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Ms Judith McArthur  
Principal  
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Dear Ms McArthur

**Ofsted inspection of ITE provision leading to Awarding Body qualifications in the lifelong learning/further education sector**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your provision between 16 -19 January 2012, for the time you gave to our telephone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and to a published national overview report. This report will identify the overall quality of provision leading to Awarding Body qualifications and identify the overall strengths and areas for development. However, in line with previous practice, inspectors will not make graded judgements of the quality of the provision in each centre; they will evaluate and feed back identified strengths and any points for further development. These are outlined below for your centre.

The published overview report will list the names of the contributing institutions but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text.

**Outcomes for trainees**

Chesterfield College subcontracts its City and Guild's ITE provision to Joan Patterson Associates who manage and deliver the Certificate (CTLLS) and Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTLLS) qualifications on behalf of the college.

Success rates for trainees on the CTLLS programme have improved substantially over the past three years and are high, though numbers are low. Success rates on the DTLLS course have steadily improved over the past three years to slightly below the national average. Retention has declined in

the last year but is above the national average, whereas achievement has improved but is below the national average. For the last two years male trainees have been more successful than female trainees. Minority ethnic trainees' success rates are similar to white British trainees.

The majority of trainees' teaching is competent. Trainees in the early stages of the course are beginning to appreciate a variety of teaching and learning styles, drawing on central training sessions. However, trainees do not give sufficient attention to the needs of individual learners and their sessions could benefit from more active participation to capture learners' interest and motivation.

The standard of trainees work is variable but meets awarding body requirements. Tutors' comments on trainees' assignments usually include helpful and constructive tips for improvement. However, the lack of marking on the text means tutors do not always correct trainees' grammatical and spelling errors, or comment sufficiently on their written expression.

The course is extremely flexible and attracts individuals and groups who might otherwise not benefit from the training. The design and structure of the course provide a number of routes to passing the qualification and allow for contingencies such as missed training sessions to be accommodated. The monthly whole-group training session provides good opportunities for trainees to learn actively from the tutor, socialise and share good practice. The course is supported well by an accessible VLE, which is used well to communicate with learners, mark their work, store all their evidence, including journals and teaching records. It is a useful repository for course materials and resources.

Individual learning plans (ILP) are not utilised sufficiently to aid learning. The ILP is referred to briefly at the beginning of the programme, in the middle and at the end. Unit achievements and course targets are monitored appropriately. However, the ILP is not used to pull together the ongoing developmental points arising from teaching observations, assignments and tutorials to support trainees' rapid progress.

The majority of trainees are positive about the programme and acknowledge the impact it has in developing their roles at work and on their appreciation of the wider context of lifelong learning.

Central training covers aspects of inclusion comprehensively. Trainees feel confident in tackling discrimination and are aware of the issues for race equality, disability and behaviour management. They are well prepared to teach in a diverse society and this is reflected in their written work.

Subcontracting arrangements are appropriate. Trainees are observed frequently over the duration of the course. However, the college does not carry out paired observations to check or moderate the quality of teaching evaluations.

**The key strengths are:**

- excellent promotion of the provision to widen participation to groups, communities and organisations who otherwise would not be able to access such provision and who are currently under-represented in teacher education and the lifelong learning sector
- extremely flexible programme to meet the needs of individual trainees and employers
- good use of VLE to support distance learning, for assessing work and as a location for resources to support the programme
- trainees have up-to-date specialist knowledge in their teaching area and are passionate and enthusiastic in the teaching of their subject area.
- Well-qualified and committed staff who provide good central training in a supportive environment in which they model a variety of teaching approaches and encourage trainees to share ideas with each other
- good attention to equality and diversity within the programme, which prepares trainees well to teach in diverse contexts.

**The key areas for development are:**

- improve the arrangements for workplace mentors and workplace observers by strongly promoting their benefits and enabling them to fulfil their role of supporting trainees
- improve the observations of teaching and learning by ensuring that development points are highlighted sufficiently to enable learners to identify better action points to improve their practice.
- improve the quality, and frequency, of the review of individual learning plans to ensure that they contain trainees' targets from different aspects of the programme so that trainees are aware of how best to address their main areas for development
- improve trainees' action plans from their initial assessment outcomes and give greater attention to trainees written expression, grammar and spelling to help them cope with the academic demands of the course.

As explained in the inspection guidance, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next inspection.

Yours sincerely

**William Baidoe-Ansah**

**Her Majesty's Inspector**