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AoC 16-19 Maths and English Survey

November 2014

2-5 Stedham Place, London WC1A 1HU T: 020 7034 9900 E: publicaffairs@aoc.co.uk www.aoc.co.uk

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Final Report

This survey was part of the DfE Shared Learning Grant project funding to support the development and implementation of high quality 16-19 Study Programmes. The aim of the maths and English survey was to gain a fuller understanding of the impact of Government policy in this area, including the repercussions of the funding condition and the requirement for students with GCSE Grade D to continue to study GCSE rather than a stepping stone qualification.

Section 1 - Response rate

125 providers responded to the survey. Of these, 118 were from Further Education and Sixth Form colleges (35% of all colleges in England); five were from Natspec Specialist Colleges; and two were from higher education institutions. This is a high response rate to a survey of this kind and the responses can therefore be considered representative of the college sector.

Type	Number of responses	Number of Colleges in England	Percent within type
General Further Education College	79	216	37%
Sixth Form College	30	93	32%
Specialist Designated College	8	27	30%
Not specified	1		
Total Colleges	118	336	35%
Independent Specialist Colleges (NATSPEC)	5		
Other	2		
Total Responses	125		

Region*	Number of responses	Number of Colleges in England	Percent within region
Eastern region	6	32	19%
East Midlands	10	22	45%
Greater London	16	50	32%
North East	5	20	25%
North West	24	56	43%
South East	20	58	34%
South West	11	27	41%
West Midlands	10	38	26%
Yorkshire and the Humber	15	33	45%
Not specified	1		
Total	118	336	35%
* excludes NATSPEC and Other			

Section 2 – Recruitment

Q4. What is your college's total number of EFA funded 16-18 (and 19-24 with an LDA) this current year (2014/15)?

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Min	419
Max	9,000
Average	2,291

As the table above shows, the range of 16-18 provision in responding colleges from 419 to 9,000 students is very wide, with an **average of 2,291 16-18 students per college.**

Q5. How many EFA funded 16-18 (and 19-24 with an LDA) in 2014/15 are studying level 2 maths (all qualifications) and/or level 2 English (all qualifications)?

Q5. How many EFA funded 16-18 (and 19-24 with an LDA) in 2014/15 are studying level 2 maths (all qualifications) and/or level 2 English (all qualifications)?	16 to18-year-olds studying Level 2 Maths in 2014/15	16 to18-year-olds studying Level 2 English in 2014/15
Min	2	0
Max	1,289	1,481
Average	387	437

The average number of students per responding college studying level 2 maths is 387 (17% of the 16-18 cohort) and level 2 English is 437 (19% of the 16-18 cohort).

Q6. Approximately how many 16 to 18-year-olds without maths GCSE A*C in September 2014 have been enrolled compared with September 2013?

(new enrolments only i.e. first year)

Q6. Approximately how many 16 to18-year-olds without maths GCSE A*C in September 2014 have been enrolled compared with September 2013? (new enrolments only i.e. first year)	Number of 16 to 18-year-olds without maths GCSE A*-C in September 2014	Number of 16 to 18-year-olds without maths GCSE A*-C in September 2013	% change
Min	2	0	-30%
Max	3209	3771	1650%
Average	675	645	4.7%

The average number of students enrolled per college **without GCSE A*-C in maths** is **675** in 2014, which is 4.7% higher than in 2013.

Q7. Approximately how many 16 to 18-year-olds without English GCSE A*C in September 2014 have been enrolled compared with September 2013?

(new enrolments only i.e. first year)

Q7. Approximately how many 16 to 18-year-olds without English GCSE A*C in September 2014 have been enrolled compared with September 2013? (new enrolments only i.e. first year)	Number of 16 to 18-year-olds without English GCSE A*-C in September 2014	Number of 16 to 18-year-olds without English GCSE A*-C in September 2013	% change
Min	0	0	-67%
Max	3590	3993	1438%
Average	680.7	657.2	3.6%

The average number of students enrolled per college **without GCSE A*-C in English** is **681** in 2014, which is 3.6% higher than in 2013.

Q8. Approximately how many 16-18 enrolments this year have a Grade D in maths and/or English?

(new enrolments only i.e. first year)

Q8. Approximately how many 16-18 enrolments this year have a Grade D in maths and/or English? (new enrolments only i.e. first year)	Number of 16 to 18-year-olds without maths GCSE A*-C in September 2014	Number of 16 to 18-year-olds without English GCSE A*-C in September 2014	Number of 16 to 18-year olds with Grade D in maths in September 2014	Number of 16 to 18-year-olds with Grade D in English in September 2014	% grade D maths	% grade D English
Min	2	0	2	0	1%	1%
Max	3,209	3,590	1,082	1,446	208%	205%
Average	699	704	242	302	35%	43%

The average number of students per college with a **Grade D in maths** is **242** (35% of those without GCSE A*-C) and in **English** is **302** (42% of those without GCSE A*-C).

Q.9 Have you experienced any of the following changes in recruitment patterns? (Please tick all that apply)



44% of respondents report that local schools applying more rigorous selection criteria for their sixth forms and are rejecting those without Grade C in maths and/or English;

35% report that local schools are retaining those without a Grade C in maths and/or English, and offering re-sit programmes;

53% report that their own college is applying more rigorous selection criteria for level 3 programmes.

Comments from respondents show a mixed picture with some reporting that schools and some colleges are raising their entry criteria to level 3 provision, whereas others report a lowering where student numbers are falling and where schools want to retain students.

Section 3 – Logistics

Q.10 What is presenting the biggest logistical challenge to your college?

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Answer Options	Response Percent
Timetabling	43.8%
Staffing for English	9.1%
Staffing for maths	29.8%
Initial assessment	3.3%
Diagnostic assessment	3.3%
Other	10.7%
If 'Other', please specify:	

The biggest logistical challenge colleges report is **timetabling (44%)**, followed by **staffing for maths** (30%) and, at a lower level of challenge, staffing for English (9%).

Comments from respondents also suggest that understanding students' entry qualifications, and the whole area of initial and diagnostic assessment is a big challenge for colleges.

Q.11 Timetabling for maths and English:

Q.11 Is timetabling for maths and English done at:	
Answer Options	Response Percent
Whole college level	56.8%
Departmental level	14.4%
Course level	1.6%
A mixture of the above	27.2%

57% report that timetabling for maths and English is carried out at whole college level; 27% report a mixed approach; and 14% report that timetabling is carried out a departmental level.

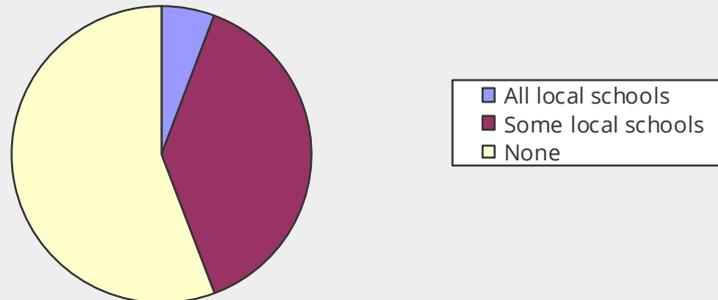
Q.12 In order to ensure that you have sufficient staff to deliver maths and English which of the following are you doing: (Please tick all that apply)

Q.12 In order to ensure that you have sufficient staff to deliver maths and English which of the following are you doing: (Please tick all that apply)	
Answer Options	Response Percent
Employing additional maths and English teachers who are already trained	87.9%
Up-dating existing staff	78.4%
Working with other schools and colleges to recruit specialists	6.9%
Workforce support from the Education and Training Foundation (ETF)	31.9%
New teachers who received bursaries	19.0%
Salary incentives	7.8%
Promoting Golden Hellos	18.1%

88% of responding colleges are employing qualified maths and English teachers; 78% are updating their own staff; and 32% are accessing workforce support from ETF.

Q.13 In relation to initial assessment and ensuring students are on the right programme, do you currently get GCSE Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) from:

In relation to initial assessment and ensuring students are on the right programme, do you currently get GCSE Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) from:



56% of respondents do not get GCSE UMS scores from any of their local schools; 39% get them from some and 6% from all.

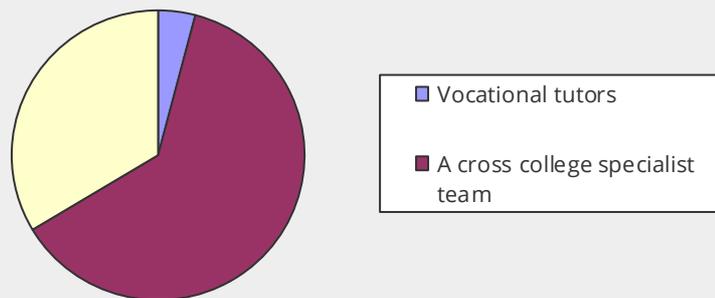
Section 4 - Leadership and management

Q.14 Do you have a senior management lead for maths and English?

79% have an SMT lead for maths and English.

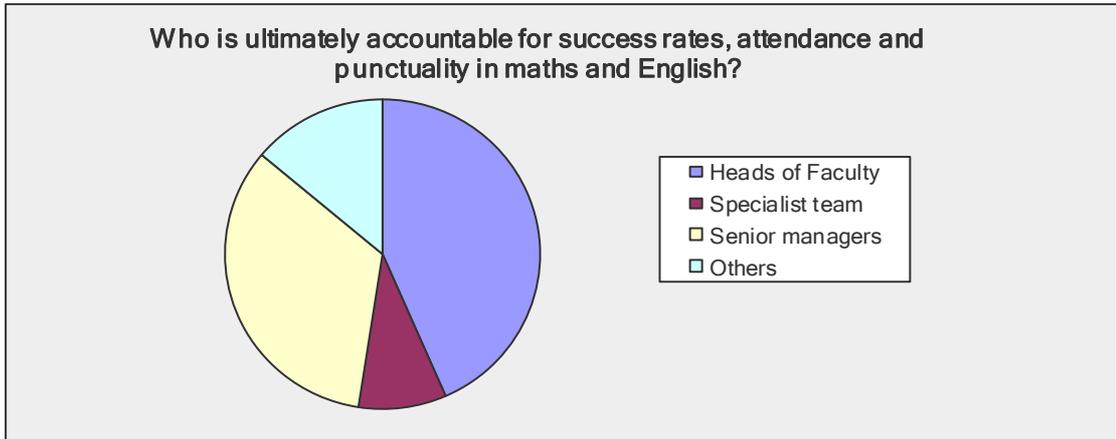
Q.15 Who is responsible for the delivery of maths and English?

Who is responsible for the delivery of maths and English?



The majority (62%) of respondents have a specialist cross college team with responsibility for delivery of maths and English. Only 4% have given this responsibility to vocational tutors, and 34% use a mixture of vocational and specialist tutors.

Q.16 Who is ultimately accountable for success rates, attendance and punctuality in maths and English?



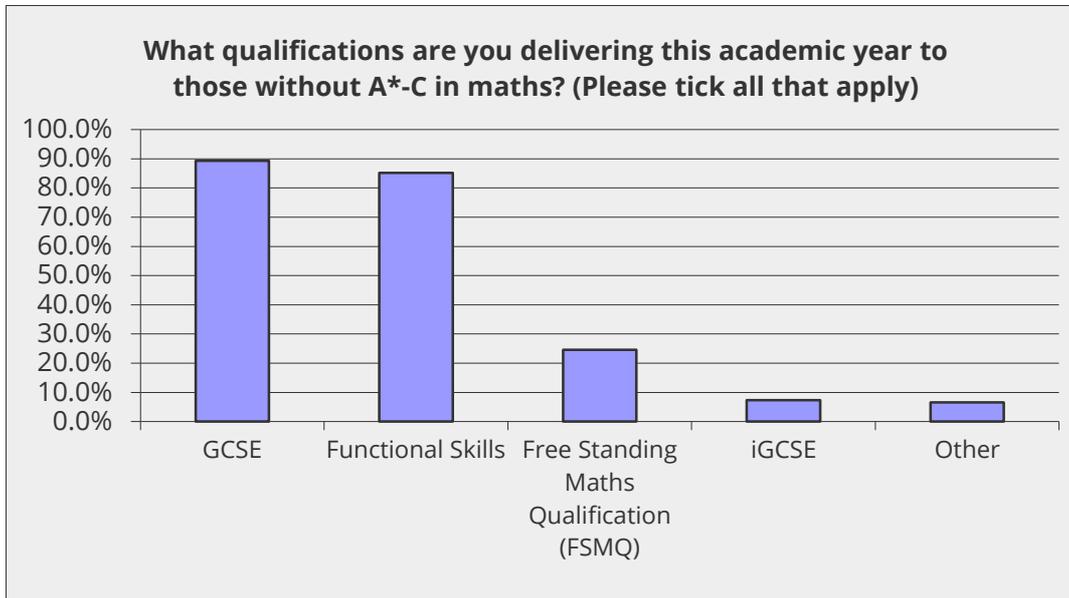
In the majority of responding colleges (43%) faculty heads are ultimately accountable for success rates, attendance and punctuality in English and maths; in 34% this responsibility falls to senior managers; in 9% it is a specialist team.

Q.17 Have you got a separate Self Assessment Report (SAR) for maths and English?

68% of respondents have a separate SAR for maths and English.

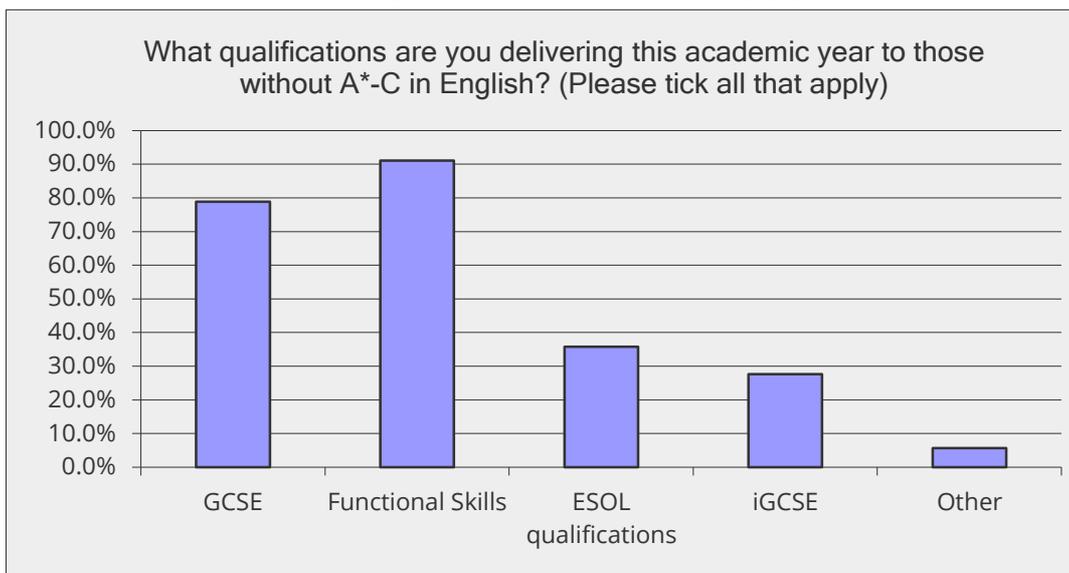
Section 5 – Curriculum, qualifications and student motivation

Q.18 What qualifications are you delivering this academic year to those without A*-C in maths? (Please tick all that apply)



The main maths qualifications being delivered to those without a GCSE Grade A*-C are GCSE (90%) and Functional Skills (85%). Other qualifications include: Cambridge Progression Awards, Certificate in Use of Maths, Numeracy qualifications and personal finance qualifications.

Q.19 What qualifications are you delivering this academic year to those without A*-C in English? (Please tick all apply):



The main English qualifications being delivered to those without a GCSE Grade A*-C are Functional Skills (91%); GCSE (79%); ESOL (36%), and iGCSE (28%).

Other qualifications include: Cambridge Progression Awards and basic skills/foundation English.

Q.20 From next year, all those with a Grade D will be required to study towards GCSE rather than any other qualification. How far do you agree with this condition of funding?

Q.20 From next year, all those with a Grade D will be required to study towards GCSE rather than any other qualification. How far do you agree with this condition of funding?	
Answer Options	Response Percent
Strongly agree	7.3%
Agree	25.8%
Neither agree nor disagree	4.8%
Disagree	34.7%
Strongly disagree	27.4%
If you 'Disagree' or 'Strongly Disagree', please explain why:	

62% of respondents disagree or strongly disagree with the requirement for those with a Grade D to study GCSE whereas, 33% agree or strongly agree that they should.

Comments were made by 76 respondents and indicated strong support for colleges to have the flexibility to offer stepping stone qualifications before GCSE for students with low grade D and those on the D/E border.

Q.21 The condition of funding also means that students without A*-C in both subjects must study maths and English concurrently. How far do you agree with this?

Q.21 The condition of funding also means that students without A*-C in both subjects must study maths and English concurrently. How far do you agree with this?	
Answer Options	Response Percent
Strongly agree	7.2%
Agree	24.0%
Neither agree nor disagree	8.0%
Disagree	37.6%
Strongly disagree	23.2%
If you 'Disagree' or 'Strongly Disagree', please explain why:	

61% disagree or strongly disagree with the requirement to study maths and English concurrently whereas, 31% agree or strongly agree with this requirement.

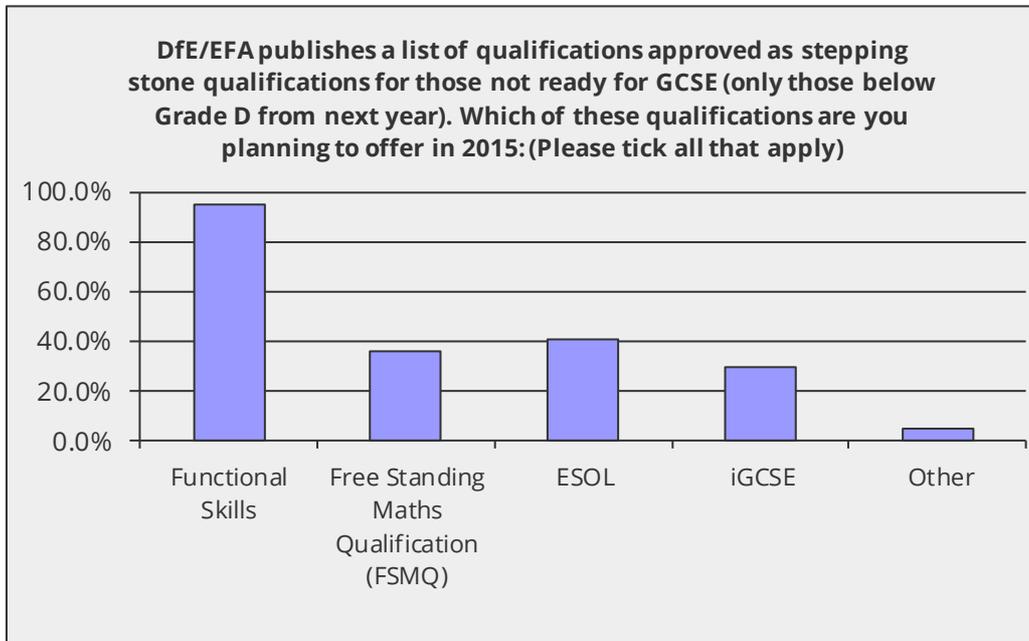
Comments from 73 respondents indicate strong concern re the requirement for both subjects to be studied concurrently. The main concern is that this is too heavy a load for the student and weights their programme towards the study of GCSEs in maths and English and away from their chosen vocational qualification which is the main motivator for attendance and success.

Q.22 If you 'Disagree' or 'Strongly Disagree' with Q21, do you think that students who have a Grade D in both subjects should be able to study one GCSE course each year, and a stepping stone qualification in the other subject?

Q.22 If you 'Disagree' or 'Strongly Disagree' with Q21, do you think that students who have a Grade D in both subjects should be able to study one GCSE course each year, and a stepping stone qualification in the other subject?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree	51.2%	43
Agree	38.1%	32
Neither agree nor disagree	4.8%	4
Disagree	4.8%	4
Strongly disagree	1.2%	1

The overwhelming majority (89%) think that those who have a Grade D in both maths and English should be able to study one GCSE course per year and a stepping stone qualification in the other subject.

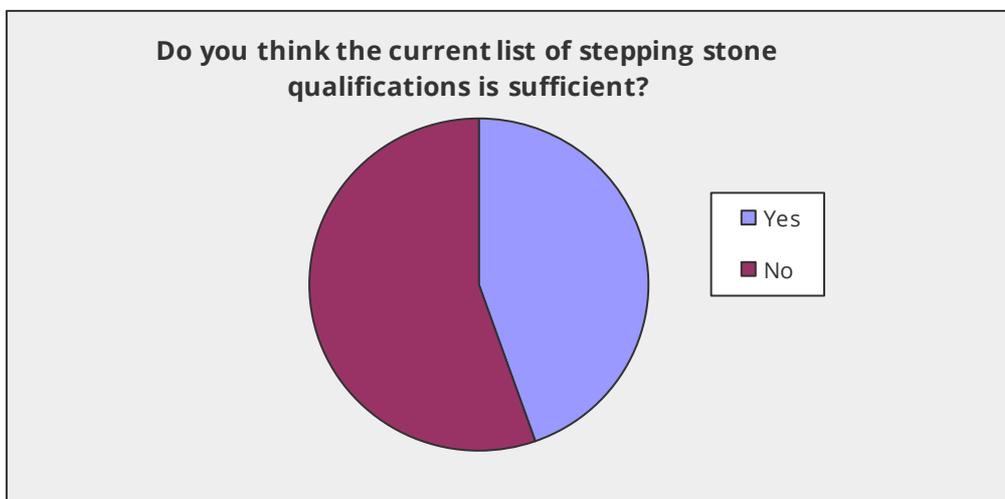
Q.23 DfE/EFA publishes a list of qualifications approved as stepping stone qualifications for those not ready for GCSE (only those below Grade D from next year). Which of these qualifications are you planning to offer in 2015: (Please tick all that apply)



The most popular stepping stone qualifications are Functional Skills (95% planning to offer in 2015) followed by ESOL (40%) and FSMQ (36%), and 29% iGCSE.

Other qualifications respondents report that they are planning to offer in 2015 include: Cambridge Progression Awards and other awards at level 1.

Q.24 Do you think the current list of stepping stone qualifications is sufficient?

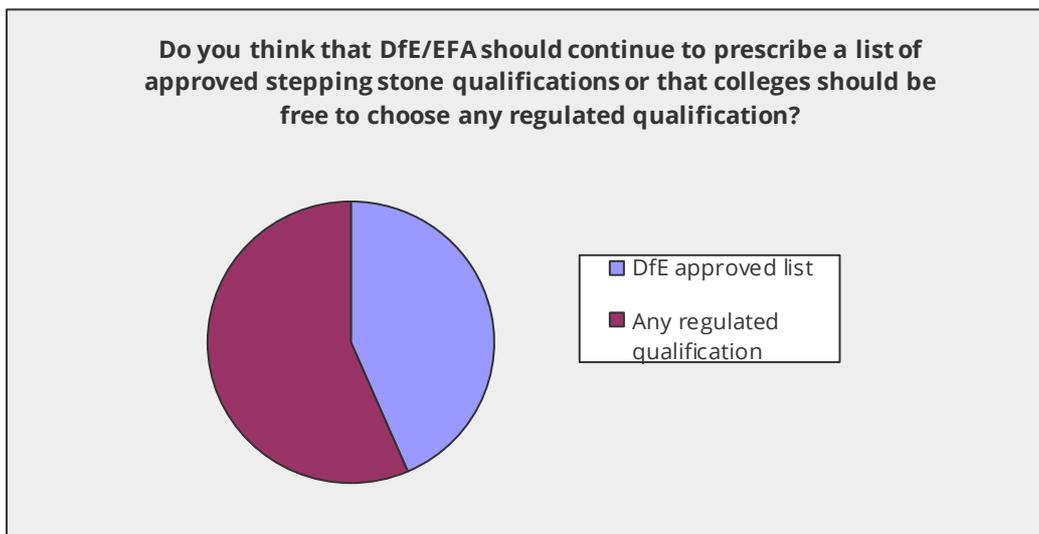


The majority (55%) do not think the list of stepping stone qualifications is sufficient and would like to see more.

Comments were received from 60 respondents and indicated that they would like to see a much more coherent offer including clear progression pathways in both maths and English. They would also like to see:

- a Free Standing English qualification similar to FSMQ;
- a return to unitised qualifications which allow for bite-size achievement;
- a bridging qualification between Level 2 Functional Skills and GCSE;
- a pre-GCSE programme which prepares people for GCSE (rather than Functional Skills which were not designed to do this);
- alternative GCSEs, including a post-16 GCSE, so that young people are not simply repeating what they have already failed to achieve;
- inclusion of the Cambridge Progression Awards.

Q.25 Do you think that DfE/EFA should continue to prescribe a list of approved stepping stone qualifications or should colleges be free to choose any regulated qualification?

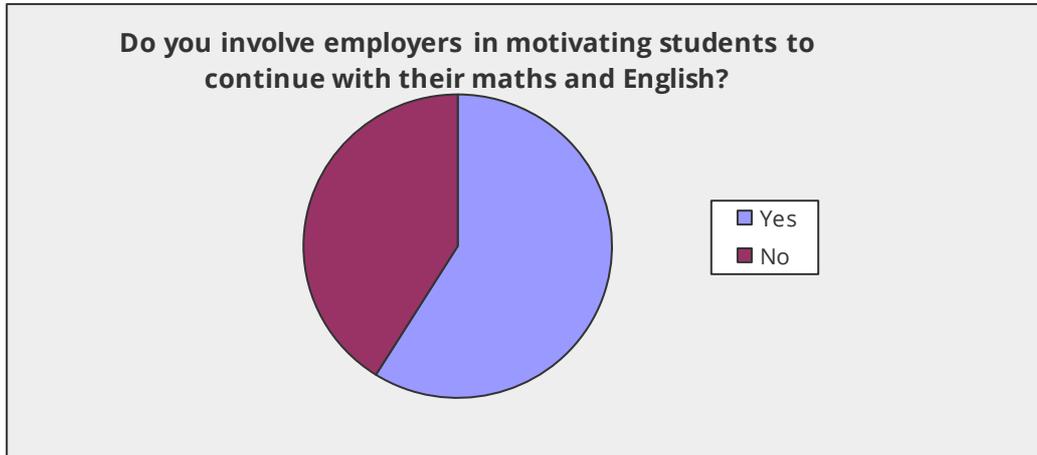


The majority (57%) would like to be able to offer any regulated qualification, although a sizeable minority (44%) would like the DfE list to remain.

Q.26 Do students know they will have to continue with maths and English when they enrol?

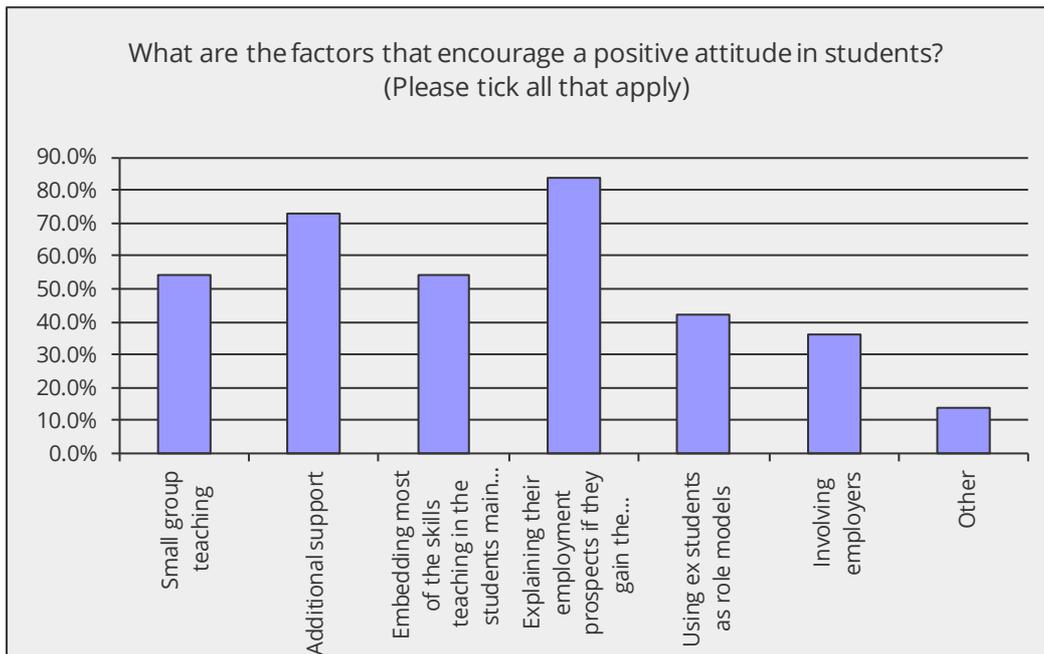
97% of respondents report that students know at enrolment that they will be required to continue with maths and English if they do not have GCSE Grade A*-C.

Q.27 Do you involve employers in motivating students to continue with their maths and English?



59% of respondents involve employers in motivating students to continue with maths and English.

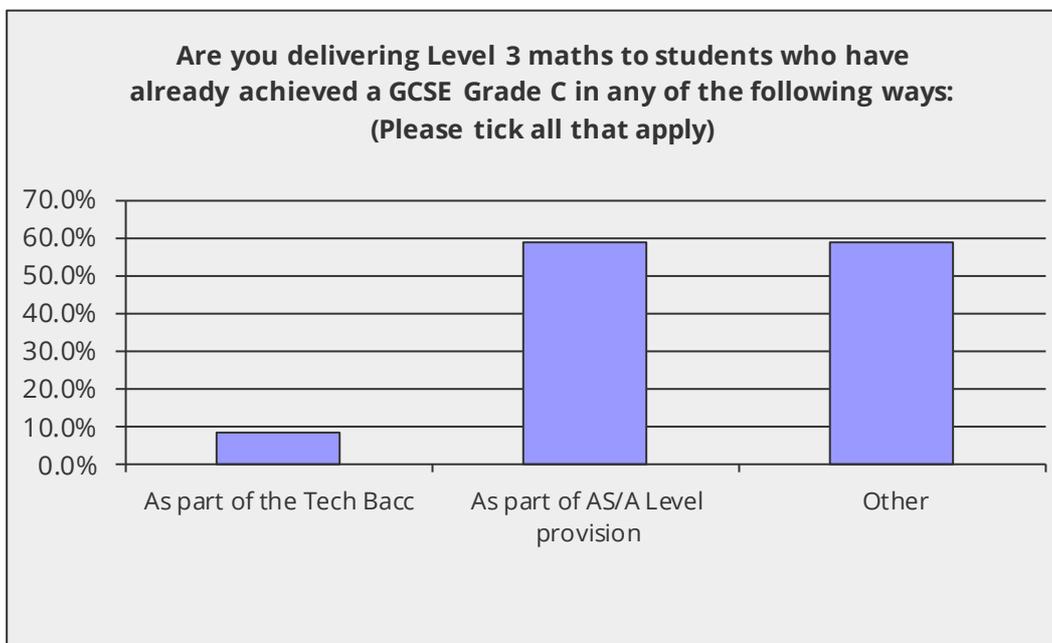
Q.28 What are the factors that encourage a positive attitude in students? (Please tick all that apply)



84% of respondents report that explaining employment prospects is the most important factor in encouraging a positive attitude to maths and English in students. The next most important factors in encouraging a positive attitude is provision of additional support, small group teaching and embedding in the students' main qualification. Using ex-students as role models and involving employers are also beneficial. Other comments included:

- the importance of high quality teaching along with innovative and exciting delivery;
- ensuring that students make small positive steps to success;
- a whole college approach with all staff on message re the importance of maths and English;
- ensuring maths and English is seen an integral to the students' study programmes.

Q.29 Are you delivering Level 3 maths to students who have already achieved a GCSE Grade C in any of the following ways: (Please tick all that apply)



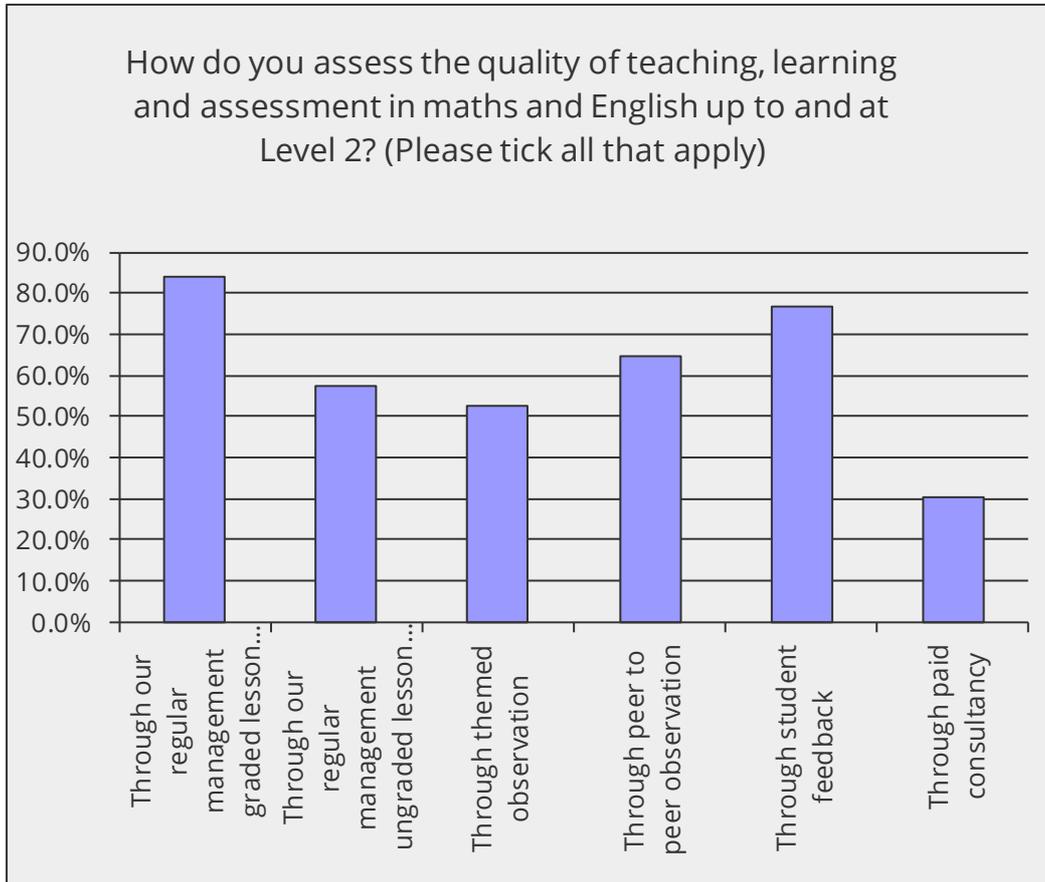
59% are delivering level 3 maths as part of A Level programmes and 59% as part of other programmes. 8% are offering the Tech Bacc this year.

Those offering as part of other programmes include:

- the Core maths pilot
- L3 maths in Engineering courses
- voluntary 'stretch and challenge' classes

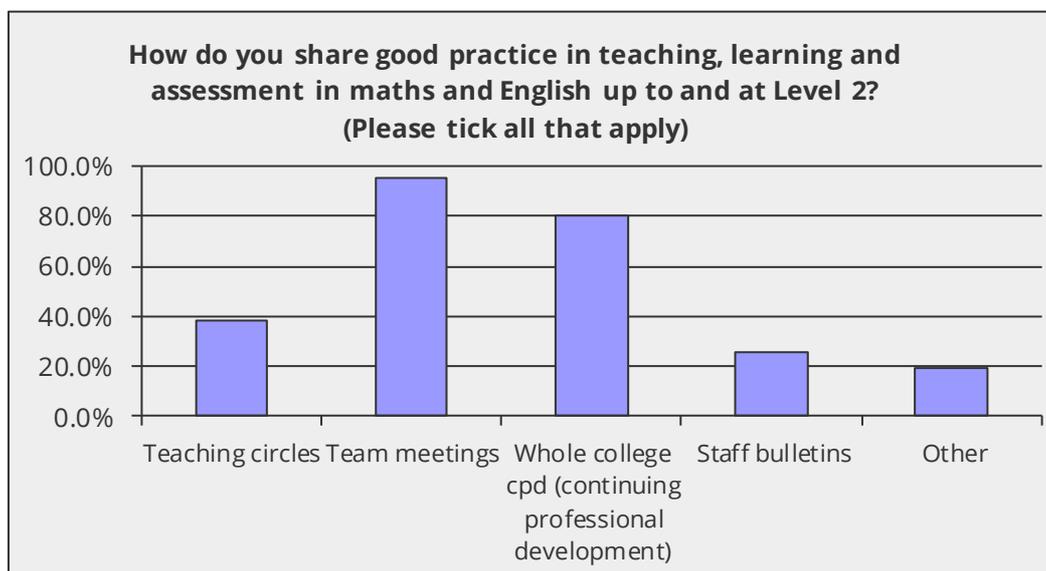
Section 6 - Evaluating teaching and learning

Q.30 How do you assess the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in maths and English up to and at Level 2? (Please tick all that apply)



The most commonly used way of assessing the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in maths and English is through regular graded lesson observations (84%); student feedback and peer observations (77% and 65% respectively) are also popular. 58% use ungraded lesson observations and 52% themed observations.

Q.31 How do you share good practice in teaching, learning and assessment in maths and English up to and at Level 2? (Please tick all that apply)



The two most popular ways of sharing good practice in teaching learning and assessment in maths and English is via team meetings (95%) and whole college CPD (81%). Teaching circles and staff bulletins are also used but are less common.

Other ways of sharing good practice included:

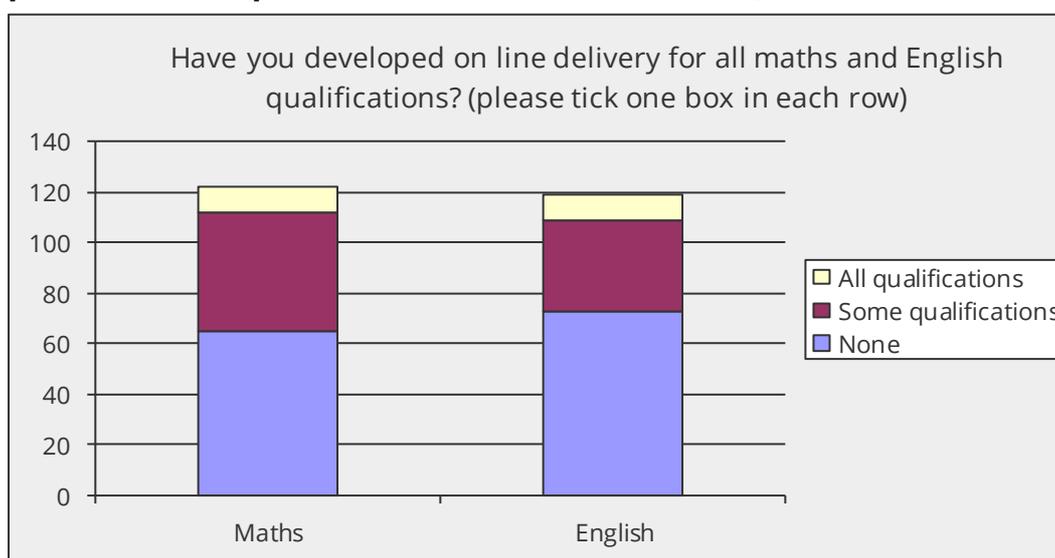
- specific and targeted CPD activities;
- Teaching Skills Academy run by in-house specialists;
- communities of practice;
- cross college teams promoting literacy and numeracy;
- improvement practitioners to support staff to embed maths and English into the wider curriculum;
- external CPD and training;
- teaching and learning coaches;
- advanced practitioners;
- bite-size CPD sessions;
- maths and English champions;

Q.32 What teaching resources have you found most useful for teaching, learning and assessment in maths and English up to and at Level 2?

Comments from respondents included the following:

- Many respondents reported developing their own resources for maths and English and use of Moodle or their own VLE;
- On-line commercial resources are also very popular. These include: BBC Skillswise; GCSE Bitesize; GCSEPod; mathswatch; myMaths; Teachit; Khan Academy; and BKS B remains very popular.
- Awarding organisation resources are also popular, as are prescribed textbooks and use of past papers;
- NCTEM and NANIMIC are also reported as useful, and respondents say that something similar is needed for English.

Q.33 Have you developed on line delivery for all maths and English qualifications? (please tick one box in each row)



Respondents are starting to develop on line delivery for maths and English qualifications with 47% doing so for maths and 39% for English.

Q.34 Please use this space for any other comments on the issues raised in this survey

The final comments largely repeat those made elsewhere in the survey but a common theme is that, whilst colleges understand and support the drive to improve young people’s maths and English skills, an unfair load has been placed on colleges in terms of the funding condition when no such financial penalty is applied to schools for failing to ensure that students leave school with these skills and qualifications. Given that this responsibility has been passed on to colleges, there is a strong sense that professionals should be trusted to design study programmes that meet the best interests of their

students, and that studying both maths and English is too much on top of a vocational qualification.

Summary of findings:

1. Recruitment and logistics

It is clear that colleges face a significant task in delivering maths and English to those who have not been successful in their years at school. Whilst colleges vary in terms of size, the average 16-18 numbers for those responding to this survey is 2,291. Of these, on average 675 do not have maths GCSE and 681 to not have English GCSE to the required standard. Some colleges face much higher numbers of young people needing these qualifications.

Colleges report the biggest logistical challenge to be timetabling. This includes ensuring students are on the correct course and only 6% routinely receive the detailed UMS scores that they need to help with this. Finding sufficient staff to teach maths is the other main challenge.

2. Leadership and management

Colleges do understand how important this area of work is and 80% of responding colleges have a Senior Management Team lead for maths and English. In 77% of colleges the Senior Manager or Faculty Head is ultimately accountable for success in this area. 68% produce a separate Self Assessment Report (SAR) for maths and English.

3. Curriculum, qualifications and student motivation

Colleges are delivering mainly GCSE and Functional Skills to those without GCSE A*-C, along with FSMQ, ESOL and to a lesser extent iGCSEs. 60% are delivering level 3 maths to those with A*-C.

Two thirds of respondents disagree or strongly disagree with the requirement for those with a Grade D to study GCSE and, for those who need both subjects, with the requirement to study both subjects concurrently.

55% think the list of stepping stone qualifications is insufficient and would like to see more, and 57% would like the freedom to delivery any regulated qualification.

Colleges want the flexibility to design study programmes that meet the needs of their students. Respondents would like to see a much more coherent curriculum offer including clear progression pathways in both maths and English. They would like a pre-GCSE course and a different, post-16 GCSE so that there is a different offer for students post-16. They would like a unitised qualification to enable bite-size achievement and progression.

4. Evaluating teaching, learning and assessment

Colleges are using a wide range of resources, both in-house and commercial, to deliver maths and English and are sharing good practice and evaluating teaching and learning in this area.