The Minimum Core for teacher training qualifications for the Further Education and Skills sector

April 2022

Minimum Core Guidance

The Minimum Core was introduced in 2004 to support awarding organisations and teacher education programmes to equip trainee teachers in developing inclusive approaches to addressing the literacy, language, numeracy and ICT needs of their learners.

Revised in 2007, it became part of all initial teacher training programmes as an important aspect of professional development. Minimum core guidance was updated in 2015, in line with the Guidance for inspecting initial teacher education and the New Common Inspection Framework.

Since 2015 there have been many changes to education in the UK, not least because of COVID-19. Digital skills may be at the forefront of these changes, but the need to support learners develop English and maths skills is greater than ever. However, English, maths and digital skills are not the only skills required for learners to succeed in future life and work. To fully equip people for their future jobs and careers, all learners can and should be green learners. The ETF recognises the challenges facing wider society and the role education can play in bringing sustainability issues to the fore. Therefore, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD or sustainability) has been added to the Minimum Core, accompanied by detailed information and guidance on how teachers can become sustainable practitioners. Additionally a section has been added on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), since the importance of this area for particularly the FE & Skills sector cannot be understated. Although most FE ITE programmes will have addressed EDI in some form, setting a minimum standard for expectations in this area is perhaps overdue and programmes now have a benchmark for delivery.

The new version of the Minimum Core aims to focus on the core skills trainee teachers need to support learners with necessary skills on their foundation, technical or academic course. It is not intended as a box ticking exercise for leaders, employers or teacher educators to make judgements on trainees or staff. Rather, its main purpose is to promote awareness and reflection. Trainee teachers can use the document to reflect on their own practice and to start meaningful searches for resources or activities to address any identified gaps.

Feedback from the sector suggested that the structure and content of the previous Minimum Core was unwieldy and outdated, so a new structure has been devised. This structure aligns with the Education and Training Foundation's Digital Teaching Professional Framework.

This updated document also supports teachers at various stages in their career in aspiring to meet the professional standards. Existing practitioners may find this website useful for CPD activities that help them to:

- promote the benefits of technology and support learners in its use
- address the mathematics and English needs of learners and work creatively overcome individual barriers to learning
- ensure familiarity with key equalities issues
- promote the awareness and importance of sustainable practice in 21st century teaching and learning.

The revised document

This guidance document is divided into two parts.

Part One sets out the Minimum Core specification – that is the expected minimum level of English, maths, digital skills and sustainability of all further education teachers.

Part Two is guidance to offer practice suggestions for supporting the specified skills needs of teachers and learners in further education and provides links to further reading, resources and CPD activities.

Both sections can be used to guide and support:

- trainee teachers
- existing teachers
- teacher educators
- awarding organisations
- leaders and managers in training provision.

This updated version aims to:

- clarify the expected minimum level of further education teachers in the relevant areas
- emphasise that learners may need to be supported in all these skills for them to achieve their qualification
- encourage the development of inclusive practices to meet the needs of all learners
- promote collaborative practice between vocational and technical specialists and English, maths, digital skills, sustainability and EDI specialists
- provide links to useful reading, resources and CPD activities to support teachers' own skills and those of their learners
- to bring the document up to date.

Part One

The Minimum Core details the elements of English, mathematics, digital skills, EDI and sustainability that every further education teacher should know, understand and be able to use. Teachers who do not have these skills and knowledge themselves will have difficulty supporting the development needs of their learners in these important subject areas.

Within each subject area, elements have been divided into the following categories:

- Planning your teaching
- Approaches to teaching
- Supporting learning to develop employability skills
- Subject specific and industry specific teaching
- Assessment
- Accessibility and inclusion
- Self-development

Each element is then linked to an objective which defines how a teacher might evidence their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Minimum Core English

Planning your teaching

Element	A teacher should
A1 **Explain how learners' background can impact on development of English skills**	A1 Research and explain personal, cultural and linguistic factors that may enhance or inhibit the development of English skills.
A2 **Explain how institutional factors can impact on development of English skills**	A2 Research and explain institutional and teaching and learning factors that may impact on the development of English skills.
A3 **Ensure needs of ESOL/SEND learners are catered for and make specific provision where appropriate**	A3 Research and appreciate factors affecting language acquisition for ESOL/SEND learners. Plan to support learners appropriately.
A4 **Identify challenges to English in programme design**	A4 Identify potential barriers to effective communication about English in programme design and delivery and take steps to overcome them (e.g. allow time to teach specific vocabulary, plan written work, prepare verbal and visual presentations)
A5 **Recognise emotional factors associated with literacy difficulties**	A5 Use sensitivity and discretion when approaching literacy difficulties in the classroom, remembering the stigma associated with not being able to read (especially for native speakers)
A6 **Use learner information to inform planning**	A6 Interpret initial and diagnostic English assessment data if available or draw on learner profiles and amend teaching plans (SOWs, lesson plans, etc) to meet the needs of individual learners
A7 **Identify English skills needed to complete the course**	A7 Identify English requirements of own learning programme and relate to GCSE/Functional Skills English. Use this analysis in planning and designing learning to structure and present ideas.

Approaches to teaching

Element	A teacher should
B1 **Search for and evaluate suitable materials to use with learners and adapt appropriately**	B1 Use strategies to search for and recognise what materials/resources are appropriate for their learner group
B2 **Design, create and adapt inclusive resources and assessment materials to use with learners.**	B2 Design and create own resources for use in the learning environment suitable for learner group and/or adapt existing resources as appropriate. Recognise and apply copyright laws when creating materials
B3 **Be aware of language and dialect in verbal communication**	B3 Have an awareness of their own language and dialect and the impact this can have on all learners especially non-native speakers. Avoid colloquialisms.
B4 **Use appropriate format, style, structure, language and tone in written communication with learners**	B4 Make explicit key features of text to support learners with the writing process.
B5 **Use standard English grammar, spelling and punctuation in written communication with learners**	B5 Use upper/lower case appropriately and avoid writing solely in capital letters on the whiteboard, on feedback, on digital resources they produce, etc. Read and spell correctly key terminology
B6 **Use appropriate vocabulary**	B6 Explain course/industry related/specialist jargon being used
B7 **Use clear instructions and confidently present/explain/describe information to learners in a range of ways**	B7 Use very clear instructions in a variety of ways (e.g. written and verbal) and check how well the information has been received. Adapt teaching to the level, needs and prior knowledge of the learners.
B8 **Promote learner independence to developing English skills**	B8 Encourage learners to develop a range of strategies to support their English skills. For example, ask learners to keep a course glossary/contribute to a group online course glossary to explain key terminology in context.
B9 **Use appropriate tools to support the development of English skills**	B9 Recognise the importance of dictionaries/digital devices to help explain and/or translate unfamiliar terminology
B10	B10 Use non-verbal techniques to help convey meaning.

Model effective communication skills and support learners to communicate effectively	Explain conventions of active listening and responding during discussions.
B11 **Support learners to produce effective written work**	B11 Identify different stages of production of written work and explain the importance of this. Provide models of different texts, where appropriate, and their purpose in different contexts. Support with spelling – identify significant features of English spelling.
B12 **Support learners to read a variety of course/technical texts**	B12 Explain how to guide learners to read different text types especially when unfamiliar. Explain importance of reading in context. Explain a range of different reading strategies (e.g. skimming, scanning, detailed and critical reading.)

Supporting learners to develop employability skills

Element	A teacher should
C1 **Link English skills to curriculum area**	C1 Give examples of the English skills required in occupations related to your curriculum area to better prepare your learners for employment and in real life.
C2 **Explain the importance of English in different contexts**	C2 Give examples of how to develop learners' awareness of the range of contexts where they can benefit from good use of English
C3 **Explain the role of English in everyday life**	C3 Help learners to see how English skills can support participation in public life and social and economic activity.

Subject and industry specific teaching

Element	A teacher should
D1 **Identify the English skills required in your subject area, on your course and in your industry**	D1 Using course specifications, determine what is required for successful completion of the course. Make reference to occupational English skills where appropriate.
D2 **Promote the take up of English support**	D2 Identify opportunities for incorporating English into the curriculum and encourage the take up of English support
D3 **Give appropriate information, advice and guidance to learners**	D3 Advise or signpost learners to appropriate information about progression routes and/or career prospects

Assessment (and feedback)

Element	A teacher should
E1 **Promote a healthy English learning environment**	E1 Encourage an open and supportive environment promoting peer and self assessment/correction
E2 **Source appropriate assessment methods for learners with specific needs**	E2 Investigate with awarding organisations appropriate/alternative assessments for learners with ESOL/SEND needs.
E3 **Enable learners to evaluate and interpret the results of formative, summative, self and peer assessments**	E3 Encourage learners to use a range of methods to check work and self-correct where possible.
E4 **Reference English skills when marking and giving feedback**	E4 Make connections between English skills and subject related tasks when marking and giving feedback
E5 **Correct learners' written work (SPAG)** *appropriately*	E5 Pay attention to spelling, grammar and punctuation as well as content, taking care to not mark every mistake if there are many
E6 **Correct learners verbal errors** *appropriately and in context*	E6 Use strategies which do not disrupt learners' fluency whilst signalling errors. For example, repeat incorrect sentences with the correct version encouraging learners to listen for and recognise own errors.

Accessibility and Inclusion

Element	A teacher should
F1 **Research appropriate resources**	F1 Identify resources and specialist equipment to support learners to overcome their English differences
F2 **Explain effective practice ~~when~~ in working with specialists**	F2 Refer learners to specialists and give examples of effective practice for working with specialists in supporting learners
F3 **Utilise current research to support learners with learning differences**	F3 Give examples of how to address the needs of learners with learning differences, referring to relevant research/literature

Self-development

Element	A teacher should
G1 **Evaluate own practice**	G1 Evaluate your own practice in the light of relevant research in English
G2 **Identify your own training and development needs**	G2 Identify and evaluate the knowledge required to support your professional needs re English support
G3 **Recognise professional duties with others requiring good communication skills.**	G3 Liaise with external bodies/stakeholders, parents etc (verbally and in writing). Liaise with internal colleagues, including support staff, marketing staff, security, etc
G4 **Write fluently, legibly and accurately on a range of topics**	G4 Write accurately, using appropriate format when communicating with others. For example, when writing references for learners, course-based reports when required, setting targets for learners.
G5 **Communicate clearly with others about your course**	G5 Talk to potential students confidently about courses they teach for open events, etc.

Minimum Core Maths

Planning your teaching

Element	A teacher should
A1 **Explain how learners' backgrounds can impact on development of maths skills**	A1 Research and explain personal, cultural and linguistic factors that may enhance or inhibit the development of maths skills
A2 **Explain how institutional factors can impact on development of maths skills**	A2 Research and explain institutional and teaching and learning factors that may inhibit the development of maths skills
A3 **Identifying barriers to maths in programme design**	A3 Identify potential barriers to including maths in programme design including communication and delivery, and take steps to overcome them.
A4 **Recognise and support learners with maths anxiety**	A4 Recognise common signs of maths anxiety and put strategies in place to help overcome this
A5 **Use learner information to inform planning**	A5 Interpret initial and diagnostic maths assessment data, if available, and/or draw on learner profiles and amend teaching plans (SOWs, lesson plans, etc) to meet the needs of individual learners
A6 **Analyse maths skills needs to complete course**	A6 Analyse maths requirements of own learning programme and relate to GCSE/Functional Skills maths. Use to plan and design learning, structure lessons and present ideas.

Approaches to teaching

Element	A teacher should
B1 **Explain how attitude can affect learning**	B1 Portray a positive attitude to maths and encourage open discussions about maths using appropriate language
B2 **Adopt a growth mindset and promote discussion about how learners feel about maths**	B2 Model and encourage learners to adopt a growth mindset when tackling maths problems
B3 **Build confidence and resilience**	B3 Research and develop strategies to build confidence and resilience in learners when tackling maths related tasks in the classroom.
B4 **Break down maths concepts into small, connected steps.**	B4 Adopt a step-by-step problem-solving approach, where appropriate, to tackling maths related tasks
B5 **Allow adequate time in class to develop maths skills**	B5 Allow students time in class to actively work on, think about, reason with and discuss maths concepts with others
B6 **Use visual representations to aid learning**	B6 Encourage the use of visual representations (eg. bar models) where appropriate to reduce cognitive load and increase fluency
B7 **Check that learners have the skills for the task**	B7 Identify the skills needed to complete maths related tasks and check learners have them or can develop them
B8 **Develop deep learning**	B8 Make connections to prior learning, other key maths concepts/topics to promote deep and holistic understanding
B9 **Encourage collaborative work**	B9 Research and use a range of strategies, including collaborative practice and peer support, to support learners with maths related tasks. Encourage learners to identify and

	share methods used and to communicate answers
B10 **Address misconceptions and confusions**	B10 Identify misconceptions and confusions and explain how to use them positively in their teaching and their development of learners
B11 **Use appropriate tools to support development of maths skills**	B11 Identify appropriate methods, operations and tools, including digital skills, to explore a situation

Supporting learners to develop employability skills

Element	A teacher should
C1 **Link maths skills to curriculum area**	C1 Give examples of the maths skills required in occupations related to your curriculum area to better prepare your learners for employment and in real life.
C2 **Explain the importance of maths in different contexts**	C2 Give examples of how to develop learners' awareness of contexts in which learners can benefit from the application of maths
C3 **Explain the role of maths in everyday life**	C3 Help learners to see how maths skills can support participation in public life and social and economic activity

Subject and industry specific teaching

Element	A teacher should
D1 **Identify the maths skills required in your subject area, on your course and in your industry**	D1 Using course specifications, determine what maths skills and levels of functional skills/GCSE maths are required for successful completion of the course. Make reference to occupational maths skills where appropriate.
D2 **Promote the take up of maths support**	D2 Identify opportunities for incorporating maths into the curriculum and explain how to encourage the take up of maths support

Assessment (and feedback)

Element	A teacher should
E1 **Promote a healthy maths learning environment**	E1 Encourage an open and supportive environment promoting peer and self assessment
E2 **Emphasise importance of process**	E2 Focus on the importance of reasoning rather than answer getting when marking work and giving feedback
E3 **Promote problem solving**	E3 Design maths related assessment tasks which promote problem solving, reasoning and discussion
E4 **Promote learner independence in developing maths skills**	E4 Encourage learners to use a range of methods, including estimating, rounding and sense-checking to self-assess.
E5 **Reference maths skills when marking and giving feedback**	E5 Make connections between maths related tasks and subject related tasks when marking and giving feedback

Accessibility and Inclusion

Element	A teacher should
F1 **Research appropriate resources**	F1 Identify resources and specialist equipment to support learners to overcome their maths differences
F2 **Explain effective practice when working with specialists**	F2 Refer learners to specialists and give examples of effective practice for working with specialists in supporting learners
F3 **Use current research to support learners with learning differences**	F3 Give examples of how to address the needs of learners with learning differences, referring to relevant research/literature

Self-development

Element	A teacher should
G1 **Participate in and promote a whole organisational approach to maths**	G1 Encourage an open dialogue with others in the organisation and contribute to the changes needed to ensure opportunities for developing maths skills are developed and improved
G2 **Evaluate own practice**	G2 Evaluate your own practice and maths experience in the light of relevant research in maths, *and with regard to outcomes*. For example, look at CFEM action research and get involved in a network
G3 **Identify your own training and development needs**	G3 Identify and evaluate the maths content knowledge required to support your professional needs
G4 **Recognise maths skills needed in the role of a teacher**	G4 Use data and graphs to interpret learner information, including identifying patterns and drawing appropriate conclusions. Interpret statistics and graphs in the news, academic reports and relevant papers.

Minimum Core Digital

Planning your teaching

Element	A teacher should
A1 **Planning and looking for information – how can technology best support your planning?**	A1 Use online search strategies to identify resources and content relevant for teaching and learning. Be aware of digital environments which provide educational resources
A2 **Designing and adapting activities**	A2 Create and modify resources using basic tools and strategies, use 'office' software to design and modify e.g. worksheets and quizzes. Create digital presentations for teaching sessions.
A3 **Support for learning and support activities including initial assessment – empowering learners through technology**	A3 When planning sessions, include learning activities, assignments and assessments that encourage learners to use digital technologies to find data or information.
A4 **Communication and collaboration with colleagues – how technology can offer broader opportunities to learners to work together**	A4 Make some use of digital technologies for collaboration with learners. Make some use of digital technologies for communication with professional colleagues or support staff.

Approaches to teaching

Element	A teacher should
B1 **Teaching and learning resources**	B1 Use digital resources to visualise and explain new concepts in a motivating and engaging way, e.g. by using animations or videos, games and quizzes. Share educational content via e-mail attachments and links. Be aware that some online teaching resources are subject to copyright and that they may need to be quality-assured.
B2 **Teaching context: face-to-face**	B2 Use the learning environment technologies and resources that are available to them, e.g. digital whiteboards, projectors, PCs, Wifi, intranet, choosing appropriate technologies for learning objectives and contexts. Provide access to online resources for their learners.
B3 **Teaching context: blended learning**	B3 Use some digital strategies to interact with learners. Use digital technologies, e.g. a

	discussion forum, to respond to learners' concerns.
B4 **Teaching context: fully online - towards a community of learning (some aspects may not be possible in offender learning)**	B4 Use some digital technologies to interact with learners, e.g. online forums, to respond to learners' questions or doubts.

Supporting learners to develop employability skills

Element	A teacher should
C1 **Supporting digital capabilities (for employability)**	C1 Support learners to develop their digital capabilities and employability skills in self regulated learning activities. Encourage learners to use digital technologies to support their individual learning activities, e.g. for finding data or information or presenting results and to enhance their employability skills. Include activities that support learners to use digital technologies for creating content, e.g. by producing texts, sounds, images and videos.
C2 **Supporting study skills**	C2 Support learners to use digital technologies to solve problems. Encourage learners to solve technical problems using trial and error. Encourage learners to transfer their digital competence to new situations.
C3 **Communication and collaboration with and between learners**	C3 Encourage learners to use digital technologies to collaborate in activities. When implementing collaborative activities or projects, encourage learners to use digital technologies to support their work.

Subject and industry specific teaching

Element	A teacher should
D1 **Teaching: subject-specific and industry-related**	D1 When planning CPD use online resources to update subject knowledge. Use online resources to update subject-specific, industry-related and teaching knowledge.
D2 **Raising learners' digital employability and self employability skills**	D2 Support learners to develop their digital employability skills by using common digital technologies in learning activities, assignments and assessments. Encourage learners to use digital technologies to develop an understanding of industry-related technologies through targeted learning activities e.g. searching for information about specific digital technologies and skills used within their subject/industry

Assessment (and feedback)

Element	A teacher should
E1 **Assessment and feedback**	E1 Integrate digital technologies into traditional assessment and feedback strategies. Plan for learners' use of digital technologies in assessment tasks, e.g. to support assignments Evaluate basic data available on learner activity and performance and administrative data for individual feedback and targeted interventions. Be aware that digital assessment tools (e.g. quizzes, voting systems) can be used within the teaching process to provide them with timely feedback on learners' progress. Use digital technologies to compile an overview of learners' progress, as a basis for offering feedback and advice.

Accessibility and Inclusion

Element	A teacher should
F1 **Accessibility**	F1 Demonstrate the importance of ensuring equal access to the digital technologies used for all learners. Be aware that digital technologies can hinder or improve accessibility
F2 **Equality and Diversity**	F2 Explain how digital technologies can support differentiation and personalisation, e.g. by providing activities at different levels and speeds

Self-development

Element	A teacher should
G1 **Self-assessment and reflection**	G1 Be aware of their development needs for using digital technology to enhance their teaching practice.
G2 **Progression and CPD - strategies to develop digital skills and pedagogy**	G2 When planning CPD use online resources to update subject-specific or teaching knowledge.
G3 **Well-being: practitioner and learner**	G3 Encourage learners to use digital technologies safely and responsibly. Promote learners' awareness of how digital technologies can positively and negatively affect health and well-being
G4 **Managing identity: practitioner and learner**	G4 Encourage learners to use digital technologies safely and responsibly. Promote learners' awareness of the benefits and drawbacks of the openness of the internet.

Minimum Core Sustainability

Planning your teaching

Element	A teacher should
A1 **Identify core concepts of sustainable development**	A1 Clarify the complexity and interconnectedness of sustainability issues and systems
A2 **Explain core concepts of education for sustainable development**	A2 Identify the imperative for education to equip learners with the knowledge, skills, behaviours, values and agency needed to recognise and solve sustainability challenges
A3 **Create learning environments that promote ESD**	A3 Optimise the learning environment's ability to enhance ESD in terms of what learners perceive and develop through the cultural norms of their place of study and seek opportunities to enhance this using 'living laboratory' principles.
A4 **Develop meaningful stakeholder engagement**	A4 Identify and build relationships with suitable stakeholders, partners and collaborators to enhance their ESD provision

Approaches to teaching

Element	A teacher should
B1 **Create opportunities for ESD**	B1 Identify and adopt teaching and learning strategies that develop learners' knowledge, skills, behaviours, values and agency that help achieve sustainability goals and equip them to make positive sustainability impacts in their lives and careers, whilst also enhancing their employability.
B2 **Align and embed ESD**	B2 Embed ESD throughout subject specialism and/or occupational pathway where appropriate rather than present sustainability as an additional, separated subject
B3 **Model sustainable practices and promote sustainable development principles, values and goals.**	B3 Act in line with organisational operations that promote positive environmental, social and economic impacts; promote sustainable development through their choices and behaviours and demonstrate responsible and sustainable leadership.
B4 **Use appropriate resources to develop ESD outcomes**	B4 Use appropriate resources to visualise and explain sustainable development concepts in a motivating and engaging way; demonstrate the

	relevance of sustainability to learners, and to enhance their ESD outcomes
B5 **Identifying and using ESD examples to build learners' skills in other areas (e.g. Maths, English, communication)**	B5 Use sustainable development themed content as examples and the basis for activities which develop learner's core functional skills.
B6 **Recognise the importance of collaboration**	B6 Identify, build and maintain mutually beneficial partnerships to enhance ESD teaching approaches

Supporting learners to develop employability skills

Element	A teacher should
C1 **Explain how ESD can impact learner attainment and destination**	C1 Research and explain factors that may affect learner attainment and destination as a result of ESD exposure
C2 **Explain how sustainability is relevant to different occupations and careers**	C2 Promote the idea that all jobs can be green jobs. Explain how the core concepts of sustainability issues relate to their subject specialism and/or occupational pathway (both in terms of creating sustainability impacts and the solutions to them)
C3 **Demonstrate sustainability skills in their own practice**	C3 Promote links between sustainability skills and solutions to sustainability challenges

Subject and industry specific teaching

Element	A teacher should
D1 **Identify how core concepts of sustainability issues relate to their subject specialism and/occupational pathway**	D1 Show how sustainability concepts relate to their subject matter and professional practice both in terms of creating sustainability challenges and the solutions to them
D2 **Identify environmental, societal and economic trends both locally and globally**	D2 Emphasise the inter-connectedness, scale and urgency of sustainability challenges, particularly in relation to the climate emergency, and the need for both short and long term thinking in relation with their subject specialism/occupational pathway.
D3 **Identify innovation and sustainability action being taken in sectors relevant to the subject specialism/occupational pathway**	D3 Research and keep up-to-date with relevant sustainability action and innovation relevant to their subject specialism/occupational pathway, including evaluating skills gaps and

	opportunities in industries and sectors relevant to the subject specialism/occupational pathway.

Assessment (and feedback)

Element	A teacher should
E1 **Create opportunities for ESD**	E1 Identify and adopt assessment strategies that identify learners' knowledge, skills, behaviours, values and agency that help achieve sustainability goals and equip them to make positive sustainability impacts in their lives and careers, whilst also enhancing their employability.
E2 **Promote a healthy, supportive learning environment**	E2 Encourage an open and supportive environment promoting peer and self assessment/correction
E3 **Promote problem solving and critical thinking**	E3 Design ESD related assessment tasks which promote problem solving, critical thinking, reasoning and discussion
E4 **Reference ESD knowledge and skills when marking and giving feedback**	E5 Make connections between ESD and subject /skills related tasks when marking and giving feedback

Accessibility and Inclusion

Element	A teacher should
F1 **Identify methods to support learners to fully engage in ESD**	F1 Use current research to support learners with learning differences making an inclusive environment, being aware of inequalities that exist in relation to ESD/and the subject specialism/occupational pathway and seeking to reduce these
F2 **Promote accessible and inclusive practice when working with collaborators and partners**	F2 Develop mechanisms to ensure activities led by partners and collaborators are also accessible and inclusive, providing examples of effective practice for supporting learners including the needs of learners with learning differences, referring to relevant research/literature and providing feedback to create an ongoing.

Self-development

Element	A teacher should

G1 **Identify your own training and development needs**	G2 Identify, evaluate and assess their ESD training and development needs
G2 **Participate in and promote a whole organisational approach to ESD**	G2 Pursue opportunities to align ESD teaching with other areas of the learner experience – careers advice and guidance, tutorials, enterprise education, enrichment etc. to create cohesive, coherent and explicit message about sustainability and how it inter-relates with learners' subject specialism, future jobs and their lifestyles.
G3 **Value learning through innovation and research**	G3 Demonstrate openness to innovation, research and action-based learning to stimulate positive sustainability and ESD outcomes.
G4 **Connect and collaborate with partners**	G4 Pro-actively forge and foster mutually beneficial relationships, collaborations and partnerships (both internally and externally to the organisation) to progress ESD outcomes.

Minimum Core: Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

Planning your teaching

Element	A teacher should
A1 **Commit to a pedagogy of human rights, equality, diversity, and inclusion**	A1 Promote the ethics and values of human rights, equality, diversity and inclusion throughout their teaching. Explain how EDI knowledge and skills can impact learner attainment, destinations, life chances and success in employment.
A2 **Recognise and exceed legislative requirements**	A2 Keep-up-to date with the requirements of equality and human rights and related legislation.[1] Make explicit the anticipatory duties of the Disability Equality Duty within the Equality Act (2010) and what this means in practice for all teaching.
A3 **Embrace social change and recognise that the practice of EDI is ever-changing**	A3 Appreciate the diversity of people and values in our society: that there will always be ignored existing inequality (such as social class) and new and emerging inequalities.
A4 **Ensure that learning opportunities are inclusive (noting the difference between inclusion and inclusive)**	A4 Be aware of the social model of disability, working from a strengths-based approach and that the learning fits the learner
A5 **Embed EDI within all aspects of curricula, teaching, assessment and organisational life**	A5 Embed and practice EDI throughout subject specialism and/or occupational pathways and assessments based on real world examples, that are respectful and relevant to learners. Use specific EDI -related events and celebrations as well as naturally occurring moments within your teaching

---

[1] For example, but not exclusively: The Children Act (1989); The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1992); Human Rights Act (1998); Equality Act (2010) particularly the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED); Education Act (2011); Children and Families Act (2014) Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018); data protection (GDPR, 2018); online accessibility requirements for public sector bodies (2018); Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019).

Element	A teacher should
A6 **Create trauma-informed learning environments.**	A6 Recognise and take seriously how inequalities and injustice– poverty, prejudice, discrimination, violence create trauma and how they limit life chances.
A7 **Ensure that the learning environment supports equity, diversity and inclusion**	A7 Ensure that the physical environment such as lighting, sound, heating and distractions can all support access and inclusiveness. Ensure that physical space and seating enables learners to feel comfortable, safe, can socially interact and are not socially excluded.

Approaches to teaching

Element	A teacher should
B1 **Use appropriate teaching methods to support access and inclusion**	B1 Select appropriate teaching methods that enable learners to access and succeed in their learning.
B2 **Ensure that curriculum content supports equality, diversity and inclusion**	B2 Ensure EDI is embedded in curriculum content using relevant, accessible and evidence-based examples.
B3 **Create safe and supportive learning environments**	B3 Support and empower learners to be their authentic selves, overcome challenges, seek opportunities and be aspirational
B4 **Ensure appropriate language**	B4 Use language that is appropriate and acceptable to discriminated against groups.[2] Support learners to be considerate and use appropriate language
B5 **Develop appropriate and inclusive resources**	B5 Design and create inclusive resources for use in the learning environment.

---

[2] For example, change the language, to embrace: personal pronouns, gender neutral language and anti-discriminatory language

Element	A teacher should
	Ensure resources are • Intersectional • Disability accessible • Readability
B6 **Make space for learner voice**	B6 Ensure that all learners voices are heard, particularly those most marginalised.
B7 **Ensure that EDI is embedded within other core skills development such as English, maths, digital skills and sustainable development**	B7 Appreciate how EDI impacts on the development of core skills and put in place measures to address this inequity

Supporting learning to develop employability skills

Element	A teacher should
C1 **Use data to build awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace**	C1 Link current EDI data and demographics to the curriculum area and specific occupational sectors to help learners make informed learning, career, and employment choices
C2 **Ensure learners can summarise equality, diversity and inclusion requirements in the workplace**	C2 Support learners to demonstrate in real-world terms what employers and work colleagues expect of them in a fair and respectful workplace
C3 **Observe and promote safe working practices. Ensure learners can outline legislative requirements for safe working practice and environments**	C3 Ensure learners can articulate their rights and protections in the workplace as employees
C4 **Build awareness of employment legislation**	C4 Ensure learners can articulate their rights and protections under the law and what to do if things go wrong Ensure learners with disabilities are aware of workplace support entitlements[3]

Subject and industry specific teaching

Element	A teacher should
D1	D1

---

[3] For example, reasonable adjustments, Access to Work , DWP specialist disability advisers, job coaching.

Element	A teacher should
Demonstrate the importance of diverse representation in the curriculum content, teaching methods, research evidence, resources and materials used in teaching	Ensure that there is diversity of representation in images, speakers, sources, citations, in all resources and materials used in teaching.
D2 **Describe how inequality has impacted on the subject being taught or on the industry learners are being trained for**	D2 Ensure that learners can describe the systemic barriers to participation and success in learning and work that has led to underrepresentation and invisibility of marginalised groups and people in particular occupational sectors, areas of employment and work cultures.
D3 **Show an awareness of demographics of working population in industry specific areas**	D3 Source and make learners aware of information on equality and diversity in the workforce, including data on pay gaps, and diversity in senior leadership and management etc.
D4 **Promote respect and fairness in the workplace**	D4 Ensure that employability skills include respectfulness and fair behaviour in the workplace
D5 **Recognise and celebrate learners' own knowledge, experience and voice in promoting equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) within the learning and work environment**	D5 Enable learners to contribute and share solutions and insights into EDI in the workplace
D6 **Promote the importance of EDI to businesses reputation and success**	D6 Work with employers to raise awareness of the business case for EDI Ensure those who are aiming to work in the public sector in the UK are aware of most recent equalities legislation and that they will need to keep up to date[4],
D7 **Identify ways to collaborate with partners to promote EDI within subject and industry specific learning**	D7 Develop mechanisms to involve others eg external agencies and employers to find solutions to EDI challenges in teaching and work environment

Assessment

---

[4] For example, GDPR (2018) and the 2018 public sector accessibility regulations.

Element	A teacher should
E1 **Identify how bias and prejudice affects assessment of learning**	E1 Recognise and challenge prejudice and bias (own and others) when they see it
E2 **Recognise that some learners face social, emotional, physical and financial barriers to the assessment process**	E2 Remove the barriers to enable learners to be assessed equitably
E3 **Source appropriate assessment methods for learners with specific needs**	E3 Investigate with awarding organisations appropriate/alternative methods for assessments for learners with specific needs
E4 **Research and apply reasonable adjustments during the assessment process**	E4 Ensure reasonable adjustments reflect the adjustments already made in the learning and work environment
E5 **Promote independence and empowerment of learners during the assessment and feedback process**	E5 Encourage open and supportive conversations that enable learners to say what would help them to be assessed fairly
E6 **Create opportunities for learners to demonstrate understanding and action on equality, diversity and inclusion**	E6 Identify and adopt assessment strategies that test learners' knowledge, skills, behaviours, values and agency on equality, diversity and inclusion

Accessibility and Inclusion

Element	A teacher should
F1 **Appreciate the importance of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)**	F1 Ensure that learners are on the right course with the right level of support to enable them to succeed
F2 **Identify the correct level of learning support for learners**	F2 Use current research and resources to provide the most appropriate type of support for learners who have additional learning support needs, to ensure they access all aspects of their learning
F3	F3

Element	A teacher should
Identify sources of learner support for learners	Be aware of the pastoral, financial or social support that is available to learners within your organisation or community, or signpost appropriately and make them available to learners
F4 **Create an environment in the classroom that is respectful and inclusive**	F4 Develop ways and opportunities for all learners to feel safe, comfortable and respected and to be mindful of the all the ways in which learners can be undermined, silenced or marginalised in the learning environment
F5 **Identify ways to collaborate with others to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion**	F5 Include others, including learners, external partners and community groups, to create and develop ways to promote access and be more inclusive
F6 **Commit to promoting access and being more inclusive throughout the whole academic year**	F6 Ensure access to on-going opportunities for declaration and safe and easy ways to access support whenever learners need it, as issues that impede access and inclusion can occur at any time.

Self-development

Element	A teacher should
G1 **Develop deeper self-awareness**	G1 Engage in thinking and reflection in order to understand one's own lived experience and background from an intersectional perspective
G2 **Be open to challenge**	G2 Be aware that you can learn from the challenge of others who may have different lived experiences or knowledge.
G3 **Commit to continuous learning and unlearning to identify training and development needs**	G3 Appreciate that EDI is an evolving subject and that it is important to commit to learning and unlearning. Value developing your EDI practice learning through innovation and research
G4	G4

Element	A teacher should
Be open to diverse perspectives	Develop a diverse network and be open to different sources of information and learning to widen understanding and knowledge
G5 **Be humble and brave**	G5 Recognise that commitment to promoting EDI takes energy and commitment, courage to be uncomfortable and to challenge others and to stand up for what is right
G6 **Collaborate with others**	G6 Invite others such as external partners, learners and people with lived experience to be part of the solution and be prepared to learn from them. Amplify their voices.

Part Two

Inclusive approaches

Over the years many names have been used to describe the skills adults need for their personal and working lives:

- Basic Skills
- Key Skills
- Essential Skills
- Skills for Life
- LLN (Literacy, Language and Numeracy)
- Functional Skills

What has not changed is that teachers of all areas often work with learners whose necessary skills are below Level 2. Almost 3 in 10 young people have not achieved a Level 2 in English and maths by the age of 19 (Learning and Work Institute, 2019[1]). Additionally, 9 million working-age adults have low basic skills in literacy/numeracy, of which 5 million have low skills in both. (OECD Survey of Adult Skills, 2016[2]).

Qualified specialist teachers in these subjects are often in place to offer a range of support. Yet more could be done to include the development of these important skills within the main learning programme. It is widely accepted that a more integrated, or 'embedded' approach, can lead to higher learner achievement.

This section looks at strategies for supporting learners' needs, including embedding the important underpinning skills, inclusive approaches to planning and assessment and working with specialists. It also signposts resources that can help further education teachers develop their own personal skills levels through professional development opportunities.

This guidance can be used by:

- Trainee teachers
- Existing teachers
- Specialist English, maths and digital skills teachers
- Teacher educators
- Awarding organisations
- Leaders and managers in training provision

---

[1] Available at https://learningandwork.org.uk/resources/research-and-reports/getting-the-basics-right-the-case-for-action-on-adult-basic-skills/
[2] Available at https://www.oecd.org/skills/piaac/The_Survey%20_of_Adult_Skills_Reader's_companion_Second_Edition.pdf

English

Planning your teaching

Many teachers in FE work with learners on technical programmes whose first language is not English. This can provide significant challenges for teaching staff. The Supporting learners on ESOL courses guide has some useful strategies to help teachers get the best from their ESOL learners.

Teachers also frequently work with SEND learners, or learners who have additional needs. Many learners do not wish to be singled out as requiring 'extra support or one-to-one help'. The ETF's Supporting learners with additional needs guide has a wealth of suggestions to support learners with a range of needs.

In addition, the dedicated SEND Excellence Gateway website has a range of resources for teachers, support staff and leaders.

Being able to support learners with additional needs, is of course, a fundamental part of any teacher's role. However, it is equally important to recognise and support native English speakers who struggle to read and write. Many adults spend a lot of their lives devising coping strategies or trying to avoid situations which may draw attention to this. You may have learners in your class who are struggling to read and write. Therefore, it is often best to avoid asking learners to read aloud in the class as this could cause embarrassment, shame and possibly behavioural issues for learners who do struggle.

The Reading Agency states that 1 in 6 adults struggle to read and 1 in 4 experience mental health issues at some point in their lives. They try to tackle adult literacy, mental health and social isolation through the power of reading. They work with people of all ages and their website has a dedicated section on working with adults.

The Learning and Work Institute is an independent policy, research and development organisation dedicated to lifelong learning, full employment and inclusion. They have published a report on the need to equip adults with the basic skills they need to survive in life and work.

Amongst resources available on the English excellence gateway is a page dedicated to supporting teachers plan for learning in English.

Approaches to teaching

The English excellence gateway has a wide of resources for teaching staff to support learners with the teaching, learning and assessment of English skills. Resources include a guide to Teaching students the writing process and how to avoid plagiarism. This could be particularly useful for learners on technical programmes that are not used to writing.

The ESOL excellence gateway has a similar range of resources for teachers supporting learners whose first language is not English. Using smart phones in ESOL learning can help engage, motivate and help learners to develop important life skills. The ETF guide has lots of useful ways to engage learners.

In addition to the ESOL excellence gateway, the ETF has specific resources on supporting ESOL learners often referred to as 'pre-entry' and are now referred to as 'New to ESOL'. Practitioners working with ESOL learners on functional skills programmes may find the report 'ESOL Learners and Functional Skills English' interesting.

[Effective practice in the delivery and teaching of English and maths to 16-18 years olds](#) is a summary of findings in a report into how to effectively plan and teach post-16 maths and English.

Supporting learners to develop employability skills and subject specific/industry specific teaching

[Embedding English and maths in technical and vocational programmes](#) has some excellent, subject specific flyers summarising the maths and English dimensions of a variety of technical areas. They were designed to help providers and employers to embed maths and English skills into their study programmes and work experience placements.

Assessment (and feedback)

The ETF has a dedicated page on [Assessment](#) on the [English Excellence Gateway](#) to support teachers with assessment practices. Although there is a focus on English and maths, the information about Assessment for Learning is relevant for all teaching and learning in further education.

The page includes guidelines on [New approaches to assessment and tracking in maths and English.](#) The guide is aimed at teachers, encouraging them to reflect on and develop practices in assessment for learning. The [Assessment for Learning Effective Practice Guidelines](#) gives a good insight into how assessment for learning can work best for learners.

[The Effective Practice on marking spelling, grammar and punctuation](#) website details research carried out by teachers at Kirklees College, supported by the Education and Training Foundation and the East Midlands Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training (EMCETT).

The ETF have devised a [New to ESOL screening tool](#) for non-specialists of ESOL who wish to understand the needs of learners who are at the beginning stages of learning English.

Accessibility

[The SEND Excellence Gateway](#) is a valuable source of information for anyone working with learners who have specific needs and need to adapt their teaching.

Self-development

There are three national [Centres for Excellence in Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)](#) which provide expert support for leaders, managers and practitioners who wish to put learners with SEND at the centre of their organisation as part of a Department for Education (DfE) funded national programme. They offer free support to leaders from all types of providers across England's Further Education (FE) sector. Each centre also hosts communities of practice to provide support to managers and/or practitioners.

[The SEND CPD Framework](#) is a collation of training and qualifications available from the ETF and other organisations and may be a useful starting point for action planning

Maths

Planning your teaching

The ETF has a range of CPD training and resources for maths and English practitioners.

The Maths excellence gateway also hosts a wide range of resources for teachers to support with the teaching, learning and assessment of maths and is a good starting point to search for suitable resources. The Planning for Learning page has information and resources on supporting teachers plan for teaching maths.

The Centres for Excellence in Maths (CfEM) programme is a national improvement programme, funded by the DfE, aimed at improving maths teaching up to Level 2 in post-16 settings, with a focus on 16-19. The programme is exploring what works for teachers and students, embedding related CPD and effective practice, and building networks of maths professionals in further education.

The programme is focussed primarily on four core themes of activity:

- An adapted mastery approach to mathematics, suitable for the post-16 sector.
- Approaches to contextualisation which relate maths to real-world situations
- Motivating and engaging learners
- The use of data and technology within mathematics education in the sector.

The National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics (NCETM) has up to date information and a wealth of resources for teaching maths. Many of the resources are aimed at primary and secondary education but some of these resources can be appropriate for teaching in FE.

Many people can feel worried or stressed when faced with maths. Maths anxiety is common and should not be ignored by teaching staff. You can read more about maths anxiety and what to do about it on the National Numeracy website.

Approaches to Teaching

The CfEM website has links to resources which can support the teaching of maths, including a blog about why motivation for maths is low and possible solutions to increase motivation and engagement.

This YouTube video explains how City College Plymouth works to engage and motivate learners in maths and is accompanied by a PDF of the practice study.

Flipped learning is used for teaching GCSE maths at Gateshead College and is demonstrated through this practice study. Learners are encouraged to be more autonomous in their learning and teachers have seen a reduction in behaviour management issues.

Supporting learners to develop a growth mindset towards maths may help to overcome barriers and motivate learners. Carol Dweck discussed fixed and growth mindsets in her blog. Dweck also produced a report on the relationship between mindsets and maths/science learning. Charlie Stripp of NCETM also wrote about the importance of growth mindsets in his article Mindsets, maths and mastery.

Supporting learners to develop employability skills/Subject and industry specific teaching

One problem which can affect the motivation of learners when learning maths is seeing the relevance of maths concepts in everyday or working life. Eddie Playfair from the AOC explains what contextualisation is and why it is important when teaching maths in his blog.

Using the Realistic Maths Approach (RME) in the classroom helps to contextualise learning and encourages thinking through solutions to problems. This practice study explains how it has been successful at Cambridge Regional College and is supported by a video.

The Maths Education Innovation is a charity working to improve lives through maths education. It has a range of useful resources, including a contextualisation toolkit.

Teachers on technical qualifications may find it useful to look at resources on embedding and supporting learners

Some teachers may find it helpful to look at common maths misconceptions to help anticipate issues some learners may face and address these in their teaching.

Assessment (and feedback)

The ETF has a dedicated page on Assessment on the Maths excellence gateway to support teachers with assessment practices. Although there is a focus on English and maths, the information about Assessment for Learning is relevant for all teaching and learning in further education.

The page includes guidelines on New approaches to assessment and tracking in maths and English. The guide is aimed at teachers, encouraging them to reflect on and develop practices in assessment for learning. The Assessment for Learning Effective Practice Guidelines gives a good insight into how assessment for learning can work best for learners.

Diagnostic questions are used by Stoke on Trent College as assessment for learning in GCSE maths.

Accessibility and inclusion

The SEND Excellence Gateway has a dedicated page on teaching maths, English and ESOL to learners with specific needs.

Self-development

CPD Modules for teachers of maths can be found on the Excellence Gateway.

As part of their work, the CfEM has CPD opportunities for teachers.

There are opportunities for teachers to work alongside other teachers as part of CPD through the NCETM.

Digital Skills

The Minimum Core digital skills is the first stage for 'exploring teachers' on the [Digital Teaching Professional Framework.](#) The Digital Teaching Professional Framework is a competency framework for teaching and training practitioners across all parts of the FE sector, including for learning providers in the workplace, community settings and prisons. It has been developed by the ETF in collaboration with Jisc – a not-for-profit organisation which provides digital solutions for UK education and research – and has been designed to focus on the benefits of good pedagogy supported by technology to enhance learning.

The framework sets out different teaching contexts and activities, and the main components that comprise each of these. Each component is mapped to relevant parts of the European Framework for the Digital Competence of Educators, the ETF's Professional Standards and Jisc's six Digital Capabilities. There are statements that describe what competency looks like for each of the teaching and training activities that form the core elements of the framework. The competency statements describe three stages of competence – Exploring, Adopting, Leading – to show how practitioners can develop their skills.

The framework is accompanied by free, online, bite-size training modules, which are accredited. The training modules are designed to support just-in-time and self-identified training needs. They will also support training needs identified through a self-assessment 'discovery tool' that has been developed by Jisc.

The full version of the framework is designed to be used mainly by leaders, managers and HR professionals. It provides a foundation for professional development plans, so could be used as part of a staff development approach and strategically as part of a digital skills strategy. There is a shortened version of the framework more suited for use by mainstream practitioners, which will include the most immediately useful competences.

The [Enhance Digital Teaching Platform](#) has two strands. The first strand is aimed at supporting teachers using Educational Technology (Ed Tech) in their practice. The second strand supports teacher of Essential Digital Skills but is suitable for many practitioners who are working on improving the digital skills of their learners.

The [Essential Digital Skills](#) platform provides a self-assessment tool, resources and advice for anyone who is teaching on essential digital skills courses using the national standards. A login with the Education and Training Foundation is required but it is free. A list of [modules](#) can be found on the website and a [video](#) has been produced to explain this.

The main areas covered by the EDS are:

- o Using devices and handling information
- o Creating and editing
- o Communicating
- o Transacting
- o Being safe and responsible online.

Practitioners also have the opportunity to participate in the [EDS Community of Practice](#) where they can share resources and ideas.

Training modules to accompany The Digital Teaching Professional Framework have been created and links to the 7 categories listed in the minimum core.

Planning your teaching

Planning and looking for information modules include *credibility and reliability of resources for teachers* and *choosing the best resources.*

Designing and adapting resources modules include *creating content: adapt and edit content* and *new content from old – swap, borrow, renew, recycle*

Empowering learning through technology modules include *accommodating different levels of digital skills* and the *validity of internet information.*

Communication and collaboration with and between colleagues/learners modules include *sharing resources using links and attachments* and *webinars, videos, vlogs for CPD/PLD.*

Approaches to teaching

Teaching and Learning resources modules include *active learning spaces* and *designing mobile friendly learning.*

Teaching context face to face modules include *learner led activity* and *organising learning.*

Teaching context blended learning modules include *delivering effective teaching, learning and assessment* and *supporting learners online.*

Teaching context fully online modules include *asynchronous teaching and learning* and *collaborative learning activities for online courses.*

Supporting learners to develop employability skills

Supporting digital capabilities to enhance employability skills modules include *blogs and diaries for learners* and *creating content – social media.*

Supporting study skills modules include *personal learning environments* and *dealing with technical problems with digital literacy.*

Communication and collaboration with and between learners modules include *collaborating with learners.*

Subject and industry specific teaching

Teaching subject specific and industry related modules include *assessing and updating specialist competencies* and *improving your approach to searching online.*

Raising learners' digital employability and self-employability skills include modules include *enhancing employability through social media* and *finding employment online.*

Assessment (and feedback)

Assessment and feedback modules include *formative assessment using quizzes* and *how to improve feedback using audio and video.*

Accessibility and inclusion

Accessibility modules include *assistive technology* and *accommodating the learners' digital context.*

Equality and diversity modules include *learning for independent living* and *supporting special learning needs.*

Self-development

Self-assessment and reflection modules include *innovation and the need for change* and *assessing your digital skillset.*

Progression and CPD – strategies to develop digital skills and pedagogy modules include *being confident* and *working with others to identify own CPD and collaborative networks.*

Well-being – practitioner and learner modules include *digital well-being for all* and *recognising and responding to cyber bullying.*

Managing Identity – practitioner and learner modules include *how to tread a positive digital footprint* and *controlling the audience, posting and publishing online and public.*

Sustainability

If we're to meet the UK's ambitious [decarbonisation plans](#) and contribute to the [UN sustainability development goals,](#) both the employment and the education landscape is going to change considerably.

The challenge is stark and the action required urgent. We need specialist sustainability expertise but also people from across all industries to be knowledgeable and ready to make sustainability the norm.

To fully equip people for their future jobs and careers, all learners can and should be green learners. Education is an enabler – a lever to help achieve sustainability goals. Learners need to be developing knowledge, skills, behaviours, values and agency as core competencies so they can create positive change in their lives and their work whether they go on to be sustainability specialists or not.

The demand for this is plentiful – whether from business and industry who recognise the skills they need in their workforce[1], from academia who recognise the risks of not acting upon climate change[2], biodiversity crisis and social inequities, from learners who absolutely expect their educational organisations to be operating responsibly and teaching sustainability skills[3], and from the existing further education and training workforce who absolutely see the potential of the sector in achieving of sustainability goals as well as helping ensure a 'just transition' whereby we achieve those goals without leaving anyone behind[4].

If we are to develop sustainability literate learners who are well equipped to be active change-makers, we require teachers and educators who are similarly equipped, and who have what they need to bring this to their learning and teaching practice.

As the 2021 [Skills for Jobs](#) white paper recognised, a strong focus on staff recruitment, retention, training and development is the key that unlocks excellence in the system. Research undertaken by the [Education and Training Foundation (ETF)](#) with nearly 850 members of the FE workforce at the same time of the white paper's release shows that 74% of teaching staff don't feel they haven't had adequate training to embed sustainability in their work.

We need our educators across all subject specialisms and occupational pipelines to have the confidence, capability and capacity to develop their own ESD skillsets and this needs to be a priority. This isn't just so they're able to train those moving into jobs that support green growth but also to ensure there isn't a bottleneck creating skills gaps and a lag between what's being taught and societal and industry need.

Continued professional development in education for sustainable development (ESD) outcomes and how to achieve them is needed for all staff working in the FE sector. This also needs to be included in initial teacher education and occupational standards hence the inclusion of ESD in the latest revision of the minimum core.

The inclusion of ESD in the minimum core is just one of the ways the FE and training sector is responding to sustainability challenges and moving to position sustainability as a central pillar of our education system. For example, many awarding bodies are exploring how best to embed sustainability into the FE curriculum and the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education recently publishing a [sustainability framework](#) to guide trailblazer groups and route panels in ensuring occupational standards best reflect sustainability needs

and how these translate into appropriate knowledge areas, skills and behaviours amongst learners

An increasing number of sector stakeholders are taking sustainability leadership positions and high-level support is vital for meaningfully embedding ESD in FE.

For updates, resources and further information, visit https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/supporting/education-for-sustainable-development/.

ESD in the minimum core

The ESD content provides guidance on approaches to curriculum design, teaching, learning and assessment. It's designed to inspire, inform and enable Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) to be included within formal and informal teaching. It will be of practical help for further education practitioners working with learners to foster their **knowledge, skills, behaviours, values and agency** relevant to sustainable development.

There is much debate regarding the concept of 'sustainability', and the definition of the terms 'sustainable development', and 'education for sustainable development'. This guidance does not contribute to this debate but aligns with the approach developed by UNESCO[5], and the UN sustainable development goals[6].

We want educators and teachers to understand (broadly) their role in equipping learners with skills, knowledge and opportunity to develop their agency in relation to sustainability. The nature of the FE landscape is diverse, with a large variety of roles, courses and contexts. Different individuals in different roles have different perspectives and ways of contributing to sustainability. This means the approach to embedding ESD cannot be prescriptive.

Similarly, sustainability challenges are broad, complex and multi-faceted. There isn't a specific, definitive curriculum that all learners should follow. Instead different subject specialisms and occupational pipelines will include different content and develop different skills that is most relevant to the subject matter and learner needs. As such, there are many ways good ESD outcomes for learners can be achieved. This is another reason the ESD content outlined is neither prescriptive or exhaustive. Instead, we present the concepts required, and encourage both enquiry and development by individuals and organisations.

Alongside the objectives and elements within the minimum core itself, a number of resources have been developed to assist trainees (and indeed existing teachers, teacher educators and leaders and managers) in this enquire and development – encouraging them to adopt the requirements set out in the most impactful way for them, their provider, their subject specialism and their learners. As further resources are developed in future, these will be made available at https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/supporting/education-for-sustainable-development/.

We recognise that educators are not limited to making an impact through their teaching and learning but also can make positive changes through the way that they work, how they work with others and how they interact with the organisation(s) they work for. Therefore we suggest ways educators can further the quality and impact of their ESD work in through the way they contribute to the organisations for whom they work, and how they collaborate with others.

Operations in this context include the infrastructure, systems and processes that support our learning landscapes. There are opportunities for our buildings and the way they are operated to compliment teaching and learning and provide spaces to share with, and bring value to, our communities. There are significant sustainability impacts relating to design, energy use, resource use and waste. Learners should see these being managed responsibly and understand their role in this.

Learners don't learn purely through the formal curriculum but also through the informal and subliminal curriculum – the norms they adopt whilst part of their place of learning. We therefore also suggest ways in which educators reflect upon how they role model sustainable practice through their professional behaviours and choices.

Finally, we remember that leaders are not always in leadership positions. For the FE and training sector to reach its potential in contributing to the achievement of sustainability goals, and in fully equipping our learner with the skills they need, we need leaders in all areas, in all organisations. Therefore relevant sustainability leadership competencies have also been included in the framework.

Annex 1: examples and illustrations of sustainability being embedded into different subject specialisms and occupational pipelines

Throughout this document we've reiterated that there isn't a prescriptive nor definitive way to embed ESD across the teaching in the FE sector – this is because of the diversity of subject specialisms, qualification levels, providers and teaching roles. However, it's vital that this content isn't simply a theoretical framework, but something teachers are able to put into practice – contributing to the achievement of sustainability goals, in collaboration with others.
As demonstrated by the requirements set out in the ESD knowledge, understanding and skills required by the minimum core, a collaborative and cohesive approach to learner engagement with sustainability is needed. Adding a short mention of sustainability in one lesson isn't going to develop the desired learner outcomes. Similarly, the focus shouldn't be purely on classroom behaviours but place sustainability meaningfully within your subject matter. You can apply social, economic, environmental contexts to engage and challenge students and staff. It may be that by facilitating a dialogue (with your learners, colleagues and others you work with) you learn from them as much as they do from you.

Examples of ways teachers can do this in different contexts are given and will be kept up to date on the ETF web page: https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/supporting/education-for-sustainable-development/embedding-sustainability-into-subject-specialisms/ . Some of these are real-life accounts (shown in quotation marks) of how teachers have engaged their learners in ESD through the formal curriculum, linked to their subject specialism. The topics covered represent qualifications which, in total, account for the majority of post-16 enrolments. These were initially collected through the ETF's 2021 research into experiences of ESD amongst the FE workforce[7] and are supplemented by further ideas and suggestions.

Some of these examples are taken from the sustainability framework produced by IFATE sustainability framework[8] and showcase how sustainability can be demonstrated in different occupations. These are replicated here to help teachers understand the types of sustainability challenges their learners may encounter. Of course, this is not a definitive nor exhausted list – it's intended to provide inspiration and ideas.

This list is supplemented by a forthcoming ETF publication reviewing ESD outcomes in the most popular curricular used by FE organisations and a series of case studies outlining approaches practitioners are taking to embed ESD in their work both in subject areas explicitly linked to the sustainability agenda (e.g. transport and construction) and those that have less explicit links (e.g. ESOL, foundation studies, hairdressing).

If you have your own examples, case studies or recommended approaches you'd like us to include in future, either from subject areas listed or additional ones, please contact charlotte.bonner@etfoundation.co.uk.

Annex 2: Prompts

The starting point for embedding sustainability is for individuals (and groups of individuals) to understand the elements of sustainability and then explore what it means in relation to their role.

These prompts have been designed to help individuals, and groups, work out where to start. To ask themselves what they could and should be doing *in their role* to embed sustainability.

These prompts are for individuals and groups with learner-facing roles. The basic prompts should be applicable to all teachers and trainers and the advanced prompts are for those with responsibility for managing courses, teams of teachers or trainers or with other curriculum-related roles.

Basic:

1. Have you undertaken sustainability training to familiarise yourself with the basic principles?
2. Where do sustainability principles already appear in your curriculum (if at all)?
3. Have you explored the relevance of sustainability to your subject area?
4. Can you make space to discuss / explore sustainability with your learners?
5. Can you include sustainability examples in any teaching materials?
6. Can you use sustainability as part of projects or assessments?
7. How do you role model good practice?

Advanced):

8. Have you undertaken a sustainability review in your curriculum area?
9. Can you support / encourage your team to undertake sustainability training?
10. Can you facilitate or contribute to a Community of Practice for Sustainability or bring sustainability into existing groups or networks you are part of?
11. Can you share good ESD practice with your team or across your organisation?
12. Have you discussed sustainability with employers or professional bodies? Are there opportunities to collaborate?

Curriculum development prompts:

Here we present reflective questions to support designing ESD into curricula. Again these are designed to be undertaken both by individual teachers but also in conversation and consultation with colleagues, partners and colleagues. Inspiration for these questions was

taken from the Education for Sustainable Development Guidance developed by QAA Advance HE[9].

13. What challenges does your subject area face regarding environmental and social changes that are taking place locally and globally?
14. How is sustainable development being addressed by relevant employers to your subject area? What sustainable development challenges and critiques do these organisations and how might they respond?
15. What do your learners see as a priority for the integration of ESD? What do they want to learn, experience and contribute? Is the students' union (or other student representative body) active in sustainable development related activities? Do they run any clubs or societies that may interact with curricula?
16. What are the sustainable development needs, interests and priorities of the provider and its local community? Can your students engage with these?
17. Who are potential partners interested in creating educational experiences relating to ESD? Could they provide 'living labs', case studies, experiential learning, simulation activities, projects, placements etc.?
18. What ideas and perspectives can you utilise from other disciplines and subject areas, to promote an interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary approach? What are the barriers to interdisciplinary learning (if any) and how can these be overcome?
19. Are students provided with and supported to develop opportunities to put ESD learning into practice, to 'live what they're learning?'
20. How can you evaluate the impact of your ESD content?

***Operations** p*rompt*s:*

All staff have some role to play in helping to embed sustainability across the operations of their organisation. The basic prompts are to help staff think about the ways they contribute to sustainability ambitions as part of their professional practice. The advanced prompts are for those with specific responsibility relating to operational areas; staff who buy goods and services on behalf of the organisation, who manage teams or budgets or policy areas for example.

Basic (for all staff)

21. Have you undertaken sustainability training to familiarise yourself with the basic principles?
22. Have you considered the sustainability impacts of your activities at work?
23. Can you reduce your environmental impact at work? (use less energy, consider waste etc)
24. Can you find ways to make a positive contribution to sustainability in your workplace?
25. Can you support learners, colleagues or others to take sustainability action?

Advanced (for specialist role-holders)

26. Do you manage an area which can make a unique or significant contribution to sustainability? (procurement, HR, quality etc)
27. Have you identified what best-practice looks like in relation to sustainability and your role or function? (sustainable procurement, sustainability in estate management or HR for example)

28. Have you identified ways to build sustainability into and policies or processes you manage?
29. Can you support or encourage members of your team to undertake sustainability training and embed sustainable practice into their work?
30. Can you find opportunities to build sustainability into your progress reporting?

Annex 3: Resources to further support teachers' sustainability knowledge, understanding and ESD skills

Sustainability as a subject matter is broad and complex. Understanding the complexity and interconnectedness of sustainability issues and systems and how they relate to individuals, organisations and society is in itself challenging, especially the additional layer of regular new insights from the work of science, innovations from technology, and different political approaches to solving sustainability challenges.

As a result, we recognise that many teachers themselves aren't confident in their sustainability knowledge. We've provided some signposts below to help enhance teachers' knowledge of the broad issues relating to sustainability, ESD, and organisational approaches to sustainability that employers may which to explore. This content won't be completely relevant to all roles and subject specialisms, but it's intended to encourage teachers to build their knowledge of the fundamentals of ESD so that they have increased confidence in bringing these subjects to their work.

The concepts of sustainability:

1. Various training courses exist to introduce people to the core concepts of sustainability. You can view a list of sustainability qualifications on the Education and Training Foundation's ESD webpages.

Education for sustainable development contexts:

1. UNESCO are one of the major enablers of ESD globally. They define ESD as "[empowering] learners to take informed decisions and responsible actions for environmental integrity, economic viability and a just society, for present and future generations, while respecting cultural diversity. It is about lifelong learning, and is an integral part of quality education." Their website is rich with information about ESD approaches internationally, including resources for educators. Of particular note is 'Education for the SDGs: Learning objectives', a guide for education professionals on the use of ESD in learning for the SDGs, and consequently to contribute to achieving the SDGs. The guide identifies indicative learning objectives and suggests topics and learning activities for each SDG in a non-prescriptive way meaning educators can adapt its contents to suit their learning contexts and environments.
2. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has recently published a conceptual framework for learner outcomes, the learning compass, aiming to create a common language around broad educational goals that is globally relevant and informed, while providing space to adapt the framework to local contexts.
3. Some FE teachers work in higher education contexts, or deliver higher education content. QAA and Advance HE have published guidance intended to help UK higher

education institutions incorporate ESD within their curricula. The full guidance is available to any staff member or student at a QAA Member or Advance HE Member institution. QAA Members can access the guidance on their Membership Resources Site. An executive summary, providing an overview of the guidance, is publicly available.

4. SOS-UK is an educational charity created by students and staff at the National Union of Students in 2019 in response to the climate emergency and ecological crisis. They campaign for ESD as well as providing a host of training, events, organisational change programmes as well as undertaking research and consultancy.

Whole-organisational approaches to sustainability in the further education and training sector

1. Developed by the Climate Commission for UK Higher and Further Education and Nous Group, the Climate Action Roadmap for FE Colleges provides clear actions and guidance on how colleges can respond to the climate emergency and advance sustainability. It encourages a strategic, whole-institution approach and would be suitable for many other types of organisation in the sector beyond colleges.

2. The Green Gown Awards recognise the exceptional sustainability initiatives being undertaken by universities and colleges. As the ethos of the awards is to ensure lessons and examples of good practice are shared within the tertiary education sector, they share case studies and videos from the current and previous Green Gown Awards winners.

Annex 4: Resources used in development

Informing the entire framework are the Global Sustainable Development Goals. These are a collection of 17 interconnected global goals which were agreed by UN nations in 2015. They provide a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all" and they are a helpful way of understanding and communicating sustainability.

We have also aligned our approach to that promoted by the Climate Action Roadmap for UK FE Colleges.

To inform the content of the minimum core, we've reviewed various competency frameworks spanning teaching and learning, operations and leadership. References are provided below.

ESD competencies, in particular those which have been developed through collaboration with sector experts, included:

1. Education for Sustainable Development – Guidance. QAA and Advance HE (2021)
2. Asia Society/OECD (2018), Teaching for Global Competence in a Rapidly Changing World, OECD Publishing, Paris/Asia Society, New York
3. Professional Development Framework of Teacher Competences for Learning for Sustainability (2012)
4. The Competences in Education for Sustainable Development ("Learning for the future: Competences in Education for Sustainable Development") 2011
5. The Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) (2007)

General **sustainability competencies** included:

1. The IEMA Skills map (Practitioner - Operational)
2. The ICRS Competency Framework

Leadership and governance competencies included:

1. The Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative
2. CARL – The Competency Assessment for Responsible Leadership
3. Sustainability Leadership Competencies (BSR)

[1] e.g. CBI (2021) available at https://www.cbi.org.uk/articles/skills-and-training-for-the-green-economy/ and Aldersgate Group (2020) available at https://www.aldersgategroup.org.uk/asset/1702

[2] e.g. The Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment (2020) available at https://cep.lse.ac.uk/pubs/download/cepcovid-19-010.pdf and ESD schools at the University of Plymouth, University College London and the University of Gloucestershire

[3] NUS/SOS-UK (2010-2020) available at https://www.sos-uk.org/research/sustainability-skills-survey

[4] ETF (2021) *forthcoming* available at https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/supporting/education-for-sustainable-development/

[5] See https://en.unesco.org/themes/education-sustainable-development

[6] See https://sdgs.un.org/

[7] ETF (2021) *forthcoming* available at https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/supporting/education-for-sustainable-development/

[8] Available at https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/developing-new-apprenticeships/resources/sustainability-framework/

[9] Available at https://www.qaa.ac.uk/news-events/news/qaa-and-advance-he-launch-landmark-new-guidance-on-education-for-sustainable-development

EDI in the Minimum Core

The FE and Skills sector operates within society as it is, which implies a context including a range of systemic and structural inequalities. This of course impacts on how learners achieve and progress in learning. As a sector teachers have always sought to mitigate these inequalities through their teaching, the learning they have promoted, and through additional support and opportunities offered.

As a new teacher in the sector it is really important to recognise these inequalities and, through your own professional development, learn how to promote equality, diversity and inclusion through all aspects of your teaching practice. As you develop your teaching practice, it might help to bear in mind the following that you will need to attend to:

- Equality, diversity and inclusion is broad and wide-ranging and can include being aware of learning support needs (for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities), learner support (for learners who may face disadvantages due to low income, poor housing, homelessness etc), pastoral support (for learners who low confidence, mental health and well-being) and lack of diversity and representation (for learners who do not see themselves reflected in the curriculum, course materials or in the industry sectors they want to progress to).
- Equality, diversity and inclusion is ever-changing. As society changes in response to community, national and global events, so our thinking and understanding about equality, diversity and inclusion changes. These things heighten our awareness of the challenges that many learners face but also raises learners' expectations about what the future and the world of work should offer them.
- We need to be self-aware to do the work of equality, diversity and inclusion. This means being aware of our unconscious bias and how that impacts on our thoughts and behaviours. We may have assumptions about individuals or groups based on things we have been told in our upbringing or through the way certain groups are portrayed in the media, and this will affect how we relate to, support and teach individual learners and groups of learners. We may have to unlearn some of our biases and prejudices.
- There are legal requirements on teachers and organisations to deliver equality, diversity and inclusion. This is important in tackling overt and direct discrimination but only by challenging bias and prejudice in ourselves and others can we bring about change.

This framework is designed to support you to do all of that. It is designed to help you to make your teaching practice equitable and inclusive. The list of websites is also included to enable you to explore aspects of this work in depth and to build your body of knowledge and understanding.

As a broad and evolving subject you will never reach a point where you know it all. Acquiring knowledge and skills in how to embed and promote equality, diversity and inclusion in your teaching will be exciting and rewarding as you watch **all** your learners thrive, succeed and be all that they can be. This is the start of that journey for you and you take it one step at a time.

'Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better'

Maya Angelou

Useful websites

[Home Page | Equality and Human Rights Commission (equalityhumanrights.com)](equalityhumanrights.com) Useful for information on all aspect of equality legislation for public sector organisations, including the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010

[Disability rights: Education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](www.gov.uk) Information on disability legislation including making reasonable adjustments

[Centres for Excellence in Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND): | Special Educational Needs and Disability (excellencegateway.org.uk)](excellencegateway.org.uk) A repository of everything you will need to know and do about teaching and learning for learners with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities). Also useful for linking up with people, training and events.

[How we can help | Disability Rights UK](Disability Rights UK) Useful website on disability rights in education, employment and housing

Black FE Leadership Group A group of Black Leaders in FE committed to anti-racism in the sector. Has case studies of anti-racist curricula and other effective practice

[CPD training and resources in FE - The Education and Training Foundation (et-foundation.co.uk)](et-foundation.co.uk) The ETF (Education and Training Foundation) website provides resources and training on all aspects of teaching and learning. Some pages such as digital technology, SET (Society for Education and Training) and safeguarding and Prevent will not specifically focus on equality, diversity and inclusion but will have an EDI approach embedded in all they offer. Subscribing to the newsletter will keep you up to date with everything that is going on.

[Welcome - Everyone's Invited (everyonesinvited.uk)](everyonesinvited.uk) Website dedicated to highlighting and eradicating the high levels of sexual violence and harassment in the education sector

[Supporting Mental Health in Further Education - AoC Services (aoc-services.co.uk)](aoc-services.co.uk) Information on how to support the mental health and wellbeing of teachers and learners in FE

[Free practical mental health resources | Charlie Waller Trust](Charlie Waller Trust) Useful research on mental health and wellbeing

[Home - Learning and Work Institute](#) Website for research and resources on lifelong learning, apprenticeship and employment and archived materials on working with marginalised groups such as young adult carers and refugees

Social media

Use social media as a way to keep up to date and informed.

Twitter and LinkedIn.

- Follow sector member bodies and other organisations such the ETF, AoC (Association of Colleges) AELP (Association of Employment and Learning Providers) and HOLEX (Organisation for Adult Learning) and Natspec (National Association for Specialist Colleges)
- Follow interest and networks such as Black Leaders Group, Women's Leadership Network, FE Research

Instagram

- Interest and campaigning groups and organisations such as UK Teach Racism, Everyday Racism, UK Black History, Women's History Month, Everyone's Invited.