

Manchester Metropolitan 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. The university is one of the largest providers of initial teacher training in the country. The scope of this inspection was limited to teacher training in the post-compulsory sector. This was judged satisfactory at the multi-phase inspection of the university's initial teacher education in May 2011.
4. The university manages the provision of teacher training in the post-compulsory sector from its Crewe campus and works in partnership with four further education colleges. A one-year full-time programme at Crewe offers initial training for potential teachers and trainers in further education (FE). Two-year part-time programmes, based in the colleges, provide qualifications for those already working in the sector. Bridging units enable increasing numbers of trainees to progress to the second year of the programme from national awarding body qualifications delivered at the colleges. Courses lead to the Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTLLS). They meet

statutory requirements and are endorsed by Standards Verification UK. At the time of the inspection 147 trainees were following these courses, of whom 2% were from minority ethnic backgrounds and 66% were female.

Initial teacher education for the further education system

Key strengths

5. The key strengths are:

- the good progress made by trainees who benefit from the constructive and informative feedback they receive from their tutors and mentors following lesson observations
- highly effective training which reflects good practice and enables trainees to apply the theories they have learned to the different teaching contexts in which they work
- a good range of resources used by trainers and trainees to enhance their teaching and promote learning by incorporating suitable and sometimes innovative stimulus material in their lessons
- very good quality provision on the pre-service programme
- effective identification by the partnership of the key areas for improvement since the previous inspection.

Required actions

6. In order to improve the quality of provision, the provider must:

- further improve the monitoring of mentoring, target setting and assessment and grading in partner colleges to ensure quality across the partnership
- ensure that areas for improvement in trainee practice, which are identified through mentoring, lesson observation and tutorials, are brought together more coherently so that trainees can better identify their areas for improvement.

7. In order to increase its capacity to improve, the provider should:

- further improve the accuracy of data, especially over the two-year programmes, to better inform the evaluation of performance across the partnership and the targeting of actions for improvement
- set more ambitious improvement targets with partner colleges to elicit a more timely response to the actions identified from self-evaluation and in the previous inspection report
- improve implementation of the action plan to ensure greater consistency across partner colleges.

Recommendations

8. In order to increase success rates, the provider should:

- improve the quality and consistency of advice and guidance given to in-service trainees at recruitment so they are clear about the financial, academic

and professional practice requirements and so that the number of early leavers is reduced.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 3

9. The overall effectiveness of the partnership in securing high quality outcomes for trainees is satisfactory. The partnership self-assessed this to be good; however, the quality of provision in some partner colleges is not sufficiently high. Trainees make good progress and those completing attain well. Outcomes for trainees have improved since the previous inspection in 2011. A high proportion of trainees are on target to achieve good and outstanding grades in 2012, an improving picture for in-service provision. The progress of pre-service trainees has been high for three years. Success rates are high on the pre-service programme and on the one-year bridging programme designed for trainees who have previously completed the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) and Certificate to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (CTLLS) programme with a further education partner. However, retention and success rates on the two-year in-service programmes are poor and declining with wide variations between colleges. Overall, around one third of trainees on two-year programmes do not complete, although this is a declining and small proportion of provision. Most trainees have sufficient breadth of experience and others are provided with opportunities, through peer observation, to experience teaching in contexts other than their own; an improved situation from the previous inspection. Grading of trainees is at an early stage on in-service programmes and some anomalies in process exist between partner colleges, with a few instances of over-grading.
10. The quality of trainees' work is good. Most make good progress during the course, producing assignments of very high quality and teaching good or better lessons. They challenge and motivate their learners and display good skills in questioning techniques and classroom management. Most trainees reflect well on their practice, benefiting from useful and constructive feedback on assignments and observations. They receive good pastoral, specialist and academic support from tutors and mentors. Their progress is monitored each term and they know how well they are progressing. Trainees are highly motivated and have often undertaken more than the minimum required teaching practice, especially those on the pre-service programme. They are encouraged to share ideas and learn from their peers. They apply their subject knowledge well. A few make satisfactory progress and do not learn from development points. In partner colleges individual learning plans (ILPs) are variable in quality and are not always used effectively to drive improvement and provide a holistic view of trainees' progress. The onus is on the trainee to pull together action points from a wide range of sources and set and monitor targets; pre-service trainees and some in-service trainees do this successfully. A few trainees do not focus sufficiently within their teaching on their students' learning.
11. Recruitment and selection arrangements are satisfactory overall, rather than good as judged through self-assessment. The recruitment process on the pre-

service programme is especially rigorous and retention and success rates are high. Since the previous inspection, initial assessment in core skills has been introduced on the pre-service programme as well as general study skills and the development of subject specialist knowledge. Trainees on these programmes successfully set themselves initial targets for improvement which are reviewed by tutors early in the course. The successful bridging course enables learners with a broader range of qualifications to progress to the second year of the DTLLS provision. The partnership does not, however, promote its DTLLS provision specifically to under-represented groups; targets for the recruitment of such groups are not agreed with partner colleges. As at the previous inspection, the interview process is good. Interviewers use selection criteria well to ensure equality of opportunity. The newly introduced analysis of data for different groups of trainees does not identify any areas of under-achievement. Retention is poor on the two-year in-service programme, especially in one partner college. While many trainees who discontinue do so for valid reasons, such as redundancy, health or re-location, some have been affected by insufficiently clear guidance, especially on financial and skills requirements.

12. Training and assessment have improved since the previous inspection and are good. Training sessions are very good: trainers model best practice, which trainees reflect in their own teaching. Trainees make very good links between theory and practice, supported by comprehensive observation of the teaching and learning process. Trainees on the pre-service programme talk of the benefits of sessions on the theories of teaching and learning and also of the preparatory micro-teaching sessions. Tutor feedback and support are consistently good across the partnership and trainees express high levels of satisfaction with their tutors. Many trainees benefit from very high levels of mentor support, although, as at the previous inspection, a few mentors have not been trained.
13. Trainees value the observation of teaching and learning and can identify how constructive and informative feedback received from their tutors and mentors following lesson observations leads to improvement in their practice. However, not all observers follow up comments made following earlier observations, especially mentors' consideration of tutors' comments. Where mentors and tutors have undertaken a joint observation, this has been highly valued by the mentor, guiding them in the criteria for grading and feedback. Trainees also speak highly of this system. Some mentors have not received this support and the quality assurance of feedback following lesson observations is under-developed. The moderation of assessment decisions on assignments is fit for purpose overall and is especially thorough on the pre-service programme.
14. The ILP process works well on the pre-service programme where trainees are highly reflective, immersed in the programme and setting themselves challenging targets which they frequently review. However, the quality of ILPs varies in partner colleges and they are not always used effectively to drive improvement or provide a holistic overview of trainees' progress. Some colleges have developed supplementary tutorial records which trainees find helpful, although this has resulted in a confusing array of targets.

15. The use of resources is good. A good range of resources is used by trainers and trainees, to enhance their teaching and promote learning by incorporating suitable and sometimes innovative stimulus material in their lessons. Trainees have access to high quality physical resources and a wide range of library and learning resources, including the university and each partner college VLE; however, some in-service trainees do not use either VLE. Following the previous inspection, the university allocated additional administrative and tutor support time to the programme. The involvement of members of the secondary education team as link tutors contributes to the sharing of good practice. Trainees on the pre-service programme are invited to join relevant training sessions on the secondary programme.
16. The quality of provision across the partnership is satisfactory. Trainees on some programmes such as the pre-service programme benefit from very high quality provision. However, as identified in self-assessment, there is too much variation in quality across partner colleges. Trainees' success rates are low on the two-year in-service programme and there are too few resources to support mentors and team leaders in some partner colleges. Some mentors have no time allocation for this role and have a number of mentees, a situation which does not recognise the importance of the role in both support and assessment. In some colleges, the implementation of the quality-improvement plan is too slow because of time pressures within the course team. Variations in the training of mentors, the quality assurance of mentoring and the incidence of joint observation of mentors by tutors, have impacted negatively on a few trainees and are especially critical for external candidates. The moderation of assessment grades and feedback, both on assignments and observations, is of variable quality across the partnership, despite some very strong practice on the pre-service programme and in some partner colleges. The accuracy of grading of trainees varies between colleges.
17. The promotion of equality and diversity has improved since the previous inspection and is good. Trainees of all ages and backgrounds make good progress, with female trainees making very good progress. Since inspection in 2011, a number of changes have been introduced to raise the profile of equality and diversity with trainees, especially through planning documents and feedback after observations. Support for trainees' well-being is good, enabling trainees with a range of difficulties and disabilities to make progress on the programme. For example, adjustments have been made to teaching methods and module criteria to enable one trainee, with a specific need, to gain access to the programme and make progress whilst working remotely. Most trainees are prepared well to teach in a diverse society and are able to articulate in detail what such work will entail. However, a few trainees do not have sufficient exposure to working with learners with learning difficulties and disabilities. Although trainees have been made aware of appropriate techniques to apply, a few are not yet confident to promote equality and diversity and miss opportunities to do so.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality

Grade: 3

18. The partnership has a satisfactory capacity to secure improvements. The partnership self assessed this to be good. However, the rate of improvement across partner colleges has not been sufficient. The evaluation of performance in order to improve the quality of provision, by managers at all levels, is good. Following the previous inspection, the university effectively identified key areas for improvement and action necessary to address them, leading to a clear action plan for implementation. A number of new processes have combined this academic year to improve the identification of issues, including three-point reviews of progress of learners and of the post-inspection action plan, the link tutor role and a greater emphasis on the learner's voice. These processes have identified a number of key issues also identified by inspectors. The university knows the quality of most aspects of provision across the partnership well. The university has involved senior managers from all partner providers in self-assessment this academic year, adding rigour to the process, although it is too early to see an impact from this. The self-evaluation process adopted in autumn 2011 built on practice from across the university and required greater use of performance data. However, the inaccuracy of data on two-year programmes has limited the accuracy of both the self-evaluation and the three-point in-year review, by overstating some success rates. This has limited the ability of the university to target its resource accurately.
19. As part of a recent university initiative in all faculties, even greater use is made of learners' feedback to evaluate performance. Over the past few months, this has been collected systematically on teacher education programmes and benchmarking analysis has been undertaken, for each course and partner. This is still at an early stage of development and has not yet had an impact on the variable quality across the partnership.
20. The effectiveness of the partnership in planning and taking action for improvement is satisfactory, not good as the partnership self-assessed. Action planning has improved: the post inspection action plan identifies an appropriate range of actions which, if fully implemented, would bring about improvement and reduce inconsistencies across the partnership. The self-evaluation report is less descriptive than previously, being based on a range of data; however, not all data are accurate. Implementation of a number of actions is slow in some partner colleges, resulting in satisfactory quality across the partnership. In some colleges slow progress has been made on required actions from the previous inspection, for example, on the training of mentors, monitoring the quality of mentoring, and standardising lesson observations. Slow progress has been made on target setting, also a required action from the last inspection. Progress on this issue has not been monitored sufficiently across the partnership. The university has increased the number of link tutors who work individually with each college to improve implementation. While valued by colleges, this support is not closely targeted and it is too early to see an impact from this aspect of the link tutor role. Following a mid-year review of progress on the post-inspection action plan,

when gaps in implementation were apparent, agreed new targets were not sufficiently challenging.

21. The partnership's capacity to anticipate change and prepare for, and respond to, national and local initiatives is satisfactory, not good as at the previous inspection. Managers' responses to national and local initiatives are also satisfactory. They have incorporated a range of national initiatives and priorities, such as 14 to 19 developments, safeguarding, key and basic skills, behaviour management and working with learners with learning difficulties and disabilities within the programme, and most trainees are confident on these issues: key and basic skills have a particularly high profile in lesson planning documentation. Developmental practice has improved provision for pre-service trainees, who benefit from tutors undertaking higher qualifications and the opportunity to attend secondary education sessions at the university. An annual event celebrating achievement enables trainees from across the partnership to share good practice on a range of issues, including national initiatives. On in-service programmes trainees are given too much scope to focus on issues of current interest to them in learning and skills and not necessarily on those key policy areas which have most impact on the sector.
22. Managers across the partnership are aware of challenges and initiatives which, especially since the change in government, will impact on provision. In April of this year, in anticipation of future changes, the university gave college partners notice to terminate the programme: no new trainees will be recruited to any part of the programme in September 2012. At this stage it is unclear what arrangements colleges will make for current or prospective trainees. Some second year groups may be unviable in individual colleges without the recruitment of trainees from college PTLLS and CTLLS programmes through the bridging programme. The university has given an undertaking to ensure that all current trainees have the opportunity to complete their programme. The team has written a new programme recently to embrace changes in the sector, including dealing with change, sustainability, e-learning and e-assessment, innovation and creativity. This programme will not now be implemented because of the closure of the course. This development work has not enriched the current programme significantly enough to benefit the final cohort of trainees. There has been little other joint development work or continuous professional development in this academic year beyond that required by the post-inspection action plan.

Annex: Partnership colleges

The partnership includes the following colleges:

Macclesfield College
Mid-Cheshire College
South Cheshire College
Wirral Metropolitan 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?		3
Trainees' attainment	How well do trainees attain?	2
Factors contributing to trainees' attainment	To what extent do recruitment / selection arrangements support high quality outcomes?	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
	To what extent are available resources used effectively and efficiently?	2
The quality of the provision	To what extent is the provision across the partnership of consistently high quality?	3
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?	3
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?	3
How effectively does the provider plan and take action for improvement?	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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