



# Survey of Teacher Trainees' Satisfaction in Learning & Skills ITT

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# SWitch: Member sectors

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- **Adult & Community Learning**
  - **Awarding Bodies**
    - **FE Colleges**
  - **Higher Education Institutions**
- **Voluntary & Community Sector**
  - **Work-based Learning**
- **Network & Support Organisations**





# What do we know about the FE based teaching workforce?

According to Lifelong Learning UK's Staff Individualised Records (SIR) data (2006/07):

- SW FE institutions included: 27 general colleges, 2 sixth forms, 4 specialist colleges
- 59% of teaching workforce are female, 41% male
- 65% of female teachers and 49% of males are part time (SW overall: 68.2% part time / 31.8% full time)
- Average ages for female teachers = 43.9 years, for males = 46.1 years
- Average SW full time FE teaching salary in 2006/07: £24,948.35 (bottom of table for English regions)



# SWitch baseline report: trainees in SW partner institutions 2004/06

- 22% were pursuing HE courses, 73% FE-based courses, and 5% in ACL. Almost all (89%) of HEI candidates were on full time courses, with this reversed for FE/ACL sectors where all candidates were part time
- In HEIs 34% of candidates were taking PGCEs and 66% Cert Eds; for FE candidates, 30% were following (previous) Level 3 courses and 62% Level 4; for ACL, the respective split was 47% and 53%
- The gender split in HEI candidates was 69% female and 31% male; in FE, 63%/37%; in ACL, 70%/30%
- Across the three sectors surveyed the age range was older than equivalent cohorts in other regions, with the majority of students aged 31-50 and the largest single group 40-44. 19% of learners were over 50 compared to 15% nationally.



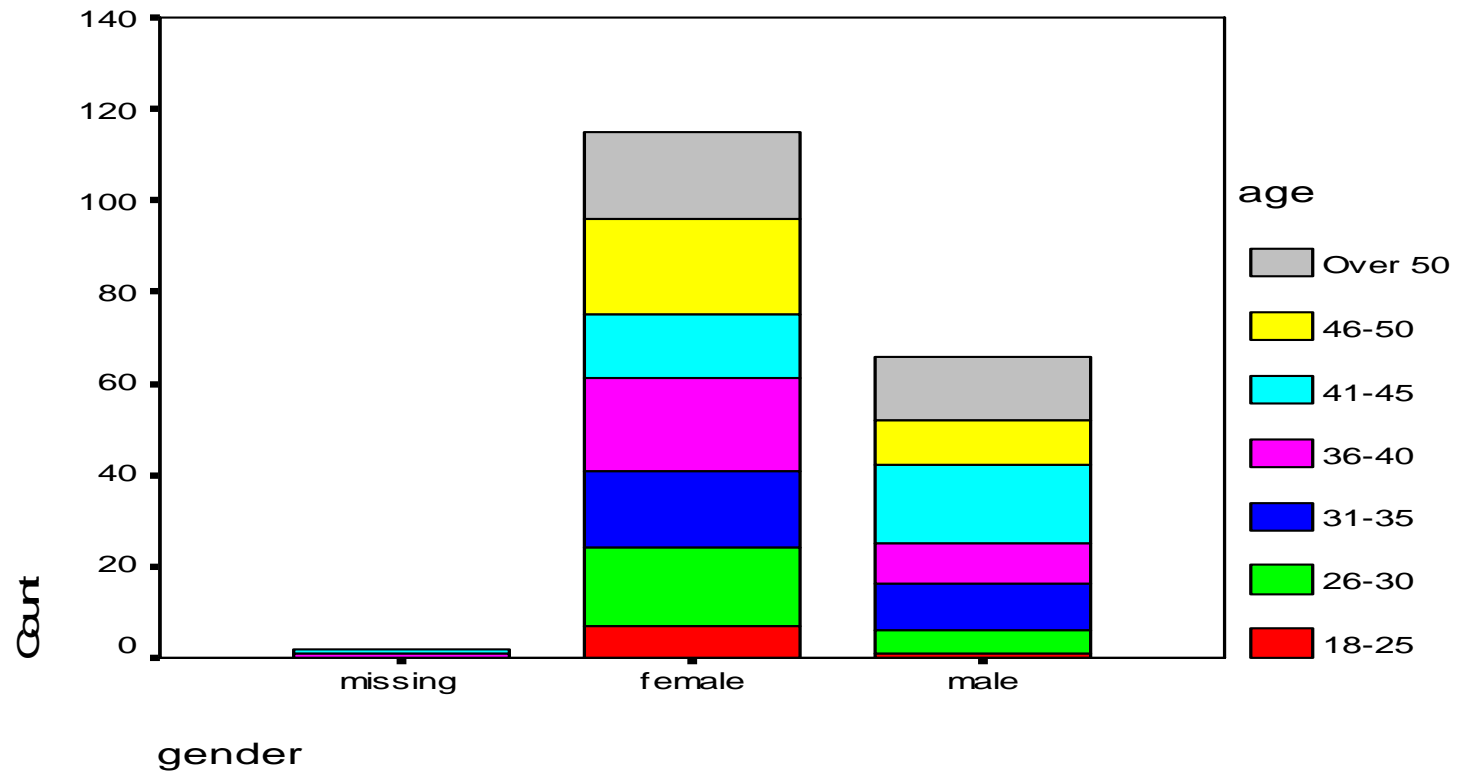
# SWitch interim report: trainees in SW partner institutions 2007/08

- 81% of respondents were pursuing Cert Ed/PGCE courses in HE or FE sectors, with the highest number of males in FE. Only 11% of respondents were on full time courses
- PTLLS represented the next largest proportion (13%) of new courses reported across most sectors and like CTLLS were widely spread. DTLLS were less available generally, and mainly in HE/FE institutions
- Across all sectors surveyed the age range was older than in the baseline report: only 16% aged under 30, with 52% over 40 and 33% over 50 - the largest single group reporting. The majority of trainees in the WBL, P&V and ACL sectors were over 40

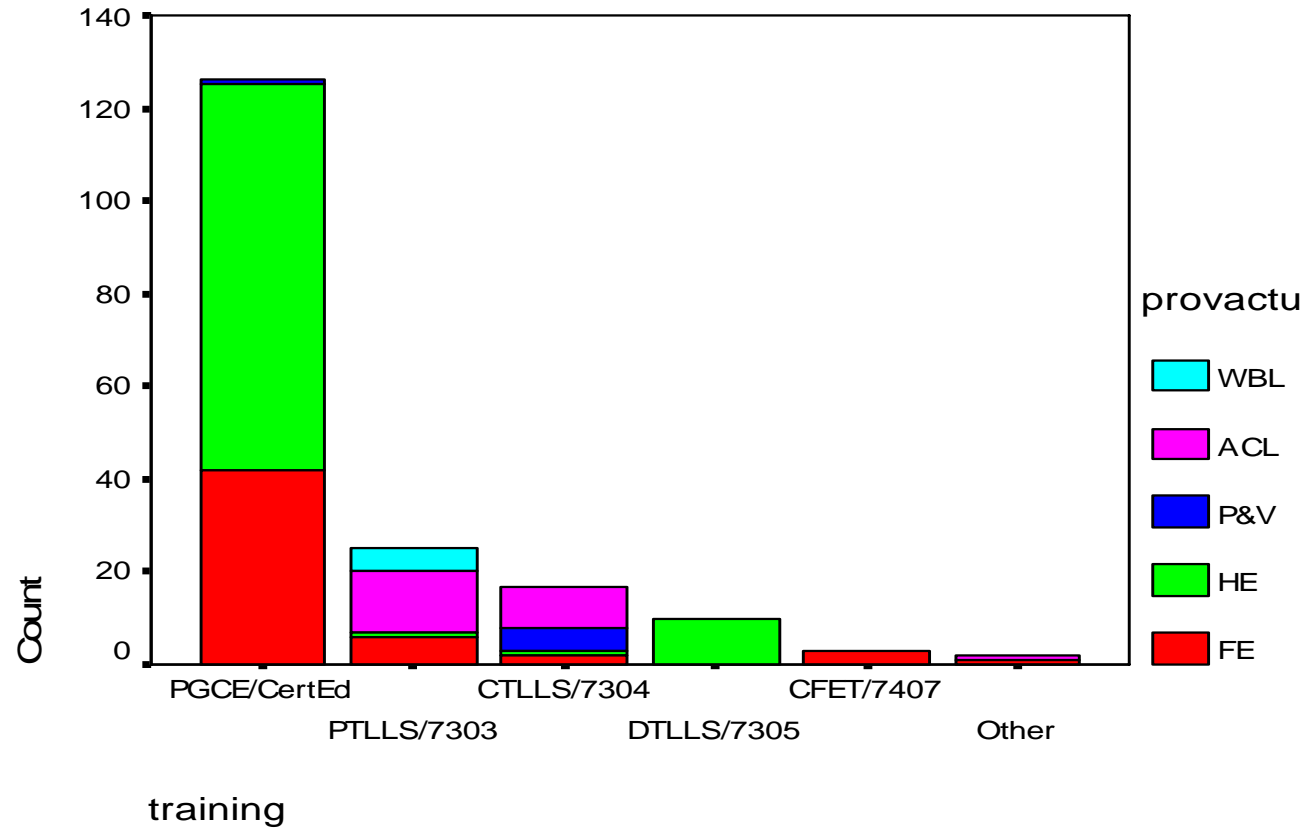
# Interim survey trainees: age/gender

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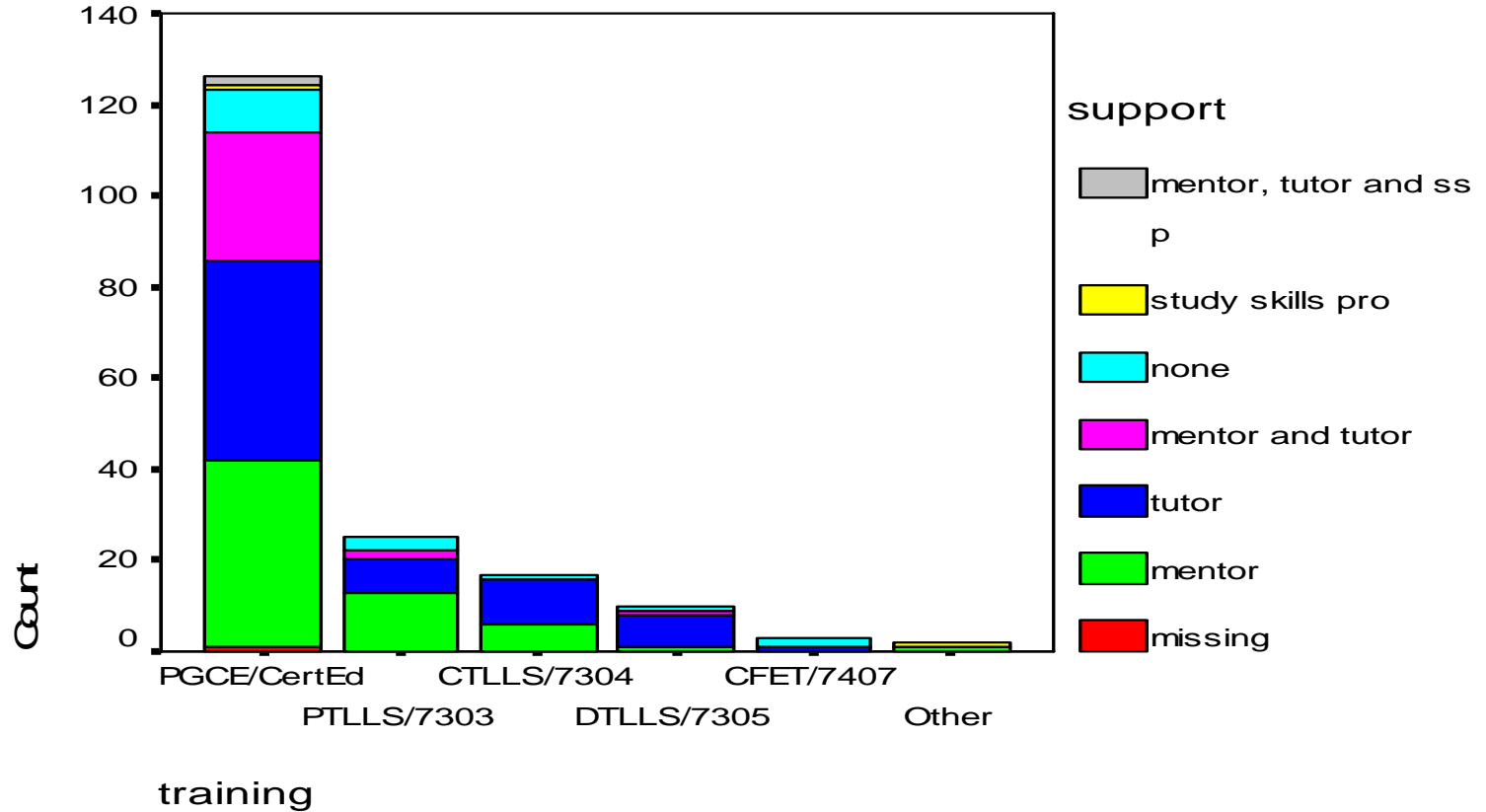
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# Interim survey trainees: course by sector



# Models of support by course





## Interim survey findings – quantitative data

- 80% of respondents considered support received to be at least ‘fairly appropriate’. There is no consistent recruitment pattern for mentors: some are line managers, many are colleagues, some were arranged by trainees and others by course tutors.
- 82% of respondents felt courses were ‘fairly’ or ‘highly relevant’; 86% also found them ‘fairly’ or ‘highly challenging’. 58% of 46-50 year old respondents found courses ‘highly challenging’.
- Almost 50% found courses ‘fairly creative’, but only 16% ‘highly creative’.
- Nearly all (89%) thought the formal requirements of the training to be founded on real world practice, with the highest ratings amongst over 50s. 76% found courses generally manageable.
- Strikingly, many respondents were unclear in which sector they were undertaking their training.



# Interim survey: qualitative findings (1)

Trainees' expectations were coloured by

- Incoming job requirements for the L&S sector
- Career changes and professional development, including pay rises
- Enhanced quality and effectiveness of practice
- Preparation to return to work / updating skills
- Peer interaction and exchange of practice

Trainees' motivations included

- Opportunities to progress and formally validate experience
- Incorporating underpinning theory and new methodologies into practice
- 'People reasons' - team and group work, sharing experiences, access to skilled observation for improvement of techniques



## Interim survey: qualitative findings (2)

### Trainees' anxieties included

- Mid to late career learning, including theoretical coursework and academic study skills
- Practicalities of juggling work/life commitments, with uncertain practical requirements and time availability an additional worry
- Unfamiliar performance and quality standards
- Micro-teaching and peer observation
- Lack of availability of course information to clarify expectations
- Concerns re a 'paper exercise' to satisfy legislation only
- No real relevance nor acknowledgement of experience for older trainees
- Overly theoretical, generalist approaches tuned more to HE/FE contexts than more specialist voluntary/work based sectors
- Additional time needed for mentoring support, reflection and research
- 'Bedding in' time for a newly developed course framework



## Interim survey: qualitative findings (3)

Suggestions for changes - responses across sectors included:

- **WBL:** *“too early on in the course to say (only had a couple of sessions)”*
- **VCS:** *“greater clarity re assignment timings and requirements ... enjoying the duality of being trained and training at the same time”*
- **ACL:** *“cut down on the number of short assignments, and the reliance on paperwork, forms ... childish to have to complete so many short assignments on an eleven week course”*
- **HE/FE:** *“For people starting this year the course has already been changed significantly, to include much more practical help, eg, voice projection, class management. ... it would be nice to get a pay rise at the end. If the government are ‘making’ us do it we should automatically get some ‘reward’. Some colleges do this, mine doesn’t.”*



# Qualitative telephone survey – rationale

- **Second follow-up survey conducted by telephone interviews in October 2008**
- **Selected sample of up to 20 participants from earlier survey according to: age, gender, level of course, SWitch provider sector, geography**
- **Aim of survey is to obtain biographical details from trainee respondents and deepen understanding of their experiences whilst on SWitch courses**
- **We are aiming to interpret how their education and employment backgrounds prior to SWitch coloured their survey responses**
- **Of particular interest is how their perceptions of courses will have changed since their initial impressions in the interim report, what they did next and how they now view their professional identities as teachers.**



# Qualitative telephone survey – questions for respondents

- How did you manage the work life balance: were you working / studying full- or part-time?
- When did your course finish and where are you working now?
- What was the best part of the course for you? The least?
- How has your course experience prepared you for practice now? Has it informed or improved your teaching practice?
- Has your sense of yourself as a teacher shifted by the end of the course?
- What does it mean for you, personally and professionally, to be regarded as a qualified teacher in the Learning & Skills sector?
- Looking back now that the course is complete, what changes would you make?



# Qualitative findings – trainees' disposition to learn

- Trainees' initial confidence and disposition to learn affects perceptions, but many have gained in confidence throughout course. Good study habits from experienced learners help them cope with workload
- Trainees have generally benefited through enhanced professional identity as teachers, and some have already been promoted. However, others feel they have been left 'high and dry' - particularly those who are self-funding and wanting to teach in the sector for the first time
- Background experiences and expectations colour outlook for future – and how course was experienced
- More experienced trainees with established professional identities in other occupations are most disappointed with quality of training, added value to existing practice and transferability of qualification



## Qualitative findings – course structure and support

- Many candidates agree that assignment requirements (for PTLLS L4) are mismatched to course, requiring degree level depth but with insufficient word count - this may be revised for future cohorts
- Work life balance was not as much of a challenge as at first anticipated. Micro teaching was also better understood once trainees had come to grips with it; some would have preferred more in practice with less theory
- Trainees appreciate employers', tutors and peer support. The quality of support – peer (informal) or tutor (formal) - can make or break the training
- Post course support is ad hoc in many cases, and there are suggestions that ACL support is underdeveloped
- In many cases candidates have continued to train as they understand all courses need to be completed by 2010. Some training employers have insisted on qualifications for continuing employment contracts; others have been very supportive
- Course theory and learning styles were well regarded, on the whole. Many reported that they had successfully put theory into practice



# Qualitative findings – qualification value and progression

- Links between PTLLS and other qualifications (new and existing) are unclear - although processes have bedded in, their market value has not. Many trainees would like to have bypassed CTLLS/DTLLS and gone directly into Cert Ed – perceived as better established
- Are PTLLS being mis-sold as a ‘standalone’ qualification? Course and careers advice for trainees is still very patchy, which leads to lack of clarity. Programme requirements for IfL accreditation remain unclear
- Few providers yet offer a seamless PTLLS/CTLLS/DTLLS progression. Dual provision can lead to inconsistent quality of course experience and advice
- Perceived difference in employment value between sectors colours trainee expectations of courses, progression and employment. Implicit hierarchy: ‘leisure’ courses not as valued as ‘qualification’ courses by employers. ACL trainees with hard won expertise can feel excluded
- Yet diverse cohorts of trainees support and have benefited from professionalising the post compulsory sector, improving parity of esteem
- Not all bad news – reflecting back, many trainees spoke of their engagement with the course, new ideas, working with people from different disciplines and backgrounds as a positive experience.



# Qualitative findings – trainees' voices

- *Best bits of PTLLS were the opportunity to work with other people “discussing what you could put into your assignments, what other people’s ideas and opinions were, step by step”*
- *“a certain loss of focus in the unnecessary minutiae [of paperwork] and lack of clarity re IFI and membership funding”*
- *“go back to the drawing board .. it needs to be a route [into teaching] that is easy to understand”*
- *“assignments were very specific to outcomes, you could tailor them to your own interests”*
- *“now I use [lesson plans] all the time, it opens your eyes .. before going to that type of classroom environment, you know people learn in different ways .. [before] I couldn’t have put labels on that but can now .. I’ve done more research into teaching and training, got more books out .. [a lot of it] was completely new, I have learnt quite a lot”*
- *“qualification made me re-negotiate my job description, given me more money too ... It’s about learning isn’t it”*

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