



English and maths survey 2016

September 2016

Background

In November 2014 AoC undertook an English and maths survey of the college sector to gauge the impact and implications of the study programme requirements. A further survey has been carried out in the summer term of the 2015/16 academic year. This report provides an overview of the key data, messages and impact comparing the results of the two surveys. Note that some additional questions were included in the summer term 2015/16 survey.

Key findings

The responses indicate that English and maths is now central to college delivery. Key findings are:

- Greater senior management oversight of English and maths including a separate self-assessment report and senior leader with responsibility for English and maths
- Move to financial incentives to fill staffing shortages
- Shift to mixed staffing models (specialist and vocational), but whole college timetabling
- Inspirational teaching is key to motivation
- Involving employers in motivating students has increased.
- Whole college CPD is on the increase
- Students are more involved in feedback
- Move to ungraded lesson observations
- Planned core maths growth
- There should be greater flexibility in the qualifications offer
- Expectations of progress from starting point are unrealistic.

Response rate

Both surveys attracted a good response rate of 35% of all colleges in autumn 2014 and 34% of all colleges in summer 2016 (appendix 1). There was an increase of 5% in the number of general further education (GFE) colleges which responded to the summer 2016 survey and a significant fall of 12% in the number of sixth form colleges which responded. This may reflect the impact of the English and maths study programme

requirement falling more heavily on GFE colleges as outlined in the government’s statistical first release¹.

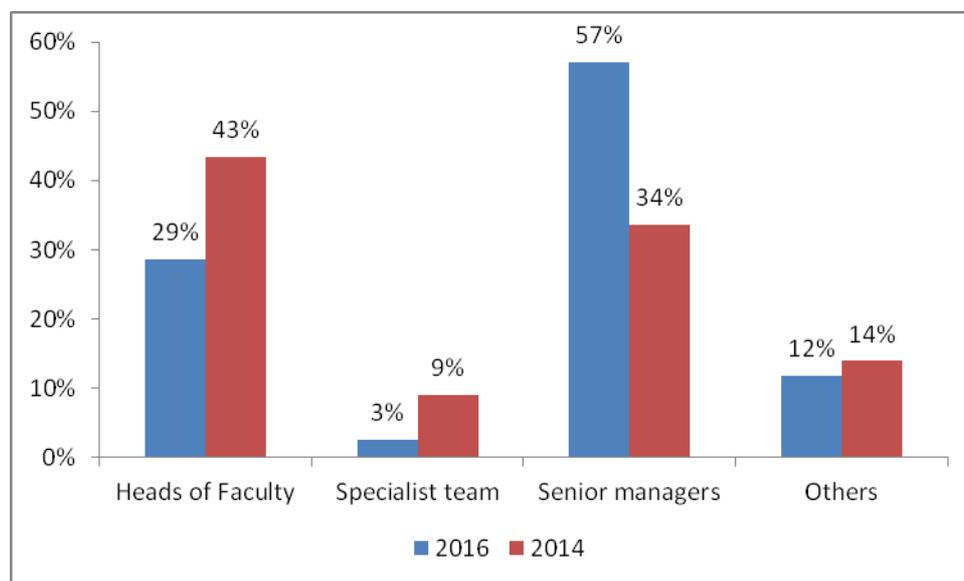
Both surveys focused on the areas of leadership and management, timetabling, staffing, teaching and learning, qualifications and data from schools.

Leadership and management

The surveys indicate that there has been a significant shift in the leadership and management of English and maths in colleges.

The responsibility for success rates, attendance and punctuality has shifted from heads of faculty (43% in autumn 2014; 29% in in summer 2016) to senior managers (34% autumn 2014; 57% in summer 2016).

Who is ultimately accountable for success rates, attendance and punctuality in English and maths?



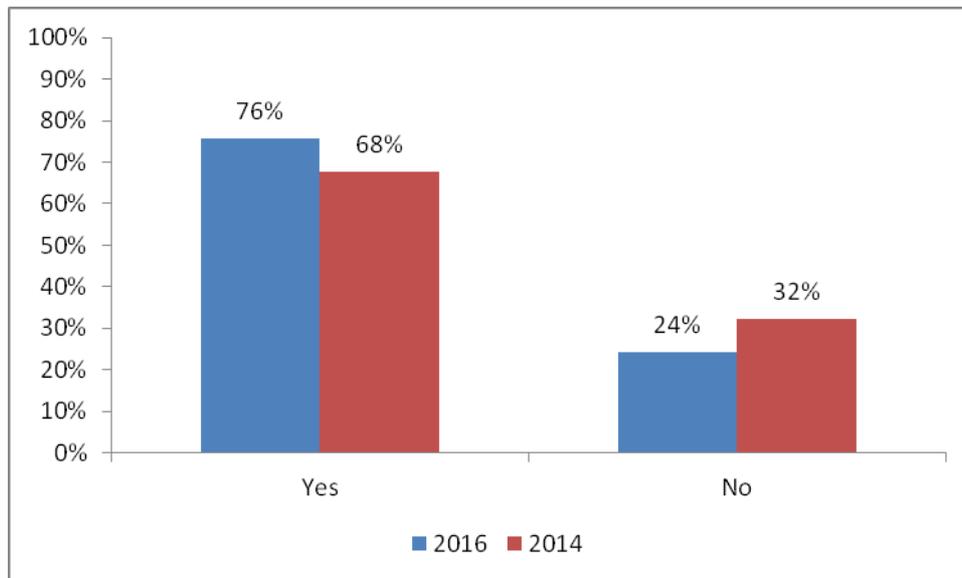
86% of colleges indicated that they had a senior lead for English and maths in summer 2016 compared with 79% in autumn 2014. Delivery structures have also changed; there has been a significant shift in the number of colleges using a mixed delivery model of both subject specialists and vocational teachers, 41% in summer 2016 compared with 34% in autumn 2014.

¹https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/525119/English_and_maths_SFR_2016_FINAL.pdf



In summer 2016 76% of colleges had a separate self-assessment report (SAR) for English and maths, an 8% increase compared with autumn 2014.

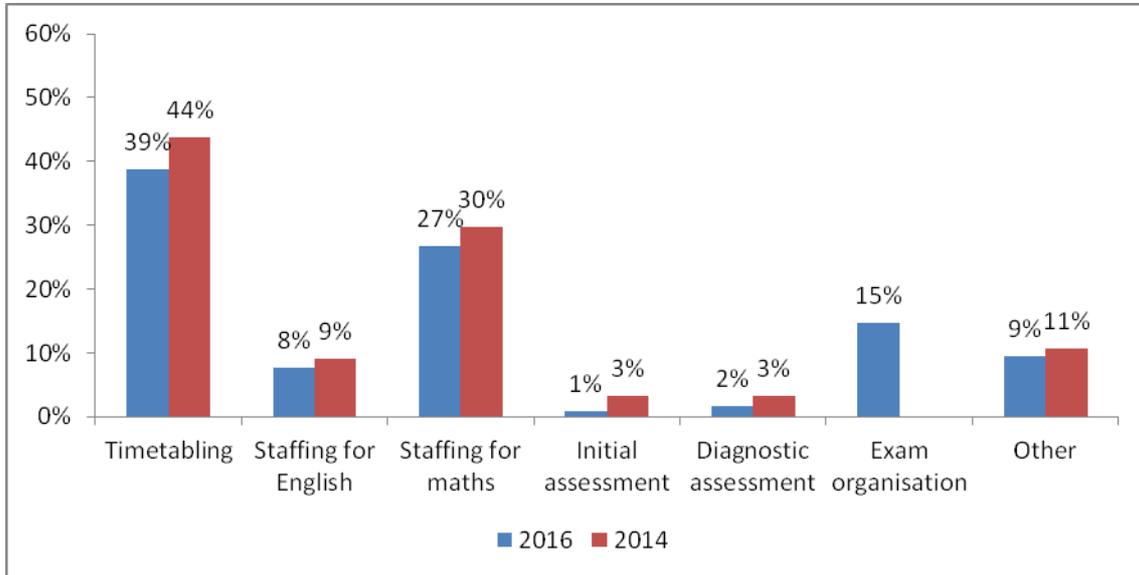
Have you got a separate Self Assessment Report (SAR) for English and maths?



Timetabling

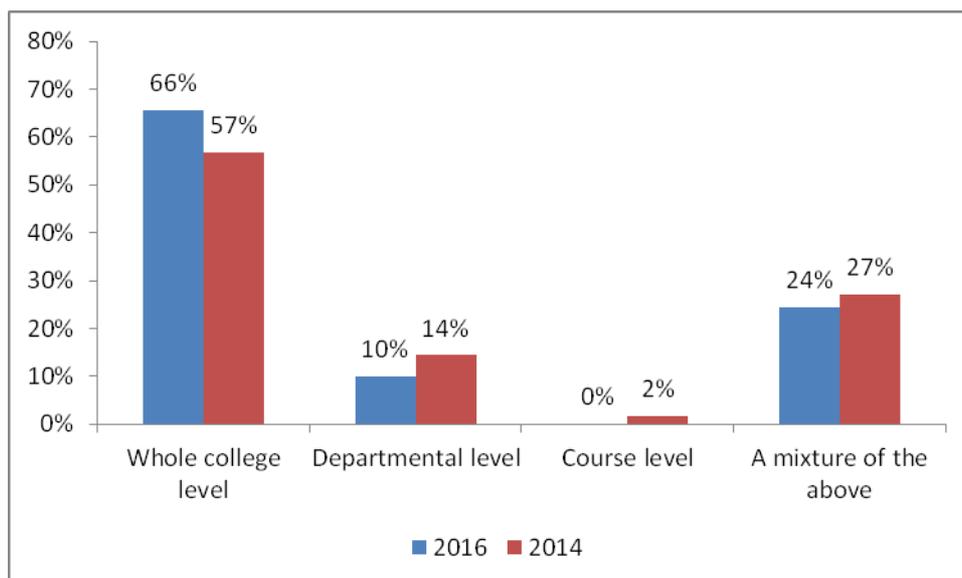
In summer 2016 timetabling was still the main challenge followed by staffing for maths with 39% and 27% of respondents respectively indicating these were major concerns. In autumn 2014 these were also the major concerns at 44% and 30% respectively. Staffing for English was still seen as less of an issue at 8% in summer 2016 (9% in autumn 2014). In the summer 2016 survey an additional category of exam organisation was added as anecdotally this had been raised as an issue by colleges. 15% of respondents rated this as a challenge.

What is presenting the biggest logistical challenge to your college?



Timetabling had shifted by a significant percentage to a whole college model (66% summer 2016 compared with 57% in autumn 2014). No colleges indicated that they timetabled English and maths by course (2% did so in autumn 2014). Departmental timetabling had dropped by 4% to 14% and a mixed approach had dropped by 3% to 24%.

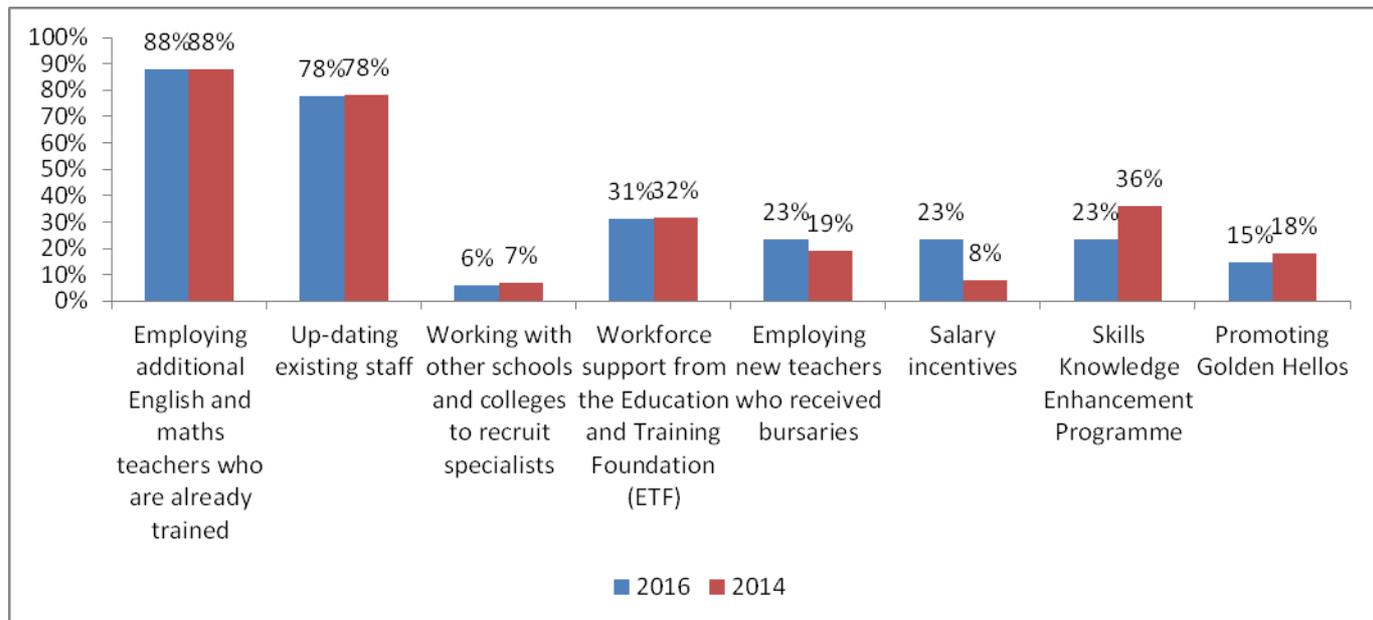
Is timetabling for English and maths done at:



Staffing

Strategies for dealing with staffing shortages changed between the two surveys. Employing staff that are already trained remained the most popular strategy for dealing with staffing shortages at 88% in both surveys. Significantly the greatest changes are in financial incentives for recruiting staff. Golden hellos were a slightly more popular strategy in autumn 2014 at 18% compared with 15% in summer 2016, but salary incentives increased dramatically by 15% from 8% in autumn 2014 to 23% in summer 2016. Recruiting new teachers in receipt of bursaries was also more popular in summer 2016 at 23% compared with 19% in autumn 2014.

In order to ensure that you have sufficient staff to deliver English and maths which of the following are you doing?



Updating existing staff remained stable at 78% although skills knowledge enhancement fell significantly from 36% to 23%. Utilising workforce support from the Education and Training Foundation increased by 1% from 31% to 32%.

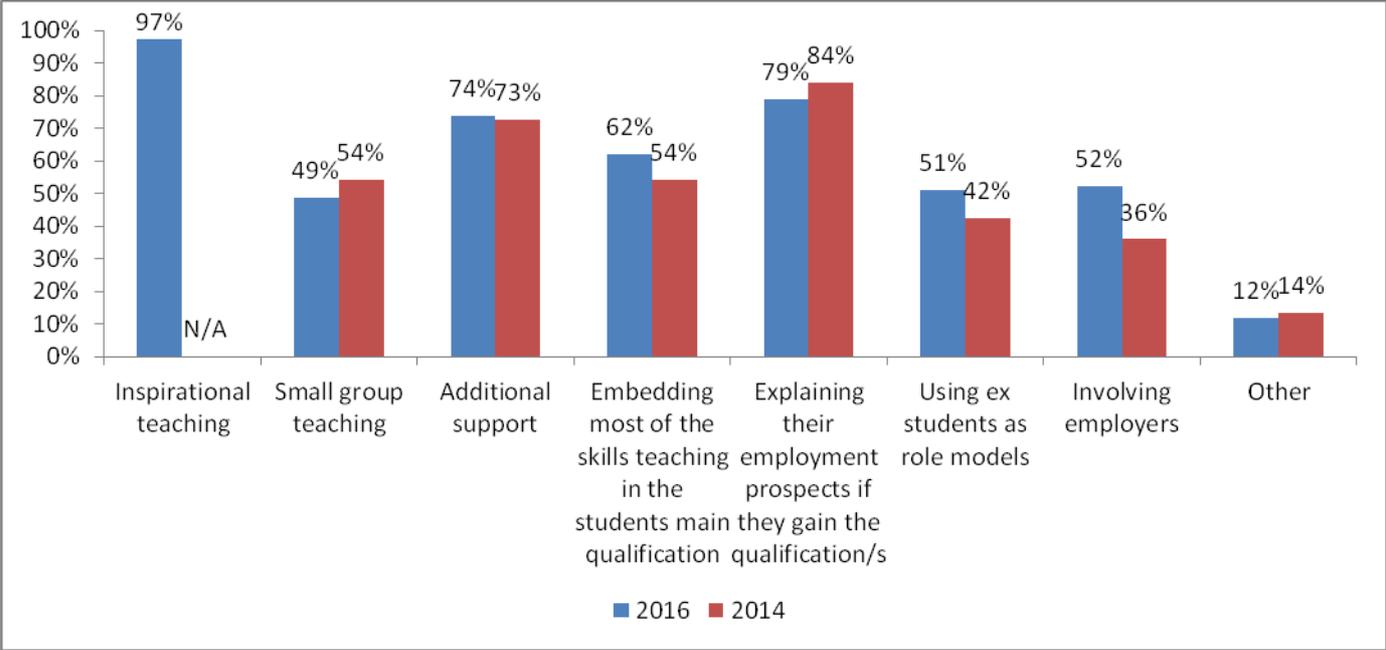
Teaching, learning and assessment and quality

The category of inspirational teaching was added to the summer 2016 survey in response to the number of free response which mentioned this in the autumn 2014 survey. 97% of respondents rated inspirational teaching as the most significant factor in encouraging students and promoting a positive attitude. Explaining employment prospects was still significant in the 2016 survey, but had dropped from 84% to 79%.



Encouraging employer involvement in motivating students in English and maths had increased significantly from 59% to 72%. The importance of additional support remained stable at 74%.

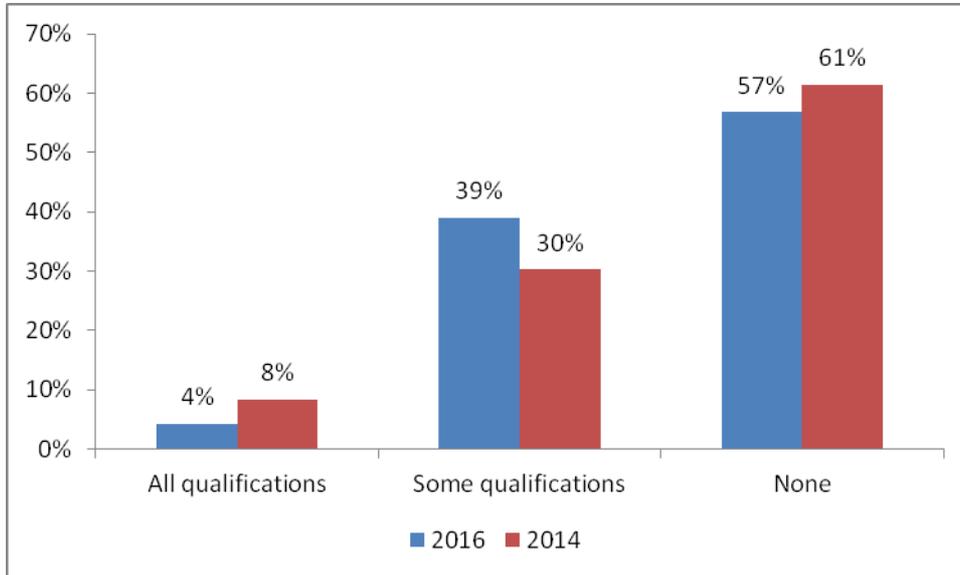
What are the factors that encourage a positive attitude in students?



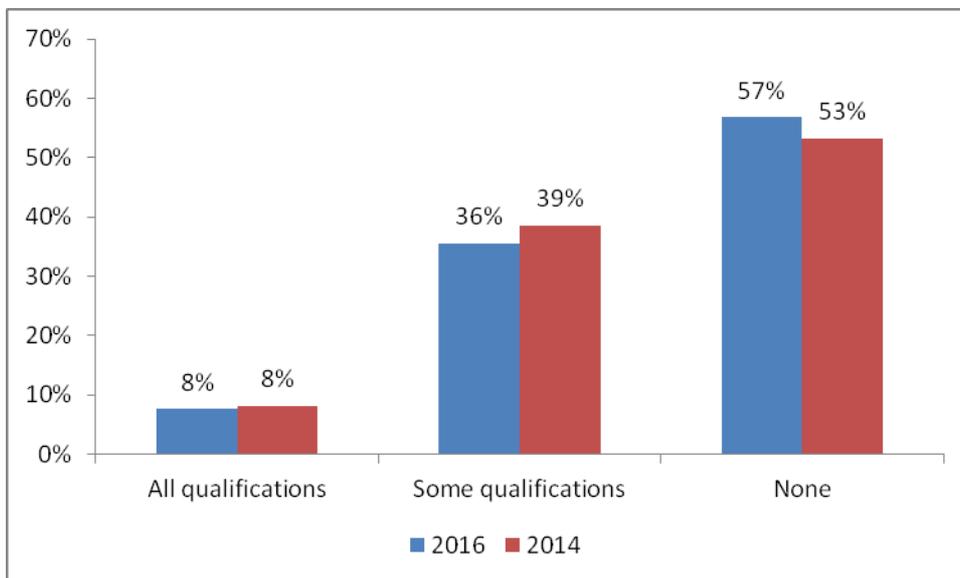
43% of respondents indicated that they have developed online delivery for some or all of their English qualifications compared with 39% in autumn 2014. Interestingly the number of colleges which indicated online delivery in some or all qualifications in maths fell slightly from 47% to 43%.



Have you developed on line delivery for all English qualifications?

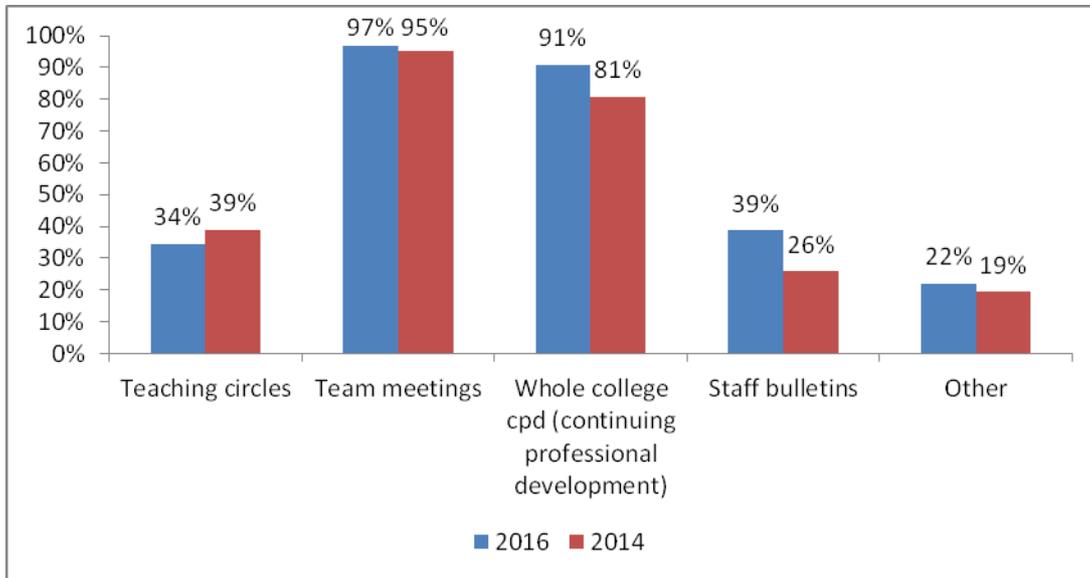


Have you developed on line delivery for all maths qualifications?



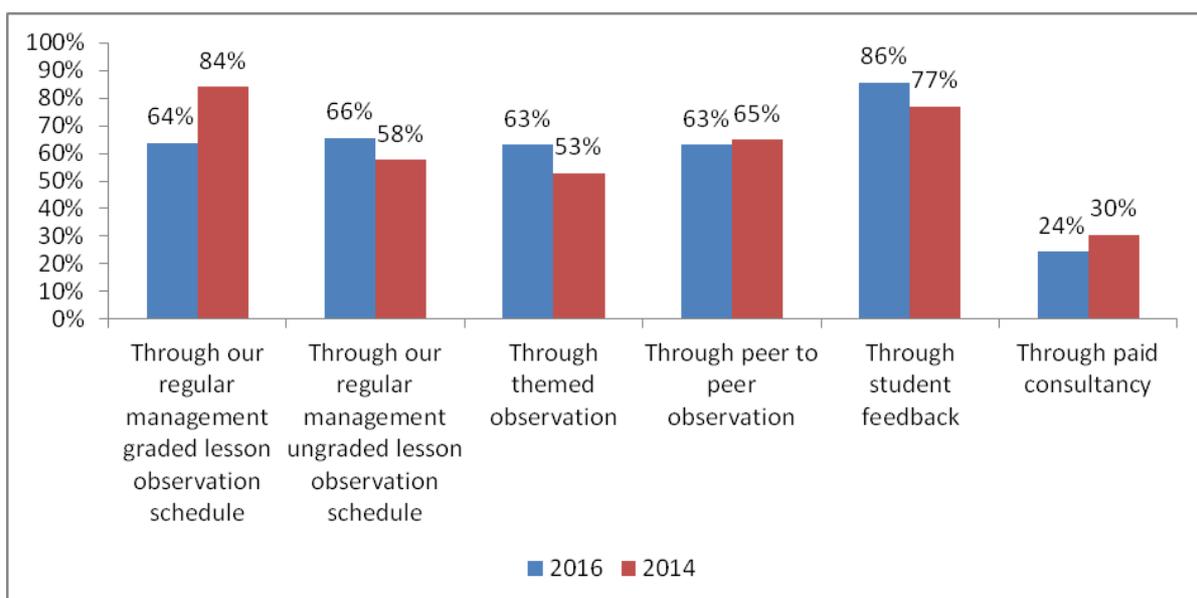
The use of team meetings for sharing good practice increased slightly to 97% from 95%, but whole college CPD rose more significantly to 91% from 81%. This is possibly as a result of the greater whole college senior management focus noted above.

How do you share good practice in teaching, learning and assessment in English and maths up to and at Level 2?



More colleges asked for student feedback on English and maths in 2016, at 86% of respondents, compared with 77% in autumn 2014. In line with changes to the Common Inspection Framework (CIF) ungraded observations increased from 58% to 66% and graded observations fell dramatically from 84% to 64%.

How do you assess the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in English and maths up to and at Level 2?



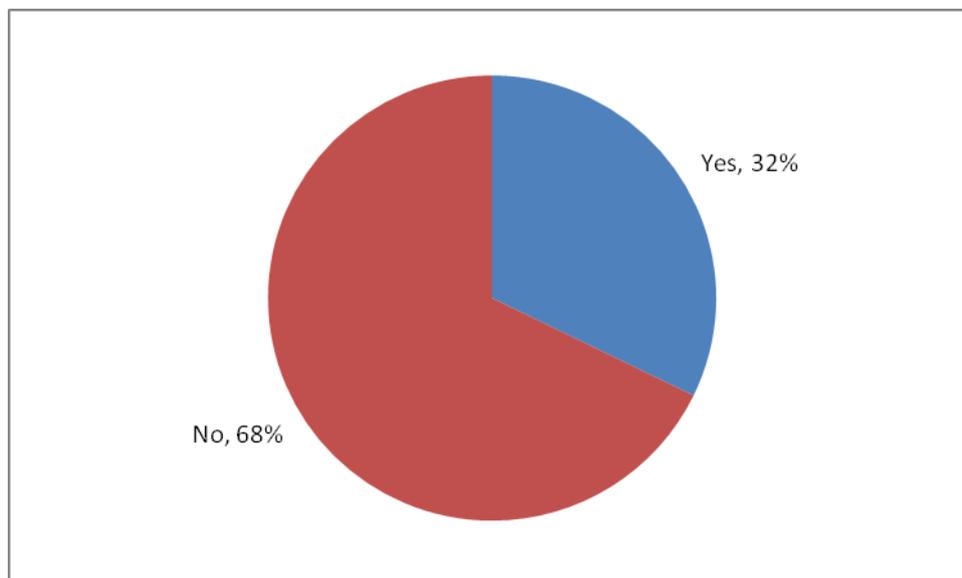
Qualifications

85% of respondents delivered English GCSE compared with 79% in autumn 2014. Interestingly, in contrast with anecdotal feedback, the number of respondents who offered IGCSE in English fell very slightly by 1% to 27%. Functional skills English delivery has risen by 1% to 92% of respondents. GCSE maths has also risen to 93% of respondents and functional skills maths delivery has risen by 6% to 91%.

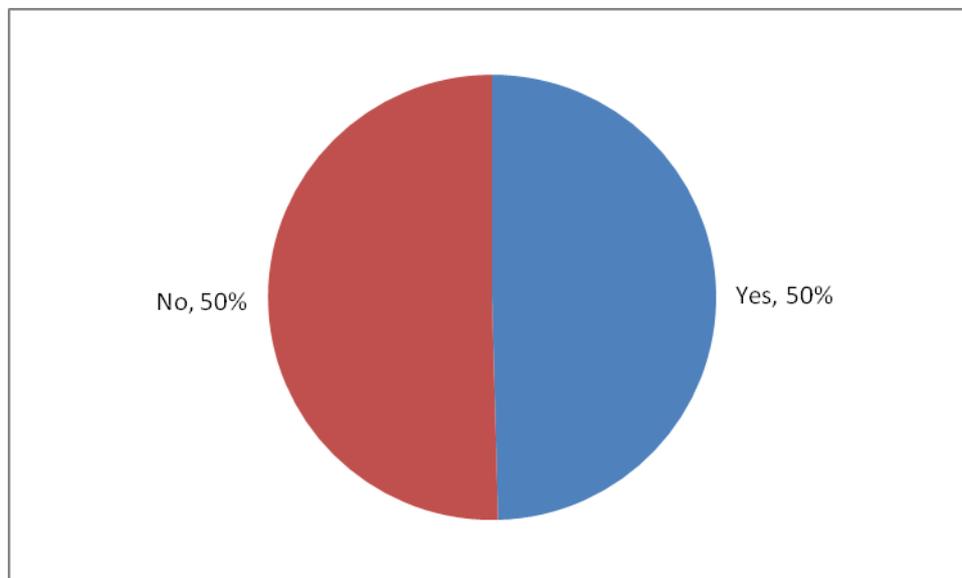
The number of colleges which indicated that they consider that there are sufficient stepping stone qualifications fell from 45% to 40%. There was an increase of 9% (66% compared with 57%) in the number of respondents who thought that they should be able to offer a wider range of qualifications rather than just the Department for Education approved ones.

In the autumn 2014 survey there was not a specific question regarding core maths. Anecdotally colleges report that they need to consider GCSE and functional skills maths before considering delivery of core maths. However, the 2016 survey indicated that 32% of responding colleges currently offer core maths and 50% intend to do so in the 2016/17 academic year.

Are you delivering Level 3 core maths to students who have already achieved a GCSE Grade C? (2016 survey)



Are you planning to deliver Level 3 core maths in 2016/17? (2016 survey)



Information from schools – Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) data

There was a slight increase, 39% to 42%, in the number of colleges which received UMS scores for their new students from their local schools.

Exam concessions

This was a new question asked in the 2016 survey. 17% of 16 to 18-year-old students required exam concessions for GCSE English and the same figure for Functional Skills English. 13% required exam concessions for GCSE maths and 15% for Functional Skills maths.

Free responses

In the autumn 2014 survey the free responses focused on the inequality between the expectations on schools and those on colleges; colleges felt they were being asked to take an unfair load. In summer 2016 there was a shift towards a focus on teaching, learning and assessment. Colleges expressed a concern about level on entry and the unrealistic outcome expectations after one year of college delivery, which is possibly a reflection of the new accountability measure focus on progress from starting point rather than achievement. They also emphasise that the current qualifications do not meet student needs.

Conclusions

The results of the 2016 survey indicate the increased prominence English and maths has within the college sector, especially further education colleges. This has resulted in significant changes in leadership and management. However, timetabling and staff recruitment are still issues and colleges are concerned about expectations of progress from starting point and the qualifications available. AoC is using this information in conversations with DfE.

Appendix 1

Response rate by type and region, 2016 survey

Type	Number of responses	Number of Colleges in England	Percent within type
General Further Education College	90	215	42%
Sixth Form College	18	91	20%
Specialist College	6	26	23%
Total England	114	332	34%
Independent Specialist College	5		
Total	119		

Region*	Number of responses	Number of Colleges in England	Percent within region
Eastern region	13	32	41%
East Midlands	6	21	29%
Greater London	11	50	22%
North East	5	19	26%
North West	22	56	39%
South East	19	58	33%
South West	14	25	56%
West Midlands	11	38	29%
Yorkshire and the Humber	13	33	39%
Total	114	332	34%

* excludes Independent Specialist Colleges