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Mr Ian Billyard  
Principal  
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Dear Mr Billyard

**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 Diploma in teaching in the lifelong learning sector (DTLLS) provision between 30 April and 4 May 2012 and for the information which they 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**

Success rates on the DTLLS course decreased last year compared with the previous year, but remain high. Not all trainees achieve intermediate level qualifications in literacy and numeracy before the end of their course. Male trainees outnumber female trainees considerably, but there is no significant difference between their success rates. Similarly, success rates by trainees with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and by those from minority ethnic backgrounds are close to the success rates of other trainees. Older trainees are slightly less successful than younger trainees. Many former trainees continue their employment with the college on



completion of the course. The proportion of former trainees who have gained QTLS status is low.

The course raises trainees' awareness of equality and diversity, differentiation, minimum core, learners with literacy and numeracy needs, and learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It encourages trainees to experiment with alternative teaching and learning methods to meet different learners' needs. Trainees are less aware of 14-19 curriculum developments. Their understanding of teaching and learning in the wide range of different settings in the diverse lifelong learning sector is less well developed. Although staff employed by the college have generic mentors, trainees do not have subject-specific teacher-training mentors. Although the course improves trainees' understanding of how to address learners' disruptive behaviour, their ability to manage this in lessons is variable. Whilst many trainees teach a wide range of levels, learners and qualifications, others have a narrow teaching practice experience.

The provision helps trainees to become more self-reliant and to improve their communication skills. Most trainees make good progress with their academic writing and self-reflection skills. Trainees are very committed and are very willing to learn and to progress. They plan their lessons thoroughly and focus on learning and their learners' needs. They enjoy a good and mutually respectful rapport with most of their learners and provide them with effective support. Trainees have good subject knowledge and demonstrate practical techniques well. In the less effective lessons, the rate of learning is slow and activities last too long and lack variety. Consequently learners lose interest and become disruptive. Some trainees' use of directed questioning to maintain learners' attention and involvement is underdeveloped.

### **The key strengths are:**

- high success rates
- trainees' extensive knowledge of their subject areas and experience of working in industry which they use very effectively to make their lessons more interesting to their learners
- good marking of, and feedback on, trainees' assignments which enables them to improve their academic writing
- very effective double marking and internal verification which advises assessors appropriately of the improvements required and encourages their consideration of wider issues
- good quality assurance procedures, including the use of trainees' views, enable staff to identify areas for improvement and to take action to resolve them
- good collaboration with an external company to widen the provision of initial teacher education for the further education sector



- very good coverage of inclusion, equality and diversity, bullying, harassment and unlawful discrimination throughout the course.

**The key areas for development are:**

- increase the frequency of lesson observations by trainers, so that trainees know their main areas for development from an early stage and take prompt action to improve their teaching and learning
- introduce moderation of trainers' lesson observations of trainees to ensure standardisation of judgements
- improve the provision and monitoring of subject-specialist mentoring so that trainees are enabled to teach their subject areas more effectively
- increase the promotion of the provision to those groups and communities under represented in teacher education courses and in the lifelong learning sector
- increase the rigour of the systems to determine that all trainees have current checks on their suitability to work with young people and vulnerable adults
- provide a more realistic evaluation of the overall effectiveness and capacity to improve of the provision by assessing its qualities against the appropriate framework.

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 inspection team for your next inspection.

Yours sincerely

**Shaun Dillon**

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

