The most important factors positively associated with the extent of change in the use of the Skills for Life infrastructure were:

- age
- change in the extent to which teachers feel informed about the new Skills for Life initiatives
- change in attitudes towards the curriculum and other Skills for Life initiatives.

There are also some factors that are negatively related to the change in the use of the Skills for Life infrastructure:

- teaching experience
- having a generic teaching qualification by the end of the last fieldwork phase.

## **Teachers' views on the impact of the Skills for Life strategy**

The Phase Three survey included two new questions in which teachers were invited to list up to three aspects of the Skills for Life strategy that had had the most positive and most negative impact on their professional role.

### **Positive impact**

Out of the 546 teachers who participated in Phase Three, 66%, or 328, listed some positive impacts, 7% said there were no positive impacts, and 27% were unsure. Below are the categories in which the answers of these teachers fall, with the percentage of respondents in brackets. We have also listed some of the aspects teachers were positive about in each category.

***Teaching materials and resources [27%]***

- practicality and usefulness
- range
- ideas
- relevance of topics to everyday life

***National standards [18%]***

- standardised criteria for assessment and progress
- all teachers working to the same standards
- standardisation of NQF levels and qualifications

***CPD [17%]***

- core curriculum training
- general professional and personal development opportunities

***Raised profile and status of sector [18%]***

- raised profile of Skills for Life within their organisation
- raised profile among general population
- gaining more respect and status
- feeling more professional

***Teaching practice [18%]***

- advice about different teaching techniques and strategies
- guidance on differentiating between learners' needs
- help with short and medium-term planning, helping map learning objectives to the curriculum.

***Assessment materials [13%]***

- diagnostic assessments
- ILPs

***More opportunities [9%]***

- being able to train other teachers
- being a mentor
- opportunities to work with employers
- opportunity to become a Skills for Life teacher

***Teacher qualifications [9%]***

- the new Level 4 subject specific qualifications

***Improving the lives of learners [9%]***

- the chance to achieve a national qualification
- interesting learning activities
- opportunities for learners working at lower levels
- bringing hard-to-reach adults back into main stream education



**Learner qualifications and national tests [8%]**

- the benefits of the national tests
- giving learners the chance to gain qualification
- willingness of learners to take tests
- tests empowering learners

**Personal benefits [7%]**

- a deeper understanding and awareness of a range of issues
- increased levels of confidence

A more detailed picture emerges from the qualitative interviews, where no interviewees spoke about the strategy in entirely negative terms. Teachers spoke of how the Skills for Life strategy had played a part in increasing their professionalism, and increasing their status both within and outside of education providers:

‘The thing I like about it is we are recognised and it is all written down that this is what we do. And people know. They don’t think we are a Mickey Mouse outfit just doing anything we like when we turn up for classes, or something.’ [Int27]

‘Bringing in the new qualifications, it has increased our prestige within the college and there is a much greater understanding now of appreciation of that.’ [Int36]

One ESOL teacher spoke of the ways in which the strategy had improved delivery:

‘I can speak of the ESOL strategy which did make a massive change to the way we delivered the resources that we had accessed. I think what it did for me was it just enabled everything to be ... it gave it that cohesion that it needed, because everyone was working autonomously, which I think was OK, but what we lacked was that curriculum and the guidelines that we currently have through the new SfL strategy, and the new curriculum, as well.’ [Int44]

Another ESOL teacher emphasised the positive impact of a new focus on employment:

‘I see a lot of positive work being done out in the field and in the workplace... [There] is more emphasis on the workplace, as it has grown, and employers are getting behind it. Getting involved. I think that is a very positive move.’ [Int18]

**Negative impact**

Out of the 546 respondents, 41% listed some negative impacts, 36% said there were no negative impacts, and 23% were unsure. When classifying these aspects as negative, this group of 187 teachers were far more likely to expand and justify their assertions than when they were speaking positively.

**Focus on accreditation and qualifications [27%]**

- ‘learners work on tasks to pass tests rather than tasks that are useful’

- 'funding is accreditation driven so achievement is more important than improving skills'
- 'too reliant on results from tests and not distance travelled'
- 'colleges force people to take an exam for their achievement when they are not necessarily ready to do so then when they fail it is my fault'

#### ***Target driven [20%]***

- 'conflict between chasing targets and ensuring needs of learners are met'
- 'unrealistic targets set by the LSC'
- 'imposed targets put more emphasis on providing for students who can succeed in tests quickly rather than the most under-skilled members on the population'

#### ***National tests, no writing, multiple choice [19%]***

- 'I am not convinced that the national tests are a true reflection of students' abilities'
- 'rigidity of multiple-choice national tests'
- 'contexts used within tests are often not applicable to a learner's experience'
- 'inadequate testing or recognition of learners' writing skills in tests'
- 'I have lost learners who are intimidated by national tests'

#### ***Curriculum [19%]***

- 'need to map everything to curriculum'
- 'allocating irrelevant curriculum references to documentation is extremely time-consuming'
- 'although initially useful as teaching aid and guidance to levels of expectation the core curriculum can be restrictive and inflexible'
- 'the core curricula documents, including Pre-Entry framework, are cumbersome and inhibiting to good, creative teaching'

#### ***Paperwork [17%]***

- 'it has increased the amount of paperwork and much of the paperwork has little consequence for learners'
- 'teachers are spending more and more time on questionable paperwork exercises when they could be preparing better lessons'

#### ***Funding [16%]***

- 'students that have achieved Level 1 but are unable to gain Level 2 do not have the funding to remain on course'
- 'removal of funding for Entry 1 and 2 levels means that some learners are in inappropriate classes'
- 'funding too tightly tied to outcomes. Some low level learners cannot fully achieve in one year'
- 'some learners need maintenance rather than progression and this is difficult to fund'

***Different learner levels [11%]***

- ‘only E1 are funded – so for the first time we have to ditch slow learners – or they don't give us an outcome’
- ‘pre-entry ESOL or literacy students – no funding’
- ‘most students now have to pass exams within a year – or they are out – few E1 and E2 recruited’

***Teaching Qualifications [9%]***

- ‘too many taking Level 4 numeracy not strong enough with own skills to really teach numeracy’
- ‘too many changes, first need a PGCE then a Level 4, too much time spent on coursework’
- ‘new CPD qualifications are very demanding on time and don't take account of the wealth of experience many staff possess. The Level 4 diploma is too broad and doesn't allow tutors to identify and focus on specific areas which they consider worthwhile’
- ‘a loss of good colleagues due to not wanting to upgrade their qualifications’

***ILPs [9%]***

- ‘laborious ILPs’;
- ‘completing of an ILP with each learner’;
- ‘sometimes an over emphasis on ILP completion for short courses’;

***Materials not appropriate [9%]***

- ‘the production of resources to be used in whole class situations at very specific levels – this is a waste of materials when teaching students with a range of requirements and abilities’
- ‘not appropriate for higher level attainment learners especially work migrants’

***Learner qualifications [5%]***

- ‘the requirement to move a level per year is too demanding’
- ‘inappropriate qualifications – need to be modular’

## **Conclusion**

The analysis shows that Skills for Life teachers have more positive attitudes towards different aspects of the Skills for Life strategy if they are employed full-time, but work fewer hours, have fewer learners and do not have managerial responsibilities; in other words their workload is smaller. A clearly defined professional role, satisfaction with development opportunities, available resources, collaboration with colleagues and managerial support were all factors that had a positive influence on the teacher's perceptions of the Skills for life strategy. Also, the more information Skills for Life teachers had about the Skills for Life strategy, and the more they participated in the actual decision-making, the more they made use of all available tools.

Teachers preferred to use the Skills for Life materials and tools as a guide and repeatedly stressed that their main strength lay in their flexibility and the fact that

they could be adapted for different learners and to different teaching situations. As one teacher remarked, when talking about the core curriculum:

'I don't use it prescriptively, but when we have learners they are always initially assessed, and we do the diagnostics, etc, and then we always use the curriculum to refer to. Sometimes they have good ideas as well, and we think, "yes I will do that". It isn't a case of sticking to it to the letter. Basically you use it as background guidance really but you are guided by what the learners do in the group.' [Int40]

Teachers are appreciative of the fact that they have the opportunity to be creative and use these standardised materials in an innovative way. This observation appears to be one of the factor keys to the successful implementation of Skills for Life. More often than not, teachers working in this field are motivated by a clear sense of purpose, even moral purpose, and a commitment to social justice. If they are to function as agents of change, and agents of the social, cultural and, particularly, the, economic transformations that the government trusts Skills for Life will achieve, then they must not only feel included in the reform process, but share ownership of the reform initiatives. Retaining the power to feed a wealth of classroom experience into teaching and learning materials is one aspect of this.

In conclusion, the changes that the Skills for Life strategy has brought have contributed greatly to the professionalisation of the Skills for Life teaching workforce. To continue and to increase this impact mechanisms need to be found to give teachers more ownership of future changes and be empowered to adapt them for their teaching practice in flexible ways.

## 8. Methodology

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The Teacher Study aimed to find out who Skills for Life teachers were, what they did at work and what they thought about their job and the Skills for Life strategy. It was also designed as a longitudinal study to enable NRDC to assess how these profiles were developing.

More specifically, the Teachers Study asked:

- Who were Skills for Life teachers? In other words, what characteristics did Skills for Life teachers have in terms of gender, age, ethnic background, qualifications, work experience, and employment details? Did this teacher profile change over time? Did different types of teachers work in different kinds of Skills for Life provision?
- To what extent were teachers exposed to the new Skills for Life learning infrastructure? To what degree did they make use of it? Which parts did teachers find most beneficial, and which caused concern?
- What were the attitudes of teachers to the Skills for Life strategy? What factors shaped and explained these attitudes? How did these attitudes change over time?
- How did teachers perceive their profession and their professional identity?
- What linked the attitudes, perceptions, and behaviour of teachers?
- What were the underlying factors in teachers' decisions to leave or remain in the profession, change organisation, or type of provider?
- How did the environment in which teachers worked affect their attitudes, perceptions, and behaviour?

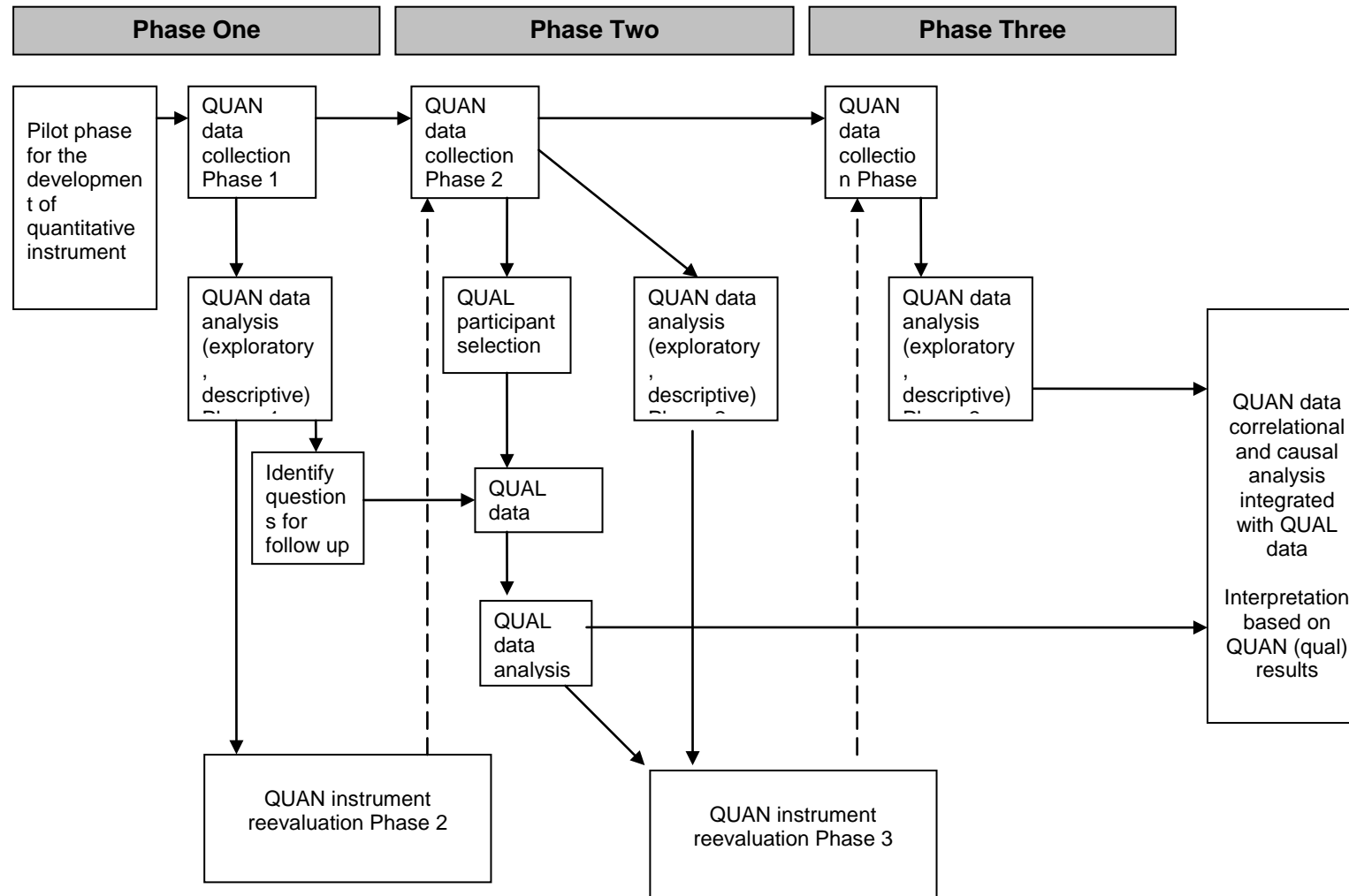
### Research design and instruments

The Teacher Study followed a mixed-method design, in that it contained both quantitative and qualitative strands. Quantitative data were gathered, via questionnaires, from the same group of respondents three times between 2004 and 2007, making the Teacher Study a longitudinal panel survey. These questionnaire data were used to build the profile of the Skills for Life workforce and the statistical models that would explain professional behaviour and attitudes. Part-way through the research programme, a sub-sample of teachers was interviewed to gather qualitative data exploring the factors that influence behaviour and attitudes and the professional choices that teachers make.

Research took place in three phases. Firstly, quantitative data were collected from the panel of Skills for Life teachers. Following preliminary descriptive analysis, the initial questionnaire was adapted and used in the second data collection phase. As the Teacher Study used a 'sequential explanatory mixed-method design' (Creswell, 1999, 2003; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007), interim results from the two questionnaires were used to develop the qualitative interview schedule and inform the selection of the sub-sample of panel respondents who were interviewed. Both quantitative and qualitative data were used to re-evaluate and redesign the third and final quantitative questionnaire. Questions were added, for example, to find out more about actual weekly working hours and

contract hours. Although the quantitative data took priority in analysis, it was important to complement these findings with data from in-depth interviews to increase interpretability and meaningfulness (see Greene, Caracelli and Graham 1989). The overall research design is summarised in Figure 8.1.

Figure 8.1: Teacher Study: Mixed methods study design



The Phase 1 questionnaire comprised of 219 questions organised into 15 sections. The second and third questionnaires consisted of 13 sections and a total of 93 questions. In these questionnaires, background scripting channeled respondents through appropriate routes and filtered them to specific questions. (So, for example, teachers who disclosed in the first questionnaire that they had gained a subject specific qualification in literacy were not asked about this qualification in the second survey.)<sup>19</sup> The majority of questions on organisational and teaching practice, on attitudes towards jobs and the Skills for Life initiatives, directed respondents to their work with their main employer in three-month period preceding the survey.

There were relatively few missing answers (item non-response) for individual questions: not more than 3% on average across the three questionnaires. The highest non-response was for income variables and some attitudinal variables, but even these had quite low non-response levels. In short, respondents answered almost all the questions where it was possible and the quality of received quantitative data was good.

The qualitative interview schedule addressed seven topics. Teachers were asked about their understanding of Skills for Life; the changes it had brought to their professional life and practice; the new qualification requirements; and the future path of the initiative. Interviewees also discussed their employment status, the hours they worked and their professional identity. Not all questions were relevant to all interviewees, and some questions were targeted to certain types of respondent.

## Research participants

The original design of the survey had called for 1500 randomly selected teachers from 245 adult education providers using six different funding streams. These organisations were to be randomly selected from a sample of 18 Learning and Skills Council areas which represented all nine English regions. Teachers were to be interviewed in the first year (2004) by Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI), and by Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) in the two subsequent years, with fieldwork carried out by the market research organisation GfK NOP.

However, it proved extremely difficult to secure the participation of organisations, managers and teachers. A number of changes were therefore made, both to the recruitment strategy and to the methods of data-gathering.<sup>20</sup> The sample became a volunteer (non-probability) sample, with a panel of 1027 Skills for Life teachers and trainers recruited using existing NRDC and other Skills for Life networks.<sup>21</sup> This panel was offered the alternative of completing the survey by filling in a web-based version: this mode of data collection proved so successful that only a web-based questionnaire was used in the second and third phases.<sup>22</sup> In Phase One

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<sup>19</sup> Since September 2007, these Level 4 qualifications have been replaced by new Additional DTLS qualifications at either Level 5 or Level 6.

<sup>20</sup> Insufficient responses to a manager questionnaire (used to gather contextual information on employing organisations) were received to allow for meaningful analysis.

<sup>21</sup> A Skills for Life teacher was defined as a teacher with responsibility for the teaching of speaking, listening, reading, writing, numeracy, or Mathematics skills at Level 2 or below of the National Qualifications Framework to adults, including those involved in embedded provision.

<sup>22</sup> Incentives were also offered to respondents, with teachers who completed the survey sent book tokens in return for their contribution to the research.



(May 2004–August 2005) there were no statistically significant differences between the key characteristics of those respondents who completed a web survey (718) and those (309 respondents) who completed face-to-face questionnaires.

A total of 755 of the Phase One teacher panel went on to complete a second web-questionnaire between May and December 2006; 560 of these respondents completed the third and final survey between April and June 2007 (see Table 8.1). As well as the quantitative data from the questionnaires, 63 teachers from the Teacher Study panel participated in in-depth telephone interviews.

**Table 8.1: Summary of the fieldwork, 2004–2007**

<b>PHASE 1:</b> May 2004 – August 2004	<b>PHASE 2:</b> May 2006 – December 2006	<b>PHASE 3:</b> April 2007 – June 2007
Quantitative web questionnaires (718 respondents) and face-face interviews (309). Total quantitative sample: 1027	Quantitative web questionnaires (755 respondents).  Qualitative structured phone interviews (63)	Quantitative web questionnaires (560 respondents).

Attrition, that is, a loss in sample size due to non-response, is a common problem in longitudinal panel surveys, as panel members move jobs and/or homes and cannot be traced, or feel no longer able to take part because of changes in their personal circumstances, or simply refuse to participate. On the Teacher Study, the attrition rate was 26% between Phases 1 and 2 and again between Phases 2 and 3. Overall, the attrition rate was 46%.

Using statistical analysis we can compare the characteristics of the teachers who participated in each fieldwork phase (see Table 8.2). The only statistically significant (yet quite small) differences were for gender and main employer type: there was a slightly higher representation of female teachers and FE teachers in the third phase compared to the original panel.

**Table 8.2: Main characteristics of teachers in Phases 1, 2 and 3**

	Phase One	Phase Two	Phase Three
Mean age	46.5	46.8	47.2
Mean experience in post-16 education [years]	9.3	9.4	9.5
Female [%]	78	79	82
Ethnicity, White British [%]	87	89	90
Full time [%]	59	58	57
Permanent [%]	78	77	77
Teach ESOL [%]^	33	34	34
Teach Literacy [%]^	71	70	70
Teach Numeracy [%]^	55	55	55
Employer: FE college [%]	72	74	76
Number of valid cases	1027	755	560

^ these categories overlap because some teachers teach more than one subject at the same time  
For comparison, information is based on categories and unweighted data from Sweep 1 only.

Looking more closely at the type of provision teachers were employed in, as Table 8.3 illustrates, the highest attrition rates were observed for teachers who worked prisons in Phase 1, followed by those who worked for Jobcentre Plus and work-based learning (WBL) providers. Although the difficulties in engaging and retaining these kinds of teachers in the study can probably be partly attributed to higher teacher turnover than in FE or community education and, in the case of offender education, access problems with the web survey, it is interesting to note that WBL and offender education have historically received poorer inspection reports than Further Education (FE) or Adult Community Learning (ACL). Furthermore, they are both areas in which government is investing large sums of money, particularly WBL through the Train to Gain programme. The difficulty in engaging teachers from these areas in the study highlights the importance of new mechanisms for making sure that these teachers are engaged in the same way as those in more mainstream sectors. Without these efforts the expectations of improvement and increased achievements in WBL may not be possible.

**Table 8.3: Attrition rates, by main employer organisation type**

Type of provider	Number of teachers in Phase One	Number of teachers in Phase Two	Attrition rates, %	Number of teachers in Phase Three	Attrition rates, % (compared to Phase Two)	Overall attrition across all Phases
FE	745	562	25	423	25	43
Prison	39	12	69	8	33	80
ACL	128	106	17	82	23	36
WBL	52	32	39	22	31	58
JCP	33	20	39	10	50	70
Learndirect	30	23	23	15	35	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>1027</b>	<b>755</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>46</b>

As recruitment and design changes meant NRDC could no longer assume that the Teacher Study panel represented the Skills for Life workforce as a whole, a later study was used to adjust the survey data to make it a representative sample. The 'Snapshot Survey' of all providers of Skills for Life, carried out by NRDC for LLUK (Carpentieri et al. 2007), collected data to establish the size of

the Skills for Life workforce and its key characteristics.<sup>23</sup> A computer software programme was used to weight target variables for age (five bands), ethnicity (six groups); mode of employment (full time, fractional, hourly paid); contract type (permanent, fixed term, casual); subject specialism (ESOL, literacy, numeracy,); and employer provider type based on the LSC classification (Further Education, Adult and Community Learning, learndirect [Ufi], and other).<sup>24</sup> The figures used throughout this report are weighted with the LLUK survey data, thus allowing the Teacher Study data to provide a statistically robust, representative picture and allow NRDC to be confident in the analysis of the Skills for Life workforce contained in this report.

Purposive sampling was used in the design of the qualitative strand: respondents were selected because of certain characteristics and not at random. NRDC considered respondents' age, gender, ethnicity, and qualifications as well as job characteristics such as where teachers worked, what subjects they taught, and the type of contract they worked on. A maximum variation sample (see Patton 1990) was used in order to maximize the range of opinions and experiences: respondents were found who could give different points of view from one another and thus avoid duplication of the same stories. According to Weiss (1994):

One argument for generalizing to a larger population from a sample chosen to maximize range depends on being able to claim that the sample included the full variety of instances that would be encountered anywhere. If we find uniformities in our sample despite our having adequately represented the range of instances, then those uniformities must be general. If we find differences among types of instance, then those differences should hold in a larger population (24).

Secondly, it was important to include some strategically important cases, such as teachers with different teaching qualifications, different employment status and so forth. Thirdly, choosing teachers based on certain criteria ensured that comparisons could be made between the opinions of different groups. Appendix A presents an overview of the qualitative sample.

## Analysis and limitations

The findings in this report are based on three stages of statistical analysis. Firstly, it uses univariate analysis, that is, statistics which describe only either the proportion or mean of the outcomes NRDC was interested in. At the next stage, bivariate analysis, variables were introduced one at a time to test which correlated with the outcome variable. Thirdly, statistical models were built using multivariate statistical models. These models were used to predict or explain variance in the outcome variable, usually, in this study, specific teacher attitudes or behaviour as a function of all the explanatory variables. Putting all the variables in the same model allows NRDC to look at the direct effect of particular factors or characteristics while holding all other constant.

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<sup>23</sup> The project was carried out for Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) by the National Research and Development Centre for adult literacy and numeracy (NRDC), the London Strategic Unit for the Skills for Life Workforce (LSU), and SQW Limited. The Snapshot Survey was carried out in October and November 2006. For a full description of this project and its findings see Carpentieri, Cara & Casey, (2007a) and Carpentieri, Cara & Casey (2007b).

<sup>24</sup> This process is known as 'iterative marginal weighting' or 'raking.' For further explanation, see Dorofeev and Grant (2006).

This report largely used two types of multivariate statistical models. Where the variable of interest was a binary variable, for example, the variable for a teacher having or not having a new Level 4 subject specialist qualification, then logistic regression was employed, using pooled data adjusted for the repeated measurements in three points in time. If the variable of interest was a continuous variable, linear regression was used, again with data from all three sweeps adjusted for repeated measurements. Analysis of change looked only at those teachers who participated in all three sweeps and only at outcomes where there was a statistically significant change over time.

The analysis in this report aimed to determine two things. Firstly, statistical significance, or how sure one can be that a difference or relationship exists. Secondly, the strength of this difference or relationship, that is, whether it was a strong, moderate, or weak relationship. Significant relationships can be strong or weak, significant differences can be large or small, and both will usually largely depend on the sample size. This report uses the word 'significance' only in its statistical sense throughout, to denote that an observation is 'probably true', that is not due to chance, and not in the sense that it is 'important'.

As this study's research objectives focus on change, a longitudinal approach allows NRDC to address issues and support methods in ways not possible with traditional cross-sectional studies that observe a single point in time. Panel studies reveal both net and gross change in attitudes and behaviour: for example, calculating not only that satisfaction with job security drops by six per cent between fieldwork sweeps, but also showing how many respondents changed their positions from dissatisfaction to satisfaction (or vice versa) and how many remained unchanged.

With panel data, researchers can control for individual observed and unobserved differences that are fixed over time, but are the same for all cases (fixed effect) as well as things that change over time, but are constant between cases (between effect). For example, fixed effects that can be measured are items such as gender, ethnicity, and the year when respondents first started teaching: fixed effects that cannot be measured could refer to underlying abilities or personality type. An example of a between effect is that Skills for Life changes over time, but influences all Skills for Life teachers. Using a combination of the two is referred to as random effect. Panel data also allows for the investigation of cause-effect processes, where events precede others in time, for example where a teacher changed their job between Phases 1 and 2, and their attitudes between Phases 2 and 3.

Some caution should be exercised over the Teacher Study findings. The strength of panel studies lies in the fact that the same sample is interviewed at different times, and this advantage diminishes as the sample size decreases. Since the variables in this study were measured over time causal inferences can be made, but there may be other variables or factors that caused certain attitudes or behaviours. For example, if the attrition rate in a panel study is high for a particular constituency, the remaining teachers might differ in regard to this variable and the variation may simply reflect this change. It is for this reason that the final statistical models looking at change in teacher attitudes or behaviour looked only at those who have participated in all three phases.

Another limitation of panel studies relates to measurements. In the first place, respondents can become primed to measurement instruments with repeated interviewing, thus making the sample atypical to the general population.

Secondly, panel studies are confined to the variables measured in the first sweep. Over the course of the research project, measurements cannot be modified as this would make it impossible to tell whether it is these measurement changes, or actual changes in attitudes and behaviour, that lead to changes in answers. New variables might emerge as important over the course of a project, but if these variables were not measured during the first sweep it is challenging to introduce them at later stages. In some cases, the Teacher Study questionnaires did introduce new variables in the second and third phases, thus losing the point of reference of any change. NRDC chose to introduce these variables due to changes in Skills for Life during the fieldwork period.

# Glossary

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**Bivariate analysis** explores the concept of association between two variables. Most often researchers are interested in the association, that is, how two variables simultaneously change together or how one influences the other.

**Coefficient/estimate (Beta) in regression** is the (regression line) slope coefficient that represents the estimated average change in the dependent variable when the independent variable increases by one unit. For example, in age coefficient (B) is 0.039 meaning that on average with each year of age a teacher's overall attitude towards SfL Strategy increases by 0.039.

**Compositional effect** – the effect of collective characteristics of properties of an organisational body on its individual members.

**'Controlling for' (variables)** means introducing different variables into statistical models to account for different factors. It makes possible holding other characteristics constant see the relationship between two variables. For example, by controlling for gender we can explore the relationship between salary and employment type separately for male and female teachers.

**Correlation** is a type of relationship between two variables. For example, there is a positive correlation between teacher's job satisfaction and their professional identity: other things being equal, more satisfied respondents have stronger professional identity than less satisfied ones. A negative correlation occurs when one thing gets smaller as another gets bigger. Correlation does not imply causality; the relationship is a two way process here.

**Cronbach's alpha** is a statistical technique used to assess the reliability (the likelihood that the same data would be collected in repeated observations) of a test or scale used in a study. A coefficient that describes how well a group of items focuses on a single idea or construct. Alpha measures the extent to which item responses obtained at the same time correlate highly with each other. The widely-accepted social science cut-off is that alpha should be 0.70 or higher for a set of items to be considered a scale, but some use 0.75 or 0.80 while others are as lenient as 0.60.

**Dependent (outcome) variable** in regression is the variable whose values are supposed to be explained by changes in the other variable (the independent or explanatory variable). Usually one regresses the dependent variable on the independent variable.

**Effect size standardised coefficients (Beta) in regression** is measured on the same scale in any regression model, with a mean of zero and a standard deviation of 1. They are then directly comparable to one another, with the largest coefficient indicating which independent variable has the greatest influence on the dependent variable. The beta coefficient represents the estimated average change in standard deviation units. So a beta coefficient of 0.5 means that every time the independent variable changes by one standard deviation, the estimated outcome variable changes by half a standard deviation, on average.

**EFL or TEFL** is (Teaching) English as a Foreign Language.

**ESOL** is English for Speakers of Other Languages.

**Factor analysis** – attempts to determine a smaller set of synthetic variables that could explain the original set is a statistical data reduction technique used to explain variability among observed random variables in terms of fewer unobserved random variables called **factors**.

**Fixed effects regression** is the model to use when you want to control for omitted variables that differ between cases but are constant over time. It lets you use the changes in the variables over time to estimate the effects of the independent variables on your dependent variable, and is the main technique used for analysis of panel data.

**Independent or Explanatory variable** in regression is the one that is supposed to "explain" the other. For example, in examining teachers' attitudes teachers' age, gender and qualifications will be explanatory variables.

**In/direct effect** – the notions of direct and indirect effects are often used informally to describe phenomena where mediating variables play an important role: an example from the Teachers Study would be indirect effect of age on employment mediated by teaching experience.

**Likert scale** is a measurement scale consisting of a series of statements usually followed by a set of response alternatives. Typically, measurements at Likert scales take on an odd number of values with a middle point, e.g. "strongly agree", "agree", "unsure", "disagree", strongly disagree. 5-point and 9-points are common Likert scales. The two ends of a Likert scale are opposites, and the middle values represent degrees in between.

**Linear regression model** is a statistical model used to depict the linear relationship of a dependent variable to one or more independent variables.

**Logistic (logit) regression** is a regression model when an outcome variable is a binary one (e.g. pass or fail; have or do not have). It is useful for looking at the probability of an event occurring as a function of other factors.

**Longitudinal data** are repeated observations on units observed over time at three or more time points. The units do not have to be the same set of people, companies, schools etc.

**LSC** is a Learning and Skills Council. There are local LSCs and a national LSC. The LSC is responsible for planning and funding high quality education and training for everyone in England other than those in universities.

**Mean (also known as average)** is the average of the scores in the population/sample. Numerically, it equals the sum of the scores divided by the number of scores.

**Median** is the middle value of a set of numbers, when they are sorted in ascending order is the value halfway through the ordered data set. 50% of data cases lie below and other 50% above. If you line five people in a row, the middle person in the middle has the median height. A median is usually a very similar number to an average, but is less misleading when a few extreme values distort the average.

**Mode** is the most frequently occurring value in a set of data.

**Multivariate analysis** involves observation and analysis of more than one variable at a time. Linear regression, factor analysis and logistic regression are all types of multivariate analysis.

**Panel longitudinal data** are repeated measures of one or more variables on the same cases (people, firms, countries etc) at three or more time periods.

**Random effects regression** if you have reason to believe that some omitted variables may be constant over time but vary between cases, and others may be fixed between cases but vary over time, then you can include both types by using.

**Regression** is a statistical method which tries to predict a dependent variable (result) by combining a number of independent variables (measures). For example, regression analysis could predict teachers' income by combining their age, gender, employment status etc.

**Regression with between effects** is the model to use when you want to control for omitted variables that change over time but are constant between cases. It allows you to use the variation between cases to estimate the effect of the omitted independent variables on your dependent variable.

**Regression correlation coefficient ( $R^2$ , R-square)** is a measure of the proportion of the variance in the values of the dependent variable explained by, or due to all the independent variables (linear relationship) in a model. It is a number between zero and one and a value close to zero suggests a poor model. Sometimes this is reported as adjusted  $R^2$ , when a correction has been made to reflect the number of variables in the equation.

**Standard deviation** is a measure of the spread or dispersion of a set of data. The larger the standard deviation, the more scattered the observations on average.

**Standard error** is the measurement of precision of your estimation, how close your estimated value is to the real data. Less precision is reflected by a larger standard error.

**Statistical significance:** is the probability that a result or outcome is larger or smaller than would be expected by chance alone. Standard scientific practice usually assumes a probability value (or p-value) of less than 1 in 20 ( $p < 0.05$ ) for statistical significance. A low p-value (usually less than 0.05) shows that the results of a research study are due to the independent variable/s rather than chance factors. Large values for p suggest that group difference may be due to chance, so that in reality, there is a strong probability that no differences exist between the groups. It is important to remember that just because an analysis revealed statistical significance; it does not necessarily imply practical significance or importance.

**Suppression** is defined as "a variable which increases the predictive validity of another variable (or set of variables) by its inclusion in a regression equation. Basically this means that instead of the drop that you would see from the direct effect of the treatment on the outcome when the mediator is introduced, the opposite happens. The inclusion of the mediating variable into the equation increases the relation between the treatment and outcome rather accounts for (decreases in terms of the size of the statistical relation).



**Univariate analysis** – explores and describes each variable separately using proportion, mean, median, mode statistics.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A: Overview of qualitative interviewees

<b>Interviewee 2</b>							
<b>Age Band</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Sector</b>	<b>Main subject</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Contract Type</b>
40–49	female	White British	SE	FE	Numeracy	Fractional	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 3</b>							
50–59	female	Any other	London	FE	ESOL	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 4</b>							
40–49	female	White British	EM	FE	Literacy	Fractional	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 5</b>							
Under 30	female	White British	YH	ACL	Literacy	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 6</b>							
30–39	male	White British	London	FE	ESOL	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 7</b>							
50–59	female	White British	NW	FE	Literacy	Fractional	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 8</b>							
Under 30	female	White British	NW	FE	Numeracy	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 9</b>							
40–49	female	White British	NE	FE	Numeracy	Fractional	Fixed-term
<b>Interviewee 10</b>							
30–39	female	Any other	London	FE	ESOL	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 11</b>							
40–49	female	White British	NE	FE	Numeracy	Fractional	Fixed-term
<b>Interviewee 12</b>							
50–59	male	White British	NE	FE	Numeracy	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 13</b>							
50–59	male	White British	London	FE	ESOL	Fractional	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 14</b>							
50–59	female	White British	NW	FE	Numeracy	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 15</b>							
40–49	female	Asian or Asian British	WM	FE	ESOL	Fractional	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 16</b>							
40–49	male	White British	SE	FE	ESOL	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 17</b>							
40–49	female	Black or	London	FE	ESOL	Hourly	Permanent

		Black British				paid	
<b>Interviewee 18</b>							
50–59	female	White British	YH	FE	ESOL	Full-time	Fixed-term
<b>Interviewee 19</b>							
Under 30	female	White British	NW	FE	Literacy	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 20</b>							
40–49	male	Any other	London	FE	Literacy	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 21</b>							
60 and over	female	Any other	London	FE	Numeracy	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 22</b>							
50–59	male	White British	London	FE	Literacy	Fractional	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 23</b>							
40–49	female	Any other	YH	FE	ESOL	Fractional	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 24</b>							
40–49	female	Asian or Asian British	EM	FE	ESOL	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 25</b>							
50–59	female	White British	SE	FE	Literacy	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 26</b>							
40–49	female	Black or Black British	London	FE	Literacy	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 27</b>							
60 and over	female	White British	EE	FE	Numeracy	Fractional	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 28</b>							
40–49	female	White British	NW	FE	Numeracy	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 29</b>							
Under 30	male	Asian or Asian British	London	FE	Numeracy	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 31</b>							
30–39	female	White British	EM	FE	ESOLy	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 32</b>							
30–39	male	White British	YH	FE	ESOL	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 33</b>							
40–49	female	Black or Black British	WM	FE	Numeracy	Hourly paid	Fixed-term
<b>Interviewee 34</b>							
50–59	female	White British	NE	ACL	Literacy	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 35</b>							
50–59	male	White British	YH	ACL	Numeracy	Hourly paid	Casual

<b>Interviewee 36</b>							
60 and over	female	White British	NW	FE	Literacy	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 37</b>							
40–49	female	White British	London	ACL	ESOL	Hourly paid	Fixed-term
<b>Interviewee 38</b>							
50–59	female	White British	SW	FE	Other	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 39</b>							
30–39	male	White British	NE	FE	ESOL	Hourly paid	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 40</b>							
40–49	female	White British	NE	FE	Literacy	Hourly paid	Temporary
<b>Interviewee 41</b>							
30–39	female	White British	SW	FE	ESOL	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 42</b>							
40–49	female	Asian or Asian British	London	FE	Literacy	Fractional	Casual
<b>Interviewee 43</b>							
30–39	male	Asian or Asian British	NW	WBL	Numeracy	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 44</b>							
50–59	female	White British	SW	WBL	Literacy	Fractional	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 45</b>							
30–39	female	White British	YH	ACL	ESOL	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 46</b>							
40–49	female	Black or Black British	WM	WBL	Literacy	Full-time	Fixed-term
<b>Interviewee 47</b>							
40–49	male	Any other	London	FE	ESOL	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 48</b>							
40–49	male	White British	WM	FE	ESOL	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 49</b>							
50–59	female	White British	NW	ACL	ESOL	Fractional	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 50</b>							
50–59	female	White British	SE	ACL	Literacy	Hourly paid	Fixed-term
<b>Interviewee 51</b>							
30–39	female	Any other	London	FE	ESOL	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 52</b>							
30–39	male	Any other	YH	ACL	Other	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 53</b>							



Under 30	male	Any other	WM	ACL	ESOL	Hourly paid	Fixed-term
<b>Interviewee 54</b>							
50-59	female	White British	NW	WBL	Numeracy	Hourly paid	Fixed-term
<b>Interviewee 55</b>							
30-39	male	White British	SE	WBL	Other	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 56</b>							
50-59	female	White British	NW	JCP	Literacy	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 57</b>							
30-39	male	Black or Black British	YH	JCP	ESOL	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 58</b>							
30-39	female	White British	NW	JCP	Numeracy	Hourly paid	Casual
<b>Interviewee 59</b>							
40-49	male	White British	YH	Prison	Numeracy	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 60</b>							
40-49	female	Any other	NW	learndirect	Other	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 61</b>							
50-59	female	White British	SE	Prison	Literacy	Fractional	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 62</b>							
30-39	male	White British	London	learndirect	ESOL	Full-time	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 63</b>							
40-49	female	White British	EM	learndirect	Numeracy	Fractional	Permanent
<b>Interviewee 64</b>							
40-49	female	White British	SW	learndirect	Numeracy	Full-time	Permanent

**Key to Regions:**

EE	East England
EM	East Midlands
NE	North England
NW	North West
SE	South East
SW	South West
YH	Yorkshire and Humberside

## Appendix B: Teacher Attitude Scales

**Table B.1 Descriptive statistics of Skills for Life teachers' attitudes, all data included**

	Range	Mean	SD
1. Skills for Life Curricula and other initiatives	0–36	19.91	6.48
2. New Skills for Life teacher qualifications	0–16	7.91	3.60
3. National tests and learner morale	0–16	8.98	2.47
4. Inspections / quality assurance	0–16	8.50	2.83
5. Validity of assessment	0–20	10.27	3.81
6. Use of Skills for Life infrastructure	0–20	9.77	4.06

### 1. Skills for Life Curricula and other initiatives

1. The *Skills for Life* curricula give me confidence in what I am doing
2. The *Skills for Life* curricula have helped me improve my teaching
3. The *Skills for Life* curricula enable me to be innovative and creative
4. The *Skills for Life* curricula have helped me expand the range of teaching techniques I use
5. *Skills for Life* initiatives have enabled providers to attract more learners from hard-to-reach social groups.
6. *Skills for Life* development opportunities make teachers feel valued.
7. *Skills for Life* initiatives have rendered the teaching of adult literacy, ESOL, and numeracy more interesting as a job.
8. I am not convinced that *Skills for Life* brings down barriers to learning. (reverse item)
9. The new core curricula take proper account of the needs of lower ability learners.

### 2. New Skills for Life teacher qualifications

- i. Teachers with a new Level 4 qualification will be better prepared to deal with the realities of teaching adults with poor literacy or numeracy skills.
- ii. The new qualification requirements for teaching adult literacy, ESOL or numeracy are driving many excellent teachers out of the profession. (reverse item)
- iii. The new Level 4 qualifications for teachers of adult literacy, ESOL, and numeracy will fill important knowledge gaps.
- iv. The new qualification requirements for teaching adult literacy, ESOL or numeracy undermine the employability of many experienced teachers. (reverse item)

### 3. National tests and learner morale

- i. Standardised tests motivate learners to attend and study.
- ii. National tests deter adults from enrolling into programmes. (reverse item)
- iii. National tests increase the self-esteem of disaffected people.
- iv. Adult learners find national tests daunting. (reverse item)

#### 4. Inspections/ quality assurance

- i. There is always a hidden agenda in external inspections. (reverse item)
- ii. The judgements of external inspectors are objective.
- iii. I do not have any hesitation in trusting the knowledge and experience of external inspectors.
- iv. External inspections contribute to raising standards of teaching.

#### 5. Validity of Assessment

- i. No doubt, the new entry-level qualifications take proper account of the needs of individual learners.
- ii. There is a good match between the new core curricula and the national tests.
- iii. I'm satisfied with the range of questions in adult literacy and numeracy tests.
- iv. National literacy and numeracy tests are a valid measure of someone's skills and abilities.
- v. I don't have much confidence in a test that is based on multiple-choice format questions. (reverse item)

#### 6. Use of Skills for Life infrastructure

- i. In the last three months, how many of your learners have been assessed using the *Skills for Life* diagnostic assessment tools?
- ii. In the last three months, how often have you referred to the Individual Learning Plans of your learners in planning your sessions?
- iii. And how much have you relied on the *Skills for Life* adult core curricula and the pre-entry curriculum framework in planning your teaching?
- iv. How much have you relied on *Access for All* when planning your teaching?
- v. How often have you used the new *Skills for Life* learning materials?

### **Validity of assessment**

Teachers who were more positive about the validity of assessment:

- were more likely to be male [insignificant when main subject is entered into the models]
- had less teaching experience
- had no managerial experience
- had been with their main employer for a shorter time
- were on full-time contracts but contracted to work fewer hours [insignificant when experience and tenure are entered into the models]
- tended to work for 'other' types of provider, as opposed to FE colleges and ACL providers
- had literacy as their main teaching subject compared to ESOL teachers, but literacy teachers were more negative than those who selected numeracy or non-Skills for Life subjects.
- had a clearer professional role
- were more satisfied with their development opportunities and available resources.

Managerial support without available resources has a negative rather than positive effect on teacher attitudes.

## Appendix C: National Qualifications and Framework (NQF) Framework for Higher Education (FHEQ)

National Qualifications Framework (NQF)		Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
Previous levels (and examples)	Current levels (and examples)	
5  Level 5 NVQ in Construction Management † Level 5 Diploma in Translation	8 Specialist awards  7 Level 7 Diploma in Translation	D (doctoral) Doctorates  M (masters) Masters degrees, postgraduate certificates and diplomas
4  Level 4 NVQ in Advice and Guidance † Level 4 National Diploma in Professional Production Skills Level 4 BTEC Higher National Diploma in 3D Design Level 4 Certificate in Early Years	6  Level 6 National Diploma in Professional Production Skills	H (honours)  Bachelor degrees, graduate certificates and diplomas
	5  Level 5 BTEC Higher National Diploma in 3D Design	I (intermediate)  Diplomas of higher education and further education, foundation degrees and higher national diplomas
	4 Level 4 Certificate in Early Years	C (certificate) Certificates of higher education
3 Level 3 Certificate in Small Animal Care Level 3 NVQ in Aeronautical Engineering A levels		
2 Level 2 Diploma for Beauty Specialists Level 2 NVQ in Agricultural Crop Production GCSEs Grades A*–C		
1 Level 1 Certificate in Motor Vehicle Studies Level 1 NVQ in Bakery GCSEs Grades D–G		
Entry  Entry Level Certificate in Adult Literacy		

† Revised levels are not currently being implemented for NVQs at levels 4 and 5

Source: National Qualifications Framework fact sheet. <http://www.qca.org.uk/libraryAssets/media/qca-06-2298-nqf-web.pdf>; accessed 18 December 2007]