

Anglia Ruskin University

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. Anglia Ruskin University is a long-standing provider of initial teacher education (ITE) across a wide region. Currently, it provides training for teachers for primary and secondary schools and, in partnership with five colleges in the region, for teachers in further education and skills; all of these were included in the inspection. Since the last full inspection the ITE provision has moved into a newly created Department of Education within the new Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education and there have been fundamental changes to senior and middle leadership. The provider has also entered into strategic partnerships with a number of other ITE providers and with colleges, teaching schools, academies and other organisations within the region. The schools in the primary and secondary partnerships have been organised into geographical clusters, known as 'hubs', each with a lead mentor. This is intended to provide greater consistency, for example in mentor training, and local support.

4. Since the previous inspection, the provider has decided to close its undergraduate Bachelor of Arts (BA) primary programme and will not recruit for next year. There have also been changes to the secondary provision: the history with citizenship programme has already closed and the provider will not recruit trainees in art and design next year. Further details on the provision in each phase are given in the relevant section of this report.
5. The university has a well-designed continuum of programmes that build well on the initial teacher education courses. These range from courses for newly qualified teachers and those in the early stages of their professional development to a range of programmes that support teachers' longer-term professional development.

A commentary on the provision

6. As a result of extensive changes in leadership and management and to the primary and secondary provision, which is now of consistently good quality, there have been significant improvements in the outcomes for trainees on these programmes. A great number of improvements were developed and implemented last year and are becoming more embedded this year to have an impact on these improved outcomes for trainees. However, at the time of the inspection, the full impact of all of these changes could not be determined. The pace of improvement in the provision for teachers in further education and skills is not so rapid, but more recent developments are gradually leading to improved outcomes for these trainees. The university and its lead partners are clear about what more needs to be done and have plans for this.
7. The following are particular features of the provider and its initial teacher training programmes:
 - the high levels of recruitment from the region and the high proportion of trainees who find employment in partnership and other schools in the area, together with effective progression routes for further education and skills teachers, indicate the success of the university in meeting local needs for teachers
 - the increasingly outward looking nature of the university and its use of strategic partnerships to support further improvements in the provision and the partnerships with schools and colleges – this means that the university has positioned itself well for the changes in initial teacher education for both schools and for further education and skills
 - the lead taken by the university in a number of developments – such as work on teaching computing in secondary schools and in the teaching of primary age pupils with special education needs– these are clear signs of restored self-confidence and of the confidence that others have in the work of the university
 - the effectiveness of central training in all three phases in ensuring that trainees are clear about the interrelationship between theory and developing their teaching.
8. Since the last inspection there has been highly effective collaborative working across the primary and secondary programmes. A particularly successful development is the new assessment system and the systematic monitoring of trainees' progress. These have made a highly significant contribution to the improvements in both phases and to improved quality assurance, ensuring greater consistency and raising quality. A suitably modified version could be applied to the training in further education and skills. There are also lessons from the improved mentor training on both primary and secondary programmes that could be evaluated for use on the further education programmes.
9. Self-evaluation and improvement planning on the primary and secondary programmes is tightly focused on the analysis of data about the outcomes for

trainees. This leads to sharp targets and monitoring of progress. Improvement plans for the further education programme lack this focus on the analysis of data and the targets set lack this precision.

10. Trainees on the further education programme are much more prepared to take risks in their teaching and to try out new ideas, including new and emerging technologies, than those on the primary and secondary courses. While this may, to some extent, be due to their greater experience, there are opportunities for primary and secondary trainees to learn from their further education colleagues.
11. The following recommendations should be considered to further improve the quality of the outcomes for trainees:
 - greater collaboration between primary and secondary course leaders and those leading on the further education provision, particularly around the assessment and monitoring of trainees' progress
 - improving trainees' ability in critical reflection and analysis to improve their teaching, with a focus on evaluating the progress of the learners they teach and in bringing their understanding of theory to bear in all phases and improving the modelling of this by mentors
 - on the secondary and further education programmes, ensure that mentors support trainees in promoting equality and diversity through their teaching.

Provision in the primary phase

Context

12. Anglia Ruskin University offers initial teacher training provision in the primary phase at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. At the time of the inspection, there were 163 trainees following the three-year BA (Honours) Primary Education general programme: 76 trainees on the BA (Honours) Early Primary Education programme and 27 trainees on the BA (Honours) Primary Education with Modern Foreign Languages. The university is discontinuing this programme when the current trainees complete the training. At postgraduate level, there were 80 trainees following the one year general postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) programme, seven trainees specialising in modern foreign languages and fourteen early primary education trainees. The university works in partnership with approximately 440 schools in Essex and surrounding local authorities, including several London boroughs, with 207 directly involved in the programmes in the year of the inspection. A specific training facility focused on local need is provided for PGCE trainees based in the Peterborough area.

Key strengths

13. The key strengths are:
 - highly effective primary programme leaders who have systematically driven improvements in the provision at a rapid pace
 - rigorous and effective systems of self-evaluation, quality assurance, and improvement planning which have a strong focus on the outcomes for trainees and, in particular, their ability to teach
 - the well above average proportion of trainees who are recruited from, and who secure employment in, the local area, and in this way, meet the local need for good quality teachers well
 - well-trained mentors and visiting tutors who provide consistently effective school-based training, including accurate assessment of the progress of trainees and the setting of incisive developmental targets
 - as a result of improvements in the training, trainees' ability and confidence in promoting pupils' good behaviour and teaching early reading and pupils with different needs and abilities.

Recommendations

14. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the provider should:
 - improve the quality of postgraduate trainees' critical reflection and analysis.
15. In order to improve the quality of provision the provider should:
 - develop the partnership with schools further by sharing more widely and building on current good practice

- ensure that the good features currently evident in the BA programme are transferred to the expanded PGCE programme.

Overall effectiveness

Grade:2

16. The improvements noted in the previous inspection have continued and the positive impact on trainees' outcomes is clear. The attainment of a large majority of trainees is judged to be good or better. Potentially underachieving groups of trainees are well supported to ensure that they achieve as well as other groups. Completion rates are improving and in the case of PGCE trainees are above average. In addition, there is a significant reduction in the number of trainees in each cohort who are a cause for concern. A much higher than average percentage of trainees gain employment and the university is an important provider of good quality teachers for local schools. Accurate assessment, effective and rigorous tracking, sharp targets for improvement and effective early intervention and support mean that most trainees make good progress.
17. Trainees are professional, dedicated and determined to do a 'good job'. They plan well-structured lessons which support positive relationships and promote pupils' good behaviour. Trainees pay good attention to inclusion so that the activities they use meet the needs of most learners. Trainees have a good focus on children's learning and provide opportunities for pupils to discuss and be actively involved. They have the confidence, knowledge and ability to teach early reading and phonics well. Areas for further development are the use of higher-order assessment skills, particularly to inform pupils' learning during and between lessons, and the further development of trainees' deeper understanding of the links between the quality of teaching, pupils' behaviour and good attitudes to learning. Postgraduate trainees, in particular, often lack a deeper understanding of the purpose of critical reflection and require support to increase their ability to apply this to improve their teaching further.
18. Recruitment and selection arrangements are now good. Many trainees come from, and return to teach in, the local area; higher than average numbers are mature trainees, often changing career to become teachers. The number of male trainees is about average overall and higher than average in the Peterborough-based PGCE group. Interview activities are rigorous and university and school colleagues work well together to select appropriate trainees. Trainees find the interview process challenging and particularly enjoy the group activity. They believe that the process helps them to excel and, as one put it, 'to put my best out there'. Any weaknesses arising from subject knowledge tests are followed up promptly and there are interesting pre-course tasks which help trainees get off to a good start, particularly in developing their thinking about inclusion and diversity. Early initial subject audits and baseline assessments of trainees' teaching are used effectively to identify and address individual and cohort needs. There is good evidence of tracking from interview to final placement which shows that a significant majority make good progress from placement to placement and that increasing numbers are achieving good and better grades by

the end of the course. With the appointment of a newly qualified teacher (NQT) leader, the partnership is much better placed to carefully track former trainees so that it can evaluate its effectiveness in retaining teachers in the profession and in ensuring further career progression.

19. Centre- and school-based training is consistently effective and very positively evaluated by trainees. Third-year undergraduate trainees comment on how much the course has improved in the last three years. Support, guidance and communication are much improved; there is much greater consistency in expectations across staff. Assignments link theory and practice effectively. Trainees are very positive about the high quality of school-based mentoring and the contribution of the visiting tutors. An intensive training programme and coherent documentation means that these roles have been strengthened considerably. There remain a few concerns about the value of support provided by the personal tutor and this is currently under review.
20. The courses are well designed and the provision is carefully mapped to ensure there is integrated and differentiated coverage of key themes and aspects such as teaching pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and behaviour management. Placements are organised to ensure that, as far as possible, trainees experience a range of ages and contexts. This is further supported by the enrichment placements when trainees can spend time in different types of settings such as Sure Start centres, special schools or schools with high levels of diversity. The modern languages trainees' placement in partner European schools is particularly important in developing their language skills. There are still a few hiccups around late notification of placements, although the incidence of this is reducing as the partnerships with schools strengthen.
21. Weekly lesson observations and well-documented meetings between the trainee and their mentor are supported by regular visiting tutor observations. Feedback to trainees on the quality of their teaching is consistent, regular and informative with a good focus on key aspects such as children's progress and learning. Developmental targets are precise and followed through from one observation to the next and from placement to placement. As a result, trainees have a very clear understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve and achieve the next level. The relationship between theory and practice is well supported by directed activities and assignments. As a result, undergraduate trainees reaching the end of their course discuss educational issues with a good level of insight and analysis. This level of insight is less evident in the current postgraduate group.
22. Trainees report high levels of support to ensure that individual needs, for example illness or family circumstances, are taken into account. Good use is made of specialist resources to support trainees who have particular needs, such as dyslexia. There is good evidence to show that the high quality of individual support enables trainees to remain or return to the course and achieve well. This is enhanced by the use of regular trainee feedback, subject audits and baseline evaluations of trainees' teaching; these are used very effectively to target prompt, specific intervention and support and to inform later training sessions.

Immediate trainee feedback on centre-based training sessions is used promptly to address individual needs and also to amend the next session if necessary. One trainee speaking for several commented that, 'there has never been a lesson where they have not done something following our feedback'. There are still occasional concerns from trainees about communication and organisation, but these are relatively rare and diminishing.

23. The course content ensures that trainees are very aware of a range of potential barriers to learning, for example, types of bullying and harassment. They are also confident to discuss issues such as the implications of cultural diversity and pupils who are learning English as an additional language. At this stage in the PGCE course, for some trainees, this understanding is rather theoretical, but there are further opportunities later in the course to deepen this understanding.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality

Grade:2

24. There is a clear trend of improvement in the outcomes for trainees, including the progress they make and in their attainment; as a result, the university has good capacity to improve further. At the last inspection, one of the strengths identified was the drive and ambition of the leadership team which had been successful in addressing the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection and laying foundations for further improvement. This continues to be the case and aspects such as the use of information about trainees' teaching, accuracy of assessment and ensuring consistent good quality mentoring are now secure. Now that systems are embedded there is strong evidence of very positive impact on trainee outcomes and confidence, for example in teaching mathematics and phonics.
25. The management structure and regular meetings provide good opportunities for school and university colleagues to systematically evaluate and shape provision both at the operational and strategic levels. A wide range of qualitative and quantitative data, such as about trainees' progress, regular and detailed feedback from subject audits, schools, tutors, mentors, trainees and external examiners, is used well across undergraduate and postgraduate programmes to inform self-evaluation and gain a clear understanding of individual and cohort strengths and needs. Currently, the undergraduate BA programme has strengths that are not always apparent in the PGCE course. As the BA course closes, the provider should ensure that this good practice is transferred to the PGCE programme.
26. The rapid pace of improvement provides strong evidence that the university is able to respond effectively to external challenges. The sharp focus on tackling areas in need of improvement has resulted in additional resources being well used to strengthen aspects such as the partnership with schools, the quality and accuracy of the assessment of trainees and the tracking of trainees' teaching and their understanding of early reading and phonics. Quality assurance systems are

rigorous and effective. The extensive programme of training of school mentors and visiting tutors has been instrumental in the rapid improvement in the quality of school-based training. Joint observations and moderation are frequent and, as a result of the training and revised documentation, there is consistent understanding of expectations, responsibilities and roles. Centre-based tutors also work together well, sharing ideas and expertise. The improvements in centre-based training and modules, mentioned in the previous inspection and commented on by trainees, have led to improvements in trainees' achievement.

27. Visiting tutors provide feedback to mentors; both schools and tutors evaluate the quality of the training provided. In this way, the university is building a valuable bank of information about their schools and is increasingly using this expertise to enhance centre-based training, for example in early reading, and also to enable trainees to observe specific aspects of teaching and learning in a variety of schools. There is good involvement of school partners and internal and external experts in enriching the provision of a range of aspects including music, art and cultural diversity. The university also works well with external consultants and external examiners to evaluate and amend provision further.
28. The establishment of the Peterborough-based PGCE group, now in its third year of operation, is evidence that the university responds well to local needs. It is currently exploring different types of partnerships with schools and seeking to develop closer links and relationships with newly qualified and serving teachers. Where the hub system, of clusters of schools working together with lead mentors, is well established, for example in Peterborough, it works well, but it is still at a very early stage in some other areas.
29. The quality and impact of improvement planning is good. Planning is rigorous, based on accurate analysis and very strongly focused on trainees' outcomes. Plans, at overarching, phase and subject levels are practical, precise and have measurable success criteria related to trainee outcomes and their ability to teach. The improving outcomes provide secure evidence of very positive impact across important aspects such as phonics and early reading, inclusion and behaviour management.

Provision in the secondary phase

Context

30. Anglia Ruskin University works in partnership with around 200 secondary schools across the region. The provider offers postgraduate training in the 11-16 age range in English, mathematics, modern foreign languages, information and communications technology (ICT) and science (with biology, chemistry or physics). Although training is currently undertaken in art and design, this will not be offered from September 2012. At the time of the inspection there were 86 trainees on the secondary programme, with 69 schools providing placements in this year.

Key strengths

31. The key strengths are:
- the effectiveness of secondary programme and pathway (subject) leaders in ensuring the partnership is rapidly responding to the concerns raised in the previous inspection, such as the strengthening of quality assurance roles and the sharpening of improvement planning, and the impact on improving the outcomes for trainees
 - the effectiveness of the system for monitoring trainees' progress and the impact on raising their attainment
 - the good quality recruitment and selection procedures that result in high retention and improved completion and employment rates
 - the high quality personal support that contributes to the rising levels of successful course completion.

Recommendations

32. In order to further improve trainees' progress and attainment, the provider should:
- develop more effective guidance for mentors on target setting
 - improve mentors' ability to support trainees in focusing on students' learning when considering the effectiveness of their teaching
 - increase the contribution schools make to preparing trainees for teaching in a diverse society
 - during the final placement, enhance the extent to which trainees engage in critical self-reflection on how they can improve their teaching.

Overall effectiveness

Grade:2

33. The overall effectiveness of the partnership in securing high quality outcomes for trainees is now good and has improved since the previous inspection. The provider successfully recruits a diverse range of trainees, from across the region. It does well in ensuring the proportion that are male or from older age groups is above the national average. The recruitment of minority ethnic trainees is in line with the sector average, although these groups are underrepresented in the region and comprise a smaller proportion of the population than that found nationally. Following several years when there was not a clearly discernable trend of improvement in attainment, although it was consistently good, attainment is now rising rapidly. The improvements made to the support trainees receive have led to a sharp increase in the proportion that is successfully completing the course. Following a year when employment rates dipped a little below the national average in 2010, they rose strongly in 2011 so that virtually all trainees gained teaching posts; this trend has been continued for the current cohort. This shows that the partnership is meeting a regional need well.
34. Trainees plan their lessons thoroughly, but there is some variation in how effectively they consider students' previous learning. They appreciate the important role of setting clear objectives in their planning to ensure clarity about the learning they expect; most do this well. In the most effective practice seen, trainees identify the levels students have already achieved and ensure their lesson objectives take full account of this. In contrast to this, a minority of lessons identify the same outcomes regardless of the ability of students and do not take sufficient account of previous learning or the need to identify and overcome low levels of literacy and/or numeracy. Trainees have developed good relationships with students and manage behaviour well. They use a good variety of teaching approaches to maintain high levels of interest. Generally, trainees are anticipating well the time required for activities and can adjust the pace of their lessons when required. Trainees' questioning is used well to involve all students in the lessons, although opportunities are sometimes missed to probe understanding or to target particular groups. Trainees are developing an awareness of the needs of learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Many deploy teaching assistants well, but most are at an early stage of identifying bespoke strategies for particular ability groups.
35. Recruitment targets are met and selection procedures have recently been improved to a good level, so more trainees on the course have the potential to become good teachers, as indicated by rising attainment. Expertise from schools in the partnership has been used well to increase the rigour of interviewing. Trainees are usefully required to gain experience of working with young people before the course commences. The effectiveness of the selection procedures is demonstrated through the much improved completion and employment rates. Currently, only two trainees have left the course this year. Almost all trainees are successful in finding teaching posts, many in the region and in partnership schools. With the appointment of a newly qualified teacher (NQT) leader, the partnership is much better placed to carefully track former trainees so that is can

evaluate its effectiveness in retaining teachers in the profession and in ensuring further career progression.

36. The large majority of trainees, including in all groups, make at least good progress. There are no significant differences in the progress trainees make in the schools used for placements. Since the last inspection, the progress trainees make has accelerated as the provider has successfully responded to the issues raised. Compared to the same point last year, there has been a reduction in the proportion of trainees who are satisfactory and an increase in those identified as on track to be outstanding. The accuracy of the provider's assessment of trainees was confirmed by inspectors. Trainees make good progress early in the course because their needs are accurately identified through selection and auditing. Pre-course tasks are well-considered and careful checks are undertaken to ensure these are successfully completed. When addressing any gaps in subject knowledge, care is taken to ensure trainees also consider the implications for teaching.
37. In October, following several weeks in school, the partnership makes an accurate initial baseline assessment of each trainee's teaching potential so that they have challenging targets that can be used to assess their ongoing progress. These targets are adjusted in the light of evidence about actual progress and, as a result, trainees always have appropriately challenging longer-term targets. Targets are sensitively shared with trainees so as to further increase their motivation to improve rapidly. A particularly effective aspect of the partnership's approach to monitoring trainees' progress is the weekly assessment of their teaching that is passed to programme and subject leaders. This allows exceptionally swift interventions so that any problems are almost always 'nipped in the bud'. In order to further enhance the efficiency of its monitoring, the partnership is currently piloting web-based approaches.
38. The good progress made by most trainees is due to the good quality of the training and the consistency across the partnership of schools. Trainees receive feedback that makes clear the strengths and weaknesses following lesson observations. Mentors encourage trainees to critically reflect on their experiences. The university requirement to provide weekly feedback ensures trainees are formally observed regularly. Feedback following lesson observations usually includes clear summative judgements and perceptive comments of what went well and what needs to be improved. Trainees are generally set clear short-term targets, although at times these can be too generalised to link to trainees' longer-term targets. Trainees receive considerable informal advice which they value greatly. Trainees also value their regular sessions with their subject tutors because they provide an appropriate mix of longer and short-term targets that complement those set in schools; they sometimes 'sharpen up' these targets. Good use is made of university and school-based resources to prepare trainees for teaching.
39. The final school placement is of an appropriate length and gives trainees a more realistic view of teaching. However, it is a long placement and the university recognises that this period needs to include further opportunities for trainees to meet and reflect on their experiences. There are missed opportunities for

trainees to learn from each others' good practice and to revisit concepts introduced earlier in the course.

40. Trainees take good responsibility for their own professional development, with many demonstrating an ability to critically reflect on their teaching. However, the partnership has recognised the need to provide further opportunities for trainees to critically reflect on their experiences during the second placement to identify how they can attain at the highest possible level. At times trainees do not reflect sufficiently on how their teaching impacts on learning, often when this is not modelled well for them by their mentors in the feedback they give.
41. The demography of the region is such that trainees have limited opportunities to teach a diverse range of learners from different ethnic backgrounds. However, most trainees have the opportunity to experience schools with socially contrasting intakes. The well-established 'diversity day' successfully highlights important issues, many of which are followed up later, particularly through an alternative placement that takes place near the end of the course. Although schools provide opportunities for trainees to consider the needs of students who speak English as an additional language, broader issues related to diversity receive relatively little attention in schools. Mentors often do not support trainees in promoting equality and diversity through their teaching.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality

Grade:2

42. The provider has a good capacity to secure and sustain further improvement. The progress trainees make has accelerated as a result of the improvements that have been made against all of the points for action and recommendations in the previous inspection report. Improvements have been made to recruitment and selection, training and assessment and in ensuring consistently high quality across the partnership; in the main, training is now consistently of good quality. There are clear signs of improvement in trainees' successful completion and attainment; retention rates are very high. Almost all trainees secure employment. However, at the time of the inspection, the full benefits and impact of the improvements made on trainees' final attainment had yet to be realised.
43. The partnership has done particularly well in improving the effectiveness of the monitoring of trainees' progress and applying this consistently across its settings. The improvements to the monitoring of trainees' progress against individual expectations have led to much greater consistency in trainees' making at least the expected progress. Roles and responsibilities have been clarified and the university has taken effective steps to enhance the quality assurance procedures, largely through joint observations and by ensuring the involvement of the school's professional tutors. Current trainees in all subjects are making more rapid progress as a result of these improvements.

44. Although mentor training has improved and has led to improved consistency across the partnership, there is more to do to ensure that all trainees can make even better progress. Despite improvements in the quality of target setting, a minority of targets continue to lack precision so trainees are not always clear about how they can improve. The partnership recognises that further improvement could result through making available to mentors more detailed criteria related to particular aspects of teaching, such as assessment and differentiation to meet the needs of all learners.
45. The provider's self-evaluation and improvement planning has noticeable strengths. The current improvement plan is focused well on achieving better outcomes for trainees and uses the analysis of data to set precise targets for improvements in these outcomes. The plan is appropriately based on actions identified at the last inspection in addition to issues that the partnership had identified through its own monitoring and evaluation. Rigorous arrangements have been made to check the progress being made in implementing agreed actions. Suitable account is taken of data related to recruitment, trainees' progress, successful completion and attainment. Each subject has their own improvement plan in order to fully involve all leaders and to sharpen further the targets for improvement. The active involvement of partners in schools and effective communication has ensured that the priorities for improvement are understood across the partnership. Internal and external moderation guarantees the accuracy of the assessment of trainees, in addition to providing further insights into the effectiveness of the partnership.
46. Partnership leaders have taken effective steps to gather more regular feedback on trainees' satisfaction with their experiences. The recently introduced role of NQT leader also provides good evidence of how well trainees are prepared for teaching to inform self-evaluation. Centre-based, and to a lesser extent school-based, training are being amended in response to the feedback from trainees and schools. This feedback enhances the partnership's ability to evaluate its effectiveness and the impact of changes made to the provision. The changes made to training are accelerating the progress trainees make. Trainees' progress, recruitment and applications data is analysed in terms of gender, ethnicity and disability so that any information can be identified to inform on the impact of the partnerships approach to ensuring equality. Where appropriate, changes are made to training in response to this. The analysis also informs improvement planning.
47. The university ensures that training is kept up-to-date, in part through the links that exist with a range of other providers of initial teacher education and with research companies and with various subject associations. The nature of the partnership and the close involvement of schools in planning and delivery mean that the subject and the professional development programmes are highly relevant. In a few subjects, the university is having a stronger influence on mentors and professional tutors in schools because it is developing a reputation for being at the forefront of development, for example, in developing the place of computing and programming in ICT.

Initial teacher education for the further education system

Context

48. The university works in partnership with five further education colleges to provide initial teacher education for teachers and trainers in the post-compulsory sector. Two of the partners are joint ventures with the university; the remaining three are franchise arrangements. Courses lead to the Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTLLS), and meet all statutory requirements. Nearly all trainees are in-service and study part-time over two years. One of the partners has introduced a full-time pre-service course that has recruited a small number of trainees. Additionally, the university offers a specialist Skills for Life DTLLS course for teachers of literacy, numeracy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), which attracts a small cohort each year. At the time of inspection, around 220 trainees were taking the generic DTLLS course, with eight on the specialist route. Most trainees are employed by the partner institutions, with around a quarter employed by external organisations.

Key strengths

49. The key strengths are:

- the good quality training sessions, and in particular the effectiveness of the training in encouraging trainees to reflect on their previous teaching experience and experiment with new and sometimes innovative approaches
- many aspects of the specialist Skills for Life programme, including trainees' skill at encouraging their learners to become autonomous, independent learners, and the effectiveness with which trainees' progress is monitored
- the good progress made by many trainees from their starting points, both in respect of their teaching skills and their academic work
- well-designed assignments that are effective in enabling trainees from diverse starting points and working contexts to reflect on their skills and apply theoretical work to their teaching practice
- in some partners, the higher profile given to the teacher training provision by its integration into college-wide arrangements for improving teaching and learning and promoting continuing professional development.

Required actions

50. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment further, the provider must:

- implement agreed partnership-wide measures to gauge trainees' progress and attainment. It must ensure that all partners use data from a range of sources both to make secure judgements on individual trainees' progress and to enable cohort analysis at a whole partnership level

- ensure that all trainees have mentors who have the appropriate expertise and devote sufficient time to support the development of trainees' subject-specific pedagogy.
51. In order to accelerate the progress made in improving the quality of provision across the partnership, the provider must:
- take decisive action to secure effective leadership of the partnership by the university, including the implementation of more effective quality assurance across the partnership to tackle the remaining inconsistencies in trainees' experiences
 - ensure that all partners contribute to insightful self-evaluation, informed by comprehensive data, and that consequent action planning is a shared enterprise.

Recommendations

52. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the provider should:
- improve the communication between mentors and teacher trainers so that there is a shared understanding of how to improve trainees' progress
 - improve further trainees' understanding of how to apply their learning about the promotion of equality and diversity in their classroom practice, by ensuring that tutors and mentors raise trainees' awareness of these issues in their discussions with trainees.
53. In order to raise the profile of the university with trainees, and to secure greater consistency across the partnership, the university should:
- take steps to encourage trainees to see themselves as members of a university community as well as college-based trainees, by increasing their engagement with the university.

Overall effectiveness

Grade:3

54. The overall effectiveness of the partnership in securing high quality outcomes for trainees is satisfactory. Trainees' outcomes have improved since the last inspection, both in respect of successful completion rates and in trainees' progress as teachers. Overall, however, progress in securing improvements has been insufficiently swift. Several of the required actions and recommendations from the last inspection have yet to be fully resolved. Although there are indications of increasing urgency in tackling some long-standing weaknesses, significant uncertainty remains about the future of the partnership in respect of both its strategic direction and its operational management. As at the last inspection, it remains the case that the quality of provision and the outcomes for trainees are stronger on the small specialist Skills for Life provision than on the generic DTLLS provision.

55. The number of non-completions has fallen so that the proportion of trainees who successfully complete the course successfully has improved recently from a low base. A number of trainees leave the course before completion due to changes in their working arrangements. However, the partnership does not do enough to ascertain a detailed understanding of the reasons for non-completion across the partners. Although there are variations in the rate of successful completions between different parts of the partnership, these fluctuate from year to year and do not show a consistent pattern.
56. Inspectors found that the partnership's judgements on trainees' overall attainment were broadly accurate, although in a small minority of cases partners' views of trainees' progress and attainment were slightly more generous than inspectors'. Most trainees are making good progress in improving their teaching practice. Many trainees show a refreshing willingness to try out different teaching strategies, and experiment with a range of techniques informed by their training. Trainees on the specialist Skills for Life programme are effective in encouraging their learners to become autonomous, independent learners. More mature trainees often begin the course with preconceived ideas about the constituents of effective teaching, but respond well to new ideas and adapt their practice accordingly. A minority of trainees show real creativity; for example, in the way they make imaginative and innovative use of new technologies to engage their students. Trainees are quite adept at recognising the varying levels of abilities of their students and doing what they can to devise tasks and ask questions that take these into account. Most trainees are making good progress in recognising the importance of assessment in promoting effective learning, and are implementing a variety of assessment techniques with their groups.
57. Trainees' written work shows that most are making good progress, particularly those with modest prior academic attainment. Assignments are appropriately challenging, and encourage trainees to access a wide range of resources, including contemporary academic work. Trainees produce much good work, and feedback from their tutors is generally good; although in a minority of cases, tutors do not do enough to point out inaccuracies in trainees' punctuation and grammar. During the programme, many trainees become convinced of the relevance of theory to their practice, and can talk about the influence of their studies on their practice; although others find this more of a challenge, and rely too much on a narrow range of standard texts and ideas.
58. The partnership has not made enough progress in establishing secure and consistently implemented mechanisms to measure trainees' progress from their starting points. Since the last inspection, work has been done to seek agreement on how best to measure progress and attainment, and all centres are now using the appropriate professional standards to some extent to make judgements on trainees by the end of their training. However, the monitoring of trainees' progress throughout their training remains a key area for improvement. Practice varies between centres, and there is no evidence of a systematic, partnership-wide agreement on how best to use assessment, lesson observations, trainees' own assessment of their progress informed by their personal development plans, and other evidence, to judge progress. As a consequence, the partnership does not have reliable data to analyse trainees' progress by centre or cohort with any

degree of sophistication. Trainees on the specialist Skills for Life programme benefit from more rigorous monitoring of their progress than those on the generic course.

59. Recruitment and selection arrangements are satisfactory. In response to disappointing success rates for previous cohorts, progress has been made in agreeing and implementing recruitment processes and selection criteria across the partnership to reduce the likelihood of early withdrawal. Initial interviews and diagnostic assessment are more rigorous than previously, and more attention is being paid to the security of trainees' employment. However, current data still show a significant number of withdrawals in some parts of the partnership. The partnership attracts trainees from a wide range of external organisations. Nevertheless, there is no partnership-wide recruitment or marketing strategy designed to attract external candidates, particularly those from under-represented groups, through the university's brand. The partnership does not currently track carefully the destinations of completers; for example, partnership-wide data are not collected on the proportion of trainees who go on to achieve the full teaching qualification.
60. Training and assessment are satisfactory overall. Trainees report that the quality of their training sessions is good, and inspection evidence concurs with this view. Trainees enjoy their sessions, and think that most of their tutors model good practice, although those who work full-time report that they find the long sessions challenging at the end of a working day. Trainees value highly the opportunity to share ideas and experiences with one another, appreciating both the wide range of contexts that they teach in and the widely differing personal biographies of their peers. Trainees who do not work in colleges report that tutors do their best to ensure that the training is applicable to them as well as to college-based trainees. The training is well organised. Module assignments are a strength: they are particularly effective in providing the flexibility for trainees from different backgrounds, working in different contexts, to apply their knowledge and understanding productively.
61. Mentoring has improved since the last inspection, but weaknesses remain. Many trainees benefit from excellent mentor support that helps them to improve their subject teaching and encourages their self-reflection. However, a significant minority of trainees find that their mentors struggle to devote sufficient time to support them. In some instances, mentors do not fully recognise their role in supporting trainees to develop their subject specialism's rather than their generic teaching skills. A significant minority of mentors do not attend the training that is offered. The outcomes of discussions between mentors and trainees are often not recorded or, where they are, they are not sufficiently focused on actions that will help trainees to improve. Communications between mentors and teacher trainers is sometimes weak. Trainees' personal development plans are sometimes completed irregularly and are often not sufficiently informed by three-way communications between the trainee, the mentor and the trainees' tutor. Too often, helpful insights from lesson observations are not followed up because there is no clear link between findings from observations and the targets on trainees' personal development plans. Too many trainees see their

personal development plans as a bureaucratic requirement of the course rather than as a valuable tool for self-improvement.

62. The partnership's use of available resources is satisfactory. Teacher trainers are well qualified and well informed about developments in the sector. In some of the partner colleges, resources have been enhanced because teacher training has been integrated into the college's arrangements for improving the quality of teaching and learning and providing continuing professional development for teachers. Through the partnership-wide Discipline Network Group, the sharing of good practice and resources has improved. Trainees increasingly benefit from access to useful resources on college virtual learning environments (VLE), and a minority of trainees make good use of the university's VLE, including access to e-books. Most trainees have access to high quality new technologies to use in their teaching. Very few trainees have visited the university's main campus to make use of the resources available there, although it is recognised that the university also has campuses in Peterborough and Cambridge. However, in general, trainees do not see the benefit of being university students, and identify with the college they are based at rather than the university; this applies both to those in the franchise colleges and those in the joint venture colleges. The college libraries are well stocked with appropriate texts.
63. The quality of provision across the partnership is satisfactory. Significant efforts have been made, particularly recently, to iron out the variations in trainees' experience between the partners, and these have met with some success. Nevertheless, it remains the case that quality improvement activities have not yet succeeded in forging a partnership in which there is a consistent approach to key issues such as tracking trainees' progress, or a shared understanding of exactly what needs to be done to improve trainees' outcomes further.
64. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Issues of inclusion, equality and diversity are firmly embedded in the training programme, and many trainees demonstrate a sound understanding of the relevant concepts. However, the partnership does not do enough to evaluate how this understanding translates into trainees' practice. Notes from lesson observations, and from trainees' self-reflections and personal development plans, reveal little discussion or identification of the impact of these elements of the training on trainees' actual classroom practice. As the partnership recognises, its evaluation of data on progress and attainment by different groups of trainees is at a relatively early stage.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality

Grade:3

65. The partnership has satisfactory capacity to promote high quality outcomes for trainees and to take the actions required to secure improvements. Self-evaluation is improving: there is a recognition within parts of the partnership of the priority areas for improvement, and plans are being developed to tackle these. However, actions to improve the provision arising from self-evaluation over the last two years have not had sufficient impact. Partner institutions have not been sufficiently involved in the overall self-evaluation. As a consequence, the considerable expertise in self-assessment located within the colleges has not been used to assist in developing a cogent critique of the overall quality of provision across the partnership. Partnership-wide self-evaluation recognises many of the challenges that need to be tackled, but the accompanying action plan focuses more on a detailed list of things to do rather than setting out a clear, prioritised agenda for improvement. Monitoring of the action plan indicates an overly optimistic view of what has been achieved. Although the use of data to inform planning is improving, the partnership has struggled to collect reliable data on straightforward measures such as success rates, and has made insufficient progress in using data on trainees' progress and attainment effectively to plan for improvements in trainees' outcomes. Trainees' views, although sought and often responded to at a local level and through module evaluations, are not used effectively in self-evaluation.
66. Increasingly, elements of good practice are being disseminated through Discipline Network Group meetings. These have the potential to bring about more sustained and consistent improvement. Nevertheless, discussions between partners around key issues have not yet brought about consistent approaches to some key aspects of the programme. Quality assurance visits by the university to the partners over the last year have yielded much valuable information, but action points arising from these remain fragmented and partner-specific in many cases. As a consequence, they have not led to the formulation of incisive actions to iron out inconsistencies in the quality of provision at a whole partnership level.
67. The partnership is well informed about key developments in teacher training in the sector, and strategically much thought is given to how to respond to changes in the teacher training landscape. However, these thoughts are not always shared throughout the partnership. Good progress is being made at an operational level in preparing for changes in the next academic year. Those responsible for leading different parts of the partnership are involved appropriately in a wide range of initiatives, and use their knowledge to benefit trainees. However, the absence of a partnership-wide strategy for recruitment means that there is no coherent, shared approach across the partnership to target specific groups of potential trainees.

68. Leadership of the partnership by the university is in a state of flux. Currently, formal leadership at the university is supplemented by a secondment from one of the partner colleges, initially to prepare for re-validation of the courses. The role of the secondee has been expanded recently to drive forward agreed actions to improve consistency across the partnership. These arrangements have the potential to bring about the desired improvements and lead to better outcomes for trainees, and at the time of inspection evidence emerged that indicated a secure grasp of the key issues to resolve. This devolved model of operational management leaves the university with the responsibility for strategy and quality assurance. However, although the university recognises its continuing role in quality assurance of the programme, it does not currently have the specialist capacity to fulfil the role at the level of detail needed. In consequence it is unable to identify the extent to which partners have resolved the issues raised by inspection findings and internal self-evaluation.

Annex: Partnership colleges

The partnership includes the following colleges:

University Centre, West Anglia (College of West Anglia)

University Centre, Peterborough (Peterborough Regional College)

Epping Forest College

Chelmsford College

South East Essex Sixth Form College (Seevic)

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

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

Capacity to improve further and/or sustain high quality

		Primary	Secondary	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	2	3
How effectively does the management at all levels assess performance in order to improve or sustain high quality?		2	2	3
How well does the leadership at all levels anticipate change, and prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives?		2	2	3
How effectively does the provider plan and take action for improvement?		2	2	3

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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