



Department
for Education

Further education college workforce analysis

England

January 2021

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Introduction

The Teachers' Pensions Scheme (TPS) is a Defined Benefit Scheme based on earnings registered with HM Revenue and Customs available to all teachers in England and Wales. Data are available on everyone eligible for a teacher pension since 1998, however this has changed over time (e.g. regulatory change in 2007 to an 'Opt Out' scheme not 'Opt In').

The data covers Further Education (FE) institutions (including all types of FE colleges and sixth form colleges), primary and secondary schools, and post-92 universities. Data also cover other state-funded provision, such as adult welfare centres. Staff in independent training providers are not covered in the data.

This publication includes new experimental analysis focusing solely on the FE college¹ workforce in England using TPS data. Work will continue to improve the statistics as knowledge of the underlying data source develops.

Other sources of FE workforce data include:

- [Education and Skills Funding Agency \(ESFA\)](#) holds a database of college finance records which replicate colleges' audited financial statements insofar as they are able for general and specialist FE colleges in England (including sixth form colleges).
- [College Staff Survey 2018](#) which reports on the experience and expectations of teachers and leaders at general and specialist FE colleges in England (excluding sixth form colleges).
- [Staff Individualised Record \(SIR\)](#) is an annual survey of the FE provider workforce in England including colleges, independent training providers, local authorities and others.
- [Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings \(ASHE\)](#) is one of the largest surveys of the earnings of individuals in the UK with information on the levels, distribution and make-up of earnings and paid hours worked for employees in all industries and occupations. The ASHE data contain estimates of earnings for employees by sex and full-time or part-time status with further breakdowns included by region, occupation, industry, age group and public or private sector.

¹ General FE College (including Tertiary), Sixth Form College and Specialist College (including Art, Design and Performing Arts College and Land-Based College)

Measures and coverage

Teachers in service

Teachers are counted as 'in service' within an academic year if they have a valid contract within an FE college at the start of the FE academic year (1st August). In 2017/18, TPS data is estimated to have around 90 per cent coverage when FE teacher counts are compared to those from the College Staff Survey and ESFA college accounts. It is not possible to test the coverage across all years, so caution should be applied when interpreting results across academic years.

Teacher mobility

New entrant teachers for a particular year are those with no FE college contracts in any previous years while teachers leaving FE colleges are those with no FE college contracts in subsequent academic years. Data prior to 1998 were not available for this analysis so it is not possible to identify whether teachers had contracts prior to that year.

Note that TPS changing to an 'Opt Out' scheme in 2007 means that prior to 2007, new entrant teachers may just reflect a teacher signing up to TPS after having been in service for a period of time. From 2007, teachers that 'Opt Out' continued to be included within the data. Caution should be taken in comparing figures before and after 2007 due to the regulatory change in 2007 from an 'Opt In' to an 'Opt Out' pension scheme.

The **retention rate** for new entrant teachers is defined as the percentage of new entrants recorded in service within FE colleges in the years after they started teaching.

The **attrition rate** for all teachers is defined as the percentage of the teaching cohort not recorded in service within FE colleges in the years after the cohort year.

Teachers' pay

Teachers' pay is defined to be the full-time equivalent (FTE) salary for contracts valid at the start of the FE academic year. All pay estimates are in nominal terms, i.e. not adjusted for inflation. The following pay measures are presented within this analysis:

Median calculated by ranking all teachers' FTE salaries and taking the value at which half of teachers fall above and half fall below so this is the central value when all salary observations are ordered.

Inter-quartile range which is the middle 50 per cent of the salary distribution between the **lower quartile** and the **upper quartile**. The lower quartile is calculated by ranking all teachers' FTE salaries and taking the value at which three quarters of teachers fall above and one quarter fall below. The upper quartile is calculated by ranking all teachers' FTE salaries and taking the value at which one quarter of teachers fall above and three quarters fall below.

Percentiles show for example the 95th percentile which is calculated by ranking all teachers' FTE salaries and taking the value at which five per cent of teachers fall above and 95 per cent fall below.

The Code of Practice for Statistics requires us to take reasonable steps to ensure that our published or disseminated statistics protect confidentiality. Where appropriate we apply disclosure control to protect confidentiality. Numbers are rounded to the nearest 10 and percentages to the nearest 0.1%. The figures presented may not sum to totals due to rounding. Percentages are calculated using pre-rounded data.

Teachers' pay

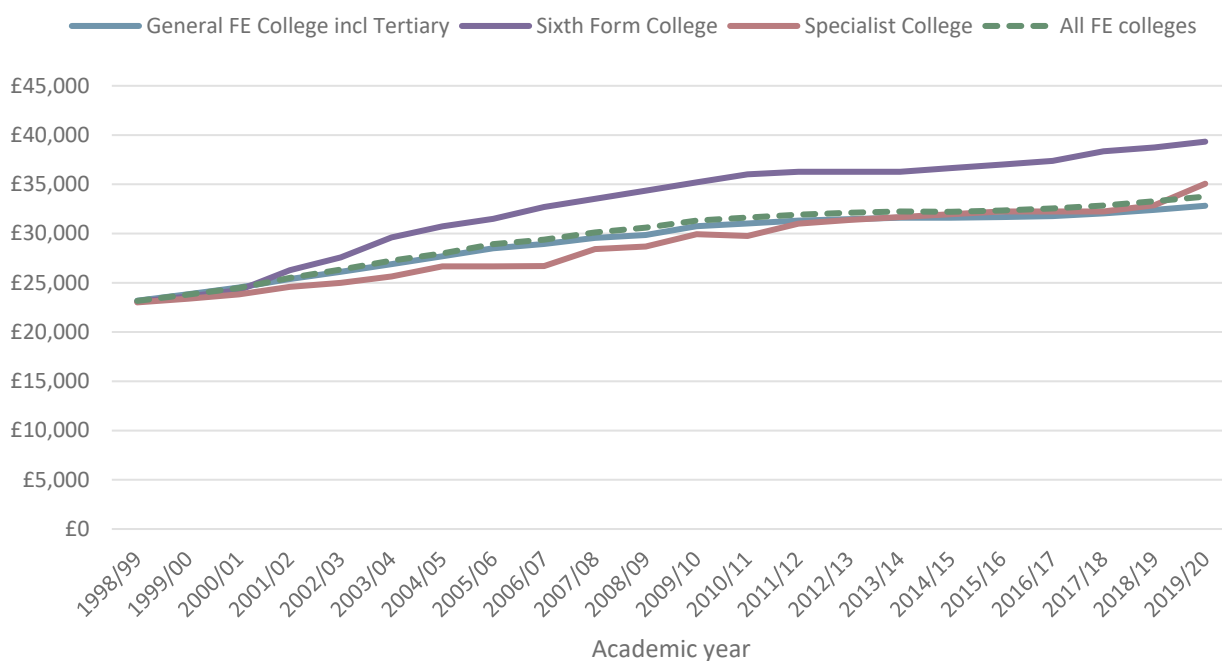
The pay analysis presented in this section provides figures in nominal terms so have not been adjusted for inflation.

Pay by type of college

The figure below shows the median pay for teachers in FE colleges by type of college. In 2019/20, median pay for all FE colleges was £33,750 with teachers in Sixth Form Colleges (SFCs) having higher median pay than teachers at General FE colleges (GFECs) and Specialist colleges.

The latest SIR² reported in 2018/19 the median annual pay of full-time teaching staff at FE colleges was £32,500 which is slightly lower than the FTE estimate from TPS (£33,280) for the same year³. Note that the SIR estimate includes only full-time teaching staff pay for contracts in existence throughout the whole of 2018/19.

Figure 1: Median teachers' pay by college type, 1998/99 to 2019/20

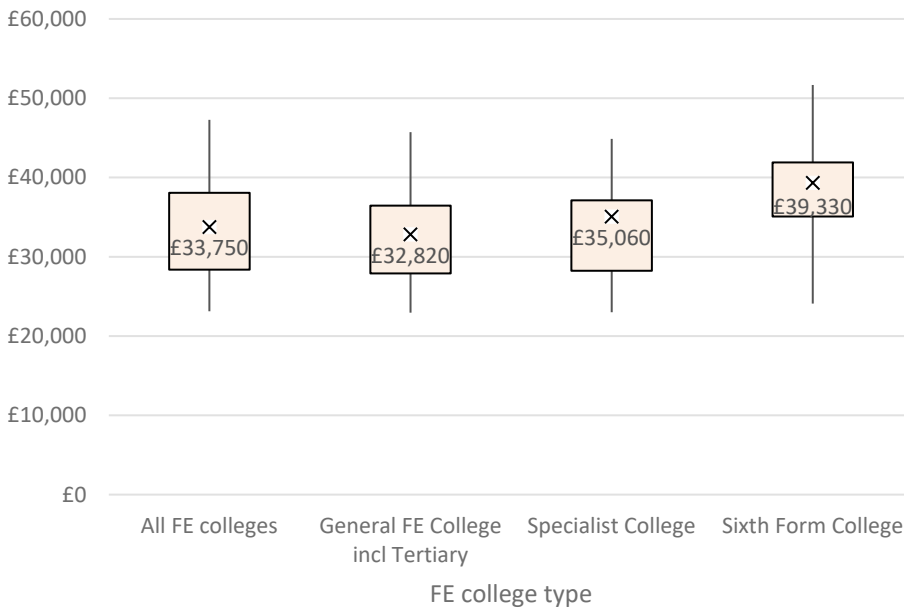


Since 2001/02 median pay for teachers in SFCs has been higher than both GFECs and Specialist colleges, and the gap has widened. The pay distribution for teachers in SFCs also sits higher with a greater range at the top as shown by the figure below.

² Staff Individualised Record 2018/19: <https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/supporting/research/workforce-data/>

³ DfE analysis of ASHE data shows that in 2018 the median full-time pay of individuals with an occupation of 'FE teaching professionals' in England was £35,898. Further to this the median full-time pay for 'FE teaching professionals' at an employer with an industry of 'Technical and vocational secondary education' was £31,701.

Figure 2: Distribution of teachers' pay by college type, 2019/20



How to read this type of chart

The median (the central value when all salary observations are ordered) is shown as the "x".

The chart also shows the inter-quartile range (the middle 50% of the salary distribution) as the rectangle,

The 5th percentile (the value below which 5% of salary observations are found) is the bottom of the line.

The 95th percentile (the value above which 5% of salary observations are found) is the top of the line.

Pay by region of college

Teachers in London based colleges had the highest median pay of all English regions. The distribution of teachers' pay in London based colleges also sits higher than in other regions. The lowest median pay was observed for teachers in colleges based in the South West.

Figure 3: Median teachers' pay by region of college, 1998/99 to 2019/20

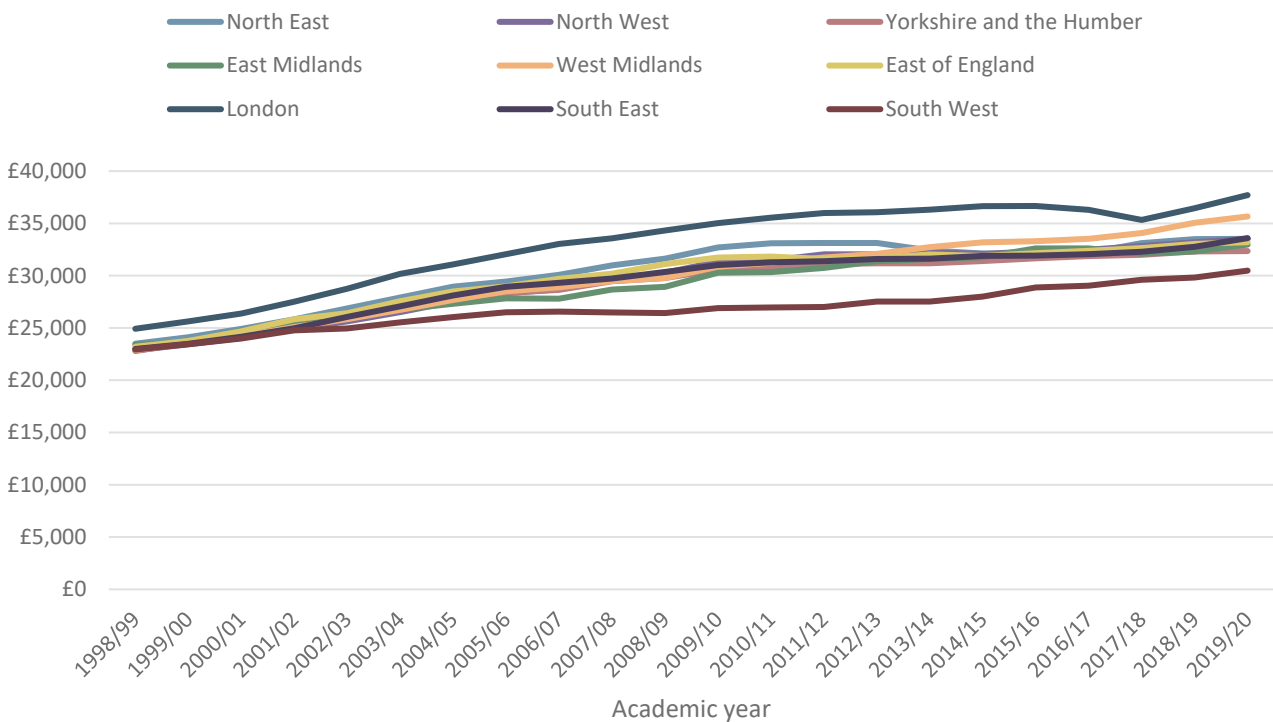
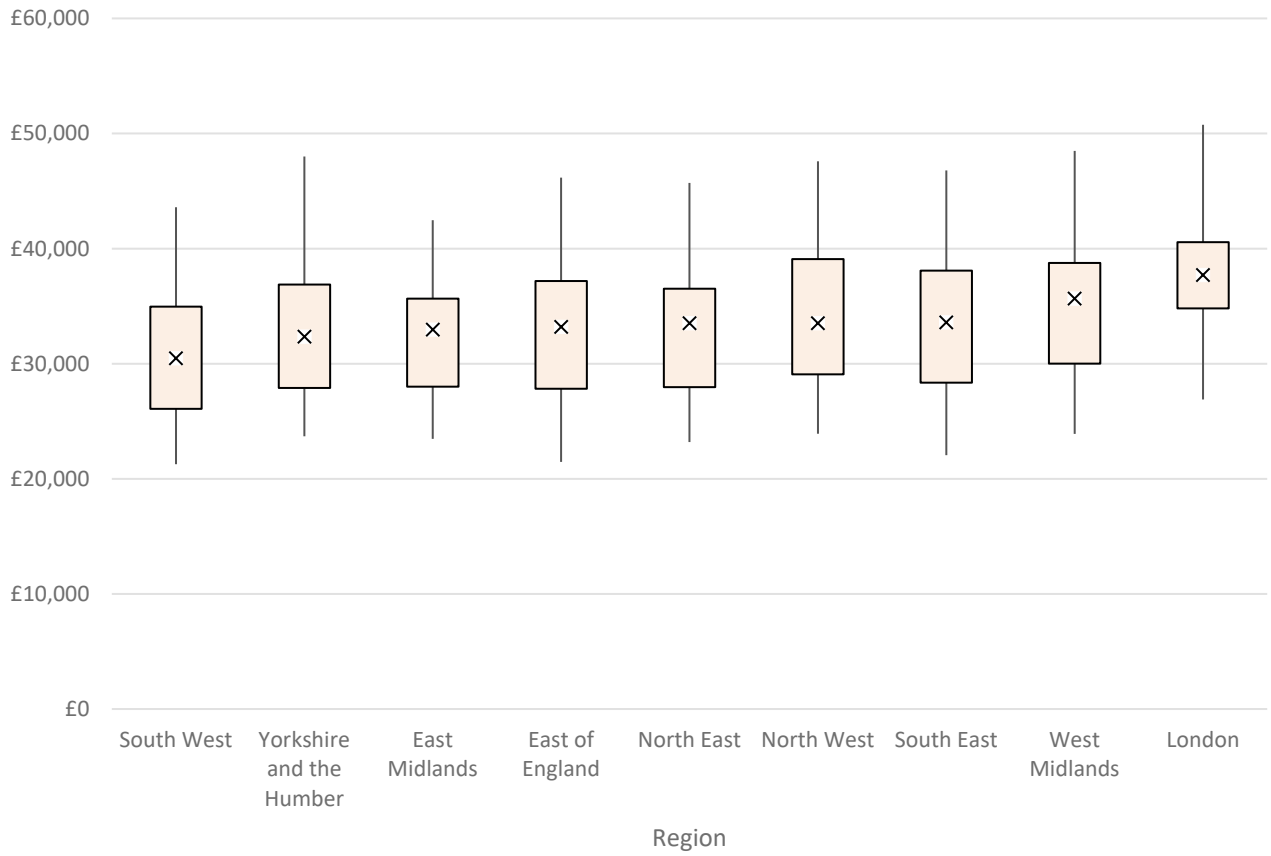


Figure 4: Distribution of teachers' pay by region of college, 2019/20



New entrant teachers

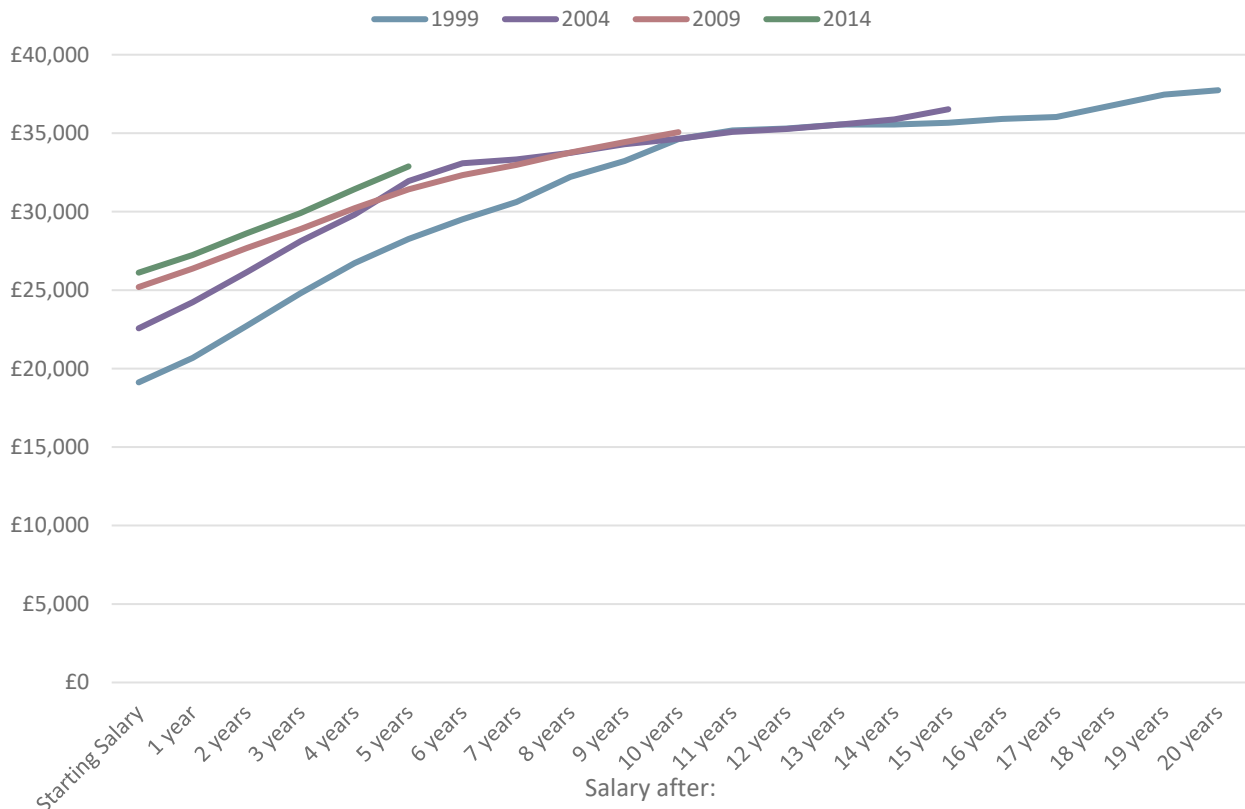
The analysis in this section focuses on new entrant teachers into FE colleges. Note that TPS changing to an 'Opt Out' scheme in 2007 means that prior to 2007, new entrant teachers may just reflect a teacher signing up to TPS after having been in service for a period of time. New entrant teachers into FE colleges will also include teachers who have transferred from another phase of education (e.g. from secondary education) and also those who transfer from providers not included within TPS such as independent training providers (ITPs).

In 2017/18, TPS data is estimated to have around 90 per cent coverage when FE teacher counts are compared to those from the College Staff Survey and ESFA college accounts. It is not possible to test the coverage across all years, so caution should be applied when interpreting results across academic years.

Starting salaries and pay progression

The figure below shows the median starting salaries for new teachers by the year they started teaching and then follows each teacher cohort's pay progression. The greatest pay progression is predominantly seen within the first five years of teachers starting in FE colleges. There has been a general downward trend in salary increases which have otherwise been largely consistent in the most recent 10 years. Detailed data are available in table 3.1.

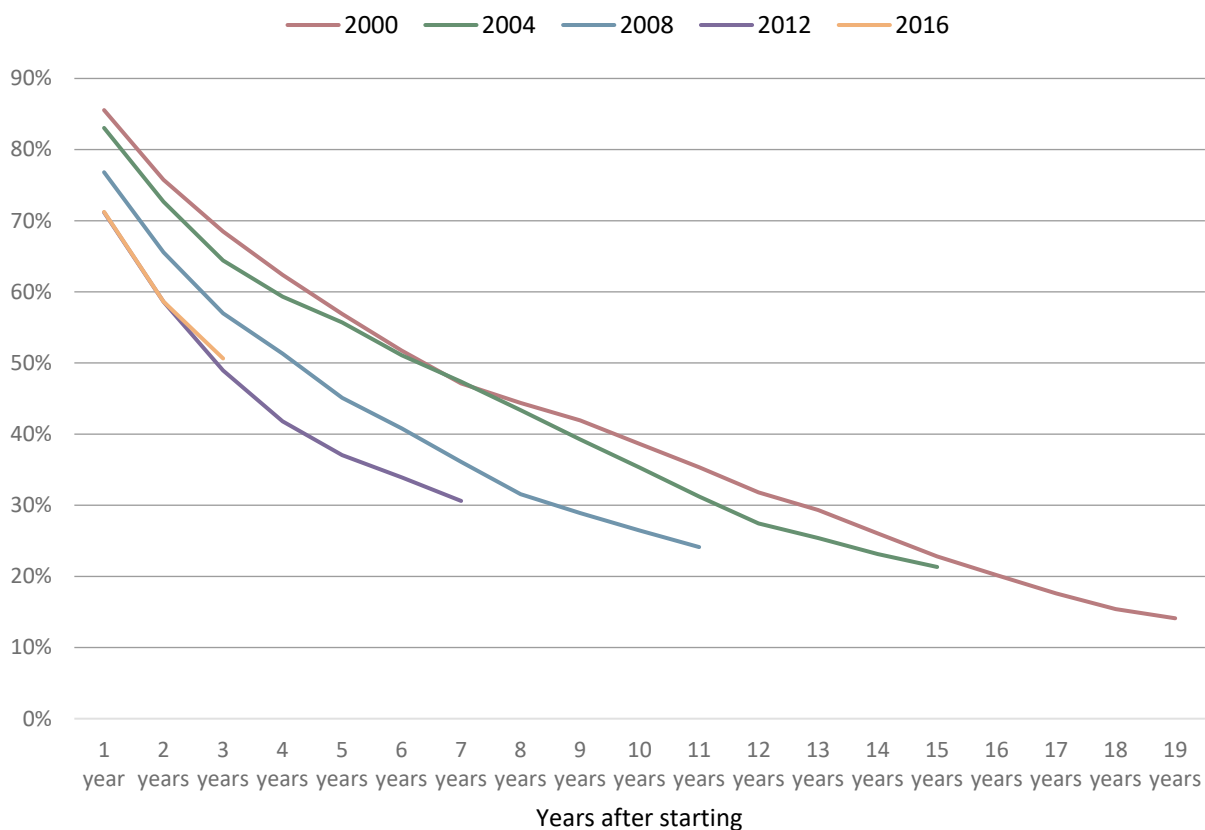
Figure 5: Median starting salaries and pay progression by cohort start year



Retention rates

The figure below shows the proportion of new entrant teachers still teaching in FE colleges in the years after they started teaching. The retention rate has fallen for more recent cohorts especially after the first few years of teaching with just over half (51 per cent) of teachers who started in 2016 still teaching after 3 years while 68 per cent of teachers who started in 2000 were still teaching after 3 years. Detailed data are available in table 3.2.

Figure 6: Retention rates for new teachers by start year, 1999 to 2018



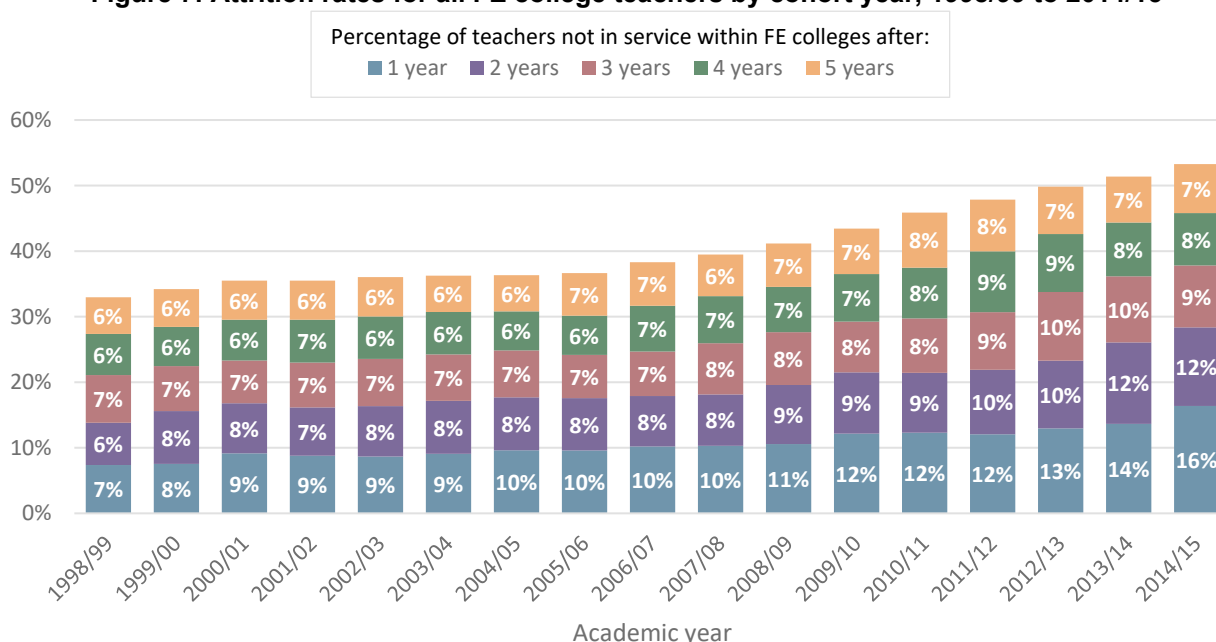
Teachers leaving FE colleges

The analysis in this section focuses on teachers leaving FE colleges. Teachers leaving FE colleges will include teachers who have transferred to another phase of education and also those who transfer to providers not included within TPS such as ITPs.

Attrition rates

The figure below shows the proportion of the teaching cohort not recorded in service within FE colleges in the years after the cohort year. Attrition rates have increased in recent years with over half (53 per cent) of teachers in 2014/15 no longer teaching after 5 years while in 1998/99 only one third (33 per cent) of teachers were no longer teaching after five years, this increase is driven mainly by a greater proportion of teachers leaving within two academic years. Detailed data are available in table 4.1.

Figure 7: Attrition rates for all FE college teachers by cohort year, 1998/99 to 2014/15



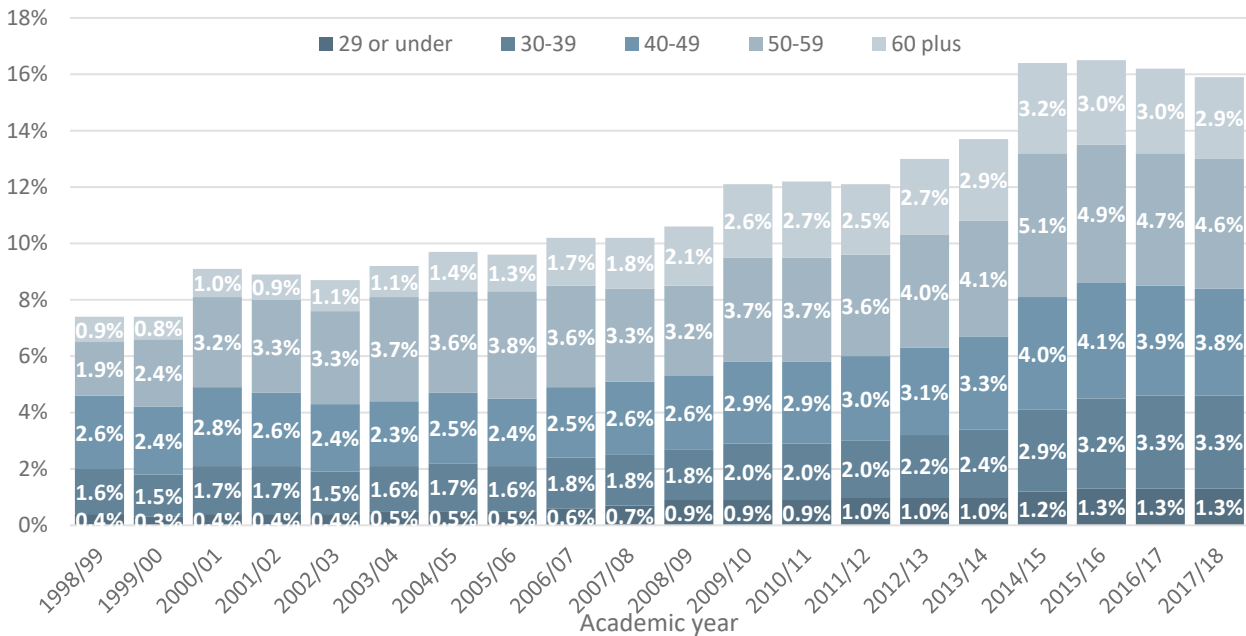
The College Staff Survey 2018 and 2019 follow up⁴ examined churn in the FE sector and although this is not directly comparable to this analysis the findings do provide context. Overall, four in ten teachers said they were likely to leave FE in the next twelve months (42%). This included two per cent who said they already had a job outside FE and a further 14% who said they were very likely to leave. The follow up survey found that one in eight teachers and leaders (13%) had left their main stage college over the last year for any reason, including retirement, career breaks or to work elsewhere.

⁴ College Staff Survey: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/college-staff-survey-2018>

Age profile of leavers

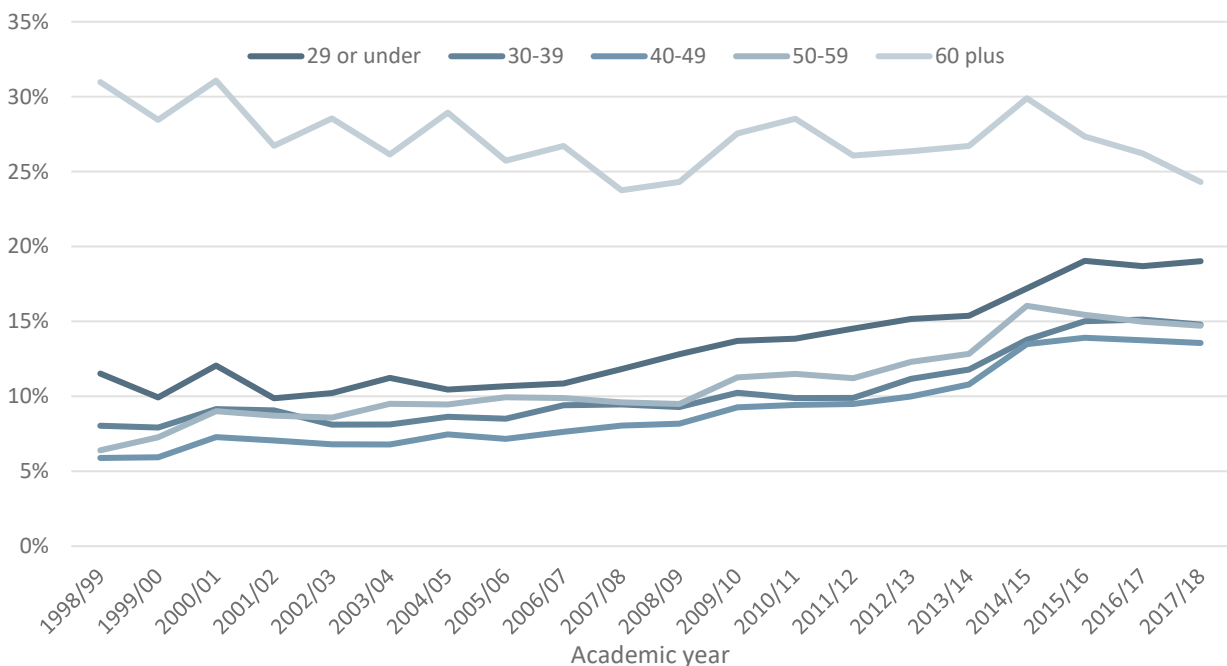
The figure below shows the age breakdown of teachers leaving FE colleges after one academic year, with the majority of teachers leaving being aged 50-59 followed by those aged 40-49.

Figure 8: Percentage of all teachers leaving FE colleges after one academic year by age group, 1998/99 to 2017/18



Further analysis of the attrition rate within each age group below shows there has been an increase in the rate at which teachers leave FE colleges after one academic year for those aged under 60 while for over 60s this has been fairly stable which highlights the ageing FE college workforce.

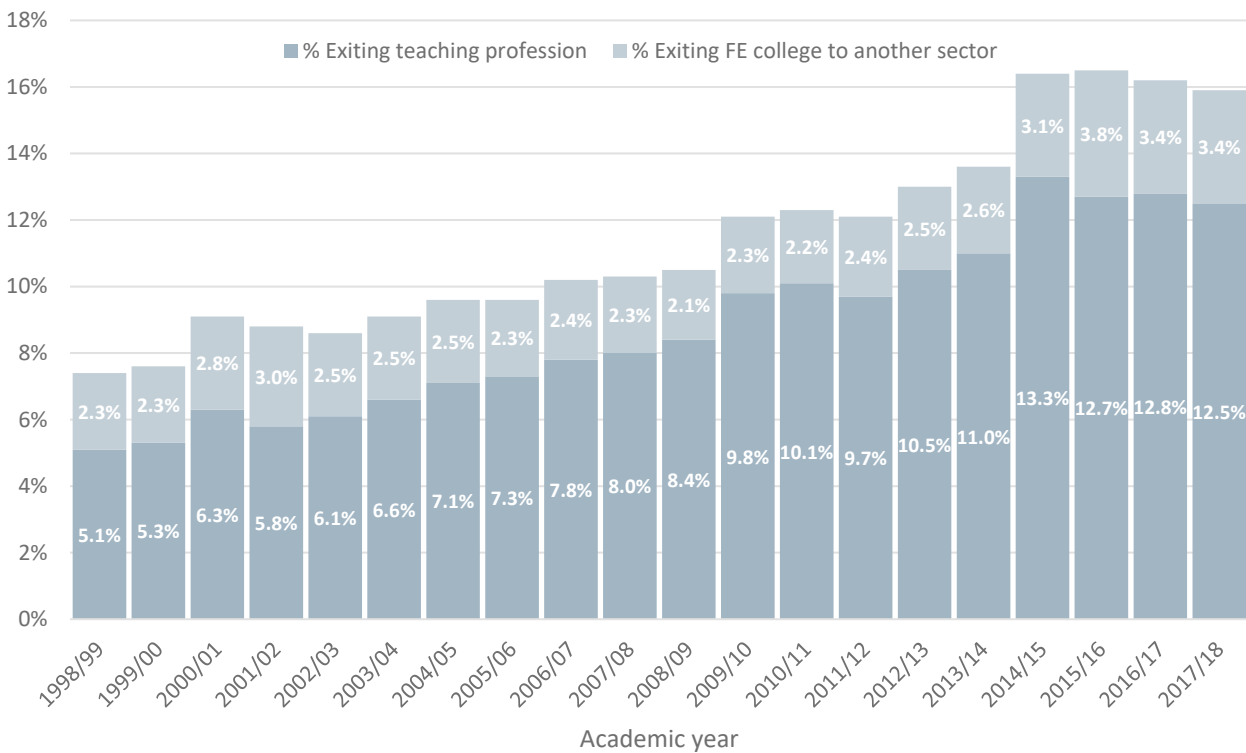
Figure 9: Percentage of teachers within each age group leaving FE colleges after one academic year, 1998/99 to 2017/18



Destinations of leavers

The figure below shows the total proportion of teachers leaving FE colleges after one academic year split by whether the teacher was subsequently teaching in another education sector or leaving the teaching profession entirely. Note that as ITPs are not included within TPS data it is not possible to distinguish teachers leaving FE colleges to teach in ITPs from those exiting the profession. The data shows that there has consistently been around two to three per cent of FE college teachers that have left to teach in another sector of education.

Figure 10: Percentage of all teachers leaving FE colleges after one academic year by destination, 1998/99 to 2017/18





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Reference: DfE-00190-2020



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