Teesside University

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

Provider address	School of Social Sciences and Law
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Introduction

1.   This inspection was carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectors supported by a team of specialist inspectors in accordance with the *Framework for the Inspection of Initial Teacher Education (2008-11)*.

2.   The inspection draws upon evidence from all aspects of the provision to make judgements against all parts of the inspection evaluation schedule in the framework. Inspectors focused on the overall effectiveness of the training in supporting high quality outcomes for trainees and the capacity of the partnership to bring about further improvements. A summary of the grades awarded is included at the end of this report.

Key to inspection grades

Grade 1   Outstanding
Grade 2   Good
Grade 3   Satisfactory
Grade 4   Inadequate

Explanation of terms used in this report

Attainment is defined as the standard reached by a trainee at the end of their training.

Progress is judged in terms of how well a trainee has developed professionally from their starting point to the standard reached at the time of the inspection or at a suitable review point.

Achievement is judged in terms of the progress made and the standard reached by a trainee at the time of the inspection or at a recent assessment review point.

The provider

3.   Teesside University's School of Social Sciences and Law works in partnership with six partner colleges to provide initial teacher education (ITE) programmes. These lead to the University's Certificate and Professional Graduate Certificate in Education: Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector. There is provision at the university and at two partner further education (FE) colleges for full-time pre-service trainees. At the six partner FE colleges the provision is offered on a part-time, in-service basis. The partnership expanded in 2009 when it was joined by Redcar College and in 2010 by Darlington College. The qualifications meet the statutory requirements and are endorsed by Standards Verification UK. Of the 369 trainees enrolled at the time of the inspection, 47 were full time and 322 part time. Of these, 64% were female, 36% male and 20% were in the 21 to 24 age group, with 70% in the 25 to 49 age group and 10% of trainees aged over 50.

Initial teacher education for the further education system

Key strengths

4.   The key strengths are:

- the high quality of pastoral care that enables trainees to achieve well

- the extent to which most trainees promote equality and diversity through their classroom practice

- the high quality recruitment and selection procedures that secure high levels of successful completion

- high quality centre-based trainers who model 'best practice' in FE teaching.

Required actions

5.   In order to improve the quality of provision, the provider and the partnership must:

- implement more rigorous monitoring of data around trainee outcomes, particularly attainment, trainees' progress and destinations leading to planning for improvement

- develop a coherent method to track and monitor trainees' individual progress across all aspects of their training

- ensure that all trainees have clear and incisive individual targets so that they are able to improve their teaching and attain the highest possible grade

- develop a measure of progress and attainment which effectively evaluates the full range of professional skills and practice necessary to become an highly effective teacher.

Recommendations

6.   In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the provider and the partnership should:

- increase the rigour of the monitoring of mentors' contributions to the assessment of trainees

- ensure greater prominence of the development of the subject-specialist skills of trainees during their programme

- utilise the expertise and resources of the partners to drive improvement more systematically

■   develop more rigorous improvement plans that define clear success criteria.

Overall effectiveness   Grade: 3

7.   The overall effectiveness of the partnership in securing high quality outcomes for trainees is satisfactory. The provider has not had accurate knowledge of completion rates of cohorts and individual groups and has therefore been limited in its use of this data to enhance provision and outcomes. Trainees' attainment is not being accurately assessed because they are not being assessed across the range of their abilities. Currently, the provider uses an aggregate of module marks to determine grades at the end of Year 1 and 2. This gives a clear view of academic attainment but does not provide a summative overview of how trainees develop as FE teachers. The Individual Learning Planner has limitations; the variety of records of assessment and achievement in use fragment the recording and tracking of trainees' progress and achievement. Across the partnership there is also variation of the criteria being used to assess practical teaching.

8.   Trainees demonstrate a good range of knowledge, understanding and abilities. They have confidence in their ability to teach or train. They have good subject knowledge and use their professional or subject knowledge to enliven their teaching and to contribute to updating departmental knowledge and practices. They have an ability to create good relationships with learners that provide positive learning environments. They have a commitment to teaching and learners' achievement as well as a commitment to their own professional development. Trainees show a willingness to try out new approaches, and use self-evaluation and feedback from their tutors, mentors and learners to improve their performance.

9.   Some trainees' skills in classroom management are outstanding. They manage challenging situations particularly well to ensure that all their learners can continue to learn with dignity and confidence. They can explain very clearly the interrelationship between students' behaviour and good teaching but this is not consistently the case. Trainees' understanding of how to raise their classroom performance and move across grade boundaries is not incisive. Trainees demonstrate a strong drive and enthusiasm to prepare their learners for employment or for progression onto further studies; this is evident through the high expectations they have for them. Trainees have a good knowledge of how to raise their learners' awareness of equality and diversity linked to the world of work or curriculum area.

10. Trainees are confident users of information and learning technology (ILT) because 'best practice' in the use of ILT is well integrated into their training. However, some trainees need to develop their ability to deploy more creative uses of ILT effectively to support learning. The very best trainees demonstrate

skills in setting learning outcomes, recognising and responding to group needs, managing challenging learners, differentiating learning, and supporting their learners' literacy and numeracy development. This is because they systematically seek out and analyse carefully their learners' prior attainment and starting points. Another feature of the best trainees seen is their ability to take risks to find ways to excite and enthuse, to make their learners' learning memorable and of high quality. When this does not always work they are able to ask themselves why, what they could do differently and then try again.

11. The recruitment and selection of trainees is good resulting in generally high levels of retention across the partnership. The interview and induction procedures are rigorous. However, there is no initial subject audit that would accurately pinpoint the needs of those at different stages of professional subject knowledge. The impact of recruitment and selection on the outcomes for trainees is not analysed rigorously or interrogated for overall patterns or for patterns that may impact on individual cohorts or different groups of trainees. There is a high number of part-time trainees on the programme with learning needs. They are positive about the support they are given. A strong feature of the provision is the progression into employment made by pre-service trainees on part-time courses in colleges. The Individual Learning Planner does not serve as a strong backbone throughout the course to support and challenge trainees' achievement. Targets are insufficiently well focused on raising attainment and moving trainees across grade boundaries. Data on employment outcomes for pre-service trainees and achievement of QTLS for all trainees is not collected systematically.

12. Training and assessment are good. Trainees value the course highly. They use the wide range of teaching strategies modelled in their own teaching and they feel that the supportive atmosphere and interesting sessions motivate them to achieve. There is good feedback by tutors which is effective in identifying areas where a trainee can develop. The feedback on practical teaching observations is detailed and formative with some excellent feedback on assignments giving detailed advice on how to improve. Trainees are positive about the excellent support by tutors who have an 'open door' policy. All trainees have mentors from the start of their training. Mentors' observations relate well to tutors' observations. There is good feedback and target-setting however, there is no system to standardise the assessment of practical teaching and there is often a lack of clarity about the criteria the tutor and mentor are using to make judgements about practical teaching. Although there is very good informal communication between the course leaders and on-site mentors that provides regular review and forward planning for on-site students, there is insufficient formalised communication between and with mentors to review trainees' progress. This leads to little or no input from some mentors off-site. Trainees from similar subjects have no opportunity to contact each other and network and, apart from the support of mentors, there are few opportunities for trainees to develop their subject specialist skills. The pastoral and professional care of trainees is outstanding. The central lesson observation documentation facilitates

the linking of mentor and tutor observations. However, in some cases, targets set following observations are insufficiently developmental. Pre-service trainees value highly the peer-learning opportunities provided.

13   Resources are good. Trainees value the VLE highly: it has extensive learning materials and is well used for communication. However, there is less access for more creative pedagogical purposes, using for example, 'webinars', videos, media content and blogs. A website for mentors has been established to support them, particularly those at a distance. There is a well-equipped and well-used library at the university. Classrooms are well equipped across the partnership, many with interactive white boards. Staff attend university programme workshops with many examples of continuing professional development, sharing teaching materials. Resources developed by individual colleges are shared across the partnership. Trainees appreciate the support offered by library staff through induction and one-to-one support. Additional support for learners with additional learning needs is provided through university and college services. Trainers are well qualified and highly experienced in teaching in a range of diverse contexts and so are able to offer good support to all trainees through modelling 'best' practice.

14.   The partnership has no data linked to trainees' outcomes that can be used to monitor and review the consistency of quality across all partners. Currently, there is no commonly understood set of criteria or means of measurement that fully assesses trainees' experience and outcomes across all aspects of their training. The university's monitoring of the college's higher education provision is not rigorous. Visits focus primarily on compliance and are not focused on outcomes and holding partner colleges responsible for actions for improvement. Library staff also visit partner colleges to run sessions. In the 'pairing up' of colleges, there is evidence of effective working arrangements. Information is limited about how far external trainees value their mentors and there is no systematic quality assurance of mentors' feedback observations. All mentors receive a handbook that they find very useful. There is no formal feedback to mentors on their performance and the uptake of mentors' attendance at training events is variable; as a consequence confidence cannot be placed in all mentors' assessment practice.

15.   Equality and diversity is a strong feature of the provision. Some trainees gave good explanations of the application of equality and diversity in their teaching. Some trainees are weak in discussing how they apply the minimum core to their learners' own literacy development. Trainees are not well prepared in literacy, numeracy and IT and they are not prepared to meet the challenge of teaching functional skills which are soon to be introduced. One trainee had applied equality and diversity through using an exemplar text on discrimination. Mentors are aware of how the course prepares trainees for embedding equality and diversity. The university has been successful in promoting the programmes to under-represented groups. Marketing and recruitment have improved the percentage of minority ethnic trainees since the last inspection. At 5%, the

number of trainees known to be from minority ethnic groups is higher than their proportion in the local population. Trainees are at least satisfactory in their knowledge and skills in teaching in a diverse society. Teaching plans effectively identify differentiated outcomes and strategies to promote equality and diversity, often using detailed group profiles to do so. Trainees are able to give good explanations of the way they promote equality and diversity in their teaching. For example in one functional skills lesson for sports students, a discussion relating to deaf and blind people playing football was expertly managed by the trainee.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality   Grade: 3

16. The partnership has satisfactory capacity overall to sustain high quality outcomes and to make further improvement. Leaders have an extremely detailed and comprehensive account of the provision, taking account of a wide range of evidence including the views of trainees, their employment contexts and external evaluation, indicating that the provider is aware of its strengths and areas for development. Prior to inspection, the accuracy of the data held by the provider on completion rates of cohorts and individual groups was limited and inhibited its use to enhance the quality of provision and outcomes for trainees. College self-evaluation and university self-evaluation need to be more closely integrated. Colleges use parallel systems of evaluation to those required by the university. Current trainees' evaluations are used effectively to inform self-evaluation of the quality of centre-based training but there is less evaluation of their experience of the work-based element of their training. There is limited use of feedback from former trainees to inform self-evaluation and course improvement, and the collection of employment data from pre-service trainees or Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills achievement could be improved to inform self-evaluation. However, a strong feature of the provision is the progression into employment made by pre-service trainees on part-time courses in colleges. The lack of clear performance indicators from the university makes the self-assessment process more challenging for partners.

17. As well as increasing the participation of under-represented groups, the university has met local and regional community needs by responding to requests for workforce development from both public and private training organisations. All partner staff are invited to a wide range of university events. A major conference will be held by the partnership in 2012 to consider implications of new FE Initial Teacher Training qualifications. Mentors are able to attend any mentor training event at any college. There is limited evidence of the university's strategic or operational leadership of the partnership impacting fully on developments at all partner colleges. There is a mismatch between the colleges' and university data which the university recognises it needs to work at to resolve. There is scope for the university to more fully utilise the expertise

and previous experience of new partners who are working with other leading teacher training universities.

18.   Although the effectiveness and timeliness of communications and of meetings across the partnership has been improved, the provider has made more limited progress since the last inspection in addressing required actions and recommendations relating to: providing all mentors with training on mentoring and lesson observation skills; improving the analysis of trainees' recruitment and performance data by different groups; and taking action to address the under-achievement of any group. The provider recognises the need to develop a measure of progress and attainment which effectively evaluates the full range of professional skills and practice necessary to become a highly effective teacher. The 2011/12 programme action could be wider in scope and detail and does not define success criteria sharply enough to link them to outcomes for trainees. There is scope to be more rigorous in monitoring key performance indicators focused around trainee outcomes, particularly attainment, trainees' progress and destinations leading to planning for improvement at all levels.

Annex: Partnership colleges

The partnership includes the following colleges:

Darlington College
Hartlepool College of Further Education
Middlesbrough College
New College, Durham
Redcar & Cleveland College
Stockton Riverside College

Summary of inspection grades[1]

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding; grade 2 is good; grade 3 is satisfactory; grade 4 is inadequate.

Overall effectiveness

		ITE for FE
How effective is the provision in securing high quality outcomes for trainees?		**3**
Trainees' attainment	How well do trainees attain?	3
Factors contributing to trainees' attainment	To what extent do recruitment / selection arrangements support high quality outcomes?	2
	To what extent does the training and assessment ensure that all trainees progress to fulfil their potential given their ability and starting points?	2
	To what extent are available resources used effectively and efficiently?	2
The quality of the provision	To what extent is the provision across the partnership of consistently high quality?	3
Promoting equalities and diversity	To what extent does the provision promote equality of opportunity, value diversity and eliminate harassment and unlawful discrimination?	2

Capacity to improve further and/or sustain high quality

	ITE for FE
To what extent do the leadership and management at all levels have the capacity to secure further improvements and/or to sustain high quality outcomes?	**3**
How effectively does the management at all levels assess performance in order to improve or sustain high quality?	3
How well does the leadership at all levels anticipate change, and prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives?	3
How effectively does the provider plan and take action for improvement?	3

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[1] The criteria for making these graded judgements are in the *Grade criteria for the inspection of ITE 2008-11*; Ofsted November 2009; Reference no: 080128.