

Information sheet 002: Teaching in the Further Education Sector in Northern Ireland

General Introduction

Students in the lifelong learning sector in Northern Ireland might be learning in any of the following environments:

- Colleges of further education
- Community learning and development centres
- Places of work
- Private training organisations
- Universities

Their learning will be directed by specialist teachers, trainers, tutors and assessors. This information sheet deals with the professional qualifications needed by these specialists if they are involved in publicly funded provision in Northern Ireland.

Please note that the qualifications framework in Northern Ireland is different from those in England, Scotland and Wales. Please contact the Information and Advice team if you want information about the qualifications in any of these other parts of the UK.

1) Teachers, trainers and tutors in Further Education Colleges in NI

(see Circular FE 12/09 <http://www.delni.gov.uk/index/publications/pubs-further-education/fe-circular/fe-circulars-2009/fe-1209.htm>)

The only qualifications recognised for teaching in the NI Further Education Sector are;

- Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), obtained in the UK;
- Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), obtained in the Republic of Ireland (provided the individual also holds a 'conditional registration' or 'full registration' with the Teaching Council in Ireland);
- Bachelor of Education Degree (B.Ed), obtained in the UK or the Republic of Ireland;
- University of Ulster BA (Honours) in Education;
- the Northern Ireland Post Graduate Certificate in Further and Higher Education (PGCFHE);

- the Northern Ireland Post Graduate Diploma in Further and Higher Education (PGDFHE);
- the Northern Ireland Post Graduate Certificate in Education (Further Education) (PGCE (Further Education)).

In addition, lecturers and teachers, who are currently registered with the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (GTCNI), are recognised and eligible to teach in the FE Sector in Northern Ireland.

Prospective lecturers who do not hold one of the qualifications listed above, may still be eligible to apply for a teaching post, provided they complete the in-service PGCE (Further Education) teaching qualification.

The PGCE (Further Education) is underpinned by the Northern Ireland Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) professional standards for teachers, tutors and trainers in the lifelong learning sector. It is fully accredited by the GTCNI and is mapped to the professional competences for teachers in Northern Ireland.

Year 1 of the PGCE (Further Education) must be completed within the first year of appointment. The second year must be successfully completed within the next two years.

The application criteria for undertaking the PGCE (Further Education) are set by the University of Ulster.

Applicants should have passes in GCSE at grade C or above in both English and Mathematics or Key Skills in Communication and Application of Number at Level 2 or NICATS Access Maths modules (or equivalent).

For more details see <http://prospectus.ulster.ac.uk/course/?id=10237>

2) Lecturers/tutors delivering Essential Skills in NI

Currently, to be eligible to deliver Essential Skills Literacy or Numeracy in NI, applicants must have:

- GCSE English (A - C) or Essential/Key Skill Level 2 in Communication;
- GCSE Maths (A - C) or Essential/Key Skill Level 2 in Application of Number; and
- the Queens University Belfast (QUB) Diploma in the Teaching and Management of Literacy/Numeracy and Essential Skills or a recognised teaching qualification; and
- the QUB Diploma and/or Certificate in the Teaching and Management of Literacy/Numeracy and Essential Skills or a subject-specific degree or a recognised

teaching qualification in which the teaching of English and/or Mathematics at primary level has been a major focus.

Currently, to be eligible to deliver Essential Skills ICT in NI, applicants must have:

- GCSE English (A - C) or Essential/Key Skill Level 2 in Communication;
- GCSE Maths (A - C) or Essential/Key Skill Level 2 in Application of Number; and
- a Level 3 or above qualification in ICT.

The above qualification requirements are changing in August 2012 (see Circular ES 01/12 <http://www.delni.gov.uk/es-01-12-qualifications-required-to-deliver-essential-skills-april-2012.pdf>).

From 1 August 2012, all new Essential Skills lecturers (full-time, associate and hourly-paid part-time) in the **further education sector** will be required to have a degree in their subject specialism, and to undertake the Certificate in Teaching - year 1 of the PGCE (Further Education) - within their first year of teaching. They will be required to complete the PGCE (Further Education) within three years of appointment.

From 1st August 2012, all new Essential Skills tutors, delivering **government-funded training and employment programmes**, will be required to have a degree in their subject specialism, and to achieve the Certificate in Teaching - year 1 of the PGCE (Further Education) - within their first year of teaching. Progression to the second year of the PGCE (Further Education) will be optional.

The revised qualification requirements outlined above will apply to all new Essential Skills lecturers/ tutors, part-time as well as full-time, delivering government-funded education, training and employment programmes. Full-time and part-time Essential Skills lecturers/ tutors, recognised by the Department prior to 1st August 2012, will retain this recognition.

3) Assessors

If your work involves the assessment of students following vocational courses, you may need to gain an assessor qualification - Assessor and Quality Assurer awards. The following assessment qualifications (with appropriate quality assurance qualifications) are now available.

- **Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment** - appropriate for staff who assess S/NVQs or QCF qualifications that use 'NVQ' in their title or who are involved in assessing and quality assuring qualifications within the QCF whose purpose is to confirm occupational competence.
- **Level 3 Award in Assessing Vocationally Related Achievement** - appropriate for staff who assess non-NVQ or non-competence-based vocational qualifications within the QCF on a 'devolved' basis meet agreed standards of assessment.

- **Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement** - appropriate for those whose role involves the assessment of both occupational competence and vocationally related achievement.

Each new qualification includes a unit that covers all the essential knowledge and understanding that assessors or quality assurance staff need, plus one or more units that describe competent practice. This means that if you are new to assessment and hoping to become an assessor, you can take the first unit and gain an understanding of assessment principles and practices even before you are in a position to practise assessment. When you are in a position to practise, you can undertake the additional unit/s. in addition to the relevant professional qualification as a teacher, trainer or tutor outlined above.

4) University lecturers

There is currently no legal requirement for university lecturers to hold a teaching qualification. Instead, universities usually seek recruits who have a higher degree in their particular subject plus successful research experience or extensive professional/commercial experience, where relevant. If you intend to become a lecturer on a teacher education programme, it is likely that you will be required to gain a teaching qualification.

The majority of universities offer in-house development programmes for new lecturers. These courses are recognised by the Higher Education Academy (HEA) - the professional body for higher education staff involved in teaching and supporting learning in the UK. For more information, visit the Higher Education Academy website at: <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk>. They work closely with the Excellence in Teaching and Learning Fund in Northern Ireland. For more information on training to teach in Higher Education, please ask for our HE Information Sheet.

5) Funding and student support for courses

For further information, please visit the Student Finance Northern Ireland website or call the helpline on 0845 6000 662.

The link below gives some information on funding and directs you to further sources of information. http://www.prospects.ac.uk/teaching_in_northern_ireland_funding.htm

6) Applying for a vacant post

Will employers expect me to have a teaching qualification?

Employers normally provide a *Person Specification* in their application packs. This *Person Specification* will tell you whether possession of a teaching qualification is a desirable criterion or an essential criterion in the selection process.

Offers of appointment to new entrants without a teaching qualification will always stipulate that the new appointee gains a professional qualification that is appropriate to their role within a specified timescale.

Where do employers advertise vacancies?

Employers often place advertisements in the local press, especially if these are for part-time posts.

Work-based learning providers usually advertise vacancies in the relevant professional or trade journals.

Vacancies are usually advertised in the Belfast Telegraph, Irish News, News Letter and in Educational Journals.

Colleges and most community learning and development centres advertise full-time vacancies in the 'FE Focus' section of *The Times Educational Supplement*. This is published on Fridays and is available through most newsagents and in public libraries. These job advertisements are also available on the associated website at www.tesjobs.co.uk for three weeks after their first appearance.

Universities and some colleges advertise full-time vacancies in the Tuesday edition of *The Guardian*, also on their website <http://jobs.guardian.co.uk>.

University vacancies are also advertised in www.jobs.ac.uk. Further education posts are also advertised in www.fejobs.com, on www.fecareers.co.uk and on www.teachFE.com.

7) Further Information

If you go to <http://www.delni.gov.uk/index/further-and-higher-education.htm> you will find further useful information.

This information was accurate at the time it was sent. Updates will be made as new information is received.