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**Professional Diploma in Teaching (Further Education and Skills)**

**Guidance on the full teaching qualification for the further education and skills sector**

**NB: DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION ONLY. NO FORMAL STATUS**

# November 2021

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**ETF Guidance for Professional Diploma in Teaching (Further Education & Skills)**

# Section 1: Overview

## 1.1 Purpose of document

This document is to provide guidance on the structure of the Professional Diploma in Teaching (FE & Skills) primarily for use by Awarding Organisations (AOs) in their development of full qualifications for teachers in the FE and Skills sector. This new qualification replaces the Diploma in Education and Training (DET), and any differently named HEI qualifications based upon the DET. AOs are advised to design qualifications in line with the following framework in order for such qualifications to attract public funding and also for the ho0lder to be eligible for progression to QTLS.

The guidance may also be useful to:

* Employers of teachers and trainers (including colleges of further education, independent training providers, local authorities, the third sector, the military, uniformed services, young offender institutions, prison education and the probation service)
* Human resource (HR) managers and line managers
* Staff development managers
* Newly employed teachers and trainers and existing staff
* Course providers and teacher educators
* Union branches and their branch learning representatives.
* Those considering teaching as a career.

How to use this document:

**1.2 The document is arranged as follows.**

* **Section 1** provides an overview of what the document covers
* **Section 2** looks at recent changes within the sector and indicates the general direction of travel as suggested by government policies
* **Section 3** provides guidance for Awarding Organisations on developing the qualification
* **Section 4** provides the structure of the qualification, including the recommended guided learning hours, teaching practice and assessed observation requirements

## 1.3 Enquiries about this document

All enquiries about this document should in the first instance be directed to the National Head of ITE Development & Advice at ETF, Howard Pilott at [howard.pilott@etfoundation.co.uk](mailto:howard.pilott@etfoundation.co.uk)

# Section 2: Background and context for the guidance

## 2.1 Updating and Higher Technical Qualification status

The Diploma in Education and Training was released in 2013 since when there have been many changes in the FE & Skills sector as well as in the wider context. Additionally teaching as a discipline has moved, and so, as a consequence, a review of the full teaching qualification is due. Alongside this, the Government has implemented a Higher Technical Qualification review process[[1]](#footnote-1), which requires AOs to:

align their qualifications to employer designed occupational standards[[2]](#footnote-2)

As new occupations standards have been developed and approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education [IfATE][[3]](#footnote-3), it is therefore necessary for the qualification to be revised. This document provides the basis for AOs to revise their offers.

This new qualification has been developed for those working or intending to work in the FE & Skills sector. The spectrum of providers in the sector is immense including further education colleges, adult and community education providers, offender education, work based learning providers, the third / voluntary sector and a plethora of independent training organisations. There are over two million students in further education colleges alone.

These providers cater for a diverse range of learning need and aspiration which include and may combine:

* Individuals from age 14 – 60+
* Those seeking academic, vocational or professional qualifications
* Individuals seeking new qualifications and / or skills for career change or development
* People from a diverse range of cultures and ethnicities
* Newly arrived migrants who may have recent traumatic experiences
* Learners who have previously been failed by the education system
* Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

The structure of the Professional Diploma in Teaching allows a flexibility to reflect this spectrum of provision and the needs and aspirations of wide range participating learners.

Teaching within the education and training sector is a challenging but potentially exciting and rewarding career choice.

## 2.2 Role of the Education & Training Foundation

### 2.2.1 Qualifications and regulations

The Education and Training Foundation (ETF) is the workforce development organisation for the FE & Skills sector. It published updated guidance for the DET in 2016 and took responsibility for Covid mitigations for ITE qualifications during the pandemic. It is therefore well placed to oversee the development and roll out of new qualifications for FE & Skills teachers. In this light the DfE has authorised the ETF convened ITE Forum to take responsibility for proposals in this area. The ITE Forum is a representative stakeholder grouping which includes AO, employer, funding and regulatory authority, and other representation. The ITE Forum constituted a working group to provide proposals for this new qualification and these have now received sector input and general approval. ETF will continue to maintain a watchful eye on this area and will from time to time issue updates to this guidance as necessary.

The Education and Training Foundation recommends TQT for the suite of Education and Training qualifications as follows:

### 2.2.2 Professional standards

ETF developed the current set of Professional Standards for the FE & Skills sector These define the professional requirements of teachers, trainers and tutors of post 16 learners, and underpin effective teaching practice in the sector. The standards:

* set out clear expectations of effective practice in education and training;
* enable teachers and trainers to identify areas for their own professional development;
* support initial teacher education;
* provide a national reference point that organisations can use to support the development of their staff

The current standards can be accessed at [professional standards](http://www.et-foundation.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/4991-Prof-standards-A4_4-2.pdf) . It should be noted that the standards are currently subject to review.

## 2.3 Policy context

### Government priorities

The Government has made clear its commitment to the FE & Skills sector in the White Paper*Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth January 2021*[[4]](#footnote-4). It presents a number of ambitious goals for the advancement of the sector including employer engagement, technical qualifications, skills guarantees, and improving teaching. Chapter 5 has a section entitled *Effective initial teacher education*, within which it states:

145. We are improving initial teacher education so that all publicly funded training will be rooted in employer-led standards... Based on this new standard, we will support the redevelopment of further education initial teacher education qualifications, so that they too are based on the same clear set of outcomes.[[5]](#footnote-5)

This new qualification follows on from that intention. A level 5 apprenticeship has been approved by IfATE, the Learning & Skills Teacher, and this new qualification will mirror the standards achieved via that apprenticeship route. There are currently no plans to regulate this provision but the Government makes plain in the White Paper that if desired improvements are not evidenced in FE teaching, then they reserve the right to take a more interventionist approach:

146. We will work closely with the sector to bring about the improvements to quality that we all agree are so important to improving teaching in further education settings. However, we are clear that substantial change is needed, and we will consider introducing new statutory powers for the Secretary of State to take a more active role in regulating the provision of initial teacher education, if the improvement we need to see is not achieved.[[6]](#footnote-6)

# Section 3: Guidance for Awarding Organisations

## 3.1 General guidance

This document lays out the parameters of the Professional Diploma in Teaching (FE & Skills). In order for courses offering this award to be eligible for public funding of any description, they must comply with these guidelines. It is for Awarding Organisations to turn these into a qualification. This means the elaboration of the content and any option units to be offered. It should always be borne in mind that this is a minimum level 5 award and any options should be at appropriate level and included to enhance the trainee’s ability to achieve the standards.

The title of this qualification is the Professional Diploma in Teaching (Further Education & Skills) – PDT(FES) – although HEIs may entitle it Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), if level 6, Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) if level 7, and Certificate in Education (Cert Ed), if level 5. They are all recognised as the full teaching qualification for the sector providing they comply with these guidelines.

## 3.2 Core knowledge and skills

The previous FE teaching qualification, the DET, included a Minimum Core of English, maths, digital skills, and sustainable development [the latter included from 2022]. There is no Minimum Core proposed in this guidance. There is however a core unit relating to Education Technology. Additionally there is a requirement that at the end of this programme, completers should have achieved level 2 in maths and English. AOs should be mindful to make explicit in the qualification content the need for teachers to be able to support their learners in all the previous Minimum Core areas. This is also reflected in the corresponding occupational standards.

It should be noted with respect to the requirement to gain level 2 English/maths by the programme completion, providers must put in place adequate support to ensure all trainees are able to do so.

## 3.3 Study and placement hours

The Education and Training Foundation recommends Guided |Learning Hours [GLH] for the qualification as minimum 360 hours, and Total Qualification Time [TQT] as minimum 1200 hours.

The placement should be of at least 250 hours in duration, of which at least 150 hours would be teaching practice. The balance, constituting professional practice includes activities such as team meetings, planning, interviews, assessment meeting, provider wide sessions [eg CPD], etc. The purpose of the professional practice hours is to gain a full sense of the wider activities of a teacher on a day to day basis. Of the 150 teaching hours, at least 100 hours must be in the trainee’s subject area. Additionally the trainee must gain experience of remote teaching: the recent pandemic highlighted the need for all staff to have this skills at their disposal. A minimum of 20 hours of remote synchronous [ie live] delivery should be included, alongside a minimum of 80 hours face to face delivery.

The placement requirement includes two locations: the teacher trainee should gain experience in more than one teaching location. This is in order to improve the breadth of experience as practices vary. The second placement must be for at least 30 hours and ideally would be at a different provider but in extremis at a large provider, could include a different level & venue in the same provider.

It is essential that fully qualified teachers are able to deal with the demands of teaching groups and therefore the majority of the teaching should be with groups of more than 10 learners, and any practice reckonable should not be with groups of less than 5. Such requireements also apply to any remote delivery.

## 3.4 Mentoring

The mentoring arrangements must be robust. All trainees must have the support of 2 mentors at their placement in addition to the support of their course tutor. The first mentor is the subject mentor and must be competent and teaching in the trainee’s subject area. This enables the provision of subject specific support. This mentor must have time to support the trainee [recommended 30 minutes per week] and additionally time to engage in assessment, particularly of the subject specific element.

The second mentor is a local pastoral support mentor for more general areas of advice and support. This mentor may support more than one trainee in the placement, maybe acting for a group of trainees. Again this mentor must have sufficient time to support trainees [recommend 30 minutes per week]. This mentor would be expected to liaise with the provider re ongoing trainee progress reports.

All centres providing the qualification are required to provide adequate training to all placement mentors to ensure they are suitably trained to meet the needs of trainees. Centres may wish to make use of resources that ETF has developed in the area of mentoring, see eg https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/supporting/professional-development/mentoring/framework-and-guides/.

# Section 4: The qualification outlined

## 4.1 Structure

The qualification consists of a Core and Options. The total credit value of the qualification is a minimum of 120 credits. The Core, as outlined below, consists of 6 Core Units [details below] which total 90 credits at level 5. It should be noted that HEIs may choose to offer part or all of the qualification at level 6 or level 7. Awarding Organisations will determine suitable option units at level 4 or above to complement the programme and enhance the trainee’s ability to achieve the occupational standards.

## 4.2 Core units

The Core units, together with a brief outline of content, are set as follows

* + Unit 1: Learners & learning
  + Part A: Learners
    - Getting to know your learners in FE
    - Their journeys to FE
    - Range of support needs
    - Safeguarding/EDI
    - Their wider expectations
  + Part B: Learning
    - Psychology of learning
    - Role of research and evidence
  + Unit 2: Teachers & teaching
  + Part A: Teachers
    - The role of a teacher
    - What makes a good teacher?
    - Working with and learning from other teachers
    - Other sources of support
  + Part B: Teaching
    - Person centred approach
    - Planning and delivering sessions
    - Individual support [incl SEND, mental health]
    - Teacher expectations of learners
    - F2f & remote delivery
    - Assessment
    - Embedding EMD
    - Courses and specifications
  + Unit 3: Professional Practice
  + Part A: Teaching practice
    - Micro teaches
    - Preparation for placement
    - Observation of other teachers
    - Team teaching
    - Teaching alone
    - Placement log
  + Part B: Being a professional
    - Developing expertise
    - Updating and CPD
    - Working with colleagues
    - Professional Status
  + Unit 4: The FE & Skills sector
    - Overview of FE & Skills Sector
    - Types of programmes
    - Timetables
    - Contracts
    - Govt policy
    - Regulations [legal and local]
    - Funding
    - Organizational and wider support
  + Unit 5: Subject specific teaching
    - Teaching your subject
    - Particular approaches, tricks and tips
    - Difficult areas
    - Required wider/prerequisite knowledge
    - Sustainability in your area
    - Progression advice
  + Unit 6: Effective on-line pedagogies
    - Range of Ed Tech
    - Managing digital delivery

For each of these headings there is provided some indicative content in the appendices. It is for Awarding Organisations to set the fine detail of these units.

## 4.3 Option units

ETF has not prescribed the options units to be available as part of these qualifications. The Core structure is sufficient to allow the acquisition and consolidation of the knowledge and skills to achieve the occupational standards. The Awarding Organisations have been allowed flexibility in their offer of option units to allow their programmes to reflect particular emphases in certain parts of the FE market. However option units should clearly be in the realm of FE teaching and should be chosen to enhance the particular trainee’s chosen pathway within the sector.

## 4.4 Assessment

The assessment model to be used on this qualification involves a final judgement based on a viva-type interview supported by a professional portfolio that the trainee has assembled during the course. The interview will be conducted by two people: a member of the qualification provider’s team [preferably the trainee’s course tutor], and the subject mentor from the workplace. The interview should be approx. 45 minutes and will seek to establish that the trainee is working at a level of competence which meets the occupational standards. The interviewers will have access to the trainees portfolio in advance to allow at least 45 minutes examination. The interviewers are free to choose whichever areas of the standards they wish to explore in their reading and questioning and must keep records of their questions and the trainee responses. The discussion should seek to give an overall picture of the trainee’s competence.

This entails that all on-course assessment is formative and in no way contributes to the final assessment, with the exception of observation: prior to undertaking the final assessment the trainee must have achieved a satisfactory observation.

## 4.4.1 Observations

All candidates must undergo 10 observations and the final one will be assessed as being satisfactory, not yet satisfactory, against the occupational standards. Progression to final assessment is dependent upon the satisfactory observation: it is inappropriate for a trainee to be considered for final assessment as a fully qualified teacher if they cannot achieve a satisfactory observation of a live teaching session. This observation must relate to a face to face session and include a group of at least 10 learners. The observations must be conducted by the provider tutor and/or the placement mentor, and the final observation must be conducted by a fully qualified teacher. The Awarding Organisation may choose to provide some guidance to accompany the final observation.

## 4.5 Entry criteria

These are for the Awarding Organisations to determine. However in order to be able to teach their subjects need to be qualified and/or experienced in that subject. Those intending to teach academic subjects would usually be expected to have a degree in their subject specialism. Those intending to teach in professional or vocational areas would usually be expected to have a professional or industry qualification and experience of working in their respective sector. There is a general expectation in the sector that a teacher should be qualified to at least one level above that at which they intend to teach. In some vocational areas this may be problematic but a reasonable expectation is that they hold the highest level trade qualification available, unless they have particularly substantial professional experience.

This qualification is a minimum level 5 and hence it is essential that all entrants are able to demonstrate an ability to study at level 5 [or above on the case of relevant HEI provision].

As the exit requirement of the qualification includes achievers having also gained level 2 in maths & English, the potential support needs of applicants should be assessed if they do not already hold these levels, and suitable support should be made available during the programme.

## 4.6 Accreditation of prior learning

Accreditation of prior learning is for providers to decide, using reasonable judgement, at the discretion and approval of the Awarding Organisation. Both parties must be satisfied that the evidence is valid, sufficient, authentic and current in order to gain any credit against the content of this qualification and, except in the case of recognised qualifications where there is a clear one to one mapping, some synoptic assessment would be deemed appropriate. Any such APL granted should be made available to external examination/quality assurance for countersignature.

## 4.7 Relationship to other FE teaching qualifications

At the time of writing this guidance, the review process has not yet reached the level 3, Award in Education & Training (AET), and the level 4, Certificate in Education & Training (CET). These two qualifications were written in 2013 as free standing awards and as they are now dated, the process for their review/rewrite will begin shortly. However there is as yet no relationship between what still exists and the foregoing new level 5 qualification. There is therefore an expectation that the AET & CET would play no role in APL issues in the case of this now Professional Diploma. The review process will examine demand for qualifications of this type and level, and also look at questions of the desirability of creating some form of progression route to fully qualified status via these lesser qualifications. This guidance will be updated to reflect any now recommendations as necessary.

1. See https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-technical-education-reforms/higher-technical-education-reforms [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/higher-technical-qualifications/approvals-process-and-timelines/ [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. See https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/learning-and-skills-teacher-v1-0 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/957856/Skills\_for\_jobs\_lifelong\_learning\_for\_opportunity\_and\_growth\_\_web\_version\_.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-6)