

Project Report: SELEP - Delivering Skills for the Future

Project Summary

This project was conceived to assist in addressing the widespread shortage of tutors, teachers and trainers working in specified subject areas in post-16 education and training across the SELEP area. The shortage was identified in the SELEP Skills Strategy set out in 'Skills for the Future'.

The project aimed to address the challenges of staff recruitment and retention aligned to priority sectors of skill shortage through the following strands of activity:

1. A broad based high quality multi-faceted awareness-raising campaign of the job opportunities the post-16 sector offers
2. The granting of bursaries towards the costs of teacher training for those in-service or about to join
3. Showcasing existing and related support available such as 'Teach-Too' and the tutor CPD work undertaken by local skills boards.

Delivered in its original phase between September 2019 and July 2020 the project was highly successful achieving in excess of its targets for the attraction of matched funding, for enquiries made via websites and for granting of bursaries.

Reflecting its success, the SELEP board chose to extend project activity for a further financial year, it completing at the end of the financial year of March 2021.

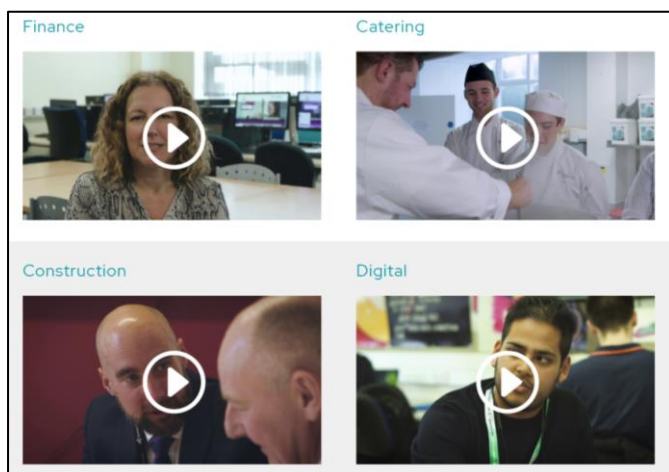
Report on Project activities

Strand one

The focus of this strand was a high quality campaign to raise the awareness of the FE Sector as an employer and the job opportunities available within it. The campaign focused on:

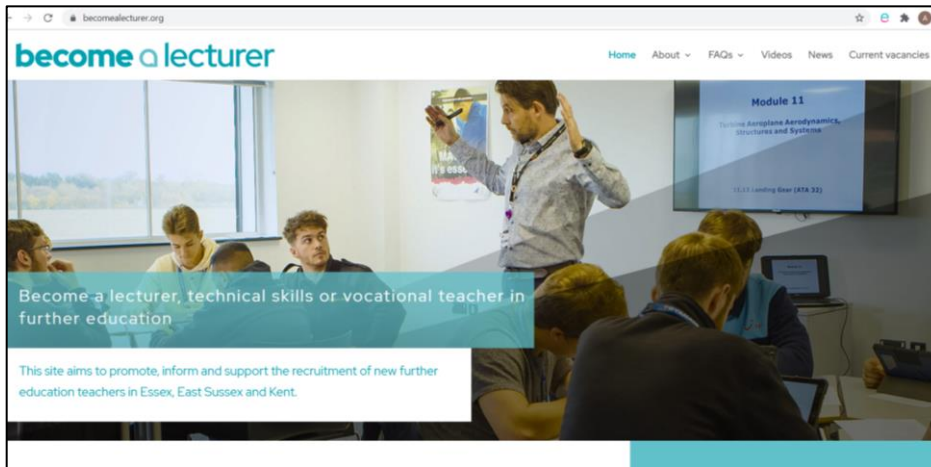
Video production

The development of 12 short videos featuring teachers who had newly joined FE after a successful career in industry. The objective of each video was to highlight potential role models for those considering a career as a further education teacher. Professionally filmed and edited, each of the videos covers a different sector skills area. They provide an easily digested way of exploring the role of a teacher within further education, how it is inherently rewarding and how the experience of a career in industry is directly applicable to educating the work force of tomorrow. The videos are available for viewing [here](#).



A website

A dedicated website for those interested in becoming a teacher (lecturer) in FE.



Designed as a one stop shop to provide information about becoming a lecturer, teacher, tutor or assessor in further education the site brings together the recorded videos and vacancy links for each FE college in the SELEP area. It also provides signposting to vacancies in private training providers. The site explains how the range of knowledge and skills taught within further education is enormous and how it covers dozens of industries and professions. The need for a diverse variety of staff is promoted as being critical in terms of workforce development, employment, career progression and skills enhancement.

The website dialogue encourages those with experience in industry and seeking a career change to consider working as a teacher in a post-16 Further Education college or with an independent training provider (ITP) in Essex, East Sussex and Kent.

The website also publicises the availability of bursaries and incentives to become teacher qualified when joining the sector or as an incentive to remain within it.

A high profile social media campaign

Designed to drive traffic to the becomealecturer website the social media campaign used:

- Facebook



- Instagram



- Twitter



- LinkedIn



- local press

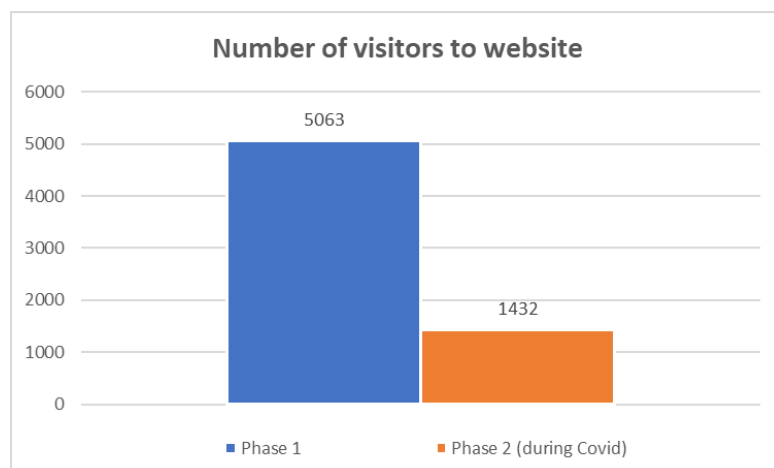
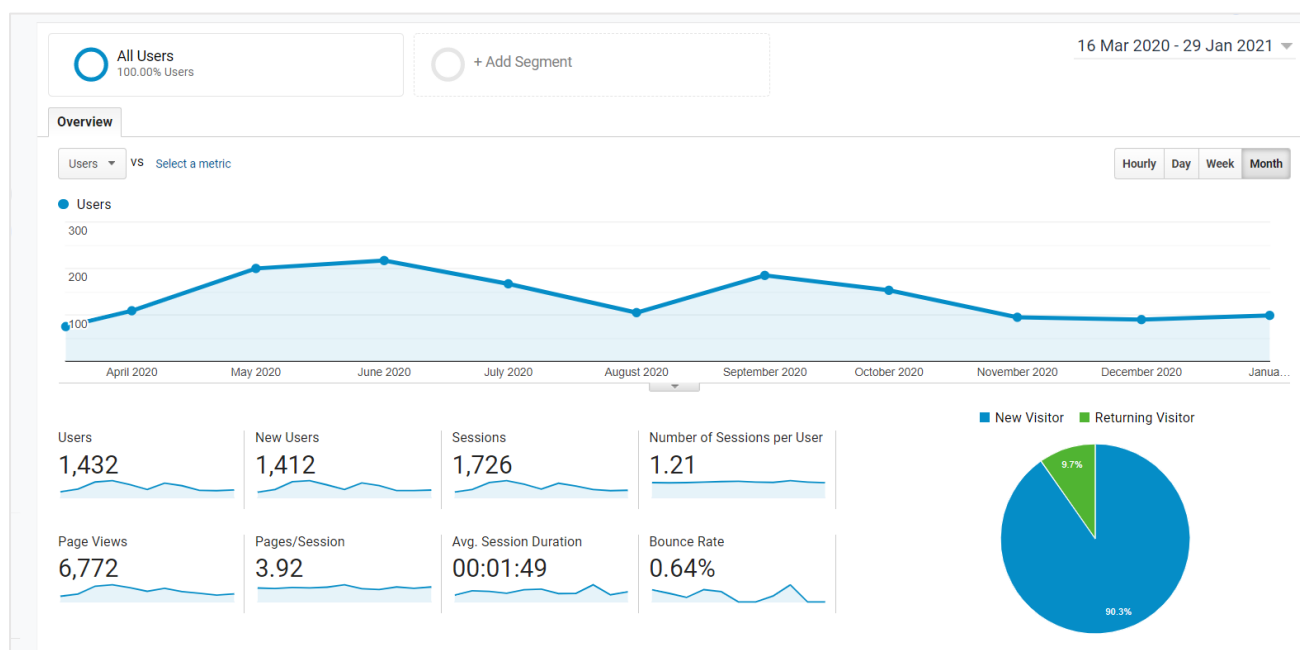


- radio



Website traffic has been (and continues to be) monitored which has enabled a continual checking of social media effectiveness. In the initial period of February 4th to March 15th 2020, 6,124 site visits and 26,271 page viewings of the becomealecturer website occurred. Following Covid19 and the lockdown periods the social media campaign was suspended.

During the social media suspension period the website has continued to attract traffic, users in the three months to February 2021 being at least 100 visits per month.



It is planned to re-start the social media campaign in April 2021 allowing for Covid restrictions to be lifted by this date.

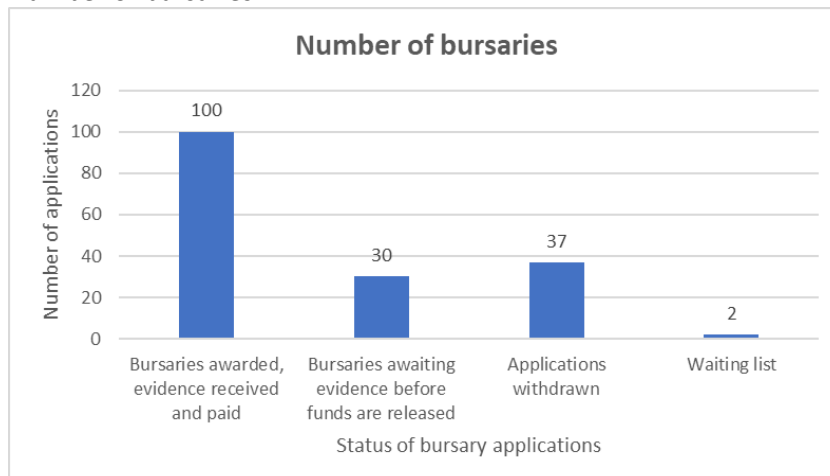
The bursary campaign

This area of project activity provided the opportunity for those newly entering the post-16 teaching (and those within it at risk of leaving) and following a recognised teacher training qualification to receive a grant towards the cost of their course. Covering all levels of qualification from level 3 to level 5 the amount of bursary was dependant on course fee and employer matched funding.

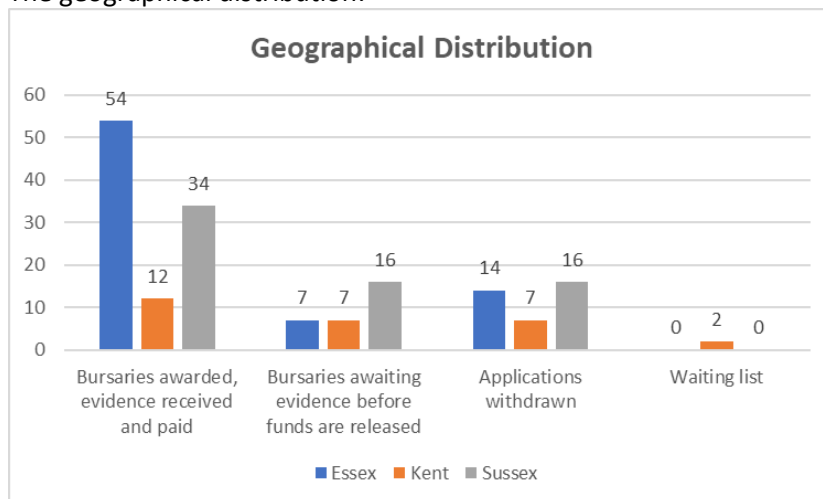
Performance against target (until 31st January 2021)

Over the duration of the project a total of 130 bursaries have been agreed with the following breakdown:

Number of bursaries:



The geographical distribution:



Subsequently, the need for appropriate industrially experienced staff has also been identified by central government and mention of it has been made in the FE White Paper published in January 2021.

Finance report

The total available project budget for bursary allocations:

2019-2020	£137,007
2020-2021	£48,000
Total Budget	£185,007

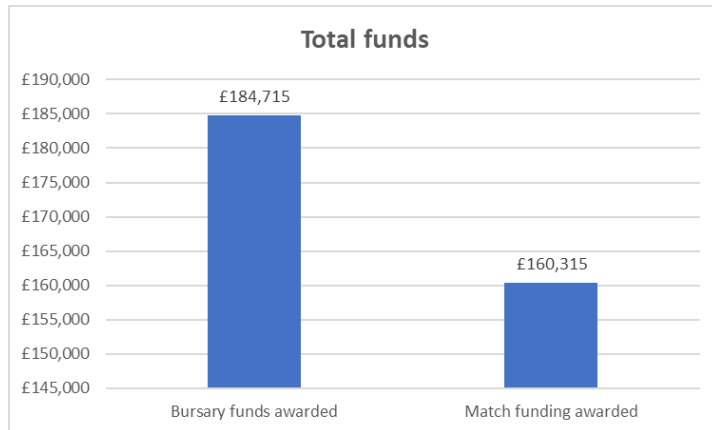
The total value of bursaries to be awarded (if all evidence is provided by 31st March 2021) is £184,715.

The total match funding target for the project:

2019-2020	£61,500
2020-2021	£50,000
Total match	£111,500

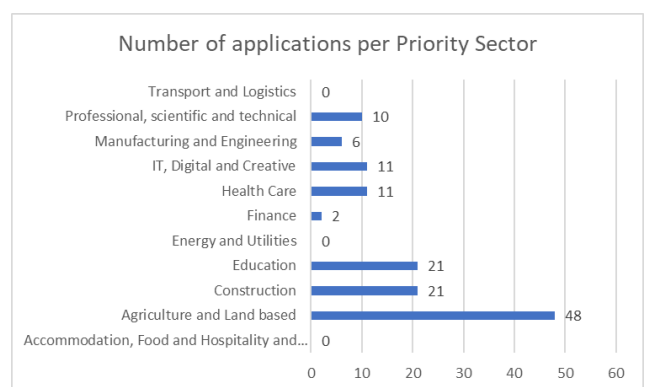
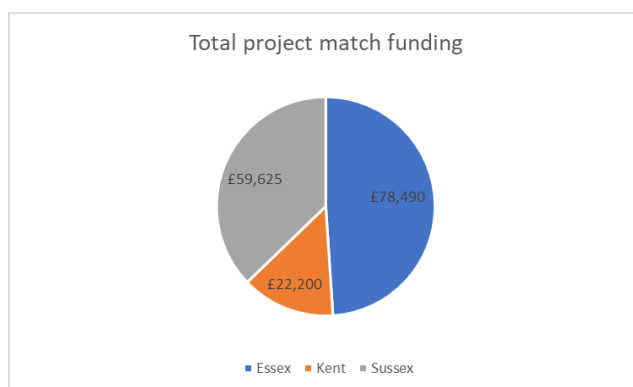
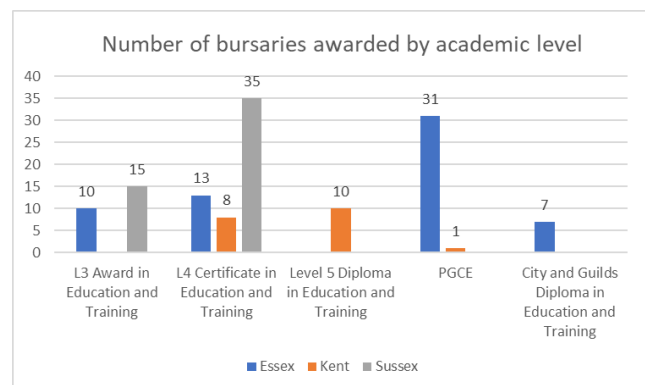
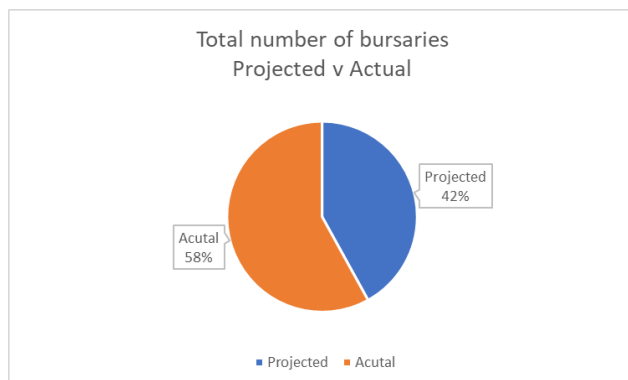
The total value of match funding (if all applications are made) received is £160,315. The total match funding received exceeded the budget figure of **43.5%**.

SELEP bursaries awarded and matched funding received:



Project successes

The project has been highly successful, it more than meeting its key performance indicators as follows:



Number of click through enquires to college websites to search vacancies and working conditions as of January 2021: 5,336.

Project challenges

The project was conceived and commenced prior to Covid restrictions which proved to be the largest challenge faced. The resulting time delays manifested themselves as delays in filming, interruption of the social media campaign, slow pick up of bursaries and delay in the advertising of job opportunities.

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All challenges were declared at regular project management meetings with SELEP and working solutions negotiated.

Case Study

Sean McLaughlin, Plumpton College



Sean decided on a career change in his late 30's and to improve skills enrolled on an environmental course at Plumpton College. After his training he set himself up in his own business and over the next 10 years established a track record as a reliable and high-quality forestry and firewood company. During this period he helped train volunteers from a local charity to use chainsaws.

When he saw a job advertised for a teacher of forestry at the college he decided to apply as he felt he could now put something back into the system. "Since I joined Plumpton I have broadened my skills and now teach not only forestry but on a range of other courses. Helping and shaping young people attracts me to the job and it is immensely satisfying. Sure, it is hard work studying for teaching qualifications but the rewards are great".

Sean would recommend anyone who has vocational qualifications and experience to consider teaching as a career move. "I haven't looked back since I changed jobs. The college and sector have supported me to become a qualified teacher and the bursary has enabled this to happen. As a result I am keen to continue to train the next generation in forestry and landbased industries".