

University of Central Lancashire

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

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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. The University of Central Lancashire works in close partnership with 13 partner colleges across the North West and one National Voluntary Organisation (Home-Start UK) to provide initial teacher education for teachers and trainers in the Further Education and Lifelong Learning sectors. Courses lead to the University's Certificate in Education (Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector [DTLLS]) and Post Graduate Certificate in Education (DTLLS). All of these awards are available to learners within the provision across all campuses. In addition, there are programmes in one college leading to a partly integrated Certificate in Education/Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and Literacy teachers. All qualifications meet the statutory requirements for initial teacher education (ITE) and are endorsed by Standards Verification UK, and registered on the Institute for Learning's Initial Teacher Training/Education Qualifications Register. Provision is offered across the partnership on both a part-time in-service and full-time pre-service basis. At the time of the inspection, the partnership had over 800 trainees following ITE

for further education DTLLS equivalent courses, 131 of whom were on pre-service full-time courses.

Initial teacher education for the further education system

Key strengths

4. The key strengths are:
 - the innovative use of a wide range of excellent human, physical and electronic resources by both tutors and trainees to enhance their teaching and their own development
 - the impact on trainees of high quality subject specific mentoring to support trainees' development
 - the impact of detailed and high quality self-evaluation which leads to trainees making good progress
 - very effective leadership and management across the partnership which has driven up the quality of provision and trainees' outcomes since the last inspection
 - highly collaborative partners who work together very effectively at all levels.

Recommendations

5. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the provider/partnership should:
 - monitor the impact of improvement planning to ensure consistency across the partnership
 - increase the recruitment of trainees, tutors and mentors from under-represented groups
 - take action to ensure that all partners raise the level of attainment of all trainees.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

6. The overall effectiveness of the partnership in securing high quality outcomes for trainees is good. Trainees are completing the programme with high levels of attainment, although there are small variations in levels between partners. In 2010, 83% of in-service and pre-service trainees were at least good and outcomes improved further to 86% in 2011. Of the 2009/11 trainees, 85% were graded good or better on completion when only 65% of the cohort had achieved this level with interim grades in 2010. In 2011, 87% of pre-service trainees achieved 'good or better'. More formal action planning, target setting and the negotiation of interim and portfolio grades with tutors are among the factors contributing to this improvement. Of the case study trainees seen, inspectors agreed with the provider's assessment in most cases. This makes inspectors confident that the provider's grading of trainees' attainment is accurate.

7. Trainees demonstrate strong subject knowledge, acquired through professional or academic study and vocational experience. Their lesson planning is thorough, with clear aims and objectives. Teaching and learning activities are planned to meet individual needs and abilities, including a range of assessment strategies. Their rationales for specific lessons show an ability to monitor their own progress and the targets they need to meet. Trainees demonstrate excellent reflective, self-critical skills both in their assignments and consistently in their professional development journals. Trainees deploy a wide variety of teaching and learning strategies which they use imaginatively and skilfully. They are adept at using information and learning technology (ILT) to enhance their learners' understanding. They are able to develop good relationships with learners and have an effective rapport with them. Management of classroom environments by trainees is good and they are able to understand the causes of, and manage, challenging behaviour. Trainees can check learners' progress accurately, often by using effective questioning. Trainees' assignments are clearly written and persuasively argued. They are fully prepared to embed literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) into their teaching, in addition to teaching learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

8. Recruitment and selection are good. The university has introduced more rigour in its recruitment and selection policy, requiring employer confirmation of teaching hours and more information from applicants about their professional context. It has carefully reviewed all withdrawals with colleges at twice-yearly reviews. As a result, interim success rates show an increase on 2009/11. Good subject specialism auditing by mentors or college staff during the initial interview enhances the interview and selection process. For example, one college asks managers of placements to sign a statement confirming the effectiveness of the mentor and the high standard of teaching in the curriculum area. Induction is thorough and full-time trainees are encouraged to observe a range of teachers before the course begins. Diagnostic literacy and numeracy assessments are rigorous and this leads to an action plan by trainees with targets to achieve by the end of the course. Colleges have taken some actions to promote the programme to under-represented minority ethnic groups, for example by advertising in a publication which would reach them. Some centres have made efforts to secure the recruitment of disadvantaged/non-traditional groups such as prison officers and unqualified prison tutors. However, the provider should increase the recruitment of trainees as well as tutors and mentors from under-represented groups as a whole. All trainees are required to have mentors and these are identified at the application stage. Good identification of the need for additional support is made early in the programme and provided in an appropriate and timely manner. Target setting is generally good. In the majority of cases, targets for improvement are identified and included in action plans by trainees, tutors and mentors through the observation, recording and feedback processes.

9. Training and assessment are good. Support from tutors is highly regarded and valued and is seen as an important component in trainees' success. Tutors have good communication with curriculum managers in colleges and external partners such as employers. Training sessions are thoroughly planned and paced, engage trainees and meet their needs. Tutors' modelling of teaching and learning

strategies is outstanding. Trainees successfully integrate theory and practice in their work. Professional development journals demonstrate progress and impact. Trainees' development as reflective practitioners is good. Mentors have good links with other subject specialists in partner colleges and feel they can ask advice on feedback. There is effective mentoring to support trainees' progress and development. Mentors value the support from the colleges and the university and most mentors have received training in specialist mentoring and observation skills. Mentors benefit from paired observations if they are new to mentoring and there are also joint observations with college staff, university tutors and external examiners. Trainees keep records of meetings with mentors which help them monitor their own development. Mentors and tutors liaise regularly to plan and monitor trainees' development. Action planning is satisfactorily monitored by trainees, tutors and mentors between observations. Mentors expressed a desire to meet more often and share good practice. A wide range of modes of assessment of trainees is deployed and the revised assessment module is thorough and effective. Trainees are thoroughly prepared for observed sessions by the production of lesson rationales. They receive good feedback on written assignments with annotated scripts. The enhanced generic and subject-specific observation pro-formas enable tutors and mentors to focus feedback more clearly and give effective and very detailed feedback on observations of teaching which develops trainees' competence. Trainees understand the criteria used to judge their practical teaching. Examples of videoed observations are impressive. The trainee and tutor can watch the lesson independently and together, stopping and starting the recording, which can provide more effective analysis than a live observation.

10. Resources and their use are outstanding. The monitoring of resources through course review has resulted in benefits to the programme. Access to electronic teaching and learning resources, such as tablet computers and electronic readers, is excellent. College virtual learning environments are fully populated, extensively resourced and well used by trainees. Trainees can access information and research through a wide range of electronic resources held by the university. All colleges have outstanding teams of highly experienced staff who are appropriately qualified. College staff receive regular continuing professional development from the university which is consistently of very high quality. Most colleges have very good library facilities. Where college libraries are less well stocked, trainees have very good access to university library resources, including online journals and databases. They can order online with delivery within twenty-four hours to two days. Library and learning resource centre staff in colleges have been trained to support trainees and are able to offer practical support that helps them to complete their assignments. All colleges have fully equipped, high quality teaching accommodation. In most sessions there is good access to, and good use of, information and learning technology. Trainees use these resources effectively to enhance learning and stimulate the interest and engagement of students. Trainees upload their own materials and resources to the intranet in order to share them with other colleagues. Tutors use the intranet to store materials and ensure in sessions that trainees are referred to those resources. In training sessions, tutors make good use of interactive whiteboards and presentation software to enhance trainees' learning and to demonstrate their use.

11. Provision across the partnership is good. Partnership working in clusters, and across colleges more widely, is good. This includes sharing good practice, effective communication, regular meetings, moderation of work and good use of data leading to the raising of trainees' outcomes. Moderation is strong at college, cluster and partnership levels. Regular visits from university staff for a variety of purposes have helped to raise standards and ensure consistency of practice. Tutors' roles are understood clearly in colleges, across the partnership and in relation to the university. The revised grade profile criteria are used by all partners and help to ensure consistency of assessment across the partnership. Most mentors have received training and both the university and individual college tutors systematically audit feedback from mentors. Tutors get a great deal of support from the university and value the continuing professional development they receive and the meetings they attend. College tutors are involved in developing the programme. Across the partnership there is effective monitoring and sharing of good practice. Joint observations provide good staff development for tutors.

12. The promotion of equality of opportunity, valuing diversity, and elimination of harassment and unlawful discrimination are good. Trainees' experience of diverse groups is broadened through the six observations of other teachers they are required to undertake. Observations of lessons and scrutiny of lesson plans confirm that trainees receive good preparation to enable them to teach in a diverse society. Teaching teams are skilled in helping trainees embed equality, diversity and the minimum core into their teaching. Most trainees promote equality and diversity in their own teaching and within their lessons. All colleges in the partnership effectively celebrate diversity and inclusion. Trainees appreciate the importance of raising the aspirations of their students to improve their life chances. For example, one teacher had a deaf learner which they found challenging to manage. They made this the subject of an action-research project. This led the teacher to use mini-whiteboards, visual aids and flip charts and arrange for a signer to overcome the deaf learner's learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This action not only challenged the prejudices of other learners in the group but made the teacher sensitive to the importance of diagnosing and meeting learning needs. Trainees find the inclusion module very helpful in preparing for differentiation in the classroom. Mentors see their support role as crucial to trainees' well-being and there are cases where mentors have been changed in order to ensure a more productive match with the mentee.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality

Grade: 2

13. The effectiveness of the management at all levels in evaluating performance in order to improve or sustain high quality is good. This detailed and high quality self-evaluation leads to trainees making good progress. The university has made extensive improvements in the collation and analysis of its data which are compared regularly with college-produced data and used to monitor recruitment, retention, success, attainment and progression. Early investigation and

intervention are carried out where issues arise. Data sets are provided on identifiable groups to ensure none of them is disadvantaged and action is taken where necessary. Trainees have very good opportunities to give feedback during the programme and the university is very responsive to the feedback given. Trainees told inspectors of a range of issues which had been raised by them and resolved in a timely manner by the college or university. For example, Year 2 trainees' feedback about the requirement for collaborative working on one assignment creating logistical difficulties resulted in this requirement being waived. A range of qualitative and quantitative data is collected through college-based accreditation panels with university staff which all trainees attend and from course reviews with college teams, module evaluation questionnaires, programme evaluation questionnaires, periodic course review procedures and external examiners' visits. This information is used effectively by university staff to develop the programme, identify differences in provision between partners and deal with any quality issues. University programme staff are very well supported by senior university staff through direct intervention regarding quality issues at centres. External examining has been enhanced: colleges are now visited during the year with a comprehensive programme arranged. There has been a marked improvement in the quality assurance of mentoring. The university's database allows interaction and the giving of systematic feedback to mentors on their feedback. This feedback is also given by college tutors.

14. The extent to which the leadership at all levels anticipates change and prepares for, and responds to, national and local initiatives is outstanding. The university has systematically built capacity with partners in a range of ways. The provider has close involvement in sector workforce development through relationships with large, medium and small employers. Excellent progression opportunities are provided for trainees, with good take up of Post Graduate Diploma, Masters and Professional Doctorate programmes. The university has a national profile for initial teacher education for further education which informs practice within the partnership. Programme staff are involved with policy at national and regional levels. The programme director was awarded a National Teaching Fellowship and another programme staff member has conducted a wide range of training for ESOL teachers at national, regional and local events and conferences. Partner staff and trainees feel strongly that not only does the university anticipate and respond to changes and national and local initiatives but that it is influential upon these changes and initiatives. The training programme itself covers some key national initiatives relating, for example, to equality and diversity, literacy and numeracy, ICT, special educational needs, and vocational education. The university offers both partner tutors and trainees extensive opportunities for writing, journal editing and research. Their work is disseminated in university publications such as *Looking Back and Moving Forward* and *Through the Looking Glass*. The university regularly involves national figures in scholarly and professional development events.
15. The provider has systematically and successfully addressed the required actions and recommendations in the previous inspection report. Planning for improvement is systematic through college quality reports which inform the programme director's annual monitoring report. This leads to the priorities for

improvement in the self-evaluation document and identifies accurately strengths and areas for improvement. Although improvement planning is driving up outcomes on the whole, the process is less successful in one or two centres and the provider should monitor the impact of improvement planning to ensure consistency across the partnership. It has enhanced the quality of mentoring, and the observation feedback from mentors is now audited by colleges and the university. The provider can analyse, interpret and use enhanced data more effectively to monitor trainees' progress and has improved the rigour and accuracy of self-evaluation at partnership level. New observation arrangements enable tutors and mentors to set both generic and subject-specific targets. Recruitment and selection procedures have been made more rigorous, there has been increased promotion of courses to groups under-represented in teaching in the further education system and the provider has strengthened external evaluation.

Annex: Partnership colleges and other organisations

The partnership includes the following providers:

Blackburn College
Burnley College
Carlisle College
Furness College
Home Start UK
Hugh Baird College
Kendal College
Lakes College West Cumbria
Lancaster and Morecambe College
Myerscough College
Runshaw College
Southport College
West Lancashire College
Wigan and Leigh College

Summary of inspection grades¹

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?		2
Trainees' attainment	How well do trainees attain?	2
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?	1
The quality of the provision	To what extent is the provision across the partnership of consistently high quality?	2
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?		2
How effectively does the management at all levels assess performance in order to improve or sustain high quality?		2
How well does the leadership at all levels anticipate change, and prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives?		1
How effectively does the provider plan and take action for improvement?		2

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.

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