



**University and College Union**

**‘Further, higher, better’**

**Submission to the government’s  
second Comprehensive Spending  
Review**

**Section 24**

## 24 Staffing

### Further education

Foster Review, 2005

'The workforce, managers and leaders face many challenges. Many people who contributed to the Review were concerned about the workforce's age profile – almost a third of the workforce is over 50 – particularly in relation to its impact on the ability of FE colleges to attract new younger recruits and portray a dynamic image. Furthermore, improving the diversity of the workforce is a priority: for example only 6% of the workforce is known to be from black or minority ethnic groups compared to 14% of learners. And there are even fewer people from black or minority ethnic groups amongst college leaders and managers, with less than 2% of principals coming from black or minority ethnic backgrounds ... None of the organisations supporting workforce and leadership development have black or minority ethnic staff in senior management positions. Since the Commission for Black Staff in FE reported in November 2002, a range of initiatives and activities have been implemented including the development of a new Race Equality Standards for FE and the Black Leadership Initiative. More needs to be done.'

According to the 2005 report by Lifelong Learning UK, Further Education Workforce Data for England, there were 233,343 staff employed in further education in England in 2003-4. Of these, 54.1%, or 126,245, were teaching staff, of whom 58.8% were women.<sup>129</sup> 68.8% of female teaching staff were employed on a part-time basis, compared with 54.1% of their male colleagues. In all, 62.7% of FE teaching staff were employed part-time.<sup>130</sup> Ethnic minorities were under-represented in the workforce.<sup>131</sup>

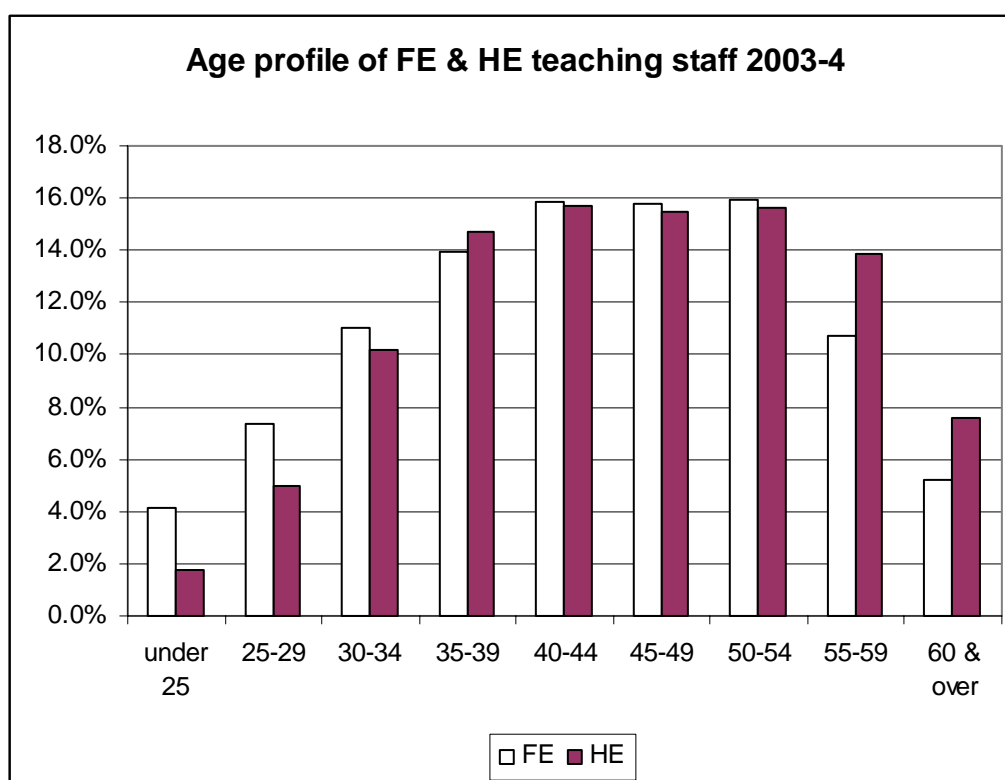
#### Age profile

The normal retirement age for members of the Teachers' Pension Scheme is 60. Already at least 5% of FE teaching staff in England were over the retirement age in 2003-4. A further 27% of teaching staff – nearly 34,000 staff – were aged between 50 and 59. This means that slightly over 40,000 teachers in FE will need to be replaced in the coming decade. Nearly 23% of teaching staff were aged under 35. David Hunter, chief executive of Lifelong Learning UK, has said: 'Our analysis of the Staff Individualised Record colleges submit to the Learning and Skills Council is confirmation that we need to address a demographic timebomb. The bulk of college staff are in their 40s and 50s. Just 19 per cent are aged under 35. Action on several fronts is necessary, especially as all areas of the economy will soon be recruiting from a shrinking population who are of working age.'<sup>132</sup>

## Teaching staff age profile for FE (England) and HE (UK) 2003-4

	FE	FE	HE*	HE
	N	%	N	%
<b>under 25</b>	5214	4.1%	1890	1.8%
<b>25-29</b>	9317	7.4%	5390	5.0%
<b>30-34</b>	13943	11.0%	10954	10.2%
<b>35-39</b>	17619	14.0%	15844	14.7%
<b>40-44</b>	20025	15.9%	16967	15.7%
<b>45-49</b>	19892	15.8%	16711	15.5%
<b>50-54</b>	20091	15.9%	16846	15.6%
<b>55-59</b>	13536	10.7%	15015	13.9%
<b>60 &amp; over</b>	6598	5.2%	8222	7.6%
<b>Total</b>	126235	100.0%	107839	100.0%

\* teaching-only and teaching-and-research academic staff; excludes staff for whom age was unknown. The figures are a headcount, rather than a full-time equivalent, although for 5% of staff, there are more than one contract, so the FE data has a 5% 'margin of error'.  
Source: LLUK (2005) Further education workforce data for England, p 54. HESA.



Source: LLUK (2005) Further education workforce data for England, p 54; HESA.

### Comment

The above data indicate serious staffing problems in further education. We welcome the intention of the 2006 DfES FE White Paper to improve recruitment and retention in the sector, not least through Golden Hellos, training bursaries and the Key Worker Living scheme. We note that the DfES is planning new programmes to increase recruitment, improve retention and promote diversity across the sector. We welcome the intention to work with unions in running these programmes. We welcome the £11m additional

funding from 2007-8 announced in the 2006 Budget for such programmes. We recommend that the level and effectiveness of the funding is monitored. UCU believes that to turn these problems round, a significant improvement in terms and conditions of employment – particularly in levels of pay – is needed.

## **Higher education<sup>133</sup>**

### UK academic staff

#### Gender

Of the 150,000 academics in the UK in 2003-4, 20% were employed on a teaching-only basis (ie with no requirement to undertake research), nearly one quarter were employed on a research-only basis, but the majority of academics, 55%, were engaged in both teaching and research. 40% of the UK's academics in 2003-4 were women. More than a quarter of women academics worked part-time, compared with 16% of men. Female academics were more likely than males to be on a fixed-term contract. Nursing and paramedical studies had the highest proportion of women academics in a cost centre; the lowest was electrical, electronic and computer engineering. The age profile of female academics was generally younger than for male academics. 40% of academics declared disabled were women. In pre-1992 universities, nearly half of staff on the most junior lecturer grade were women, but only 14% of professors were women.

#### Ethnicity

89.5% of academics were white and 10.5% were from black and minority ethnic (BME) groups.<sup>134</sup> In the UK population as a whole, 89.2% of those of working age with an NVQ level 5 (postgraduate) qualification were white, so the proportion of BME academics was very similar to the proportion of BME postgraduates in the UK population as a whole. BME academics were slightly more likely than whites to be employed on a full-time basis. White academics were more likely than BME colleagues to have a secure job. Nearly 60% of white academics were employed in the 'traditional' academic function combining teaching and research, compared with just over half of black academics and somewhat over one-third of Asian academics. The proportion of white academics on a particular post increased with the seniority of the grade. The most ethnically diverse academic cost centres were generally in engineering, science and technology; conversely, arts, humanities, education and most language-based studies tended to have higher proportions of white academics. The age profile of BME academics was generally younger than for white academics, particularly for those employed in teaching-and-research posts. 93% of academics with declared disability were white. While the majority of higher education institutions reported that around 10% of their academic staff were of black or minority ethnicity, several small institutions reported no BME academic staff at all.

### UK managerial staff

## Gender

Of the 11,500 managerial staff in UK higher education in 2003-4, 46% were women. 87% of managers, both female and male, had an open-ended or permanent contract. Female managers had a younger age profile than their male colleagues. 2.4% of managers had a declared disability.<sup>135</sup>

## Ethnicity

Of HE managerial staff whose ethnicity was known in 2003-4, 95.8% were white and 4.2% were of black or minority ethnic (BME) groups. In the population of working age with a NVQ level 4 (degree level) qualification – who might be taken as the pool of potential applicants for managerial posts in UK HE – 92.0% were white, so BME managers in HE were relatively under-represented. White managers were slightly more likely than their black and Asian colleagues to be employed full-time. White and black managerial staff in UK HE were slightly more likely than Asian colleagues to have a permanent contract. White and black managers in UK higher education generally had an older age profile compared with their Asian colleagues.

## UK non-academic professional (NAP) staff

### Gender

Of the 27,000 non-academic professional (NAP) staff in UK HE in 2003-4, 54% were female. Female NAP staff were slightly more likely than males to be employed on an open-ended or permanent contract. There was a younger age profile for female non-academic professionals. 2.6% of non-academic professionals had a declared disability. Female NAP staff earned 88.1% of the pay of their male colleagues.

### Ethnicity

Of the UK non-academic professional staff whose ethnicity was known, 93.8% were white and 6.2% were from BME groups in 2003-4. In general, BME non-academic professional staff were under-represented in UK HE. Black and Asian non-academic professional staff were more likely than whites or those of other ethnicity to work on a full-time basis. White non-academic professional staff were more likely than BME employees to have an open-ended or permanent contract. The age profile of white non-academic professionals was older than that of their BME colleagues. Of UK HE non-academic professionals with a declared disability in 2003-4, 93.6% were white.

## Recruitment and retention

Despite the growing numbers of employees in the sector, a range of reports in recent years have pointed to recruitment and retention problems in UK higher education among academic, academic-related and other university staff. One of the most recent, by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research

for the Department for Education and Skills said: 'We would conclude that there are recruitment problems and that these vary by subject and seniority, but that problems are not severe.'<sup>136</sup> However, the relatively narrow research base of the NIESR report, restricted to academic staff in 13 institutions in England and excluding clinical academics, may make its conclusions open to debate. The most recent of a series of reports for the Universities and Colleges Employers Association on recruitment and retention of staff in higher education found that in 2005 the majority of institutions surveyed believed the situation had largely remained the same over the preceding 12 months, with most institutions experiencing difficulties 'sometimes' for academic, administrative and professional staff, and manual staff.<sup>137</sup>

Some of the recruitment and retention problems in UK higher education are related to shortages in specific disciplines, others are linked to tight labour markets in certain occupational groups or the ageing population of academics in some subject areas. There is also a regional dimension to recruitment and retention, whether related to the high cost of living in certain parts of the UK, or to fluctuations in the availability of particular skills. All in all, large areas of employment in UK higher education are now affected by recruitment and retention difficulties. Some of the main reasons for this are lack of career progression, uncompetitive pay, the casualisation of employment and increasing workload in higher education institutions.

### **Comment**

We are concerned that BME staff are under-represented in the FE and HE workforce, and urge government and employers to take further steps to address this.

We are concerned at the impending retirement of many thousands of teaching staff in FE and HE, and urge government and employers to set in process a high-profile recruitment campaign to address this situation.

We are also concerned about the significant pockets of recruitment and retention problems in the sector.