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Mr Amarjit Basi
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Dear Mr Basi

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

Thank you for the help which your staff gave when I inspected your provision on 16-20 January 2011, for the information which they provided before and during the inspection and for our telephone conversation.

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

The success rates on the Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (CTLLS) course have increased significantly and are high. All trainees achieve intermediate level qualifications in literacy and numeracy before the end of their course. Trainees from White backgrounds are more successful on the Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTLLS) course than trainees from minority ethnic backgrounds, but this is reversed on the CTLLS course. Trainees with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) are less

successful than those without LDD. Trainees aged 30-39 tend to be less successful than trainees in other age bands.

Success rates on the DTLLS course have decreased significantly in the last three years and are very low. Managers decided, about 18 months ago, to end this provision in December 2011, not just because of poor outcomes but primarily because the provision was unsuitable for the trainees concerned. The course team accepts that a few trainees were wrongly accepted on the course. In 2010/11, approximately half of the DTLLS trainees withdrew, many of whom had lost their employment. Staff supported several of these trainees very effectively to complete their qualifications through the provision of academic and personal support on a bridging course.

Very few trainees progress from Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) to CTLLS/DTLLS courses, but for two-thirds of them the PTLLS qualification is sufficient for their role. No CTLLS trainees progress to DTLLS and for the great majority the CTLLS qualification is sufficient for their role.

The course raises trainees' understanding of differentiation, the minimum core and how to teach learners with literacy and numeracy needs very effectively. Trainees receive very good advice about the needs of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The course prepares them to manage behaviour issues effectively. Trainees are less confident in their understanding of safeguarding, the *Every Child Matters* themes and 14 to 19 curriculum developments. The teaching practice experience of most CTLLS trainees is narrow. Their understanding of teaching in the different settings of the diverse lifelong learning sector, other than through peer discussions, is underdeveloped.

The provision helps trainees to become more self-reliant and to improve their communication skills. Most trainees on the CTLLS course make good progress. Their academic writing and self-reflection skills are more variable. While some trainees produce high quality assignments and insightful opinions on their assignments and their lessons, others present lower quality work and their self-reflections are superficial. Trainees plan lessons thoroughly and focus on learning and their learners' needs. They enjoy a good and mutually respectful rapport with their learners and provide them with effective support. Trainees have good subject knowledge and demonstrate practical techniques well. They use information learning technology appropriately to aid learning. In the less effective lessons, learners are not involved, learning is rushed and

questioning to check learners' prior knowledge and/or learning is underdeveloped.

The key strengths are:

- trainees' extensive and current knowledge of their subject areas which they use very effectively to make their lessons interesting to their learners
- good feedback on trainees' assignments and lessons which enables and also challenges them to improve their academic writing and teaching and learning
- very effective internal verification which advises assessors appropriately of the improvements required and encourages consideration of wider issues
- very committed subject specialist mentors who provide much personal support to their trainees to aid their progress and skills acquisition
- good and knowledgeable trainers who provide trainees with the theory and practice they need to work in the lifelong learning sector and who give willingly of their time and expertise to support their trainees
- good preparation and awareness raising of trainees for progression to higher levels of teacher training qualifications and to professional formation for the Institute for Learning (IfL) requirements for qualified teacher learning and skills (QTLS)
- the reinvigorated teacher training team which has well-qualified and experienced staff who have valuable additional skills and who involve specialists to deliver relevant topics to widen trainees' understanding and knowledge
- the very effective embedding of equality and diversity matters throughout the course
- the effective inclusion of trainees' views in quality assurance, self-assessment and improvement, action and strategic development plans which lead to improved quality of provision.

The key areas for development are:

- increase success rates by ensuring existing good practice in feedback and marking is shared amongst all staff and across all courses
- strengthen the systems to determine that all trainees have current checks on their suitability to work with young people and vulnerable adults
- improve the quality and frequency of the setting and reviewing of trainees' targets and learning plans so that they know best how to address their main areas for development
- improve the training, support, sharing of good practice and monitoring of all subject specialist mentors so that they know best how to advise and guide their mentees

- increase the systematic involvement of mentors, placement providers and external stakeholders in the self-assessment and quality improvement processes to ensure a fully inclusive approach to the evaluation and improvement of the provision
- increase the quality of the evaluative judgements in the self-assessment report and relate them more closely to their impact on trainees.

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

Shaun Dillon

Her Majesty's Inspector