

IMPACT REPORT

2019–2020

ETFFOUNDATION.CO.UK

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Welcome to the Education and Training Foundation's first annual Impact Report

I am pleased to present the Education and Training Foundation's (ETF's) first annual Impact Report, for the 2019-20 financial year, based on independent analysis by SQW economic and social development consultants.

Building on the 2019-20 Public Benefit Report, it draws together evidence of the impact of the ETF's workforce development programmes, focussing on changes to professional practice, organisational performance, and learner outcomes. This is a new approach for the ETF, and it marks a milestone in the use of evidence to inform ETF programme development.

Since 2013, the ETF has worked to make a real difference to the Further Education (FE) and Training sector through the professional development of leaders, teachers and trainers in England. Everything we do is for the benefit of learners. This principle drives all our activity and sits at the heart of the strategic objectives that structure this report.

To achieve our strategic objectives, we work collaboratively with the Government, our partners, colleges and training providers and stakeholders. Our offer is characterised by a distinctive dual approach: development of professionals' skills, knowledge and understanding; and development of professional communities through research, collaboration, and networks. When harnessed with evidence-based programme design and delivery, this dynamic dualism has the potential to strengthen quality and effectiveness across the FE and Training system.

In the 12 months covered by this report, the ETF has:

- offered professional development opportunities throughout England
- achieved consistently high participant satisfaction feedback
- supported research practice, collaboration and dissemination
- influenced quality improvement and organisational development
- given professionals the courage and confidence to excel.

I am very proud of what we have achieved, working with our partners and the FE and Training sector.

Our work is even more relevant today as we face the compound challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, economic recovery, social inequality, and climate crisis. We continue to support the sector workforce as it rises to meet these challenges in the years ahead.

I hope you enjoy learning about the impact the ETF has achieved. If you would like to know more, please look up www.etfoundation.co.uk or email enquiries@etfoundation.co.uk so we can continue the conversation.

Thank you for your continuing support.



David Russell is the Chief Executive of the Education and Training Foundation

Executive summary

This report assesses the impact of workforce development programmes for the FE and Training sector delivered by the ETF in financial year 2019-20.

It asks the question: to what extent did the ETF deliver its strategic objectives? Independent SQW analysis of evaluation reports, management reports and performance data for two dozen workforce development programmes shows these objectives have been delivered. The report also recommends areas for improvement.

The ETF workforce development offer is characterised by a dual approach: the development of skills, knowledge and understanding by participating professionals; and community development through engagement with professional networks and collaborative projects. This dynamic dualism has the potential to contribute to profound and sustained impact across the sector.

Capturing impact evidence is challenging. The ETF's evaluation practice is evolving to strengthen the evidence base and maximise the impact of its workforce development programmes. In 2019-20, the ETF commissioned programme evaluations based on the COM-B and Kirkpatrick evaluation frameworks focused on understanding how programme participation affects programme participants. These reports and the associated evidence listed in the report annexes generated the following findings.

The ETF helps the sector to **grow** its teaching workforce by increasing the number of expert and talented entrants and expanding membership of the Society for Education and Training (SET). Recruitment programmes help organisations fill teaching vacancies, meet new recruits' employment needs, and improve their teaching skills, knowledge, and confidence. As the professional body of the ETF, the SET provides resources and development opportunities for its members, with growing numbers completing Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status and Advanced Teacher Status (ATS).

The ETF enhances sector **leadership** capacity and capability by developing diversity in senior leadership, building the leadership capacity of middle managers, securing the senior leadership pipeline, and strengthening college governance. Leaders improve their leadership skills, knowledge and understanding, and develop the confidence and motivation to implement change. Managers value professional development, develop leadership knowledge and strategic thinking, and become more confident to introduce organisational change. Chairs and governors value professional development, become more knowledgeable and confident, and provide more effective governance for their organisations.

ETF practitioner research programmes provide experience and insight to **inform** decision making. Practitioner researchers value professional development, develop research skills and knowledge, innovate, develop their careers, and disseminate evidence-based practice. Practitioner research leads to quality improvement, enables research cultures to grow, and benefits learners and the sector.

ETF workforce development programmes respond to practitioners' needs and **develop** their capability to excel in teaching and training. Practitioners develop knowledge and skills and improve practice, lead improvement in their organisations, develop their careers, improve teaching quality, and enable learner retention, progression and achievement. They value peer networks and sharing learning within their organisations and through professional exchanges across the sector.

As a learning organisation that supports self-improvement, the ETF is committed to strengthening its evaluation practice in line with the evidence-based recommendations presented in this report. This means demonstrating how workforce development improves professional practice, organisational performance and learner outcomes. The ETF aims to support transformational change in the FE and Training system. The ETF's evaluation practice is evolving to match this ambition, by building evidence-based rationales for programme development, collecting high-quality programme management information, embedding evaluation in programme design, delivery and participation, adopting a theory of change approach, and publishing programme evaluation findings and recommendations.

1. Introduction: capturing impact

Introduction

- 1.1** The Public Benefit Report 2019-20 published by the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) provided an account of the range and scale of ETF activities that support governors, leaders, managers, teachers and trainers in the Further Education (FE) and Training sector. This impact report, based on commissioned analysis conducted by SQW, develops its themes further by drawing together evidence of the impact of this collective activity, on professional practice, organisational development and learner outcomes.
- 1.2** This report asks the question: to what extent did the ETF deliver its strategic objectives in 2019-20? The body of the report provides a synthesis of impact evidence for each strategic objective drawn from evaluations, management reports and performance data for two dozen workforce development programmes. It concludes with an assessment of the challenges involved in demonstrating impact and recommends ways to strengthening the ETF's impact evaluation practice.

Strategic priorities

- 1.3** The ETF believes that the key to improving education and training is to support teachers and their leaders to excel. The ETF's vision is to achieve:
- Highly effective, professionally confident teachers and trainers
 - First class leadership of the sector
 - FE positioned as the career of choice for ambitious professionals who wish to make a difference.

- 1.4** In 2019-20, the ETF had four outward-facing strategic objectives to achieve this vision:
- Grow** the sector's membership body (number of members), professional statuses and high-quality new entrants
 - Lead** and enhance the sector's leadership capacity and capability
 - Inform** decision-makers with data, experience and insights
 - Develop** the workforce's capability to excel in teaching and training.

These external strategic objectives are supported by the ETF's fifth internally facing objective:

- Evolve:** evolve the ETF to take new opportunities and respond to key challenges.

Conceptualising impact

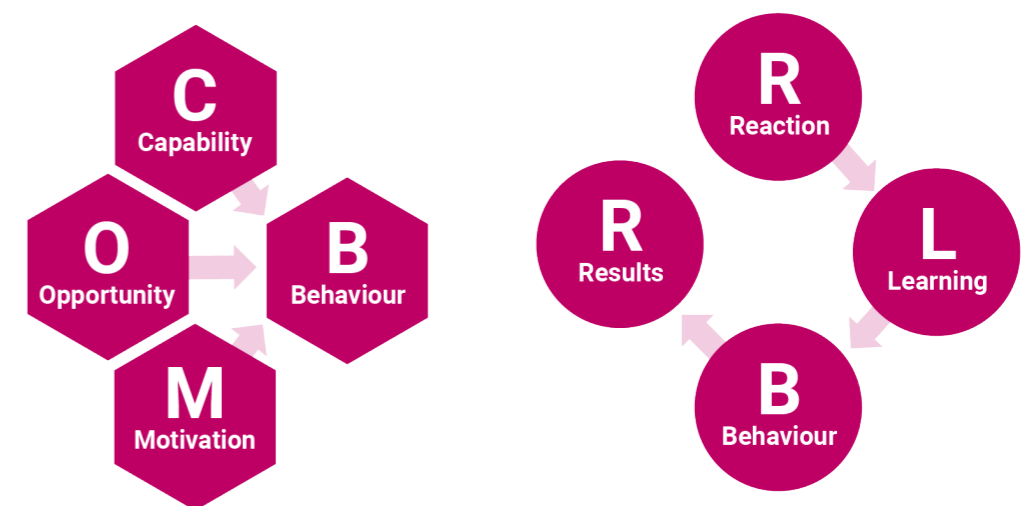
- 1.5** Impact occurs in the space between delivering successful programmes that achieve their objectives and the realisation of strategic vision. Conceptualising impact, articulating it and then designing tools to measure it is not straightforward. For example, successful leadership development programmes can be measured in terms of programme **outputs** (how many leaders have enhanced leadership skills) and programme **outcomes** (how leaders have applied their enhanced leadership skills to improve organisational performance). The **impact** of organisational performance improvements resulting from leadership development will be experienced by the organisation's wider workforce, the learners they teach, train, assess and support, and other sector stakeholders in myriad ways, including a more satisfied workforce, greater capacity to meet challenges, organisational sustainability and resilience, and so on. Ultimately the **vision** of the ETF is that successful leadership development programmes will create first-class leadership for the sector. Any investigation of impact therefore needs to consider evidence linking programme outputs to outcomes and impact, and the various routes to impact that ETF programmes support.

- 1.6** This approach aligns with the COM-B and Kirkpatrick frameworks which are integral to ETF evaluations commissioned during 2019-20. All programme evaluations included in this report have used these frameworks to consider the context of the programme and participants' experiences of it.
- The COM-B framework¹ identifies three factors that need to be present to affect behaviour change: **capability, opportunity, and motivation**. These factors interact as part of a dynamic system that can create a set of mutually reinforcing conditions that create the conditions for participants' behaviour change.
 - The Kirkpatrick² model is designed specifically for assessing the impact of training interventions. It adopts a linear approach for assessing progressive impact at four levels: participants' **reaction** to the programme; the learning participants acquire during the programme; the application of this **learning** in participants' **behaviour** at work; and the **results** (targeted outcomes) obtained from these behaviour changes.

- 1.7** When used together, the COM-B and Kirkpatrick frameworks can demonstrate the conditions needed for participants' behaviour change (COM-B) and the programme effects on individual participants (Kirkpatrick). Both models can be developed and adapted to broaden the scope of behaviour change to include collective behaviours (for example of leadership or teaching) and to assess both direct, indirect, or longer-term results (for example on potential teacher recruits or learner outcomes). For the purposes of ETF programme evaluations, the frameworks generally have been applied to understanding how participation affects individual programme participants.

Figure 1-1: Key components of the ETF evaluation approach

COM-B and Kirkpatrick evaluation frameworks



1. Michie, S., van Stralen, M. M. and West, R. (2011) The behaviour change wheel: A new method for characterising and designing behaviour change interventions, Implementation Science, vol 6:4.

2. See <https://www.kirkpatrickpartners.com/>

Evidencing impact

- 1.8** The ETF have partnered with SQW who provided an objective review of ETF evidence for programme impact. SQW delivered a comprehensive analysis of 22 different programmes (see Annex A). The evidence they reviewed comprises independent evaluation reports, internal project management data reports anonymised dataset summaries and other ETF management reports. SQW reviewed a total of 40 documents and data sets for programmes delivered between 2019-20 for this report (see Annex C).
- 1.9** The overall quality of data for evidencing programme impact was variable. In some cases, programmes were not evaluated, therefore information related mostly to uptake of workforce development opportunities. In others impact was difficult to capture because the programmes and their evaluations operated within short timescales governed by annual grant funding. The quality of each data source was rated red, amber or green (RAG), and only those that offered a good standard of objective information were analysed (see Annex B).
- 1.10** All qualitative documents in the analysis were systematically coded to structure the impact narrative which forms the core of this report. Qualitative software was used to handle the high volume of data. Every document was reviewed within MaxQDA software and coded to a pre-determined system that aimed to capture all aspects of the routes to impact as well as any reported impacts themselves.³ Insights from the coding exercise were triangulated with quantitative programme management data and programme surveys where available.
- 1.11** The report presents short case study excerpts from key documents to illustrate some of the impacts described in each section. The case studies have been selected on the basis of the quality of evidence available and to complement (rather than duplicate) cases presented in the ETF's Public Benefit Report 2019-20.
- 1.12** Like the Public Benefit Report, the ETF strategic objectives provide the structure for this report. The following sections 2-5 focus on each strategic objective and broadly follow the Kirkpatrick (K) levels:
- Programme reach, engagement and quality (K1 reaction, K2 learning)
 - Impact on practitioners' behaviour and practice (K3 behaviour)
 - Impact for organisations and their learners (K4 results).
- 1.13** The conclusion considers the implications of the findings for the ETF and the FE and Training sector. It discusses the main themes emerging from evaluation report recommendations included in this report, particularly for strengthening impact, and suggests ways in which evidence of impact could be enriched in the future.

3. See Annex D for the coding framework and frequency distribution.



2. GROW: the sector's membership body, professional statuses and high-quality new entrants

- 2.1 The ETF is helping to make FE the career of choice for ambitious professionals who wish to make a difference by supporting the recruitment of high-quality new entrants into the sector. The ETF also supports the professionalisation of the existing workforce by developing and awarding acknowledged standards of effective practice and enabling the Society of Education and Training (SET) to grow its membership, oversee professional standards and provide development insights.
- 2.2 These areas of work contribute to the recruitment, retention and recognition of expert and talented individuals, and provide a foundation for workforce development planning in the FE and Training sector. Routes to impact include providing opportunities for professional status, qualifications and career development. Practitioners in the sector require progression pathways for developing their skills and knowledge as professional educators, and as a labour force should represent the diversity of community they serve. Generating a stable and sustainable workforce is important in ensuring the sector remains strong and attractive to prospective new entrants.
- 2.3 This section considers the ETF's role in supporting the recruitment of expert and talented individuals into the workforce, growing SET membership and the number of practitioners achieving Advanced Teacher Status (ATS) and Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS).
- **The SET for Teaching Success** development programme engaged 36 technical specialists with a Level 6 qualification (or above) in 2019-20 to complete their ITE to teach Science, Engineering and Technology in the FE and Training sector. The majority of participants came from industry, with a handful already employed in non-teaching roles in the FE and Training sector⁵.
 - **The Taking Teaching Further programme** supported colleges to recruit and retain 113 industry professionals in 2019-20 to undertake a Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training (DET) over two years and undertake their ITE full time in an FE setting. The biggest uptake was by sole traders and freelancers from the creative and digital sectors⁶.
 - **The Talent to Teach programme** involved 190 participants between July 2019 and February 2020 in 40-hour placements in an FE setting. Participants were in their final year of an undergraduate degree and were interested in progressing into FE teaching⁷.
- 2.5 The programmes **delivered financial and marketing support to provider recruitment strategies** to attract potential recruits who may not have thought about teaching in FE before. For example, the Further Forces programme attended the National Recruitment Conference and Webex events to promote the benefits of participation for service leaders (primarily the opportunity to achieve a Level 5 qualification and support in finding employment)⁸.
- 2.6 Some programmes found it **difficult to attract a wide range of potential candidates**. The Taking Teaching Further programme in particular found it challenging to recruit participants, due to concerns regarding lower salaries in FE than industry, and the two years required to undertake the DET. However, providers delivering the programme mitigated this to some extent, by creating innovative, hybrid roles to attract highly skilled professionals and individuals who had not considered working in FE before⁹.

Recruiting an expert and talented workforce

- 2.4 In 2019-20, the ETF delivered four programmes focused on recruiting high quality new entrants into the FE workforce. These programmes targeted individuals across different sectors and at different career stages.
- **The Further Forces programme** engaged 56 military service leavers in 2019-20 who wanted to begin a career in the FE and Training sector and complete their Initial Teacher Education (ITE). Participants most commonly planned to teach within the Engineering, Health and Science and Digital sector subject areas⁴.

4. Final Evaluation of SET for Teaching Success and Further Forces (The ETF, September 2020)

5. Ibid

6. Taking Teaching Further Evaluation: Process Evaluation of Strand 1 (Department for Education, November 2019)

7. Evaluation of the Talent To Teach Programme Final Report (The ETF, March 2020)

8. Final Evaluation of SET for Teaching Success and Further Forces (The ETF, September 2020)

9. Taking Teaching Further Evaluation: Process Evaluation of Strand 1 (Department for Education, November 2019)

Recruitment programmes meet new recruits' employment needs

- 2.7 Overall, **satisfaction levels with recruitment programmes were high**. Most participants reported placements met their needs and enabled them to gain a realistic teaching experience. Where levels of low satisfaction were reported, this was due to the participant's experience with their placement. Participants on the Talent to Teach programme¹⁰ also noted that placements adjacent to academic holidays could limit opportunities for them to interact with students and therefore from gaining a 'true' experience of working in FE.
- 2.8 All four programmes involved mentoring for participants. Participants **appreciated the personal support provided by mentors**, which generated a more tailored experience. They felt comfortable contacting their mentor with any issues they were facing. Participants on the Taking Teaching Further programme spent an average of six hours per week with their mentor. They felt their mentors had supported them with a wide range of issues, from dealing with disruptive behaviour to moving into the local area and finding a place to live¹¹.

"I was having difficulty getting used to being out of the military, where discipline is assumed. I asked my mentor how to discipline in the classroom – he said to try this and this which was helpful."

Further Forces programme participant.

Final Evaluation of SET for Teaching Success and Further Forces (The ETF, September 2020)

- 2.9 The majority of participants on recruitment programmes felt that the **mixture of activity delivered by the approach was valuable**. They felt that the combination of in-service training or placements, events and workshops (and where relevant, industry placements) allowed them to experience a good mix of practical and theory-based learning and network with their peers. Those on the Further Forces programme appreciated the blended learning approach, as they were able to develop their practical skills within an FE setting, while also benefiting from theory-based learning and online peer support¹².

10. Taking Teaching Further Evaluation: Process Evaluation of Strand 1 (Department for Education, November 2019)

11. Final Evaluation of SET for Teaching Success and Further Forces (The ETF, September 2020)

12. Evaluation of the Talent To Teach Programme Final Report (The ETF, March 2020)

13. Taking Teaching Further Case Study (The ETF, 2020)

14. Taking Teaching Further Case Study (The ETF, 2020)

New recruits improve their teaching skills, knowledge and confidence

- 2.10 Participants across the four recruitment courses reported that their **preparedness and skills for teaching increased**. Participants discussed pedagogical knowledge and skills which they had gained, for example learning how to plan engaging lessons effectively and understanding different teaching methods. Some practitioners gained behaviour management skills, which was reported to be one of the most difficult challenges participants faced. Learning about working in an FE setting more widely than the classroom was valued by those less familiar with the sector, for example understanding colleagues' daily routine and their non-teaching responsibilities.
- 2.11 As a result of the knowledge and skills gained through the programmes, participants experienced **improved confidence levels in addition to increased motivation to work within the FE and Training sector**. Participants on the Talent to Teach programme reported that their social skills developed as a result of meeting different types of people, which improved their confidence overall¹³. This is likely to benefit participants once they complete their undergraduate degrees and enter the workplace.

Organisations benefit from participants' expertise and gain role models

- 2.12 Organisations involved with programmes stated that **participants had brought new skills to their roles**. This included specialist knowledge in their sector subject area, leading to improvements in curricula, enhancements in technical skills development, and deepening the industry knowledge of existing teaching staff. The dedication and commitment of the participants were also valued by participating organisations.
- 2.13 Participants' existing networks **strengthened industry partnerships**. Providers involved with the Taking Teaching Further programme described how this led to bespoke work packages that could improve their offer of work placements to learners¹⁴.

2.14 There is evidence to suggest that the programmes have had a positive impact on learners. Two programmes reported that the diversity of participants **provided role models for learners, strengthening classroom engagement**. Organisations participating in the Talent to Teach programme reported a positive effect on learner concentration levels. As the programme participants were often also younger, it was felt they were better able to relate to learners, and organisations found this strengthened learner engagement¹⁵. Recent industry experience of new recruits was shared with teaching colleagues and helped **improve learner knowledge and understanding** within some organisations.

Teacher B felt it was vital for teachers in FE to have some sort of industry experience because it means they can teach based on practice, rather than only on theory. They felt able to bring lessons to life by using real-life examples of issues they have faced first-hand.

Taking Teaching Further Evaluation: Process Evaluation of Strand 1 (Department for Education, November 2019).

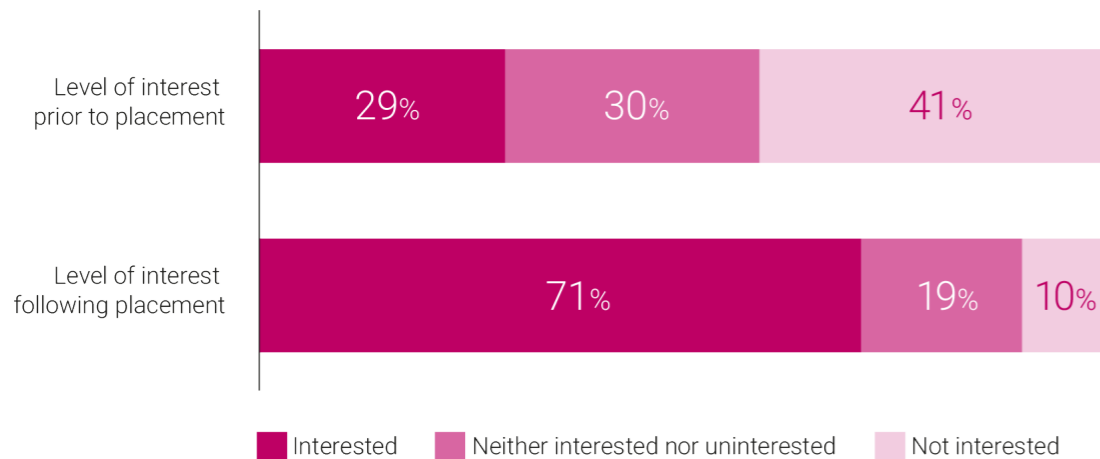
Recruitment programmes help organisations fill teaching vacancies

2.15 Organisations reported recruitment programmes helped them to **find teachers for vacancies in hard-to-fill sector subject areas**. Many involved with the development programme SET for Teaching Success reported difficulty filling SET teaching vacancies, most commonly in engineering disciplines. The programme enabled them to do so¹⁶.

2.16 Linked to this, there is evidence that programmes could **provide a more stable workforce for organisations**. On most of the recruitment programmes, many participants remained in the organisation they trained in, meaning that organisations did not have to undertake additional recruitment. Several participants on the Taking Teaching Further programme reported that the programme gave them the opportunity to enter a profession with a better work life balance¹⁷.

2.17 Overall, the recruitment programmes succeeded in recruiting expert and talented individuals into the FE and Training sector. In the case of Talent to Teach, participants have been given the opportunity to experience the FE and Training sector before graduation to develop their interest in FE teaching¹⁸. Participants joined the programme to gain experience of teaching before committing to it as a career (81%), enhance their CV with employability skills (76%), and gain experience of the FE sector (73%). The evaluation results show a large increase in interest in teaching in FE from a low base (see Figure 2-1 below), but also a decrease in participants' certainty about this after their placement. The evaluation report suggests this is a good thing, because it reduces the risk of uninterested applicants pursuing FE teacher training programmes then leaving the workforce. However, it does not explain why uninterested applicants might apply in the first place.

Figure 2-1: Talent to Teach: Participant levels of interest in FE as a career prior to and following their placement (N=196)



Source: Evaluation of the Talent To Teach Programme Final Report (The ETF, March 2020)

15. Evaluation of the Talent To Teach Programme Final Report (The ETF, March 2020)
 16. Final Evaluation of SET for Teaching Success and Further Forces (The ETF, September 2020)
 17. Taking Teaching Further Evaluation: Process Evaluation of Strand 1 (Department for Education, November 2019)
 18. Evaluation of the Talent To Teach Programme Final Report (The ETF, March 2020)



Further Forces programme: Impact

The Further Forces programme offered placements in FE providers to former military service personnel. Organisations benefited from having new colleagues with new and additional knowledge and skills, a small number of providers reporting that as a result they had been able to offer new modules or higher-level qualifications. Further Forces participants had also brought softer skills into the organisation, such as dedication, loyalty, commitment, and trustworthiness. Their colleagues said they brought 'collegiate attitudes' and were quick to help their colleagues and volunteer to support wider provider activities such as educational visits and clubs.

Further Forces participants have had an impact on learners. Most organisations said that Armed Forces personnel were often role models for young people. They were said to command 'natural respect' and this enabled them to build a good rapport with learners. Organisations felt that this made learners more inclined to participate actively in the classroom, and raised learner aspirations.

For participants themselves, the programme may for some result in career development opportunities. Participants who were involved in the programme prior to 2019-20 were reported to have been promoted within their organisation, or had been given additional responsibilities.

More widely, the programme was said to have a wider significance for the sector. Many participants on the programme were keen to remain in the sector for the next five years, contributing to a more stable workforce.

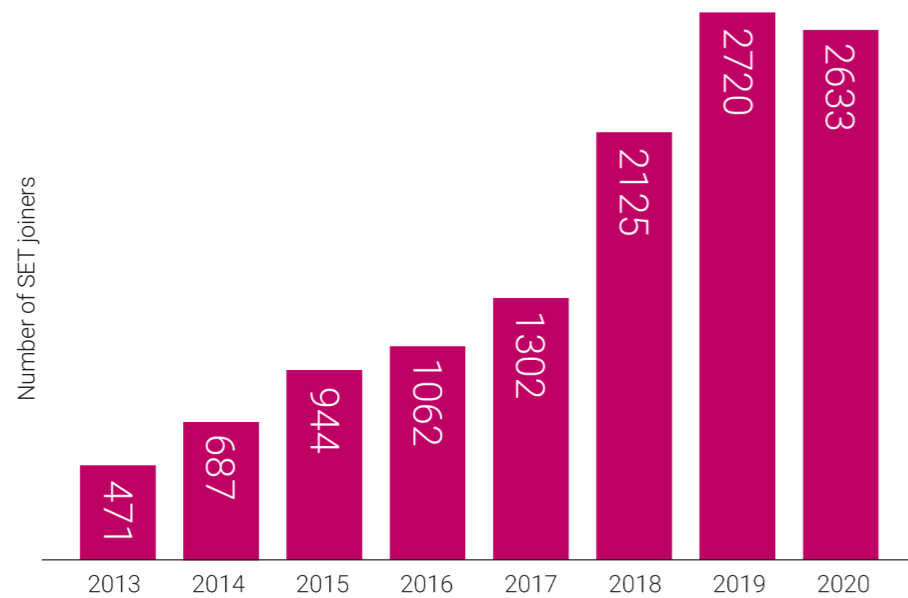
Source: Final Evaluation of SET for Teaching Success and Further Forces (The ETF, September 2020)

Growing professional membership

2.18 The **Society for Education and Training (SET)** is the membership body of the ETF for the FE and Training sector, providing resources and development opportunities to its members. **Membership continued to grow during 2019 and 2020**, and in 2020 had reached over 20,000 members¹⁹. The figure below illustrates the growth of SET membership since 2013, the year the ETF began. Please note, the graph shows the number of current SET members by the year they joined, rather than the total number of joiners each year.

2.19 Members were broadly representative of the sector in terms of gender, with 62% identifying as female (reflective of the wider workforce in 2018/19²⁰). SET membership comprises a considerably lower representation of white British practitioners than the wider workforce (74%, compared to around 85%). With an average age of 45 years, SET also has strong representation from younger practitioners. Whilst this is unusual for membership bodies, which often have an older population, it does represent the average age of the wider FE workforce (46 years)²¹.

Figure 2-2: Current SET membership by year joined (2013-2020)



Source: SET Programme Management Data. (SET, November 2020)



19. SET Programme Management Data. (SET, November 2020)

20. Further Education Workforce Data For England (The ETF, March 2020)

21. SET Programme Management Data. (SET, November 2020)

Practitioners improve professionalism through QTLS

2.20 Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS)

professional status is offered as part of SET membership. QTLS is a badge of professionalism for practitioners in the FE and Training sector. Since 2013, 800 practitioners had achieved QTLS status, with a further 2,000 professionals starting on the programme²².

2.21 Practitioners who completed their QTLS status between October 2019 and March 2020 were **satisfied with the support they received** (83%). It was reported that practitioners valued the opportunity to reflect on their practice, improve their confidence and continue to develop their skills. However, it was noted that participants would have liked additional support at times, for example via an allocated SET tutor or mentor.

2.22 There is emerging evidence that having QTLS professional status has a positive impact. Many practitioners who completed their QTLS status in March 2020 reported that the **QTLS had significantly impacted on their own practice** (65%). Notably, they felt more confident in their practice, which had allowed them to take more risks in their teaching, be creative and change elements of their practice to improve the quality of their teaching. This was expected to continue to improve, with the majority of practitioners (86%) reporting that they would use their learning to develop their practice further.

“My confidence has increased which has led to more questioning in the classroom. This is a great way for me to check understanding and recognise gaps in my teaching and their learning from the answers provided, helping raise standards in the class. Additionally, I am able to take on board criticism from colleagues and make the changes to improve my planning and teaching. Pedagogical knowledge has helped me to change the content of my lesson to meet the diverse needs of learners.”

QTLS participant. QTLS Participant Experience Survey (The ETF, 2019-2020)

2.23 Some practitioners also felt that their involvement in QTLS had an **impact on learner outcomes and their organisation** (50% and 24% respectively). Practitioners reported that learners were more engaged, and some had seen improvements in attendance and assessment results²³.

22. Public Benefit Report (The ETF, 2020)

23. QTLS Participant Experience Survey (The ETF, 2019-2020)

24. Public Benefit Report (The ETF, 2020)

25. ATS Evaluation Study Cohort 1 (The ETF, January 2019)

2.24 The growth in SET membership has led to **more practitioners achieving a recognised professional status**, improving the quality of practice of those with QTLS status, and consequently positively affecting learner experience.

“The learners have become used to my teaching style, and their results have shown improvements over the months as they have started to apply what they have learnt they have enjoyed the collaborative teacher-pupil link. The learners have an increase in participation in the lesson as they are more engaged and motivated with the new enthusiasm I show whilst teaching.”

QTLS participant. QTLS Participant Experience Survey (The ETF, 2019-2020)

ATS gaining recognition

2.25 SET also offers **Advanced Teacher Status (ATS)** which is a badge of mastery for practitioners within the FE and Training sector who want to take a step beyond QTLS and achieve Chartered Teacher Status. In 2019-20, 74 practitioners were awarded ATS²⁴. The characteristics of cohort 1 of ATS (who completed their ATS between 2017-18) gives some indication of the types of practitioners who engage with the award programme. Half of cohort 1 worked in an FE college setting, and just under half (48%) were in a solely learner facing role; the remaining 52% were either in middle or senior management²⁵.

Practitioners value the ATS programme

2.26 Practitioners were on the whole satisfied with the ATS programme, indicated by the fact that 85% of cohort 1 **participants would recommend the course to their colleagues**. Some participants found the ATS challenging, but others reported that the process was interesting and rewarding. While some practitioners particularly **valued the mentor support**, however where others found ATS difficult, the mentor support did not meet expectations, indicating a need for additional support.

Further elements of the programme were valued by participants:

- Practitioners reported they had the opportunity to network with their peers via a Facebook group, which was considered helpful for sharing learning.
- The *viva voce* (oral) examination was well received by practitioners, with the *viva* panel described as encouraging and collegiate in nature.
- Feedback on the electronic portfolio where practitioners upload their evidence was mixed. Some practitioners felt the volume of evidence required was vast and inappropriate and thought the portfolio could be simplified. However, it was recognised that the delivery team acted on issues and were responsive to challenges faced by practitioners.



ATS improves practice, collaboration and career development

2.27 Overall, 80% of cohort 1 practitioners stated that ATS had a positive impact on their practice. They reported they were **more confident and self-assured**, and as a result, were **more willing to take informed risks in their role**. Practitioners achieved a greater awareness of their own practice and their strengths and weaknesses, supporting personal and professional improvement. The majority of practitioners reported the programme strengthened their love of teaching, and they felt more empowered and motivated in their role.

2.28 Four cohort 1 participants said that they had made **career moves**, which they attributed to the programme. For others, their involvement in ATS triggered new career interests due to their renewed enthusiasm for teaching. This suggests that ATS could generate career progression for participants in future.

2.29 More widely, ATS encouraged practitioners to **support their colleagues within their organisation**. Most (75%) practitioners felt their participation had a positive impact on their colleagues, as they shared learning and provided mentoring support to them. In addition, 66% of participants felt that their participation had a positive impact on their organisation. Practitioners **contributed to new policies and strategies within their organisation** due to their improved knowledge and confidence and supported the development of a reflective culture through improved collaboration with colleagues.

“Through collaboration with other tutors, we have made positive and significant improvements on processes, which has positively impacted on the learner’s development. By collaborating with peers and colleagues, it is starting to breed a ‘reflective’ culture within my organisation, reflecting on our teaching and striving to improve where possible... Learners are making a stronger connection between their vocational practice and theory in the classroom, as maths and English is embedded within practical tasks”

ATS Participant. ATS Evaluation Study Cohort 1 (The ETF, January 2019)

2.30 The ATS is a relatively new professional status, and therefore there are some elements which need to be addressed to maximise its impact. However, interest in the ATS was said to be growing amongst practitioners, who were beginning to see ATS as a **‘beacon of professionalism in FE’**. Therefore, evidence supports the ETF’s aim of ATS becoming the career development gold standard²⁶.

“The process has made me realise how happy and privileged I am to be a classroom teacher who continually critically reflects to bring about sustained changes to practices of teaching learning and assessment.”

ATS Participant. ATS Evaluation Study Cohort 1 (The ETF, January 2019)

3. LEAD: enhance sector leadership capacity and capability

3.1 The ETF’s vision is for the FE and Training sector to have first class leadership. To achieve this, the ETF has supported programmes that develop top leaders, actions that build the leadership capacity of middle managers to enhance their capacity in their current roles and build a strong pipeline for promotion and recruitment to higher leadership roles. Organisational leadership also requires strong governance, and the ETF developed programmes to develop the capacity and capability of Chairs of Boards and Governors.

3.2 The impact of these collective development opportunities should be seen in terms of individual enhancements to core capabilities, such as leading organisational change, strategic decision making, and effective service management. Impact in terms of capacity might be seen through distribution of management responsibility across teams and effective use of the board of governors. Cultures of continuing improvement may be generated within the sector, capitalising on peer learning and learning from other sectors.

3.3 This section draws together evidence of such types of impact as they have been reported in three ETF-run programmes: for developing top leaders, for middle managers, and for Chairs and governors.

Developing diversity in senior leadership

3.4 The ETF aimed to increase the diversity of sector leadership through its **Diversity in Leadership programme**. The programme engaged approximately 150 senior leaders, managers and governors in workshops and events in 2019-20²⁷. They reported **high levels of satisfaction**, describing the workshops and events as well designed and delivered, the breadth and depth of topics covered appropriate to their roles, and they valued the opportunities afforded for sharing learning with their peers. The programme delivery partners were said to be well suited to the role given their exceptional knowledge of the sector.

3.5 **Aspiring leaders valued coaching** offered by colleagues from minority ethnic backgrounds because it provided tailored learning experiences which met their needs. Most reflected that the coaches were pragmatic and non-judgemental, enabling them to feel empowered and motivated. However, it was noted by some that the delivery team could have been more diverse. Some practitioners recommended that the programme could be expanded to consider a broader range of protected characteristics.

“I’ve only ever had white female middle aged women as coaches and where they are professional coaches, they’re not BAME and you can’t understand [or] expect people to understand the way you work and operate. To me that was important.”

Diversity in Leadership participant. Diversity in Leadership Programme Evaluation Report (The ETF, May 2020)

Leaders develop leadership skills, knowledge and understanding

3.6 Leaders on the Diversity in Leadership programme reported **improvements in knowledge and skills**. This included knowledge about the sector, knowledge of organisational cultures, and improved understanding of how to approach bias. Many practitioners developed skills in relationship building, influencing and negotiating, and managing difficult conversations. They were also able to reflect on their own leadership style and become more self-aware as a result. Leaders became **more aware of diversity within their institutions**, and the programme enabled them to think about the value that others’ experience brings to fulfilling organisational objectives.

Leaders develop confidence and motivation to implement change

3.7 Building confidence among participating leaders was a focus of the Diversity in Leadership programme. Many practitioners felt **more confident in their own value and ability**. They reported confidence in achieving their professional goals and felt they would progress into new roles due to the knowledge and skills gained through the programme.

“One lady she said to me, ‘I know who I am, I know my value, I know my team’s value.’ For me that’s a powerful thing for a person to see... I think the major impact is individuals seeing their value and how they can contribute.”

Programme Delivery Partner. Diversity in Leadership Programme Evaluation Report (The ETF, May 2020)

3.8 Leaders on the Diversity in Leadership programme **planned to implement what they had learned**. Some reported that they planned to think more strategically, communicate more effectively, chair meetings differently, and seek the support of their peers in progressing into more senior management roles. One leader was motivated to introduce coaching to empower their colleagues and increase cultural understanding across their organisation.

3.9 Senior leaders have also benefited from other programmes delivered by the ETF. Notably, the Middle Management Programme offered some senior leaders the opportunity to become mentors for middle managers, enabling them to re-engage with their work that their middle managers do and support them more effectively, benefiting the organisation as a whole²⁸.

3.10 Some practitioners on the Diversity in Leadership programme also **planned to make changes to organisational policy**, although they noted that changes could take time to embed. This included reviewing equality, diversity and inclusion statements and other equal opportunities policies, comparing them to examples from the programme and introducing an equality lead governor or an equal opportunities strategy group, to ensure that other aspiring leaders within their organisation would be able to progress and feel empowered. **Participants continued sharing their learning through networks** created on the programme between peers and through provider networks.

“I’m hoping my younger BAME colleagues will take bolder steps in the future... much bolder steps, much earlier.”

Diversity in Leadership participant. Diversity in Leadership Programme Evaluation Report (The ETF, May 2020)

3.11 The Diversity in Leadership programme generated an FE Diversity Charter and a toolkit comprising resources for improving diversity in leadership²⁹. There is potential for these tools to further diversify senior leadership. Once finalised, participants hoped the Charter would gain support across the sector.

3.12 Importantly, the programme **gave a voice** to the intersectional bias experienced by women from minority ethnic backgrounds. It was noted that enabling these discussions is crucial in eliminating bias and prejudice across the sector.



28. The Evaluation of the Middle Managers Programme Final Report (The ETF, December 2019)

29. Diversity in Leadership Programme Evaluation Report (The ETF, May 2020)

Developing the senior leadership pipeline

3.13 Middle managers play vitally important roles in the sector today. They are also the senior leaders of tomorrow. The ETF delivered the Middle Managers programme to develop the senior leadership pipeline whilst also supporting continuing improvement in middle management. The **Middle Managers programme** involved 66 participants³⁰. They were predominantly from General FE Colleges with Ofsted grades of Good or Outstanding, suggesting they already had a strong platform for developing excellence. There was limited engagement with Independent Training Providers or Adult Community Learning providers. Participating managers were broadly representative of the sector in terms of ethnicity, gender and age. The ETF also delivered an **Opportunity Areas (OA) Middle Managers programme**, to support the development of middle management in geographic areas in which barriers to social mobility are tackled through education³¹.

Managers value professional development

3.14 Overall, **practitioners were satisfied with the quality of programme delivery**. This was exemplified by workshop evaluations completed on the OA Middle Managers programme, for which three workshops (where scores were reported) received average satisfaction scores of over 4 out of 5³². The majority (93%) of practitioners surveyed valued the programme facilitators, describing them as professional and knowledgeable. It was noted that the fact that the facilitators were current leaders/managers meant that they could answer questions practically rather than theoretically. **The mentoring element of the programme was also appreciated**, with practitioners reporting that they were able to share their ideas, acknowledge their challenges, and ask for advice in a safe space.

3.15 Practitioners enjoyed the blended learning model of programmes, but particularly liked the **opportunity to work with their peers in small group exercises or discussions**. On the OA Middle Managers programme, practitioners highlighted the value of practicing difficult conversations with actors³³. However, while the majority of practitioners felt that the topics covered were appropriate, some felt that more complex topics could have been covered in more depth, for example finance and funding and the strategic and policy landscape.

Managers develop their leadership knowledge and strategic thinking

3.16 Participants in the middle management programmes gained **knowledge and understanding of leadership topics**. Across key leadership topics covered through the programme, participants’ average self-reported knowledge score (out of 10) increased by between 1.35 to 2.17 points, with the greatest increases seen in strategic policy and finance topics. They commonly reported little prior knowledge of these topics and benefited from their inclusion in the programme. Line managers of those involved in the Middle Management programme saw tangible changes in participants’ knowledge and skills³⁴.

3.17 An increased **ability to think more strategically** was highlighted by some managers. They participated in exercises that used real-world scenarios to reflect on team functions and future priorities. Some reported they had developed more practical skills around language and body language, improving their understanding and confidence on how to cope with difficult management situations, including how to give challenging yet respectful feedback and how to speak out against unfairness or bias.

Some participants reported that a key lesson they learnt from the programme is that “being a better manager ... isn’t about doing everything. It means prioritising and understanding my role”.

The Evaluation of the Middle Managers Programme Final Report (The ETF, December 2019)

Middle managers become more confident

3.18 As a result of participation in Middle Management programmes, practitioners reported that they became **more confident working with senior managers** and asking their line manager for more responsibility. They also became more confident in decision-making and taking initiative in their current roles.

3.19 With greater confidence, participants felt able to **make changes within their own practice** and adapt their ways of working with their teams. The majority (83%) of Middle Manager programme survey respondents agreed that the programme had had a major impact on their work practice. Practitioners felt better able to delegate where appropriate, implement new procedures and processes, and improve their management abilities³⁵.

30 The Evaluation of the Middle Managers Programme Final Report (The ETF, December 2019)

31. Opportunity Areas Middle Management Programme 2018 – 2019 (The ETF, 2019)

32. Ibid

33. Ibid

34. The Evaluation of the Middle Managers Programme Final Report (The ETF, December 2019)

35. Ibid

Manager A's Deputy Principal (DP) indicated that part way into the programme, manager A had been promoted to a more senior role. The DP went onto say that as a result of the programme manager A has significantly grown in confidence and is really making some important positive changes in his team, using the knowledge and understanding he has gained during his time on the programme. As a result, he has been promoted to this more senior role and they are delighted with his new-found confidence, skills and innovation.

The Evaluation of the Middle Managers Programme Final Report (The ETF, December 2019)

3.20 Increased confidence was also evident among managers participating in other programmes. Some newly promoted managers who participated in the Maths and English Continuous Professional Learning and Development programme reported confidence gains resulting from the leadership modules in the programme. Several participating managers described changes they had made in their management practice, including providing guidance and support for their teams through learning walks, action plans and mentoring³⁶.

More confident middle managers introduce organisational change

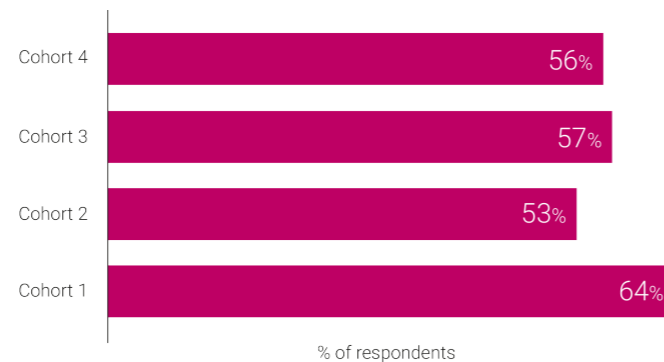
3.21 The middle management programmes resulted in changes at participant organisations. Managers developed the **confidence to collaborate effectively** with peers within their own organisations, exchanging best practice and cultivating innovative approaches to management practice. In addition, 88% of participants on the Middle Management programme disseminated findings and tools from the programme with colleagues in their organisation, enabling wider programme reach across management tiers³⁷.

The high level of dissemination suggests the programme may also be influencing other managers and departments within the provider. As a consequence, the programme is more likely to achieve organisational impacts that cover a range of curriculum areas.

The Evaluation of the Middle Managers Programme Final Report (The ETF, December 2019)

3.22 By applying what they had learned to day-to-day practice, participants on middle management programmes reportedly facilitated **wider organisational change**. This included preparing a bid to the senior leadership team for resources to implement new student data monitoring processes, and developing a new learner recruitment strategy targeting under-represented communities. Participants also reported changes within their departments and teams, for example developing internal training based on learning from programme participation, delivering one-to-one coaching, and introducing new performance management measures. However, it was reported that the impact of middle management programmes depended on organisations sending the right staff to participate.

Figure 3-1: Middle Management programme participants who agreed or strongly agreed the programme had an impact on other departments and teams in their organisation, by cohort (N=42)



Source: The Evaluation of the Middle Managers Programme Final Report (The ETF, December 2019)

3.23 Implementing department and organisational change as a result of the middle management programmes had begun to impact on learners, according to those involved. One example involved implementation of new recruitment and teaching strategies which **increased recruitment and attendance**. Through taking more responsibility for improving employer relationships, one practitioner involved in the Middle Management Programme had increased the number of work placements available to their learners³⁸. Many practitioners on the programmes stated that there had not been any significant impacts on learners at the point of evaluation, however they were positive that learners would benefit in the long-term.

36. Evaluation of the Maths and English CPLD Offer: 2014–2019 (The ETF, October 2019)

37. The Evaluation of the Middle Managers Programme Final Report (The ETF, December 2019)

38. Ibid



Developing the leaders of tomorrow

3.24 Ultimately, the middle management programmes have begun to **develop the leadership pipeline**. Some managers attributed taking on new responsibilities in their organisation to the skills and confidence they developed through the programme. This includes management of professional development and employer relationships. One manager on the Middle Management programme was promoted to Head of Learning in their organisation³⁹.

3.25 The leadership pipeline has also been developed through other ETF programmes. Whilst only a small number of ETF-run programmes in 2019-20 focused specifically on leadership development, practitioner improvements in skills, knowledge and confidence supported participants' career progression. For example, a small number of practitioners on the Practitioner Research programme attributed their promotion to management positions within their organisations to the programme⁴⁰. This suggests that by offering management and leadership development opportunities across its workforce development offer, the ETF is potentially having a wide impact on the leadership pipeline.

39. Ibid

40. Evaluation of the Practitioner Research Programme (The ETF, October 2020)

41. Diversity in Leadership Programme Evaluation Report (The ETF, May 2020)

42. Evaluation of the Chairs Leadership Programme (The ETF, March 2020)

43. Diversity in Leadership Programme Evaluation Report (The ETF, May 2020)

44. Evaluation of the Chairs Leadership Programme (The ETF, March 2020)

Supporting the development of Chairs and Governors

3.26 The ETF delivered the **Chairs Leadership programme** and other programmes incorporating workforce development for Chairs and Governors. This includes the **Diversity in Leadership programme** which provided coaching for ten Governors from diverse backgrounds with aspirations to become a future Chair within the FE and Training sector⁴¹.

Chairs and Governors value professional development

3.27 Participants on the Chairs Leadership programme reported that it **exceeded expectations**. Some participants felt the programme was intellectually stimulating and noted the programme was delivered to a high standard with a good balance between theory and real-world practice⁴².

3.28 Those involved in Chair and Governor development programmes reported that **the format of programmes was supportive and non-judgemental**. They appreciated the coaching element of the Diversity in Leadership programme⁴³ and felt that the tutor groups implemented on the Chairs Leadership programme were an effective delivery model (although it was noted that groups were sometimes polarised between those with extensive experience and those relatively new to the role). Participants felt that the tutor groups would continue to meet beyond the programme⁴⁴.

"Sharing each other's experiences in a safe environment has been useful. For me it has been invaluable... even the most experienced of Chairs have been able to bring things to those tutor groups and say, 'I've got this issue, what do you think?' And then just to hear other people's experiences has been great."

Chairs Leadership programme participant.

Evaluation of the Chairs Leadership Programme (The ETF, March 2020)



Chairs and Governors become more knowledgeable and confident

3.29 The Chairs Leadership programme improved the knowledge of those involved. All participants surveyed (16) agreed that the programme provided opportunities for the exchange of good practice between chairs. Some participants reported learning new concepts and stated that their participation had given them an **improved awareness of the different methods of leadership** and the challenges Chairs face. Some participants said they had expanded their knowledge of specific topics relevant to their role, such as financial and legislative requirements.

3.30 The majority of participants (15 of 16 surveyed) felt **more confident as a result of their engagement with the programme**. Specifically, some reflected that they would be more confident to push back against senior leaders in their institution to elicit changes. Others felt the programme had increased their confidence by 'validating' key decisions they had made, as a result of greater understanding of the processes involved. As a result of their increased confidence, one participant was elected to a senior position outside their organisation; they reflected that they would not have considered standing prior to the programme.

"There's nothing I thought I was doing badly before that I'm doing much better now, but I do feel validated in some facets of the approach I take."

Chairs Leadership programme participant. Evaluation of the Chairs Leadership Programme (The ETF, March 2020)

More knowledgeable Chairs and Governors support their organisations

3.31 As a result of their involvement with Chair and Governor development programmes, participants reported **impacts within their organisation**:

- greater engagement with other board members, improving communication channels in Board meetings
- taking a more active role in decision making, impacting the direction of the organisation
- more able to identify challenges within their organisation and support senior managers to overcome these⁴⁵.

3.32 There is potential for the Chairs Leadership programme to generate wider impact across the FE and Training sector. Some practitioners involved in the programme formed a network of Chairs to provide ongoing support to each other, but also with the aim of influencing policy across the sector⁴⁶.

45. Diversity in Leadership Programme Evaluation Report (The ETF, May 2020)

46. Evaluation of the Chairs Leadership Programme (The ETF, March 2020)

4. INFORM: provide decision-makers with data, experience and insights

- 4.1** The ETF's vision is to have highly effective and professionally confident teachers and trainers. To support the achievement of this vision, the ETF has established programmes which provide opportunities for practitioners to develop evidence-based research. There is value in this evidence being developed within the sector to inform decisions within provider organisations and improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- 4.2** Impact can be increased when practitioners disseminate their research outputs to colleagues within their organisations and through professional networks and publications. Increasing the capacity for practitioners to collaborate with others, share learning and develop Communities of Practice (CoPs) can also increase impact. These routes to impact may in turn motivate colleagues and organisations to innovate by strengthening capability for evidence-informed decisions.
- 4.3** Providing impartial, comprehensive workforce data also supports sector organisations and stakeholders to make evidence-informed decisions. In 2019-20, the ETF was responsible for the collection, analysis and dissemination of Staff Individualised Record (SIR) data and provided insights from the dataset to sector organisations and stakeholders. This is noted rather than discussed because no further evidence of the impact of SIR data insights was available for this report. The following section therefore considers how the ETF has supported the generation of practitioner research to provide practitioners, organisations and stakeholders within the sector with evidence and insight to improve quality and effectiveness.

Developing practitioner research capability

- 4.4** The ETF delivered three main programmes which provided FE practitioners with the opportunity to undertake practitioner research: the Outstanding Teaching Learning and Assessment (OTLA) programme, the Practitioner Research Programme (PRP) and Technical Teaching Fellowships. Each of these programmes operated on different scales of reach and intensity:
- **OTLA:** 440 practitioners from 45 organisations participated in 12 collaborative projects. Participation was varied and included managers, English specialist teachers, vocational subject trainers, tutors, lecturers, volunteers, librarians, Learning Resource Centre staff and support assistants⁴⁷.
 - **PRP:** 41 practitioners were enrolled on MA and MPhil accredited courses at the University of Sunderland. Over half of participants were in a student-facing role and almost all had a degree-level qualification⁴⁸.
 - **Technical Teaching Fellowships:** two practitioners selected for their exceptional practices completed a fellowship in 2019-20, both of whom were from General FE Colleges. Grants of between £13,500 and £15,000 were awarded to fellows to support their research and dissemination⁴⁹.
- 4.5** In addition to dedicated research programmes, the ETF incorporated elements of practitioner research within wider professional development programmes, including the following:
- The **Centres for Excellence in Maths (CfEM)** programme, which facilitated action research projects. Participation in action research was not recorded centrally, so the reach of this activity is unclear. However, it was reported that activities were generally led by one provider and undertaken by two or three practitioners within an organisation⁵⁰.
 - The **Advanced Practitioner programme**, which facilitated four collaborative projects involving 41 practitioners, to evaluate the effectiveness of Advanced Practitioner models and established CoPs attended by 99 practitioners⁵¹.
- 4.6** Evidence of impact presented in this section focuses on these five main programmes.

47. OTLA Evaluation: Final Report (The ETF, 2020)

48. Evaluation of the Practitioner Research Programme (The ETF, October 2020)

49. Technical Teaching Fellowships 2019-20 (The ETF, 2020)

50. Evaluation of Centres for Excellence in Maths – Year 1 interim report (The ETF, June 2020)

51. Year 2 Evaluation of the Advanced Practitioner Programme (The ETF, April 2020)

Research practitioners value professional development

4.7 Overall, satisfaction with the quality of the programmes offering practitioners the opportunity to undertake evidence-based practitioner research was high. Most practitioners felt that **programmes were well designed, managed and delivered**, offering them a range of opportunities to learn about and undertake evidence-based practitioner research.

“The level of knowledge of the lecturers on that course is high. And the standard of written and oral communication... they deserve an applause on their own. I was really impressed by them.”

Case study participant. Evaluation of the Practitioner Research Programme (The ETF, October 2020)

4.8 In particular, practitioners enjoyed the opportunity to work and network with others at workshops, action learning sets and residentials. The PRP participants reported that the in-person residentials were “crucial”, as they offered the opportunity to immerse themselves in their research and a protected space to share ideas and learning with others⁵². Action research events held for CfEM participants were considered to be useful in providing a forum to share learning and practical tips for delivering action research, with 78% stating that workshops adequately prepared them for undertaking action research⁵³.

4.9 Most programmes which facilitated evidence-based practitioner research involved mentors or coaches, who supported practitioners to develop their ideas and deliver their research projects. **Mentors were highly valued** across these programmes, for their expertise in addition to their pastoral support. Practitioners often stated they did not have enough time allocated to spend with their mentor. It was reported that some mentors on the OTLA programme had driven projects far beyond what they would have achieved otherwise, and were described as **responsive, knowledgeable and inspiring**⁵⁴. Practitioners on the PRP who were undertaking accredited qualifications valued their mentors for their exceptional pedagogical knowledge and passion for research, which enabled practitioners to be stretched and challenged whilst feeling well supported in their research journey⁵⁵.

“I felt really well supported. It didn't feel like we were just commissioned to do a project and left to get on with it; I felt we were able to call them in any shape or form for support with the project.”

OTLA participant. OTLA Evaluation: Final Report (The ETF, 2020)

Practitioners develop research skills and knowledge

4.10 Participants reported developing research skills, for example analysing and collecting data and critically reflecting on their findings. The majority (90%) of OTLA participants responding to a survey reported that their involvement had improved their understanding of **how to use action research to measure the effectiveness of teaching methods**⁵⁶. Some CfEM participants specified they had better skills for researching and testing new initiatives in the classroom⁵⁷, with the majority (98%) stating they had increased their understanding of how to apply action research.

4.11 Practitioners across programmes reported they had gained **knowledge and understanding of pedagogical theory**, which they felt improved their understanding of the importance of different teaching methods. All three mentors delivering the PRP reflected that practitioners had succeeded in drawing on more complex pedagogical theory, and were able to discuss theories and argue their strengths and weaknesses⁵⁸.

4.12 As a result of their learning, some practitioners reported that they had become **more reflective practitioners**. Practitioners on the OTLA and PRP both explained how they increasingly thought about how their practices could be improved or adapted to meet the needs and issues in their classroom or organisation⁵⁹. In addition, Advanced Practitioners reported that they were better able to reflect on their own practices based on their pedagogical knowledge generated through the programme⁶⁰. All practitioners on the PRP achieved accredited academic qualifications at MA or MPhil level, evidencing their learning⁶¹.

52. Evaluation of the Practitioner Research Programme (The ETF, October 2020)

53. Evaluation of Centres for Excellence in Maths – Year 1 interim report (The ETF, June 2020)

54. OTLA Evaluation: Final Report (The ETF, 2020)

55. Evaluation of the Practitioner Research Programme (The ETF, October 2020)

56. OTLA Evaluation: Final Report (The ETF, 2020)

57. Evaluation of Centres for Excellence in Maths – Year 1 interim report (The ETF, June 2020)

58. Evaluation of the Practitioner Research Programme (The ETF, October 2020)

59. OTLA Evaluation: Final Report (The ETF, 2020) and Evaluation of the Practitioner Research Programme (The ETF, October 2020)

60. Year 2 Evaluation of the Advanced Practitioner Programme (The ETF, April 2020)

61. Evaluation of the Practitioner Research Programme (The ETF, October 2020)

Practitioner researchers innovate and develop their careers

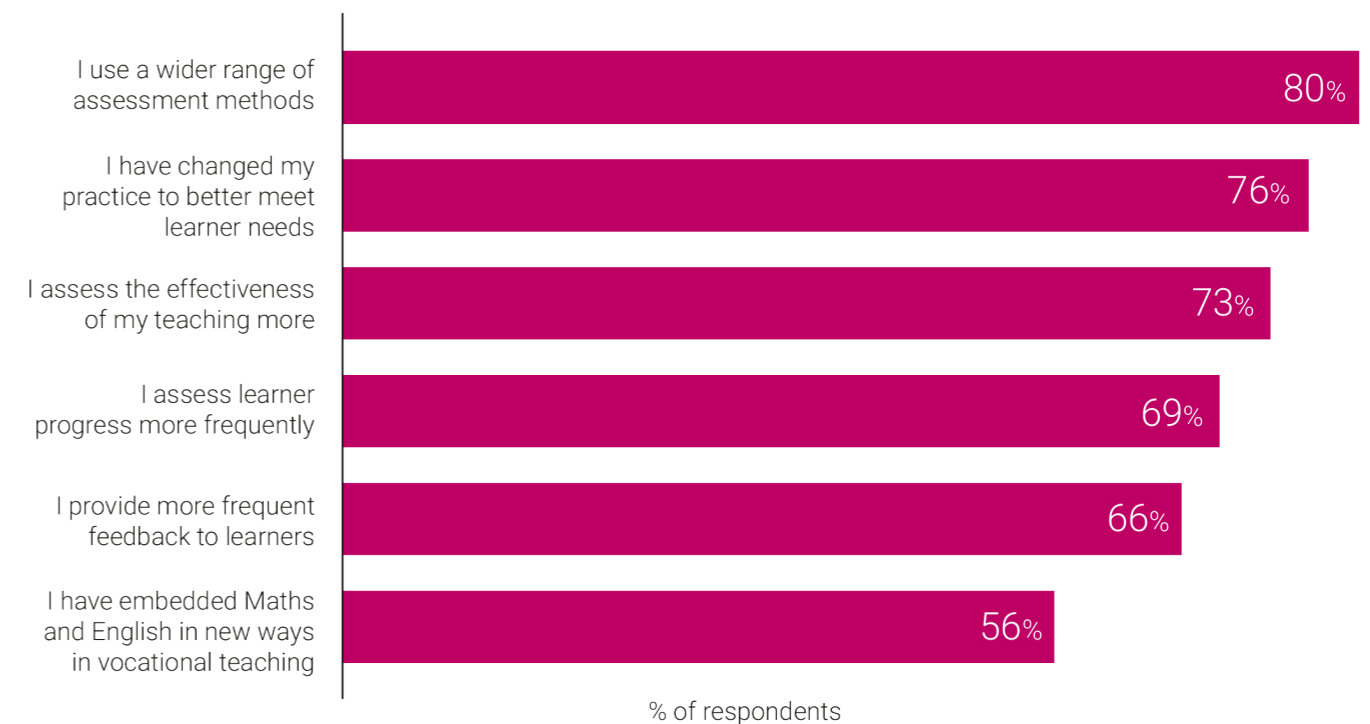
4.13 Practitioner researchers reported an increase in **confidence both as researchers and practitioners**. They said this strengthened their professional identity, enabling them to feel more credible when discussing their ideas with senior leaders or colleagues.

“[The PRP] has made me realise I'm an academic and intellectual, a researcher.”

Focus group participant. Evaluation of the Practitioner Research Programme (The ETF, October 2020)

4.14 Practitioners across the programmes gained confidence to change their teaching practice. Practitioners on the PRP stated that they felt “validated” to trial new research-informed methods in the classroom and felt more **confident in being creative and innovative**. Some practitioners reported this led to successful innovations, for example student engagement with technologies used in the classroom, and improved learner experience through adoption of creative curriculum design⁶². As shown in Figure 4-1 below, OTLA practitioners had made changes to their practice, predominantly using a wider range of assessment methods (80%) or changing their practice to better meet learner needs (76%).

Figure 4-1: OTLA practitioners who agreed or strongly agreed they had made changes to teaching, learning and assessment practices (N=29)



Source: OTLA Evaluation: Final Report (The ETF, 2020)

62. Ibid

4.15 The CoPs created by programme participants have been sustained. Practitioners were able to **share learning and challenges with other practitioners**, which led to continuous improvement of their own practice. Advanced Practitioner programme participants reported that their involvement in a CoP had resulted in whole-day visits to other organisations to discuss their work, with some undertaking cross-provider learning walks and teaching triangles. As a result, practitioners reflected on their own approaches and refined their methods to improve the quality of teaching and learning⁶³.

4.16 Some practitioners **progressed onto higher-level study**. Practitioners who completed an OTLA were enthused to apply for a place on the PRP MA course, while some on the PRP MPhil course moved onto doctoral studies with the University of Sunderland⁶⁴. In addition, one Technical Teaching Fellow progressed to a higher research degree at the University of Sunderland⁶⁵.

4.17 Job promotion or role extension within practitioners' organisations were reported by some participants as a result of their completion of practitioner research programmes. Some practitioners also reported achieving employment in external roles. For example, one Technical Teaching Fellow was appointed as the CEO of the South West Institute of Technology whilst also retaining their teaching and management roles at their organisation⁶⁶.

Both acknowledge that simply being in receipt of the Fellowship opens doors – in terms not just of the funding that it attracts and the time that it allows to pursue your professional interest, but also the speaking engagements and media opportunities and avenues into higher-level study that are afforded to holders.

Technical Teaching Fellowships 2019-20 (The ETF, 2020)

Practitioner researchers disseminate evidence-based practice

4.18 Across all practitioner research programmes, practitioners were given opportunities to disseminate their research, at varying different levels. Practitioners commonly shared their learning within their organisation by contributing to professional development of their colleagues, sharing their learning at department meetings, in staff rooms or on corridors, creating “lightbulb moments” for colleagues, and disseminating their research to senior leaders within their organisations or to all staff via organisation-wide newsletters.

4.19 Participants on the PRP reported that internal research dissemination was more effective when enabled by senior leaders who had ‘bought in’ to their research project⁶⁷. Some practitioners across the programmes shared their practice-based research externally. **Improved confidence** was described as both an enabler and a result of external research dissemination by practitioners. The programmes facilitated opportunities for this, for example through running conferences and events:

- CfEM events were reportedly oversubscribed despite having over 650 delegates⁶⁸
- the Practitioner Research Programme Annual Conference enabled practitioners to share their academic posters to 100 delegates from across the sector⁶⁹
- the Technical Teaching Fellows disseminated their research at events for FE practitioners and organisations outside the sector⁷⁰.

4.20 Practitioner research **findings were disseminated through external conferences and networks**. This included sector-specific networks and conferences (e.g. English Practitioners Network, British Educational Research Association conference), conferences focused on other sectors, and international conferences. One of the Technical Teaching Fellows also sat on Expert Technical Panels nationally to share effective practice⁷¹.

4.21 Practitioners across the programmes have **disseminated practice-based research via social media**, with Twitter the main mode of virtual dissemination. Some practitioners on the PRP published their findings in FE publications, for example *InTuition* and *TES*. Others disseminated their research through peer-reviewed journals and articles, broadening their reach and impact into academia⁷².

63. Year 2 Evaluation of the Advanced Practitioner Programme (The ETF, April 2020)

64. Evaluation of the Practitioner Research Programme (The ETF, October 2020)

65. Technical Teaching Fellowships 2019-20 (The ETF, 2020)

66. Ibid

67. Evaluation of the Practitioner Research Programme (The ETF, October 2020)

68. Evaluation of Centres for Excellence in Maths – Year 1 interim report (The ETF, June 2020)

69. Evaluation of the Practitioner Research Programme (The ETF, October 2020)

70. Evaluation of Centres for Excellence in Maths – Year 1 interim report (The ETF, June 2020)

71. Technical Teaching Fellowships 2019-20 (The ETF, 2020)

72. Evaluation of the Practitioner Research Programme (The ETF, October 2020)

Practitioner research leads to quality improvement

4.22 Anecdotal evidence suggests **organisations implement new policies and practices** based on practitioner research supported by ETF programmes. For example, one practitioner who had participated in both the OTLA and PRP developed a ‘Teachers Takeaway’, a video-based social media platform to allow practitioners to share CPD resources and ideas which are accessible at any time. Their research supported a greater understanding of the impact of the platform, so it can be further improved to support the development of colleagues⁷³.

4.23 Within organisations, departmental changes were also reported to have occurred as a result of practitioner research dissemination. One practitioner involved in CfEM action research reported introducing the concept of maths squares across their organisation, which involved pairing teachers in the maths team to develop a lesson together that supported specific groups of learners. The lessons were videoed, discussed and evaluated to **improve teaching quality**⁷⁴.

4.24 An increased **collective responsibility to improve teaching quality** was identified by some practitioners across practitioner research programmes. On the OTLA, one organisation reported a shift in the mindset of their vocational tutors, who now recognised the essential role they had to play in supporting their learners to achieve GCSE English alongside their colleagues. It was reported that staff across the college took collective responsibility to support this⁷⁵.

“I was able to take evidence to my line manager and show the value of having a dedicated maths classroom. In a few weeks myself and my colleagues were given classrooms and were able to put resources on the wall and have equipment to hand. Because of the evidence from the research we were able to say it would make a difference to learning ... my classroom now, as soon as you step in you can see it’s a maths classroom. Before I used to teach in a health, science or arts classroom.”

CfEM participant. Evaluation of Centres for Excellence in Maths – Year 1 interim report (The ETF, June 2020)

73. Ibid

74. Evaluation of Centres for Excellence in Maths – Year 1 interim report (The ETF, June 2020)

75. OTLA Evaluation: Final Report (The ETF, 2020)

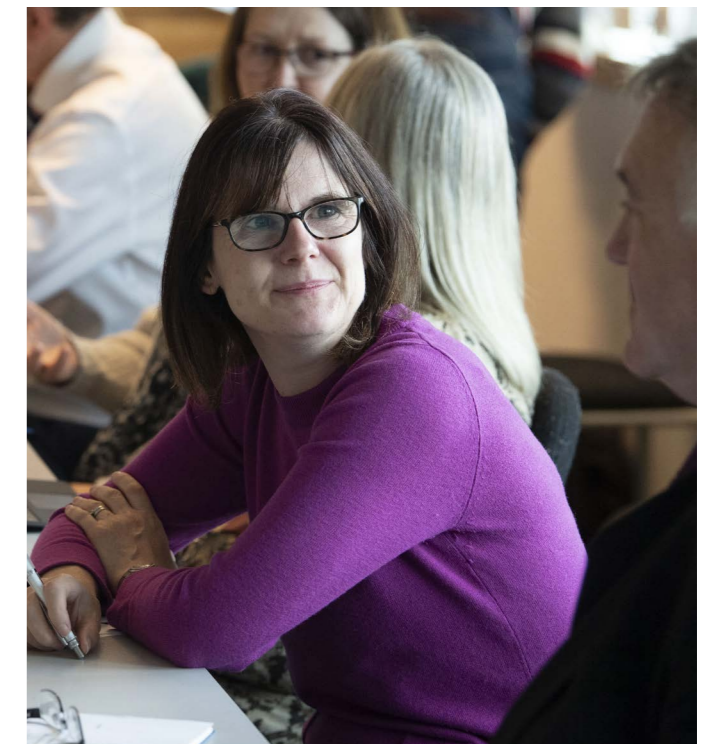
76. Ibid

Practitioner research enables research cultures to grow

4.25 Practitioners across practitioner research programmes encouraged their colleagues to **become more innovative in the classroom**, improving the quality of teaching more widely across their organisation. It was reported that staff have become more enthusiastic about trying new things and more willing to take risks, creating and sharing materials with each other in new ways. A culture shift across organisations supported this, as staff felt ‘safe’ trying new approaches without risk of reprisal.

4.26 Some programmes facilitated a **wider culture change** in organisations, towards the use and generation of evidence to inform practice. These tended to be organisations which had sent multiple practitioners to the programme over a number of years. Practitioners on the OTLA described motivating colleagues in their organisation to discuss potential action research projects they could do internally, and become involved in research as part of their own professional development⁷⁶.

4.27 It is important to note that organisational impact was greater where practitioner research was **supported by senior leaders**. It was recommended that programmes should ensure that organisations are fully engaged and have the capacity and willingness to support practitioner researchers, for example by providing opportunities for internal research dissemination.



Practitioner Research Programme: Organisational impact

The PRP provided an opportunity for practitioners to undertake a research project of their own design that addressed issues pertinent to their practice and organisational priorities. Some organisations supported one or two members of teaching staff to participate over multiple years, others supported managers or those responsible for staff development to attend. Some organisations reported participation to be part of a culture change towards evidence-based practitioner research. In some providers, clusters of research-active practitioners were bringing their skills to generate an evidence-based approach to teaching practices and organisational policy.

Examples provided included:

- One practitioner reported that their research project facilitated a change in policy which adapted the role of all Advanced Practitioners across the institution, implementing a greater focus on action research.
- One practitioner's research on blended learning had informed their institution's investment in this area.

Employee retention was also reported to be influenced by involvement in the programme.

A few practitioners reported the programme had given them new impetus to stay in the sector and continue their career, which they were considering leaving prior to the programme. However, in some cases the programme was considered to be a "victim of its own success", resulting in a small number of practitioners leaving the sector to develop their research careers (although their roles continued to support the sector indirectly).

More widely, the programme was beneficial in improving organisations' reputations. As a result of improved profile, some individuals and their employers said they had widened their professional networks with other institutions and the research community. It was suggested an improved organisational reputation would bring beneficial effects to staff recruitment.

Many practitioners, employers and stakeholders recommended that the project should be scaled up, to maximise its reach and impact. They also felt that the programme should consider approaches to recruitment that encourage a wider range of organisations to participate, given that a proportion of organisations involved would send staff every year.

Source: Evaluation of the Practitioner Research Programme (The ETF, October 2020)

Practitioner research benefits learners

4.28 Practitioners began to identify impacts for learners as a result of their participation across evidence-based practitioner research programmes, although the evidence was limited and largely anecdotal. It was reported that some **learners were more engaged** with their learning as a result of improved teaching brought about by the research undertaken on the programmes. Practitioners on the OTLA responding to a survey largely agreed that their research projects had impacted on learner work-readiness (86%) and behaviour (72%), suggesting improvements in learner engagement overall⁷⁷.

4.29 Some practitioners reported **enhanced learner confidence**. This was reported to improve when learners felt they had a secure learning place and access to the support and resources they needed, enabling them to become more independent and positive learners.

"I am even more conscious of the mental health needs of my learners and how this can impact on learning. I consciously give more praise and put activities to improve confidence into my lessons."

OTLA participant. OTLA Evaluation: Final Report (The ETF, 2020)

4.30 There is some evidence to suggest that participation in practitioner research programmes resulted in **improved learner research** skills. This was identified on the PRP programme, where some practitioners incorporated the development of learners' own research skills into their teaching, for example by encouraging their learners to read more widely and reference their reading accurately⁷⁸.

4.31 There were also some instances of programmes **improving learner attainment**. This included improvements in Maths or English GCSE attainment, in addition to improved attainment in other subjects. On a scale of 1-10 (with 10 being a major positive impact), practitioners responding to a CfEM evaluation survey reported action research had an impact measuring 6.5 for learner achievement⁷⁹.

77. Ibid

78. Evaluation of the Practitioner Research Programme (The ETF, October 2020)

79. Evaluation of Centres for Excellence in Maths – Year 1 interim report (The ETF, June 2020)



One case study practitioner noted that the average pass rate for reading rose from 45% to 77% following a six-week English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) course, and another practitioner stated that their most recent cohort of learners achieved a 100% pass rate at Functional Skills English level 1 and 95% pass rate at level 2. The national benchmark is 66% and 44% respectively.

Evaluation of the Practitioner Research Programme (The ETF, October 2020)

4.32 However, it is important to highlight that across programmes it was **challenging to demonstrate learner impact within annual programme delivery timescales**. Practitioners undertaking action research through the CfEM⁸⁰ stated they would have liked to have been able to implement their action research projects earlier in the academic year, to maximise opportunities for collecting meaningful data. Further, while some practitioners involved in the programmes felt they had developed the skills to collect and analyse data for 'hard' learner outcomes (e.g. retention, achievement), others expressed frustration at the difficulties involved in data collection and analysis of data for 'soft' learner outcomes (e.g. attitudinal shifts or confidence) that may have been more important for their research.

80. Ibid

81. Evaluation of the Practitioner Research Programme (The ETF, October 2020)

Practitioner research benefits the sector

4.33 Across evidence-based research programmes, several impacts for the FE and Training sector were identified. It was noted that greater cross-sector research projects and workshops had led to greater **collaboration and networking** across the sector. Opportunities for FE and Training sector-wide impact were expanded through programme-facilitated conferences and events. Disseminating research across other sectors also raised the research profile of FE, and generated partnerships with employers.

4.34 It was suggested that external dissemination of research (e.g. via conferences and publications) may encourage **improvement in teaching practice** across the sector. For example, some practitioners on the PRP reported presenting their findings to different colleges through social media and cross-college networks, resulting in other institutions implementing their research recommendations. One practitioner wrote that a Head of Mathematics within another organisation said he intended to pilot an approach in maths classes recommended by the practitioner's research⁸¹.

4.35 Overall, the evidence suggests that the ETF is stimulating evidence-based practitioner research through a combination of intensive research training for individuals, and collaborative action research in small networks of specialist providers. The longer-term impact of this is being felt through the creation of a cultural shift that embraces evidence-based changes to practice within teaching teams, departments and occasionally at an organisational level.



Technical Teaching Fellowships: Wider impact

The two Technical Teaching Fellows have delivered events and disseminated their knowledge to other FE organisations, schools and local businesses. This brought wider benefits for both the organisation that they work within and the FE and Training sector overall, raising the 'prestige, quality and profile of technical teaching' across the sector.

Fellows have facilitated and supported events and workshops to provide STEM-focused careers information, advice and guidance. Workshops were delivered to FE practitioners and students to support learning progression to higher levels of technical study, and interactive resources and materials were developed for local school careers events to raise awareness of data science and associated careers.

Businesses were engaged at local conferences and through Fellow-facilitated events. One Fellow attended and demonstrated their research at a conference with 150 local small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in attendance. This resulted in an increase in awareness of higher-level apprenticeships in the area, and three additional apprentices were recruited by local SMEs as a result.

Sustainable partnerships with local businesses have been forged by both Fellows, to enhance curriculum design and delivery to increase skills in the Digital sector. It is hoped that over the long term, this will improve productivity and growth and the creation of a more sustainable local economy.

Source: Technical Teaching Fellowships 2019-20 (The ETF, 2020)

5. DEVELOP: workforce capability to excel in teaching and training

- 5.1** Developing the FE workforce to excel in teaching and training is at the core of the ETF's mission to develop highly effective and confident teachers and trainers. The ETF brings expertise and experience in designing and commissioning the delivery of CPD across a wide range of specialisms and roles, and provide opportunities for practitioners to research their own practice and share their learning. The dual goals of enhancing professional practice and building workforce capacity are embedded in ETF programmes.
- 5.2** The impact of individual improvements in capability and collective improvements to teaching practice should ultimately raise standards of teaching, learning and assessment across the sector. Learners should benefit from this, resulting in better attendance, engagement and attainment. The virtuous circle for organisations is to create a 'critical mass' of practitioners who adopt effective pedagogic practice within a culture of professional learning that facilitates experimentation, collaboration, networking and embedding of effective practices.
- 5.3** This section considers the impact of ETF workforce development programmes and Professional Exchange networks on developing excellence in teaching and training.

Providing workforce development opportunities

- 5.4** The ETF deliver a wide range of workforce development programmes that combine blended delivery models and elements of in-person delivery. These include:
- **The Advanced Practitioner programme**, which engaged 195 participants from across 74 organisations in 2019-20, with around two-thirds of participants working in a General FE College and small number of organisations sending more than five participants⁸²
 - **The Study Support programme**, which engaged 23 providers delivering Study Programmes to their learners⁸³
 - **The Maths and English Continuous Professional Learning and Development (CPLD) programme**, which had 8,197 attendees on in-person courses and online webinars⁸⁴
 - **The T Level Professional Development (TLPD) programme** for providers and their staff delivering T Levels, with over 9,241 attendees⁸⁵ across four delivery strands in 2019-20
 - **Safeguarding and Prevent training**, delivered through online modules and in-person training directly with organisations, with Prevent online training modules accessed over 254,000 times⁸⁶.

Centres for Excellence programmes established by the ETF support excellence in teaching maths and supporting SEND learners:

- There are 21 **Centres for Excellence in Maths (CfEM)** across England. Each centre currently has between 5 and 14 network partners. In total, 216 of the 248 colleges in England are participating in the programme⁸⁷.
- There are three **Centres for Excellence in SEND (CfESEND)**. Each Centre is led by an Outstanding provider and has a different focus: People, Curriculum, Community. In 2019-20, 733 practitioners took part in the CfESEND programme⁸⁸.



82. Year 2 Evaluation of the Advanced Practitioner Programme (The ETF, April 2020)

83. Evaluation of Study Programme Support 2019-20 (The ETF, July 2020)

84. The ETF Booking System Survey Data (The ETF, September 2020)

85. Ibid

86. Public Benefit Report (The ETF, 2020)

87. Evaluation of Centres for Excellence in Maths – Year 1 interim report (The ETF, June 2020)

88. Programme Monthly Performance Report (The ETF, March 2020)

The ETF also provide solely online programmes for practitioners to undertake at their own pace to develop their educational technology (EdTech) skills. This includes:

- Online modules in EdTech and Essential Digital Skills, delivered through the ETFs own **Enhance Digital Teaching Platform**. Overall, 625 organisations signed up and 1,807 module completions were recorded in 2019-20, with practitioners scoring the modules an average of 4.2 out of 5⁸⁹.

5.5 The ETF offers workforce development opportunities through its practitioner research programmes, improving leadership programmes and workforce recruitment programmes. Impacts of these programmes are detailed in previous sections of this report, and are detailed in this chapter where relevant.

Workforce development programmes respond to practitioners' needs

- 5.6** Practitioners were broadly satisfied with how workforce development programmes were delivered. For programmes which had an in-person element, facilitators were reported to be **professional, motivational and responsive** to the needs of practitioners. The Centres for Excellence in Maths and SEND trialled a range of in-person delivery models. Whilst feedback on these models varied, overall the programmes were reported to be well run⁹⁰.
- 5.7** Asynchronous workforce development programmes delivered online were enjoyed by practitioners, as they were able to engage when they had time to do so. However, **satisfaction with online software was mixed**. Some felt it was straightforward to use; practitioners using the Enhance Digital Teaching programme described it as clear and easy to use, with one highlighting the links at the bottom of the page as 'well worth investigating'⁹¹. However, others found software used on programmes challenging; some practitioners on the Maths and English CPD highlighted challenges in navigating the site and accessing linked resources⁹².

- 5.8** Positive feedback across the range of delivery models used across the ETF's workforce development programmes suggest **practitioners value different methods of learning based on their individual needs**. However, practitioners on some programmes did recommend that there should be clearer statements of what participants should expect and what is being offered by ETF programmes.
- 5.9** Participants particularly **value opportunities to learn from others**.

- All programmes with in-person elements offered opportunities for practitioners to network and share good practice, from small group discussions to large events. TLPD Knowledge Hubs were highlighted by participants as being valuable in promoting and encouraging collaboration and sharing learning⁹³. Practitioners also appreciated the informal opportunities to share experiences with their peers. Some practitioners recommended that there should be more opportunities to learn from others within their programmes.
- Interestingly, those on the Advanced Practitioner programme who worked at the same organisation valued the opportunity to undertake the programme as a team. They reported that the opportunities that the programme provided for sharing learning helped practitioners to get to know one another and gave their entire team the same grounding of the Advanced Practitioner values and principles⁹⁴.
- Mentors were highly valued, as they provided more tailored and bespoke support to practitioners. Organisations on the Study Support programme reported that working with a mentor allowed them to better identify their priorities for development and kept them on track in meeting these. The mentors were also able to apply insights from their experience of working with other organisations and offer appropriate resources to their organisations⁹⁵.

89. Public Benefit Report (The ETF, 2020)

90. Evaluation of Centres for Excellence in Maths – Year 1 interim report (The ETF, June 2020) and Evaluation of Centres for Excellence in SEND (The ETF, August 2020)

91. Enhance Digital Teaching Platform Data (The ETF, 2020)

92. Evaluation of the Maths and English CPLD Offer: 2014–2019 (The ETF, October 2019)

93. T Level Professional Development (TLPD) Initial phase evaluation (Department for Education, March 2021)

94. Year 2 Evaluation of the Advanced Practitioner Programme (The ETF, April 2020)

95. Evaluation of Study Programme Support 2019-20 (The ETF, July 2020)

“Cluster meetings were very valuable. Any time to discuss maths with colleagues and peers is a blessing and massively undervalued... [it is] nice to see that we are not alone.”

CfEM participant. Evaluation of Centres for Excellence in Maths – Year 1 interim report (The ETF, June 2020)

- 5.10** Those who had elected to study on two-year programmes appreciated the longer timescales. Those on the Advanced Practitioner programme⁹⁶ and the MPhil Practitioner Research programme⁹⁷ felt that they had **more time to learn, apply learning to practice, and reflect on its impact**, all with the support provided by the programme. This suggests that the diversity of provision, which allows some established practitioners to commit to longer-term programmes to develop higher-level skills, is an important feature of the ETF offer.



Practitioners develop knowledge and skills and improve practice

- 5.11** Knowledge and understanding of a wide range of topics was reported to have improved as a result of participation in workforce development programmes.
- Practitioners cited improved understanding for integrating maths and English and improving support for learners with SEND, reflecting the focus of programmes delivered.
 - Around two thirds of practitioners on the CfEM programme responding to a survey stated that they had increased their knowledge because of the programme, a significant result for a relatively short programme⁹⁸.
 - Practitioners involved in the TLPD programme reported improved understanding of industry, considered very important for T Levels delivery in which industry insight placements developed practitioners' knowledge and expertise in technical areas⁹⁹.
- 5.12** Practitioners also improved their practical learning. Across workforce development programmes, practitioners reported **learning about new ideas or practices from programme facilitators and from other practitioners** involved in the programme. Practitioners on the Advanced Practitioner programme discussed a range of new practical strategies they had learned from their involvement, regarding curriculum planning and delivery, performance management and creative assessment and feedback strategies¹⁰⁰. As Figure 5-1 shows, the majority (98%) of participants surveyed stated that the Advanced Practitioner programme had a positive impact on their knowledge and skills.

A visit to another provider gave one Head of maths and English greater understanding of how integration in vocational areas needs to be led from senior management.

Evaluation of Study Programme Support 2019-20 (The ETF, July 2020)

96. Year 2 Evaluation of the Advanced Practitioner Programme (The ETF, April 2020)

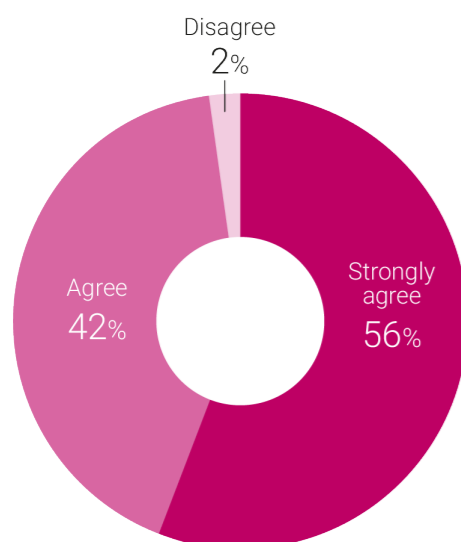
97. Evaluation of the Practitioner Research Programme (The ETF, October 2020)

98. Evaluation of Centres for Excellence in Maths – Year 1 interim report (The ETF, June 2020)

99. T Level Workforce Professional Programme: Findings from provider visits and ETF monitoring data (Department for Education, January 2020)

100. Year 2 Evaluation of the Advanced Practitioner Programme (The ETF, April 2020)

Figure 5-1: Advanced Practitioner programme: Participation has had a positive impact on my knowledge and skills (N=41)



Source: The ETF Booking System Survey Data (The ETF, September 2020)

5.13 Across workforce development programmes, **practitioners reported improving skills**. This included digital, leadership, research and data collection skills. In addition, some practitioners felt better able to reflect on their own practice, supporting continuing professional development.

Confident practitioners lead improvement and develop their careers

5.14 All workforce development programmes **resulted in more confident professionals**. Practitioners improved their confidence in communicating with others, including with senior managers within their organisations. This was particularly noticeable when practitioners were on a programme focused on career development (e.g. Advanced Practitioner programme or Middle Management programme) or undertaking research (e.g. PRP or OTLA).

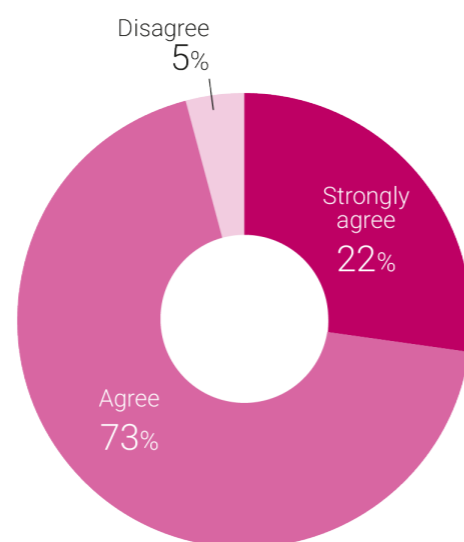
5.1 Practitioners who were selected to participate in programmes by their organisations or had been actively encouraged by their managers to take part, reported they **felt more valued by their organisation** and this had improved their confidence in their own capabilities.

101. Evaluation of the Maths and English CPLD Offer: 2014–2019 (The ETF, October 2019)

102. OTLA Evaluation: Final Report (The ETF, 2020)

103. Ibid

Figure 5-2: CfEM: I now feel more confident about this area of practice. (N=41)



Source: The ETF Booking System Survey Data (The ETF, September 2020)

5.16 As a result, practitioners began to **adapt their practice**. Examples included:

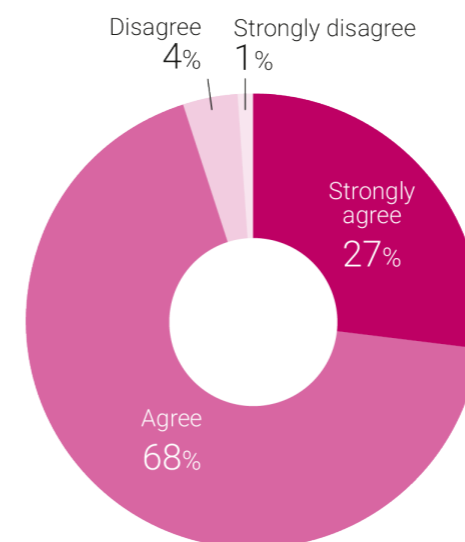
- Practitioners were more willing to take risks in the classroom and implement new and creative techniques that improved their teaching. A practitioner on the Maths and English CPLD programme described how they had gained confidence in using new methods, such as the 'Singapore Bar', which improved their ability to teach problem solving to learners¹⁰¹.
- New approaches to pastoral care were implemented by practitioners across some workforce development programmes. This included strategies to support learner wellbeing and manage learner behaviour.
- Practitioners improved the quality of assessment and feedback. For example, 79% of respondents to an OTLA evaluation survey agreed they were using a wider range of assessment methods compared to before they took part in the programme¹⁰².
- Learner feedback was used more effectively by some practitioners to improve their teaching. For example, one OTLA participant used feedback from students on what they found beneficial or enjoyed doing to improve strategies implemented in the classroom¹⁰³.
- The use of digital tools for learning also increased. Some practitioners across programmes reported using hardware like mobile phones in the classroom to engage learners, or software and platforms such as Google Classroom or Kahoot.

101. Evaluation of the Maths and English CPLD Offer: 2014–2019 (The ETF, October 2019)

102. OTLA Evaluation: Final Report (The ETF, 2020)

103. Ibid

Figure 5-3: Maths and English CPD: Participating has had a positive impact on my practice. (N=551)



Source: The ETF Booking System Survey Data (The ETF, September 2020)

5.17 Opportunities for **career development** were created by some programme participants:

- Practitioners on the Advanced Practitioner programme reported enhancing their visibility within their organisation, which is likely to be beneficial for their career¹⁰⁴.
- Some practitioners reported an increased enthusiasm for career development, for example one vocational staff member on the Maths and English CPLD programme highlighted their interest in becoming a maths teacher following the programme¹⁰⁵.
- Practitioners were also keen to keep developing professionally, for example gaining QTLS, or participating in other ETF programmes, indicating renewed enthusiasm and motivation.

104. Year 2 Evaluation of the Advanced Practitioner Programme (The ETF, April 2020)

105. Evaluation of the Maths and English CPLD Offer: 2014–2019 (The ETF, October 2019)

106. Ibid

107. Evaluation of Study Programme Support 2019-20 (The ETF, July 2020)

108. Ibid

Confident practitioners improve teaching quality

5.18 There is some evidence that **organisations benefited from improved teaching quality**. For example, as a result of the Maths and English CPD programme, one provider saw an increase in good or outstanding observation grades for Additional Learning Support Staff¹⁰⁶. Participants have also shared effective practice with colleagues through formal CPD sessions, within meetings or informally.

5.19 Feedback suggests that **tailored CPD was beneficial to organisations**. Practitioners on the Study Support programme reported that participants viewed training as less effective when the content was not tailored to meet identified needs¹⁰⁷.

5.20 Workforce development programmes resulted in middle managers and senior managers **implementing departmental or organisational change**. Some programme participants began to develop new schemes of work incorporating innovative practices for their whole department take up. For example, one provider on the Study Support programme improved work placements by developing a standard approach for work placement officers, and providing support for implementation and consistency¹⁰⁸.

5.21 Some organisations reported **positive culture change** that was at least partly attributable to the programmes. This was experienced in a variety of ways: through an increased affinity for CPD, practitioner research and collaboration, adopting a risk-taking culture, and embedding new delivery and management models. Practitioners involved in subject-specific workforce development programmes (e.g. CfEM and Maths and English CPD) reported similar culture change, with their organisations embedding maths and English across the college including within vocational subjects.

5.22 More widely, evidence from four programmes indicates that participation **improved staff morale**. This is likely to have further impacts for organisations in terms of the quality of teaching and culture change, potentially leading to increased staff retention in the long run.



Advanced Practitioner programme: Organisational impact

The Advanced Practitioner programme has generated positive changes to teaching and learning for several organisations. The programme generated new learning about ungraded observation models. This persuaded senior leadership teams, who had previously liked the quantitative data generated through graded observations, of the benefits of an ungraded model.

Other organisations began to adopt 'thinking environments' in their formal meetings, based on the thinking environments delivered on the programme by the programme delivery team. The team were invited to run a thinking council session directly with a senior leadership team in one organisation, which resulted in senior leaders embedding the model in other meetings.

Signs of cultural change were beginning to be experienced by some organisations involved in the programme. It was reported that senior leadership teams were becoming more familiar with the work of Advanced Practitioners, which has meant that their views are more likely to be listened to in terms of informing or implementing change. Staff development was also reported to be 'higher on the radar' within some organisations. Engagement and enthusiasm of colleagues with CPD and internal workshops delivered by Advanced Practitioners increased, with colleagues' attitudes to CPD reported to be more positive in general. One Advanced Practitioner reported that recent Ofsted monitoring feedback highlighted the importance of the Advanced Practitioner role in improving morale.

Source: Year 2 Evaluation of the Advanced Practitioner Programme (The ETF, April 2020)

Practitioners enable learner retention, progression and achievement

5.23 There is some evidence that workforce development programmes have resulted in tangible benefits for learners. However, evidence of learner outcomes is inconsistent across the programmes and is largely anecdotal. This may be due to the varying focus of workforce development, inconsistent data collection, and the challenges of attributing learner outcomes to the programmes within an annual funding cycle. It also results from evaluations which have not focused on learner outcomes.

5.24 **Learner engagement and motivation** were reported to have increased as a result of improved teaching quality and practitioner confidence. A few practitioners involved in the CfEM programme described learners as having 'a new mindset' due to new teaching approaches. One noted that improved motivation had resulted in one of their students moving up a grade in their assessments in a relatively short period of time¹⁰⁹.

5.25 Workforce development programmes were also considered to have had a positive impact on **learner attendance**. One teacher participating in the CfEM programme stated that attendance in their provider had increased by 10% throughout the year, which they attributed to improved learner engagement¹¹⁰.

5.26 **Learner retention** rates increased as a result of some workforce development programmes. One provider involved in the Study Support programme stated that retention of learners had increased by almost 5% during 2019-20, which they attributed in part to the programme¹¹¹.

5.27 Evidence emerging from some workforce development programmes indicating increases in **learner attainment**. In particular, grades attained after resitting GCSEs were discussed by participants of some programmes, influenced by changes in teaching approaches used in the classroom.

5.28 There are some examples of learners **experiencing opportunities that they may not have had otherwise**. The Study Support programme enabled a group of learners to take part in a six-week work trial, and some secured apprenticeship roles as a result¹¹².

Maths and English CPD: learner impact

Evaluation of the Maths and English CPD offer included longitudinal learner impact (from 2014-19). Therefore, there is clear evidence of learner impact as a result of the programme.

Improved learner engagement was a key impact recognised by practitioners. Examples of changes that had increased learner engagement included using new methods of embedding maths and English into lessons 'without them really knowing' which enabled learners to engage with maths more positively, and the introduction of Google Classrooms for apprentices which was said to be particularly helpful for learners who had struggled to engage given other constraints (e.g. anxiety). This had also stimulated improved attendance and achievement.

There were other examples of improved learner attendance and retention as a result of the programme. Greater attendance levels to classes run by practitioners who had attended compared with those who had not, were observed by some organisations. This encouraged more practitioners across organisations to engage. One organisation monitored this and said their retention rates for GCSE learners showed an increase for GCSE English from 76.7% in 2017/18 to 80% in 2018/19 and for GCSE Maths from 61.1% in 2017/18 to 79.3% in 2018/19.

Practitioners observed increases in learner confidence. Practitioners in one organisation noted that learners were gaining confidence in their English lessons and feeling as though 'they were actually getting somewhere'.

Improvements in learner progress were attributed to the CPD programme. One organisation stated that GCSE English high-grade scores rose after the English team had implemented new approaches, from 20% to 41% (between 2017 and 2018). Government performance data also showed that overall average progress scores for both English and mathematics at the organisation were above the national average. Whilst this data has limitations it indicates the potential of CPD to support learners to progress in 2019-20.

Source: Evaluation of the Maths and English CPLD Offer: 2014-2019 (The ETF, October 2019)

109. Evaluation of Centres for Excellence in Maths – Year 1 interim report (The ETF, June 2020)

110. Ibid

111. Evaluation of Study Programme Support 2019-20 (The ETF, July 2020)

112. Ibid

5.29 Overall, the ETF has succeeded in providing a wide range of workforce development opportunities for practitioners across the sector to meet a broad range of needs. Feedback from participants suggests this is needed: for example, 77% of Middle Management programme respondents had not undertaken leadership and management training in the three years prior to joining the course¹¹³. The ETF offers opportunities for practitioners to participate in professional development that are not found elsewhere.

Facilitating professional exchange

5.30 In 2019-20, the ETF delivered 12 Professional Exchange Networks (PENs) across all English regions to ensure that FE practitioners could access opportunities for collaboration and sharing learning. The size of PENs varied, with attendance ranging from approximately 70 to 260 participants in each network¹¹⁴.

Practitioners value peer networks

5.31 Overall, practitioners valued the opportunity to be part of a PEN. Primarily, practitioners appreciated the chance to interact with peers across the sector to **share ideas and discuss ways to deal with common challenges**. Practitioners described their PEN as a 'reflective space' where they could openly discuss issues in a supportive environment.

The PEN programme [is effective] in creating supportive, collaborative communities in which FE practitioners can reciprocally benefit from coming together with like-minded professionals to share their experience and expertise to improve the work they do and the learning experiences of their students.

Evaluation of the ETF Professional Exchange Networks (The ETF, September 2020)

5.32 Regional and group PEN leads were considered crucial to the success of the PENs. It was felt that a PEN worked best when the agenda was set by group participants, and that direction was managed by a 'strong experienced chairperson'. Where this structure was not in place, PEN groups began to lack direction.

5.33 It was noted that the ability to **connect to other ETF programmes** (e.g. OTLA) was considered a benefit for participants to share best practice more widely. The ability for PENs to do this was attributed to the fact that the PEN 'brand' was respected by those working within the sector, which enabled greater cross-programme working.

5.34 However, there were differing perspectives on the purpose of the PENs. Participants tended to view the PENs as CoPs for forging professional networks. This jarred with the requirement for PENs to produce outputs from collaborative projects undertaken by groups, which was perceived to get in the way of its primary purpose. Possibly as a result, the **quality of outputs** produced by PENs varied.

Practitioners share learning and deepen knowledge

5.35 The PENs gave practitioners the opportunity to **learn with, and from, each other**, building their knowledge. The majority (90%) of PEN evaluation survey respondents stated that they had opportunities to work with others to share and learn from each other's expertise. One practitioner involved in a PEN stated that he had introduced e-portfolios to his courses, as a result of learning about others' experiences of using different packages. It was recommended that there could be greater opportunities from PENs to work collectively with other PENs across regions.

5.36 Through undertaking collaborative projects and action research within PENs, practitioners reported that they had improved their **knowledge and understanding of effective practice** in a range of different subject areas, with 94% of evaluation survey respondents stating they had been given the opportunity to shape their own professional development and build their specialist knowledge and skills.

5.37 Understanding of **current policy and pedagogical theory** improved as a result of participation in the PENs. Some practitioners attributed this to visiting speakers and discussions with other PEN participants from a wide range of different organisations across the sector. Examples of topics discussed included changes to apprenticeship programmes and the new Ofsted inspection framework. PENs also raised awareness of the ETF's Professional Standards for participants to use as a reflective tool.

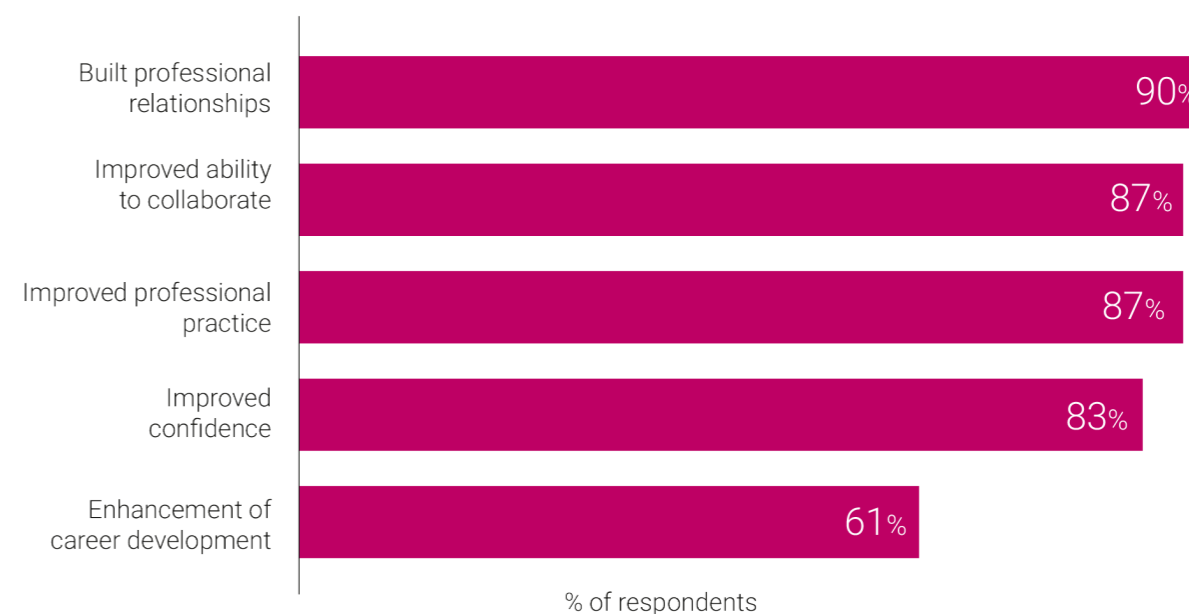
Confident professionals share their learning within their organisations

5.38 PEN participation improved **practitioner confidence**. Most (83%) of evaluation survey respondents reported that being part of the PEN had improved confidence in their professional role. Practitioners described being more confident in 'putting themselves forward' at their organisation, recognising their own value and building their professional identity. One group lead also reported that the role had improved their confidence and ability to lead.

5.39 The PENs have encouraged practitioners to **put learning into practice** in innovative and creative ways 'without judgement'. Practitioners said that discussing ideas and collaborating with others through the PEN had sparked their interest and enthusiasm in their work, which had also motivated them to try new things in the classroom.

5.40 In addition to sharing learning with each other, PEN participants have **shared learning with colleagues** in their organisation. Approximately 90% of survey respondents stated they had shared what their PEN group did with their colleagues. Some practitioners described sharing their learning through delivering CPD sessions in their organisation. For example, one practitioner fed into organisational CPD days what they had been doing in their PEN around mindfulness and long-term memory. Another stated that they had incorporated learning from a visiting speaker about apprenticeships within their CPD delivery. However, it was noted that learning from the PEN sometimes did not have an immediate impact on their organisation, with one practitioner describing a more gradual 'ripple effect'.

Figure 5-4: PEN participants who felt they had achieved impacts to some or a great extent (N=121)



Source: Evaluation of the ETF Professional Exchange Networks (The ETF, September 2020)

113. The Evaluation of the Middle Managers Programme Final Report (The ETF, December 2019)

114. Evaluation of the ETF Professional Exchange Networks (The ETF, September 2020)



5.41 There is evidence to suggest that the PEN has generated **changes to organisational policy and practice**, including around digital learning and curriculum development. Approximately 60%¹¹⁵ of PEN evaluation survey respondents reported their learning had resulted in a policy change, although the extent of this change was not often clear. Overall, it was considered to be too early to assess learner impact of the PEN. However, practitioners did discuss anecdotal examples of improved digital skills, engagement, attendance and improved learner experience. Practitioners noted the value of their digital learning on the PEN, which they had been able to cascade to learners and as a result, they had developed their digital skills.

Professional exchanges generate sector impact

5.42 The PEN programme has resulted in some sector-wide impacts. Some PENs and PEN participants have **disseminated information and learning more widely** through social media, sharing ideas across the sector. Practitioners reported using blog posts, monthly online newsletters and Twitter to share their work as widely as possible with the FE workforce.

5.43 PENs encouraged **increased collaboration and professional exchange across the sector**. Participants recognised the mutual benefits of working with others on practice and policy, 'comparing notes' and developing collegial relationships. This was considered particularly important for those who did not have opportunities to do this within their own organisation.

5.44 The ETF has generated a **potentially sustainable professional exchange network**. Some PEN participants reported that their networks would continue beyond the end of the PEN funding, establishing collegial communities of peer support. Further spin off groups had been established within some PEN communities, focused on specific projects.

6. Conclusion: strengthening impact

6.1 This section summarises the evidence of programme impact across the four ETF strategic objectives. It opens with a discussion of the different types of impact, and goes on to consider recommendations made in the programme evaluation reports regarding the measurement of impact. The report concludes with recommendations for strengthening the ETF's evaluation practice in future.

Different types of impact

6.2 Opportunities for participation in ETF workforce development programmes are mostly free at the point of delivery and offered across the country for most parts of the workforce, including new recruits and experienced teachers, trainers, middle managers, senior leaders and governors. The offer is characterised by a dual approach that fosters innovation and improvement: the development of skills, knowledge and understanding by participating professionals; and community development through engagement with professional networks and collaborative projects. Although not often commented on by programme evaluators, when harnessed in programme design and delivery, this dynamic dualism has the potential to contribute to profound and sustained impact across the FE and Training sector.

6.3 Participation is a vote of confidence in ETF programme design and delivery, and this is confirmed by consistently high participant satisfaction ratings. Suggestions for programme improvement are usually grounded in a desire to add more value to ETF programmes.

6.4 Evidence of participants' learning applied to changed behaviour is limited, but where reported is positive. It often related to increased confidence and courage to try new practices or ways of working. There is some evidence of behaviour change with potentially wide-ranging effects, such innovative teaching and assessment methods shared with colleagues and adopted within organisations and through professional networks. Examples of participant behaviour influencing organisational change include the introduction of new policies for student recruitment and staff development.

6.5 Organisations have benefited from ETF workforce development programmes. Participants have been promoted to more senior roles, given space at team meetings to share their learning, and disseminated their learning through professional networks. Some organisations associate internal culture change with involvement in ETF programmes, including introduction of evidence-based approaches to quality improvement, and the adoption of particular values and methods for team working and decision making.

6.6 As professional networks develop, opportunities for those who work in the sector to be exposed to new ways of solving shared problems expand. There is limited evidence in the programme evaluations about potential impacts on the wider workforce through engagement in professional networks, but this core element of several programmes was appreciated by programme participants. The opportunity to collaborate with and learn from peers was reported to be an important aspect in their learning experience.

6.7 Finally, impact on learner experience, engagement and outcomes is rarely evidenced in the programme evaluations. Promising results have been obtained by comparing learner measures before and after implementing practices promoted through a programme, but this approach requires more time for data collection than the annual grant funding cycle affords. With more time it may be possible to sharpen the evaluation focus on how learners, the ultimate beneficiaries, benefit from ETF workforce development programmes.

Challenges with demonstrating impact

- 6.8** SQW systematically analysed all programme reports and data to capture available evidence for each Kirkpatrick level. This process revealed that most of the evidence presented in programme evaluations relates to practitioner reaction and learning (see Annex D), particularly practitioner satisfaction with the learning experience. This presents challenges for demonstrating impact on organisations, learners and the wider sector.
- 6.9** There was least evidence for programme impact on organisations and learners, and the type of data was different. Whereas participant satisfaction survey data are available for participant reaction and learning, the impact on organisations and learners was more typically case study and anecdotal data.
- 6.10** We can attribute this to several practical factors.
- Programme management and evaluation reports are often undertaken within the same year in which the programme itself is being delivered, determined by annual grant funding. That provides little time for participant learning to be applied, shared or behaviour change amongst participants' colleagues and learners. Several programme evaluations referred to changes resulting from participant learning that were planned rather than enacted.
 - Monitoring data that captures the total number of participants, the types of providers they work for, their characteristics and their subject or vocational specialism, is rarely comprehensive and sometimes incomplete. Data can show the number of attendances rather than number of unique participants, creating challenges for aggregating impact across ETF programmes.
 - The time and resources invested in measuring impact must be proportionate to the scale of the intervention. With a series of smaller initiatives or pilot programmes the scale of data capture may be appropriate but this limits what can be measured, weakening the evidence of impact.
- 6.11** There are a number of conceptual challenges associated with demonstrating impact. The first relates to attribution. The impacts of CPD interventions are often highly complex with several contextual and intervening factors contributing to observable effects. They can also be very personal, with different people bringing different levels of knowledge, enjoying different aspects of their experience, and therefore generating a range of different behaviours and results.

- 6.12** The context for supporting improvement in the FE and Training sector also needs to be acknowledged. The ETF programmes sit within a wide range of other workforce development opportunities, but the nature and scale of these opportunities is rarely acknowledged in programme evaluations. This may be linked to generally weak information about the sector workforce, its characteristics and development needs. Greater understanding of the workforce should pivot ETF workforce development programmes towards those parts where they are needed most, and so maximise their impact for participants and their organisations and learners.

Recommendations for demonstrating impact

- 6.13** This report presents the impact of ETF workforce development programmes in relation to its four strategic objectives. It shows these objectives have been delivered, but with room for improvement to maximise impact.
- The ETF has helped the FE workforce to **grow**, including the creation of a new route to recognising excellence in teaching practice through the ATS; it should now consider setting optimal membership levels for SET, QTLS and ATS.
 - The ETF has supported the development of **leadership** of the FE workforce, focussed in particular on equality, diversity and inclusion; it should now consider ensuring this contributes to improving staff recruitment, retention and organisational performance.
 - The ETF has contributed to developing the knowledge base to **inform** the development of professional practice; it should now consider how this new knowledge shapes more effective professional practice.
 - The scale of ETF activity to **develop** the workforce is significant and sustained. Participants are satisfied with their learning experience, and there are indications this makes a difference to their professional practice and progression. The ETF should now consider strengthening the evidence base showing how this contributes to improved organisational performance and learner outcomes.

- 6.14** The programme evaluations reviewed for this report provide recommendations for strengthening ETF evaluation practice. These include the following:
- Extending evaluation timescales to assess how programme participation improves the quality of learners' learning experience
 - Adapting participant feedback to capture evidence of practitioner learning dissemination that results in changes to professional practice and organisational policies
 - Embedding monitoring and evaluation as essential elements in programme design and delivery to improve quality and impact
 - Promoting the impact of ETF workforce development widely, so the value of the investment and the benefits of participation are appreciated across the FE and Training sector.

- 6.15** These recommendations point to the need to evolve ETF evaluation practice. The use of the COM-B and Kirkpatrick frameworks has generated evidence focussed on the benefits of ETF programmes for individual participants. However, the ETF's vision is to support transformational change across the FE system. The ETF approach to impact evaluation will be strengthened to reflect this larger ambition, in the following ways.
- **Build evidence-based rationales for programme development.** A clear rationale for every programme is needed that sets out the problem to be addressed, what is known about it, the possible workforce development options, and how the proposed solution will address the problem. Innovative or untested programmes should include an ongoing element of research to test the implementation of the solution.
 - **Collect high-quality programme management information.** Comprehensive and complete programme management information is needed for collecting uniform monitoring input, output and outcome data for every programme. Alignment of this information with external administrative datasets is needed to assess programme reach and impact.



- **Embed evaluation in programme design, delivery and participation.** Programme costs, processes and impact should be specified within the programme rationale and monitored using high-quality programme management information. All programme participants should regard their learning experience as a contribution to the improvement of the FE and Training sector. They should commit to providing monitoring and evaluation evidence that contributes to improving the quality and impact of the sector's workforce development programmes.
- **Adopt a theory of change approach to evaluation.** Theory of change logic models are needed to demonstrate how programme inputs flow into outputs, outcomes and impact. This approach provides programme-specific definitions for the component parts of the logic model and its underpinning assumptions, including external factors beyond the ETF's control, that might affect impact achievement.
- **Publish programme evaluation findings and recommendations.** ETF workforce development programmes enable professionals to research, learn, collaborate, and excel. By publishing programme evaluation reports that help strengthen programme quality and impact, the ETF demonstrates the benefits of being a learning organisation and provides leadership for the self-improving FE and Training sector.

Annex A: Programme summary

A1. The table below provides brief summaries of each programme discussed in this report. The information in this table is drawn from programme reports, the ETF¹¹⁶ and SET¹¹⁷ websites and the Department for Education (DfE) 2019-20 grant letter¹¹⁸.

Advanced Practitioner programme

The Advanced Practitioner programme was established in February 2018. It is for managers and practitioners in Advanced Practitioner roles to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and support increased professionalism and self-identification in the role. The programme consists of five strands: collaborative projects, a professional learning and development course, online Communities of Practice, a resource toolkit and a national Advanced Practitioner conference. It was supported by a DfE grant allocation of £388,300 as part of the Basic Skills grant. In 2019-20, the programme supported a total of 195 participants: 41 in collaborative projects, 55 in Professional Learning Development courses, and 99 in Communities of Practice.

Source: 2019-20 Grant Offer Letter to the Education and Training Foundation (DfE, March 2019); Year 2 Evaluation of the Advanced Practitioner Programme (The ETF, April 2020)

Advanced Teacher Status

The Advanced Teacher Status (ATS) was launched in June 2017. This one-year programme for FE teachers aims to be a reputable and recognisable badge of excellence. It is an alternative, competence-based route to the MA route for achieving Fellowship of the Society for Education and Training (SET). The programme focuses on three areas of competence: development of pedagogical practice and subject specialism, development of others through coaching and mentoring activities, and the ability to influence internal and external stakeholders and affect change in curriculum and organisation quality improvement/development. After the programme has been completed a panel decides whether ATS should be awarded to the participant. The award costs £750 per participant with some bursaries of £500 being allocated for those with a strong case (from October 2020). In total 74 practitioners achieved ATS in 2019-20.

Source: ATS Evaluation Study Cohort 1 (The ETF, January 2019); Public Benefit Report (The ETF, 2020); <https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/news/new-bursaries-and-broader-eligibility-criteria-for-advanced-teacher-status-applicants/>

Centres for Excellence in Maths (CfEM)

Centres for Excellence in Maths is a multi-year programme which has been running since October 2018. It aims to support FE providers to improve the quality of post-16 maths teaching and learning, and increase the proportion of young people gaining a Grade 4 (or equivalent) at Maths GCSE. The programme operates through a 'hub and spoke' model, with 21 centres established across England, each working with a local provider to implement professional development programmes, centre-led action research, wider centre activity, networks and dissemination. The programme also operates randomised controlled trials involving 33 providers. CfEMs are funded under contract from the Department of Education.

Source: Evaluation of Centres for Excellence in Maths – Year 1 interim report (The ETF, June 2020); 2019-20 Grant Offer Letter to the Education and Training Foundation (DfE, March 2019)

Centres for Excellence in SEND

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) workforce development programme started in 2017. It aims to provide a coherent and comprehensive programme to support the FE workforce and ensure learners with SEND achieve their aspirations by delivering a step-change in the way the FE and Training sector addresses learner needs. The programme is delivered through three Centres of Excellence, each with a different theme: Weston College (leading the theme of People), Derby College Group (leading the theme of Curriculum) and City College Norwich (leading the theme of Community). The programme had a total grant allocation of £1.2 million and 733 practitioners took part in 2019-20.

Source: Evaluation of Centres for Excellence in SEND (The ETF, August 2020); 2019-20 Grant Offer Letter to the Education and Training Foundation (DfE, March 2019)

Chairs Leadership programme

The Chairs Leadership programme supports Chairs in colleges to be able to reflect on their role as governance leaders and identify ways in which they can add value to the Board and their wider organisation. The programme includes a 24-hour residential at the University of Oxford's Saïd Business School, with the opportunity to work with high profile governance experts to explore the latest governance thinking and practice with a small group of FE governance peers. The programme is funded through a grant allocation of £1.06 million and cost £750 per delegate in 2019-20.

Source: 2019-20 Grant Offer Letter to the Education and Training Foundation (DfE, March 2019); https://leadershiphub.etfoundation.co.uk/courses/chairs_leadership

Diversity in Leadership programme

The Diversity in Leadership programme aims to increase diversity in FE leadership. It seeks to increase organisations' ability to challenge bias, reduce barriers to attaining leadership roles and ensure all workers are supported at all levels of their institution. The programme entails six delivery strands: Organisational Culture Change in Equality and Inclusion workshops (for up to 80 leaders), BAME/diverse coaching aspiring leaders (20 participants), BAME/diverse coaching for potential Chairs (10 Chairs), Positive Action FE Charter, Toolkit, and Women Up! Workshops (up to 40 female participants). The programme supported approximately 150 practitioners in 2019-20.

Source: Diversity in Leadership Programme Evaluation Report (The ETF, May 2020)

Enhance Digital Teaching Platform

The Enhance Digital Teaching Platform launched in January 2019 hosts two fully subsidised training offers to support teachers and trainers using educational technology (EdTech) and developing their digital skills. It does this through online modules to support innovation in teaching and training when using technology. Overall, 625 organisations signed up and 1,807 modules were completed. The platform was allocated grant funding of £300,000 in 2019-20.

Source: Public Benefit Report (The ETF, 2020); 2019-20 Grant Offer Letter to the Education and Training Foundation (DfE, March 2019); <https://enhance.etfoundation.co.uk/>

Further Forces programme

The Further Forces programme aims to recruit and retrain Armed Forces Service leavers to teach technical subjects in FE, including Science, Engineering and Technology. The programme began in 2017. The Service Leavers are supported by mentors whilst completing their funded teacher training and securing employment. The programme is funded as part of the activity to help improve the quality of FE teaching and leadership, with a grant allocation of £450,000 and 56 practitioners engaged in 2019-20.

Source: Final Evaluation of SET for Teaching Success and Further Forces (The ETF, September 2020)

Maths and English Continuous Professional Learning and Development (CPLD)

The Maths and English CPLD programme started in December 2014. It aims to support teachers in the development of their personal skills and teaching approaches to support learners to achieve a Level 2 qualification. The course can be offered in-house and by a single provider, or as an open course in a centralised location for any provider to attend. Content was delivered through courses for maths and English teaching across 27 different webinar topics and a package of online learning modules. In 2019-20, the programme had 8,197 attendees at in-person courses and online webinars.

Source: Evaluation of the Maths and English CPLD Offer: 2014–2019 (The ETF, October 2019); The ETF Booking System Survey Data (The ETF, September 2020)

Middle Managers programme

The Middle Managers programme supports FE middle managers to develop skills to plan and manage their business area and staff. The programme is delivered through a blended learning approach, with four Primer Days complementing online modules and a Focused Learning Assessment (FLA) project. The programme was delivered through four cohorts, with two national cohorts open to all providers and two in-house cohorts for staff in a pair of providers. The cost of the programme was £975 per participant, with three subsidised places available to participants from smaller providers or from ethnic minority communities. In 2019-20, 66 managers engaged with the programme.

Source: The Evaluation of the Middle Managers Programme Final Report (The ETF, December 2019)

116. <https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/>

117. <https://set.et-foundation.co.uk/>

118. <https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/governance/our-funding/attachment/etf-gol-19-20/>

Opportunity Areas Middle Managers programme

The pilot Opportunity Areas Middle Managers programme supports the development of practitioners who are currently working in designated Opportunity Areas as a middle manager to provide a range of knowledge, skills and understanding of the issues of social mobility in the context of a personal and professional development programme. The programme involves five workshops on a range of different topics and mentoring support for participants.

Source: Opportunity Areas Middle Management Programme 2018-18 (The ETF, 2019)

Outstanding Teaching, Learning and Assessment (OTLA)

The programme has been funded since 2015 (as part of the Basic skills funding programme – with £541,200 of allocated funding) and entails a wide range of small-scale projects from single departments to region-wide activity to promote change and share best practice. The work is based on evidence and research, much of this carried out by practitioners, to improve professional practice, learner outcomes and pedagogic or vocational skills. There have been over 200 OTLA collaborative projects since the programme's inception focused on a different area of practice each year. The programme is aimed at FE providers and is run by mentors or coaches from training providers. Phase six of the OTLA collaborative projects was undertaken by 440 practitioners during the 2019/20 academic year.

Source: OTLA Evaluation: Final Report (The ETF, 2020); 2019-20 Grant Offer Letter to the Education and Training Foundation (DfE, March 2019)

Practitioner Research Programme

The Practitioner Research Programme supports FE staff to explore their research ideas, build research skills and inform practice through action research and research development programmes funded by DfE (£520,000 allocated from 2018 to 2020). This is delivered through the University of Sunderland Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training which delivers Master of Arts short courses and Master of Philosophy programmes to around 50 practitioners per year, with £5,200 grant funding allocated to institutions for each participant. The 2019/20 academic year cohort saw 41 individuals enrolling (two withdrew): 19 on the MA short course, 13 on the MPhil year 1 and nine on the MPhil year 2.

Source: Evaluation of the Practitioner Research Programme (The ETF, October 2020); 2019-20 Grant Offer Letter to the Education and Training Foundation (DfE, March 2019)

Professional Exchange Networks

The Professional Exchange Networks (PENs) programme has been delivered annually since 2016. It is designed to bring together FE practitioners to identify practitioner-focused issues and support them to develop solutions, increase participation in formal professional development activities and ultimately improve learner attitudes, retention and attainment. The PENs are local practitioner groups organised by delivery partners across England. In the groups, practitioners can undertake action research, design resources and explore new approaches to teaching and learning. Groups decide how they would like to operate, whether it be face-to-face, peer-observation, online exchanges, or webinars. The Networks were allocated grant funding of £188,300 under the Basic Skills funding strand. In the 2019/20 cohort there were nine delivery partners responsible for 12 PENS delivered on a regional basis.

Source: Evaluation of the ETF Professional Exchange Networks (The ETF, September 2020); 2019-20 Grant Offer Letter to the Education and Training Foundation (DfE, March 2019)

Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills

The Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) programme started in October 2019. It is a status recognition of professionalism in teaching or training for newly qualified and experienced teachers with qualifications at Level 5 and above. The programme lasts six months and is delivered through SET, using an online platform which provides an online workbook with self-assessments, a professional development plan, CPD tools and courses, critical reflection report, and a final action plan which is supported and shared with a 'supporter'. Once QTLS has been completed, successful participants receive a certificate and are entered into the online QTLS register. The programme was allocated grant funding of £529,400 through Level 5 Functional Skills funding strand. In 2019-20, 800 practitioners achieved QTLS, with a further 2,000 professionals starting on the programme.

Source: Public Benefit Report (The ETF, 2020); 2019-20 Grant Offer Letter to the Education and Training Foundation (DfE, March 2019)

Safeguarding and Prevent

The ETF provides tailored training on safeguarding and prevent to ensure FE and Training Sector practitioners can use this in classroom delivery and tutor skills. The training is provided in numerous ways, including through forums and webinars, through the ETF website, side-to-side online modules and face-to-face bespoke in-house training on Prevent duty, British values, Safeguarding and Equality, and Diversity. This is for all staff that require further support, including employer and apprenticeship providers, independent training providers, adult education providers and FE colleges. The programme was allocated grant funding of £108,900, and Prevent online training modules were accessed over 254,000 times in 2019-20.

Source: Programme Monthly Performance Report (The ETF, March 2020); Foundation for Online Learning Attendance Data (The ETF, 2020); 2019-20 Grant Offer Letter to the Education and Training Foundation (DfE, March 2019); <https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/supporting/professional-development/inclusion/prevent/>

SET for Teaching Success programme

The programme started in July 2018 and aims to recruit, train, mentor and support 138 new teachers in SET (Science, Engineering and Technology), with a focus on technical education, in response to teacher shortages in this area. The programme was allocated grant funding of £1.4 million. Programme recruits complete Initial Teacher Education and Technical and Knowledge Skills Enhancement, along with subject updating and academic/industrial placements, and receive up to £6,000 for Level 5 Certificate of Education/PGCE fees. An organisation grant of £5,000 is also provided to support trainees throughout the programme. 36 practitioners participated in 2019/20.

Source: Final Evaluation of SET for Teaching Success and Further Forces (The ETF, September 2020); 2019-20 Grant Offer Letter to the Education and Training Foundation (DfE, March 2019); <https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/supporting/support-teacher-recruitment/set-teaching-success/>

Society for Education and Training

The Society for Education and Training (SET) is a professional membership body for teachers, trainers, tutors and other professionals working in the Further Education and Training Sector. It is member-led and supports individuals to be excellent in their practice, enhancing the professional status of member teachers and trainers through CPD. In 2020 there were over 20,000 SET members.

Source: SET Membership Demographic Report (SET, September 2020)

Study programmes

Study programmes were introduced in 2013 and are programmes of learning available to all full-time students aged 16 to 19. Students who do not hold at least a GCSE grade 4 are required to study maths and English (as Functional Skills or GCSEs) as part of their study programme in each academic year. Study programmes each have a core learning aim tailored to individual needs and include a 'substantial' qualification, which can be either academic or technical, delivered over six months with support from the delivery partner. They also include work experience and non-qualification activities such as youth social action, whereby young people engage in socially impactful activities that also support the development of wider employability skills. The programme was allocated grant funding of £459,400 as part of the Basic Skills strand and engaged 23 providers in 2019-20.

Source: Evaluation of Study Programme Support 2019-20 (The ETF, July 2020); 2019-20 Grant Offer Letter to the Education and Training Foundation (DfE, March 2019)

T Level Professional Development programme (TLPD)

This programme aims to ensure colleges deliver high quality teaching leading to successful outcomes for T Level learners. It supports teachers due to teach T Levels to develop their understanding of what T Levels are, raise standards of pedagogy, ensure industry-relevance of teachers' subject knowledge, strengthen teaching of English, maths and digital and facilitate collaboration between T Level providers. The programme was allocated grant funding of £6.6 million and there were over 9,241 attendees in 2019-20.

Source: The ETF Booking System Survey Data (The ETF, September 2020); 2019-20 Grant Offer Letter to the Education and Training Foundation (DfE, March 2019)

Taking Teaching Further

The programme began in June 2018. It aims to attract industry professionals to work in FE by testing various routes for professionals to enter the sector, and strengthen links between FE and industry so students can gain knowledge and skills needed for employment. The programme was allocated grant funding of £4.6 million to support up to 150 industry professionals (having recruited 133 in 2019-20) to undertake a Level 5 teaching qualification over two years, with practical support through shadowing and mentoring.

Source: Taking Teaching Further Evaluation: Process Evaluation of Strand 1 (Department for Education, November 2019); 2019-20 Grant Offer Letter to the Education and Training Foundation (DfE, March 2019)

Talent to Teach programme

The Talent to Teach programme aims to raise awareness among final year undergraduates of opportunities to teach in FE. The programme works with higher education institutions and local FE providers to recruit and find placements for third-year undergraduates. During these placements, undergraduates experience working with learners in workshops/classrooms and receive ongoing mentoring. The programme is offered across all regions of England, was allocated grant funding of £1.4 million and had 190 participants between July 2019 and February 2020 (out of a target of 400).

Source: 2019-20 Grant Offer Letter to the Education and Training Foundation (DfE, March 2019); <https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/supporting/support-teacher-recruitment/talent-to-teach/>

Technical Teaching Fellowships

Technical Teaching Fellowships are awards that promote excellence in the delivery of technical education to raise profile and share practice with the wider education sector. The Fellowships have been carried out in 20 institutions (each with Fellowships) across England. Each was allocated funding (£5,000-15,000) to support mentoring activity during the fellowships. Fellows develop 'Pathways to Impact' plans, attend developmental workshops, disseminate their work at national conferences and deliver a final report. In 2019-20, two Technical Teaching Fellowships were undertaken.

Source: Technical Teaching Fellowships 2019-20 (The ETF, 2020)

Annex B: Quality of evidence

B.1 The table below provides a red, amber and green (RAG) rating of the quality of the impact evidence available for all programmes reviewed for this report. Following a review of all evidence, the following data limitations were identified:

- In 2019-20, the ETF used the COM-B and Kirkpatrick frameworks for programme evaluation and most impact evidence is focused on programme participants, with weaker evidence for organisational and learner impact. This is exacerbated by annual grant funding for both programme delivery and evaluation, limiting available data for changes to participants' professional practice, organisational performance and learner outcomes.
- While all programmes to be included in the report have been monitored, some have not been subject to external evaluation. This means that in some cases the only evidence of impact available is reach and engagement derived from project management information.
- Some evidence is from 2018-19, where evidence is not available for the 2019-20 period. Where this occurs, earlier evidence is included in this first annual impact report, reflecting the inclusion of such evidence in the Public Benefit Report of the same year.



Table B-1: RAG rating of evidence quality

Programme	RAG rating
Advanced Practitioner programme	Green
Advanced Teacher Status (ATS)	Green
Apprenticeships CPD	Red
Centres for Excellence in Maths	Green
Centres for Excellence in SEND	Amber
Chairs Leadership programme	Green
Diversity in Leadership programme	Green
Enhance Digital Teaching Platform	Amber
ESOL CPD	Red
Maths and English Continuous Professional Learning and Development (CPLD)	Green
Middle Managers programme	Green
Opportunity Areas Middle Managers programme	Green
Outstanding Teaching, Learning and Assessment	Green
Practitioner Research Programme	Green
Professional Exchange Networks	Green
Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS)	Amber
Safeguarding and Prevent	Amber
SET for Teaching Success programme and Further Forces programme	Green
Society for Education and Training (SET)	Amber
Study programme Support	Green
T Level Workforce Development programme	Amber
Taking Teaching Further	Green
Talent to Teach programme	Green
Teach Too programme	Red
Teaching and Learning CPD	Red
Technical Teaching Fellowships	Green

Annex C: Source documents

C.1 Listed below are the source documents provided by the ETF to SQW. Most are not publicly available.

- Department for Education (2020) T Level Professional Development (TLPD) Initial phase evaluation. *Prepared by CFE Research.* Available at: T Level Professional Development evaluation (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- Department for Education (2019) 2019-20 Grant Offer Letter to the Education and Training Foundation. *Letter, 26th March 2019.*
- Department for Education (2019) Taking Teaching Further Evaluation: Process Evaluation of Strand 1. *Prepared by IFF Research.*
- Department for Education (2020) T Level Professional Development Programme: Findings from provider visits and ETF monitoring data. *Prepared by CFE Research.*
- SET (2020) SET Membership Demographic Report. *Programme management report.*
- SET (2020) SET Programme Management Data.
- The ETF (2020) Diversity in Leadership Programme Evaluation Report. *Prepared by the Research Base.*
- The ETF (2020) Ed-Tech Course Rating Data. *Programme management data.*
- The ETF (2020) ETF's Enhance Digital Teaching Platform Feedback Form. *Survey data.*
- The ETF (2020) Evaluation of Centres for Excellence in Maths – Year 1 interim report. *Prepared by ICF Consulting Services Ltd.*
- The ETF (2020) Evaluation of Centres for Excellence in SEND: Interim report. *Prepared by RINA Consulting.*
- The ETF (2020) Evaluation of Study Programme Support 2019-20. *Prepared by the Learning and Work Institute.*
- The ETF (2020) Evaluation of the Chairs Leadership Programme. *Prepared by NatCen Social Research.*
- The ETF (2020) Evaluation of the ETF Professional Exchange Networks. *Prepared by CSPACE at Birmingham City University.*
- The ETF (2020) Evaluation of the Practitioner Research Programme. *Prepared by SQW.*
- The ETF (2020) Evaluation of the Talent To Teach Programme Final Report. *Prepared by CFE Research.*
- The ETF (2020) Final Evaluation of SET for Teaching Success and Further Forces. *Prepared by ICF Consulting Services Ltd.*
- The ETF (2020) Foundation for Online Learning Attendance Data. *Programme management data.*
- The ETF (2020) Further Education Workforce Data For England: Analysis of the 2018-2019 Staff Individualised Record (SIR) data. *Prepared by Frontier Economics.*
- The ETF (2020) Opportunity Areas Middle Manager Programmes Case Study. *Programme management report.*
- The ETF (2020) Outstanding Teaching, Learning and Assessment: A summary of projects in the OTLA Phase 6 (English) Programme. *Prepared by Claire Colins Consultancy, That Reading Thing and Skills Digital.*
- The ETF (2020) Programme Area Monthly Performance Report: Wellbeing and Social Inclusion. *Programme management report.*
- The ETF (2020) Public Benefit Report: 2019-20
- The ETF (2020) Taking Teaching Further Case Study: Case study A
- The ETF (2020) Taking Teaching Further Case Study: Case study B
- The ETF (2020) Taking Teaching Further Case Study: Case study C
- The ETF (2020) Technical Teaching Fellowships. *Programme management report.*
- The ETF (2020) The ETF Booking System Data. *Programme management data.*
- The ETF (2020) The ETF Booking System Survey Data. *Programme management data.*
- The ETF (2020) Year 2 Evaluation of the Advanced Practitioner Programme. *Prepared by ICF Consulting Services Ltd.*
- The ETF (2020) OTLA Evaluation: Final Report. *Prepared by the Institute for Employment Studies.*
- The ETF (2019-2020) QTLS Participant Experience Survey. *Programme management data.*
- The ETF (2019) ATS Cohorts 3 and 4: Results of first surveys. *Prepared by Dr Linda Carter.*
- The ETF (2019) ATS Evaluation Study Cohort 1. *Prepared by Dr Linda Carter.*
- The ETF (2019) Evaluation of the Maths and English Continuous Professional Learning and Development Offer: 2014–2019. *Prepared by RINA Consulting.*
- The ETF (2019) Opportunity Areas Middle Management Programme 2018 – 2019. *Prepared by Kathryn Ramsay at the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.*
- The ETF (2019) Taking Teaching Further Quotes. *Programme management data.*
- The ETF (2019) The Evaluation of the Middle Managers Programme Final Report. *Prepared by ICF Consulting Ltd.*

Annex D: Coding frequency distribution

- D.1** Qualitative evaluation and programme management reports were coded using MaxQDA software, allowing for robust systematic analysis. The coding framework was developed based on the report sections and the Kirkpatrick framework. Routes to impact were also identified. The table below shows the coding frequency distribution and the number of programmes which were coded in each section.
- D.2** The Kirkpatrick levels used in the coding framework depended on the focus of the impact, so each impact section in the table may not include the same set of codes. The material coded was triangulated with data and survey responses to develop the report. Please note, routes to impact codes are not shown on this table; instead their frequencies are incorporated into the Kirkpatrick code it related to.
- D.3** Whilst the coding frequencies presented below give an indication of the quantity of material available, it does not give an assessment of the quality of material. For example, some areas with high code frequencies (e.g. practitioner reaction) was often repetitive and did not provide strong evidence of programme impact.

Table D-1: Coding frequencies by report section

GROW		LEAD		INFORM		DEVELOP	
Code	Count	Code	Count	Code	Count	Code	Count
Recruit expertise and talent (4 programmes)		Develop leaders (2 programmes)		Support practitioner research (5 programmes)		Provide training and CPD (14 programmes)	
Reach/attendance	19	Reach/attendance	2	Reach/attendance	8	Reach/attendance	12
Practitioner reaction	19	Practitioner reaction	16	Practitioner reaction	40	Practitioner reaction	83
Practitioner learning	18	Practitioner learning	9	Practitioner learning	26	Practitioner learning	21
Impacts for organisations	10	Practitioner behaviour	10	Practitioner behaviour	97	Practitioner behaviour	118
Impacts for learners	8	Impacts for organisations	20	Impacts for organisations	67	Impacts for organisations	62
FE and Training sector impacts	9	Impacts for learners	0	Impacts for learners	34	Impacts for learners	43
Other impacts	2	FE and Training sector impacts	10	FE and Training sector impacts	20	FE and Training sector impacts	4
		Other impacts	0	Other impacts	7	Other impacts	0
Grow SET membership (2 programmes)		Develop middle management (1 programme)				Facilitate professional exchange (1 programme)	
Reach/attendance	7	Reach/attendance	4			Reach/attendance	10
FE and Training sector impacts	0	Practitioner reaction	16			Practitioner reaction	34
Other impacts	0	Practitioner learning	12			Practitioner learning	14
		Practitioner behaviour	15			Practitioner behaviour	18
		Impacts for organisations	30			Impacts for organisations	17
		Impacts for learners	7			Impacts for learners	7
		FE and Training sector impacts	1			FE and Training sector impacts	21
		Other impacts	0			Other impacts	0
Establish ATS (1 programme)		Develop chairs and governors (2 programmes)					
Reach/attendance	2	Reach/attendance	0				
Practitioner reaction	18	Practitioner reaction	6				
Practitioner learning	1	Practitioner learning	6				
Practitioner behaviour	9	Impacts for organisations	6				
Impacts for organisations	2	FE and Training sector impacts	1				
FE and Training sector impacts	0	Other impacts	4				
Other impacts	0						

INDEPENDENT ANALYSIS

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We welcome any feedback on this report to help inform the 2020–2021 Impact Report.

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