

Teacher recruitment and career intentions after the COVID-19 pandemic

Back in 2019, we first asked you lots of questions about teacher recruitment, vacant posts and career intentions. Each year since, we have repeated these questions to see what's changed. In 2020 and 2021, we could see that the pandemic had severely disrupted the annual recruitment cycle. Now, after a relatively 'normal' year (all things considered!), we have asked the questions again – has the pandemic changed things for good, or are we approaching 'normality' once more?

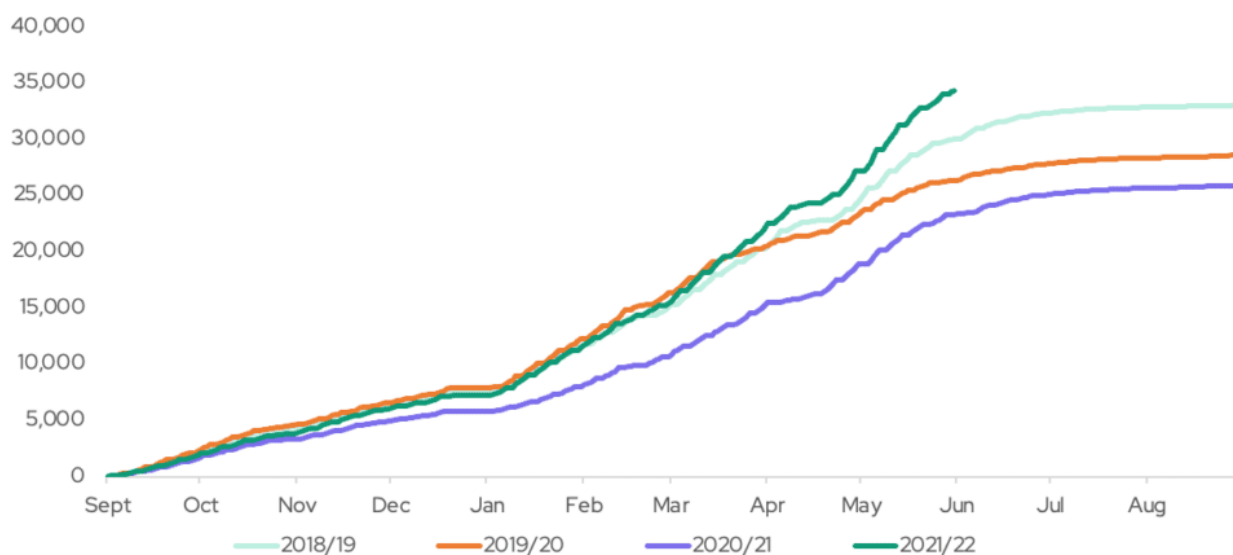
Today, we publish our latest look into teacher recruitment, updated for the 2022 round. As in previous year, we have worked with SchoolDash who monitor job advertisements on school websites. You can read more in our report '[Teacher recruitment and career intentions after the COVID-19 pandemic](#)'.

Our headlines are below:

Teacher labour market showing signs of recovery

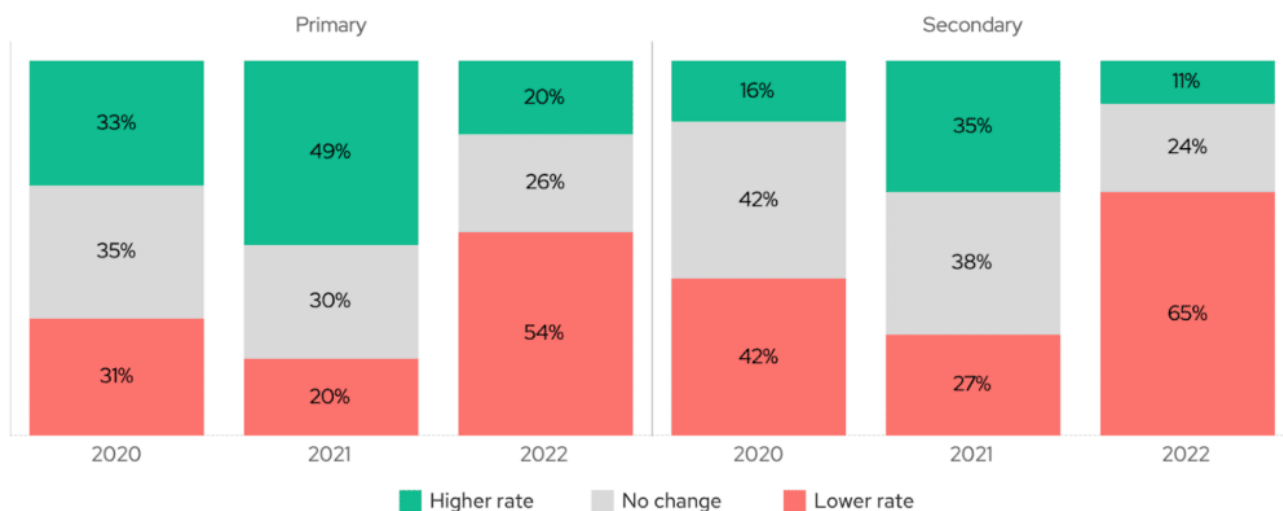
Our report shows that the teacher labour market appears to have recovered from the pandemic. In the pandemic years of 2019/20 and 2020/21, there ended up being far fewer job advertisements in secondary schools than the previous academic year. This year, however, the picture is much changed. The number of job adverts is now booming – they are up 47% on last year and up 14% on 2018/19, the last pre-pandemic year.

Secondary school teacher job adverts, cumulative over academic year



So after a relatively stagnant few years, teachers appear to be on the move, but there are signs of teacher shortages on the horizon. In the primary sector, 11% of senior leaders who advertised say they have failed to fill an advert, and in the secondary sector this value is even higher, at 15%. Senior leaders have said that they've had much lower interest in their open positions than 'normal'. 54% of primary and 65% of secondary leaders said the response to their adverts was lower than normal.

If your school has placed job advertisements recently, do you feel the response is higher or lower than normal?



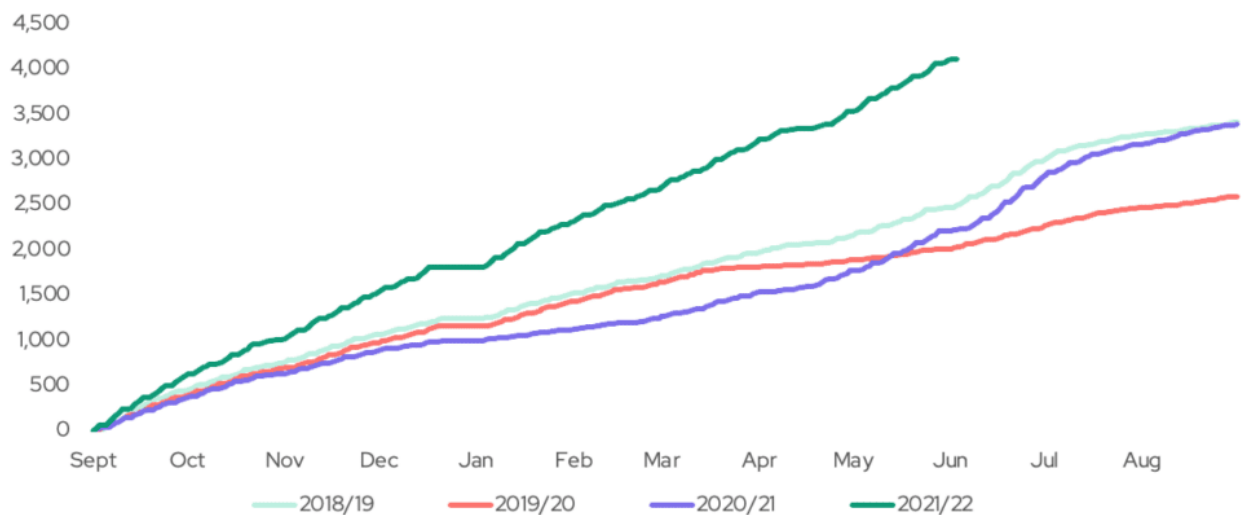
Technicians in high demand in secondary schools

It's not just teachers that are in high demand. Technicians are also highly sought after. SchoolDash has collected information about the number of adverts for art, science, technology and other technicians posted by secondary schools. Just like teachers, the

number of job adverts for technicians sharply fell during the pandemic, although we do not know whether this was due to fewer technicians leaving their jobs or whether schools were making less use of technicians during this period.

Since September 2021, this position has reversed and there has been a stark rise in technician advertisements, which are running 64% higher than in 2018/19. We suspect that this is, in part, because schools are trying to reverse the decline in technician employment rates during the pandemic. Demand for technicians in Computing and Design and Technology are particularly high, mirroring demand for workers that we see in other parts of the economy.

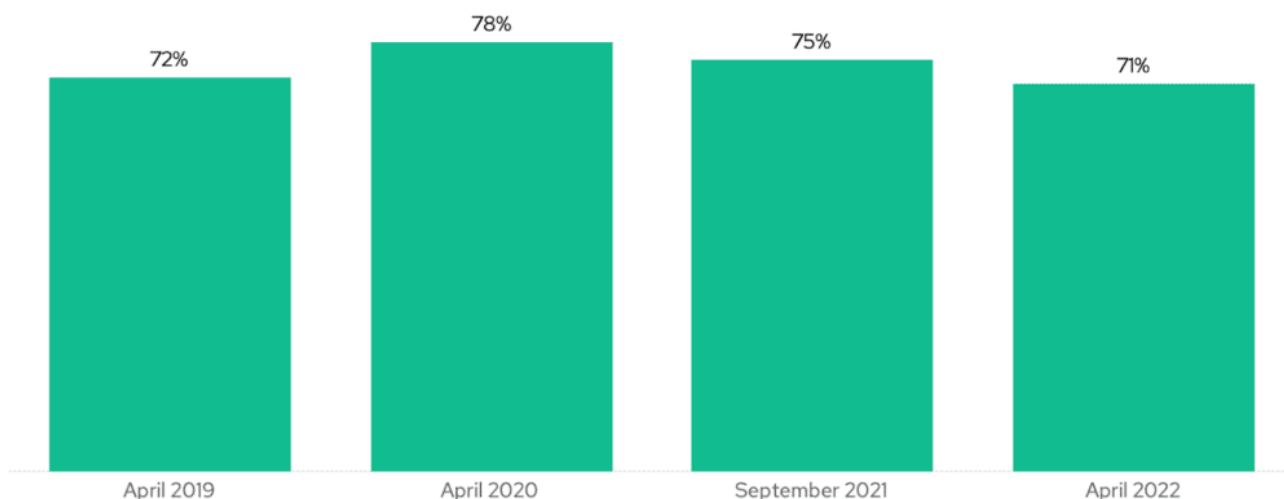
Secondary school technician adverts, cumulative over school year



Teacher job attachment returns to pre-pandemic levels

A natural question is whether the pandemic has changed teachers' intentions to remain within teaching. Teacher Tappers are regularly asked whether they expect to be a teacher in three years' time. The pandemic saw a rise in the percentage of teachers who do expect to be a teacher in three years, likely because teaching provided some security during the uncertainty. In 2022, however, the figure has returned to 2019 levels. That said, it is no worse than levels recorded pre-pandemic.

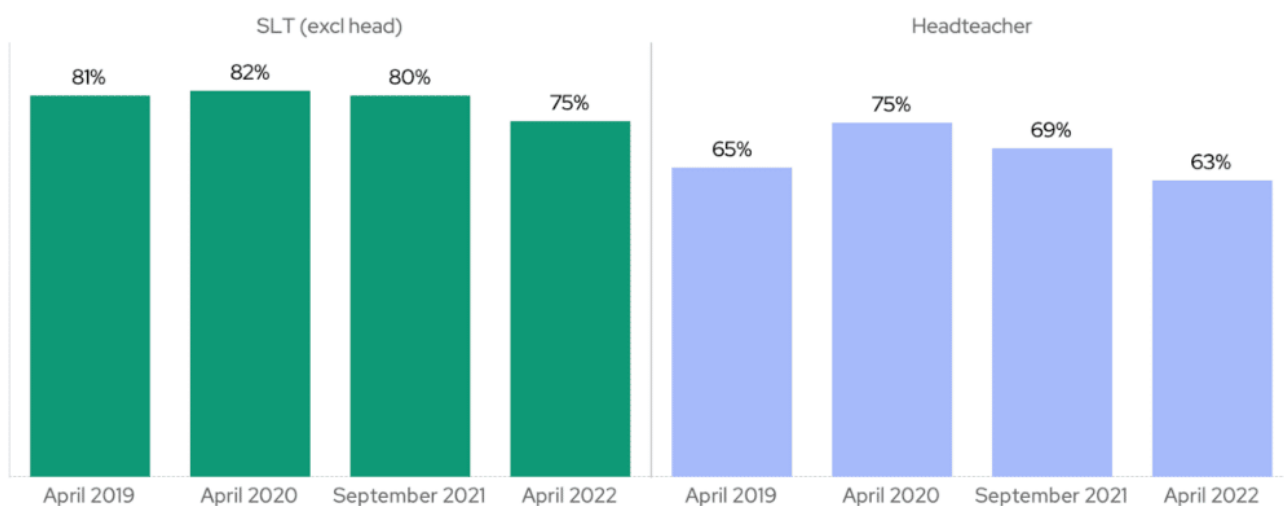
Do you expect to be a teacher in three years' time?



In pre-pandemic years, 65% of heads said they still planned to be in the profession in three years' time. This rose to 75% of heads during the pandemic for reasons discussed above. However, this year just 63% of heads say they plan to remain in the profession in three years' time. Of course, many of these will not have sufficiently high pension contributions to retire and not work, and so their resignation will depend on whether they can find suitable employment elsewhere.

Despite this, it is worth noting that so far there is no associated rise in the number of changes in headship that are recorded by the DfE, which are monitored daily by SchoolDash.

Proportion who feel 'likely' to still be teaching in three years' time



Job attachment is weakest in schools poorly judged by Ofsted

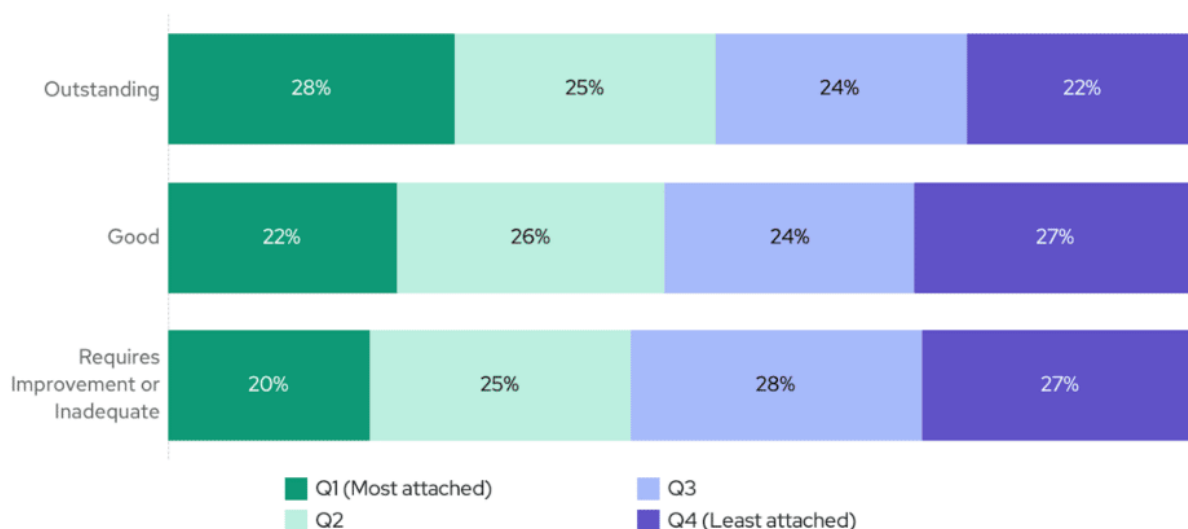
Attachment to teaching is a more complex trait than can be captured in a single question. One of the advantages of the Teacher Tapp panel is that we are able to ask them a large number of questions about different aspects of job attachment. Here we score teachers according to their responses to six questions that relate to job attachment. Using these scores, we can explore aspects of how well a teacher's job aligns with their ideal preferences.

Job attachment tends to be highest in schools judged as 'Outstanding' by Ofsted, and lowest in 'Requires Improvement' or 'Inadequate' schools.

It should be said that we do not know which is the direction of causation here. Are more satisfied and enthusiastic teachers more able to get appointments in 'Outstanding' schools? Or, are experiences within schools with a poor Ofsted judgement that are trying to change practices causing the teachers to feel less committed to their work?

Lower feelings of job attachment could be one explanation for how a low Ofsted rating can inhibit improvement and contribute to the phenomenon of 'stuck' schools.

Attachment to the teaching profession by school's most recent Ofsted rating



While we can see a relationship between job attachment and Ofsted, there is little relationship between job attachment and the social demographic of the pupil intake, as measured by the free school meals proportion. This is comforting because it shows that teachers can derive a great deal of attachment to their work, regardless of the social background of the students they teach.

There are many more interesting facets about this new 'job attachment' metric - so keep your eyes peeled for a follow-up post which explores this in more detail in the coming weeks ■■

Read all in the full report!

You can read more in our report ['Teacher recruitment and career intentions after the COVID-19 pandemic'](https://teachertapp.com/articles/teacher-recruitment-and-career-intentions-after-the-covid-19-pandemic/).

And, as always, let us know what other questions we should be asking!