

UCL Institute of Education

UCL Institute of Education
University College London, 20 Bedford Way
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Inspection dates

22 to 25 May 2023

Inspection judgements

Early career framework (ECF) inspection

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of professional development and training

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

N/A

What is it like to be an early career teacher (ECT) at this lead provider?

Those in the early stages of their teaching career benefit from a carefully considered programme that identifies and responds swiftly to their emerging needs. The lead provider deftly uses feedback from ECTs to inform ongoing improvement. Delivery partners and the lead provider work extremely well together to refine generic principles and practice into the particular requirements of the phases and subjects that ECTs teach.

Leaders at UCL Institute of Education (UCL IOE) draw on a deep resource of academic expertise to design a programme that is rich in pertinent research. ECTs value the expert advice that they receive from highly trained mentors who enable them to intelligently apply research into their evolving practice, including how to manage pupils' behaviour.

ECTs learn from a variety of resources how to adapt their teaching to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. In the primary programme, ECTs learn about the importance of systematic synthetic phonics and its role in teaching early reading.

The lead provider ensures that trainees are supported by extremely effective communication at all levels. While expectations are high, lead providers are responsive to the workload of ECTs, balancing support for their well-being with strategies to build resilience.

Programme leaders use the research strengths of the university to foreground the importance of reflective practice. The distinctive inquiry-led approach of the second year of

the programme enables ECTs to revisit core principles in immersive ways. ECTs develop a deep understanding of the teachers' standards, while building strong conceptual frameworks to inform their future professional practice.

Information about this lead provider

- There are 11,281 ECTs participating in the lead provider's ECT programme. Of these, 5,591 are in their first year of the ECF programme and 5,690 are in their second year.
- UCL IOE works with 21 delivery partners across the country.
- Of the 21 delivery partners, 19 are teaching school hubs and two are city-wide partnerships.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out by six of His Majesty's Inspectors. The inspection included a mixture of in-person meetings with lead provider representatives and online meetings with those responsible for governance. The inspection team carried out on-site visits and remote visits to delivery partners.
- Inspectors met with the lead provider's representatives, including the director for the ECF, the director for the UCL Centre for Educational Leadership, the director for professional development programmes and programme leaders for the ECF.
- The inspection team carried out eight on-site visits and two remote visits to delivery partners. Inspectors completed 10 focused reviews.
- Inspectors carried out focused reviews in primary and secondary programmes. For each focused review, inspectors met with delivery partner leaders and facilitators and discussed training with ECTs and mentors. Inspectors talked to headteachers and induction tutors. They looked at training materials and other documentation, including safeguarding information.
- The inspection team took into account 1,432 responses to Ofsted's online survey for ECTs, 1,145 responses from mentors, 501 responses from school leaders and 141 responses from delivery partner leaders.

What does the lead provider do well and what does it need to do better?

At the UCL IOE, leaders have designed an astute programme that enables ECTs to engage deeply with the knowledge and skills that sit behind the ECF. The programme has been co-designed through meaningful collaboration with delivery partners, who adjust the programme to fit the context in which ECTs work and the subjects and phases they teach. These 'licensed adaptations' enable delivery partners to develop scenarios and exemplar materials that bring particular relevance and meaning to the wider principles that ECTs learn. Leaders at UCL IOE show a clear purpose in combining their support for ECTs with a commitment to enhancing the wider teaching profession.

The lead provider meticulously audits the professional knowledge of ECTs. Facilitators use this to carefully attune the training and support that they receive. ECTs are grouped together in local clusters, giving increased relevance to the programme. The growing knowledge of ECTs is continually checked, enabling focused training and support to become increasingly bespoke over the two years of the programme.

Leaders at the UCL IOE take great care to ensure that delivery partners have the expertise and capacity to fulfil the ambitions of the programme. With equal importance, they check that partners share their vision for the attributes that ECTs should develop. The quality of training that ECTs receive, and the resources that they access to support their learning, are extremely strong.

Leaders across the partnership carry out assiduous quality assurance of the programme. There is regular and close communication between lead providers and delivery partners to check standards and explore improvement. This takes place in a highly productive and collaborative manner, with partners sharing and learning from one another. Partners show remarkable agility in responding to any areas that need further enhancement.

Mentors benefit from an extremely thorough training programme that makes the expectations for their role very clear. The lead provider's model of 'onside' and 'educative' mentoring means that ECTs benefit from non-judgmental discussion that promotes open reflection. Formative assessment is underpinned by six high-quality outcomes, providing an ambitious and shared understanding of what ECTs and mentors should encounter. ECTs are highly appreciative of mentors' abilities to customise training to support their progression.

ECTs develop increasing knowledge of how to apply the ECF to improve their practice. The inquiry model enables participants to revisit the framework in increasingly personalised ways. School leaders described the wider benefits of the programme for their schools, with the reflective practice of ECTs and their mentors becoming exemplars for the professional development of others.

The lead provider shows a clear commitment to promoting equality at all levels. ECTs have clear systems in place to report safeguarding concerns. Leaders across the programme make sure that the programme follows relevant legislation.

Leaders think considerably about how to manage the expectations that the ECF brings for those in the early stages of their careers. They manage training and resources thoughtfully, such as providing high-quality audio recordings so that ECTs can learn flexibly. If problems arise, leaders tackle them head on and find solutions in a sensitive and collaborative way.

Lead provider details

Unique reference number 2679886

Inspection number 10269634

This inspection was carried out by six His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) in accordance with the [early career framework \(ECF\) and national professional qualification \(NPQ\) framework and handbook](#).

The framework and handbook set out the statutory basis for ECF and NPQ inspections in England.

Lead provider programmes offered ECF and NPQ

Date of previous inspection N/A

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