

Education vacancies hit two-year high while applications tumble

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Education vacancies hit a two-year high at the end of last year, while application numbers fell. That's according to recent research from the Association of Professional Staffing Companies (APSCo).

The data, provided by the world's largest network of job boards, Broadbean Technology, revealed that the number of education vacancies posted in the UK hit a two year high in the final quarter of 2021 as the sector continues to face a skills shortage following a difficult two years. Greater London recorded by far the highest number of jobs (55,000+), followed by the West Midlands (almost 8,000) and Greater Manchester in third (just over 7,000). West Yorkshire and South Yorkshire both featured in the top ten for vacancy numbers.

According to the statistics, while job numbers rose, the number of applications per vacancy steadily declined throughout the year. Perth and Kinross reported the highest number of average applications per vacancy, closely followed by Middlesbrough and Antrim in third. Renfrewshire, Glasgow and Edinburgh made it a Scotland treble in the top ten.

Despite the decline in application numbers across the education sector, there was a marked fall of around 10% in the average permanent salary for teaching professionals from July 2021 onwards, perhaps linked to the pay freeze of 2021.

Ann Swain, CEO of APSCo, commented:

"The challenges for education institutions and those staffing firms that support the sector are significant. The pandemic has hit teaching professionals hard and many have simply exited the profession through a combination of health concerns, stress and the initial impact of vaccine requirements in schools. Add to this the lack of financial incentives that can be used to attract professionals in the sector and it's no wonder that schools, colleges and academies are all struggling to recruit."

"While we've seen government marketing campaigns to encourage more people into teaching, there's a more immediate need to address this dearth of resources. APSCo has highlighted a number of methods to help alleviate the skills shortages in the UK, which includes greater flexibility in Apprenticeship Levy

usage to support the 'Levelling Up' agenda, as well as the introduction of a work visa for self-employed highly skilled contractors."

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