SECONDARY INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING PARTNERSHIP BASED ON

UNIVERSITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON
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MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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A 1999/00 INSPECTION

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PREFACE

This secondary inspection was carried out in the academic year 1999/2000, the first year of a three-year programme of inspections which is to include all providers of secondary Initial Teacher Training (ITT) in England. It was based on the joint OFSTED/TTA *Framework for the Assessment of Quality and Standards in Initial Teacher Training* (the Framework), which was published in July 1998 (copies from the TTA on 0845 606 0323). These inspections focused on specific subjects rather than whole courses and each subject was assessed against the following cells from the Framework:

- T1 The quality of the training;
- T2 The accuracy and consistency of the assessment of trainees against the standards for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS);
- ST1 The trainees' subject knowledge and understanding in the secondary age-range;
- ST2 The trainees' planning, teaching and class management;
- ST3 The trainees' monitoring, assessment, recording, reporting and accountability.

The number of subjects inspected at individual providers in 1999/2000 ranged from one to seven, depending on the scale of the provision. The focus was mainly on the one-year Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) route to QTS, but a number of undergraduate courses were also inspected.

The inspections were longitudinal in nature, with four stages designed to build up an accurate understanding of each course over an academic year and, where appropriate, to allow for an evaluation of the impact of the action plan arising from the previous inspection. In stage one, subject specialist inspectors read documentation, the previous report and the associated action plan. In stage two, a new stage in the inspection process, they met with trainers and trainees in the autumn term to discuss trainees' starting points and needs and to assess how well the training was designed to meet those needs and the requirements of the standards for QTS. In stage three, they looked closely at the training process and the assessment of trainees' progress directly, through observation of training sessions, and indirectly through discussions with tutors, teachers and trainees, and by examining subject documentation, trainees' work and assessment profiles.

Stage four concentrated on the standards achieved by trainees close to the end of their final assessed teaching experience. Providers were asked to assess their trainees' teaching standards on the four-point grading scale set out in the Framework and inspectors verified these assessments by selecting and observing a sample of trainees teaching on their final period of assessed teaching experience, examining their teaching files and holding discussions with them and their mentors. This sample excluded trainees who were at risk of failure. The number of trainees in the sample varied according to the size of the subject group being inspected, but was never less than ten per cent of the cohort. Wider evidence was drawn from a scrutiny of the school experience files, record-keeping and profiles of an additional group of trainees. Moderation of inspectors' judgements in each of the five cells by subject and by provider was built into the inspection procedures. The grading scale, as set out in the Framework, is shown overleaf.

Where any cell was of poor quality and was therefore judged not to comply with the requirements of the Secretary of State's Circular 4/98, the subject will be inspected again. These re-inspections will also result in published reports.

Grading scale used for the secondary subject inspections 1999/2002

Complies with Secretary of	1	Very good
State's current criteria	2	Good
	3	Adequate
Does not comply with Secretary of State's current criteria	4	Poor quality

The expectation of the four grades is as follows:

- 1: Provision is consistently of very good quality, with several outstanding features;
- 2: Provision is consistently of good quality, with no significant weaknesses;
- 3: Provision complies with the Secretary of State's criteria, but requires significant improvement to ensure that trainees are enabled to reach a good standard of teaching;
- 4: Provision does not comply with the Secretary of State's criteria.

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INTRODUCTION

Background

- 1. The university of Wolverhampton in partnership with schools provides both primary and secondary courses of initial teacher training (ITT) through undergraduate and postgraduate routes. There is also substantial further and higher education ITT provision within the School of Education. The secondary ITT courses provide about 140 new teachers each year in six specialist subjects. All trained for the 11-18 age range.
- 2. The university also provides in-service training for teachers, including a recently introduced postgraduate certificate in the mentoring and induction of newly qualified teachers.

Recruitment and selection

- 3. The partnership involves schools fully in the selection of all teacher trainees. In most subjects recruitment targets are met and the university is engaged in a variety of strategies to increase recruitment to design and technology, mathematics and physical science. These strategies include the use of a web-site, open-evenings and initiatives aimed at increasing the number of ethnic minority candidates. First-choice applicants fill most places. Around 25 per cent of ITT trainees in their final year are from ethnic minorities.
- 4. Data on admission, completion rates and first destinations are centrally monitored, analysed and discussed in the annual course report.

Structure of secondary courses

- 5. The university offers three routes in secondary ITT: a two year BEd, a three year BA with QTS and a one year Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE).
- 6. The final undergraduate professional year and the PGCE are common to all routes. On the undergraduate courses trainees undertake subject specialist modules in year one and two. Prior to the professional year they undertake a short school placement as a bridge between their subject specialist training and the professional year. PGCE trainees and final year undergraduates experience teaching in two schools, undertaking serial and block placements in each. Subject enhancement and subject application training is provided in the professional year.

Partnership arrangements

7. A school partnership office supports the secondary partnership for which a university tutor has overall responsibility. Mentor briefings are undertaken before each school attachment. There is regular new mentor training, based in schools. Many secondary ITT mentors are enrolled on the university's postgraduate certificate in mentoring which offers study at masters' level. School mentors contribute to course planning and centre-based training. They have assisted with the development of assessment and monitoring procedures, subject and ICT audits, the "reader" for the general professional studies course and many of the school-based activities that trainees are required to undertake during their training.

Previous inspection

8. The PGCE course in modern foreign languages at the University of Wolverhampton was inspected in the academic year 1996/1997 and a report (190(L)/97/ITTSZ) was published in October 1997. The inspector found good provision in the admissions policy and procedures, and in the assessment of students' competences in relation to Circular 9/92 but found significant weaknesses in the quality of the training. He judged the students' subject knowledge to be good, but found significant weaknesses in their planning, teaching and classroom management, and in their assessment, recording and reporting.

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

9. At the time of stage four of the inspection, there were 13 trainees following the modern foreign languages PGCE course. The inspection resulted in judgements on five cells of the Framework. The grades obtained in each of the various cells were as follows:

	GRADE	
T1	THE QUALITY OF THE TRAINING	2
T2	1	
ST1	THE TRAINEES' SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING	2
ST2	THE TRAINEES' PLANNING, TEACHING AND CLASS MANAGEMENT	2
ST3	THE TRAINEES' MONITORING, ASSESSMENT, RECORDING, REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY	2

10. Four cells were judged to be good, and one cell was judged to be very good. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection in 1997. The quality of the training has improved from adequate to good, the assessment of trainees has improved from good to very good, and in cells ST2 and ST3, which were graded 3 in 1997, trainees are now achieving consistently good standards. These improvements are due to improved partnership between the university and schools, closer monitoring of trainees' achievement and the hard work of the subject tutor in successfully addressing action points arising from the previous report. There were no issues of compliance with the Secretary of State's criteria.

T1 THE QUALITY OF THE TRAINING

Course structure and content

11. Good progress has been made in responding to issues raised in the last report. Trainees have substantial and sustained periods of observing and teaching in two schools. Their experiences are carefully monitored and effective action taken to ensure that they have access to the full age and ability range. A positive development since the last inspection is that individual trainees are directed to make "compensatory" visits to partnership schools (in addition to their own attachment schools) to plug gaps in their experience of information and communications technology (ICT), post-16 (GNVQ, Advanced Level) and, for trainees placed in selective schools, teaching low ability pupils. Day release visits are organised to

sixth form colleges, and some partnership schools provide training sessions for the whole cohort on Advanced Level and GNVQ. Carefully chosen placements also enable trainees to teach both their foreign languages: two-thirds offer two foreign languages, all of these trainees teach them on their main placement, and most teach them on both placements.

- 12. ICT competence is audited at the outset of the course, generic training provided for trainees who need it, and some subject-specific ICT training is provided in the Autumn term. ICT access in schools is variable but trainees make compensatory visits if they cannot complete school-based tasks in their host schools.
- 13. The modern foreign languages course covers key issues and includes school-based activities to complement university-based work. All this is clearly described in booklets which enable trainees to understand their progression through the course. A useful addition to course content this year is a session on the national literacy strategy in primary schools, and the implications of this for teaching languages in Key Stage 3.

Roles and responsibilities

- 14. There have been two significant improvements since the last inspection. The very experienced university subject tutor no longer teaches elsewhere in the university and has increased time on the PGCE, and an enhanced quality assurance rôle. There is also greater use of "expert" mentors to contribute to training for the whole group in the university and in schools, and linked to this, more use made of visits to observe good teachers of lower ability or post-16 pupils.
- Documentation and meetings with mentors, make rôles and responsibilities clear. Mentor meetings have looked at consistency, post-16, ICT, issues related to the assessment and recording of pupils' work, and the assessment of trainees. This, together with regular visits from the course tutor, supported by two subject-specialist part-time tutors, has improved the consistency of trainees' experiences in schools. Trainees report, in general, good experiences in their placement schools.

Resources

- 16. The subject handbook lists activities and resources for use in directed time, for example as preparation for or follow-up to training sessions. All trainees are provided with copies of directed reading texts. Trainees' completion of school-based tasks is monitored by visiting university tutors and assessed at the end of each attachment: these tasks include evaluation of teaching and learning resources, including ICT.
- 17. Schools visited provide generally good access to resources for teaching modern foreign languages and trainees report no particular problems. Access to the use of ICT in schools is more variable, but trainees' experiences are monitored and, for example, use made of the second attachment to plug gaps, or trainees are directed to make compensatory visits to a Language College.

Auditing and improving subject knowledge

18. This is an improved aspect of the course. Trainees' written and oral command of their teaching language(s) is assessed at interview and audited throughout the year. School mentors monitor trainees' linguistic competence regularly and set and review targets throughout the first placement. Trainees complete school-based activities to enhance their language competence and cultural awareness. Their progress is reviewed by the subject tutor at the end of the first placement, and targets are set. All trainees also attend university-based language classes in French, German and Spanish. All trainees with a second

foreign language have been able to teach it in schools, and one trainee with poor undergraduate language results improved her spoken French and reached an adequate standard by the end of the course. Trainees maintain their language and cultural enhancement files well throughout the year.

19. All trainees complete a generic and subject-specific ICT audit at the beginning of the course and subsequently work at improving their ICT competences. School-based activities include ICT tasks, and these are monitored and assessed.

Training in how to teach modern foreign languages

- 20. All trainees have opportunities to observe and work with good teachers in their placement schools. In addition, they visit partnership schools as a group to observe teachers in action, for example teaching GNVQ. Trainees are also encouraged to visit other schools during serial and block placements to enable them to complete school-based activities. One very effective session involved paired observation of an experienced teacher working with lower ability pupils, followed by trainee discussion of observation findings and finally discussion with the teacher.
- 21. All training sessions observed exemplified at least good teaching, and one, taught by a partnership school teacher to the whole group of trainees on the topic of GNVQ, was very good, with excellent preparation, clear presentation and modelling of high level ICT skills. The trainees clearly gained much in knowledge and understanding from this session.
- As part of the university course, trainees observe videos of effective language teachers, and are shown how to integrate assessment into the planning process. The course tutor demonstrates how to introduce new language, and encourages trainees to plan on the basis on the Programme of Study and to identify learning outcomes and assessment opportunities. School-based activities follow on from university sessions, and teachers from partnership schools contribute to university sessions, for example, on classroom management or teaching pupils with special educational needs.
- 23. Trainees receive effective feedback from mentors on their teaching. Some mentors need to comment more on trainees' planning, in particular on the level of detail provided, and on trainees' coverage of the Programme of Study. Feedback on course tasks and assignments is helpful and is focused on trainees' acquisition of the standards.

Training in assessment

- 24. Expectations of trainees, and of mentors, with regard to assessment have been clarified. Workshop sessions with mentors have addressed the topic, trainees are expected to conduct school-based activities on assessment which are monitored, and mentors comment on this aspect of trainees' work throughout the course.
- 25. In addition, the university-based professional studies course provides trainees with a good overview, and assessment issues are considered alongside planning throughout the subject course. One university session, on using assessment to improve learning, made assessment principles very clear to trainees, identified some areas where they needed more guidance, and provided concrete models of how to profile pupils' performance.
- 26. Trainees' experiences of assessment are monitored throughout the course. Mentors show trainees how to correct pupils' work and generally give good guidance on assessment throughout the course. Some trainees make a slow start on assessment issues on their first placement, and a minority need more experience of assessing and recording in Key Stage 4 and post-16.

Coherence of the training

27. The action plan takes account not just of the previous inspection report points for consideration and action, but also of other issues raised, for example variation in the quality of teaching that trainees observe. Concerted action has been taken to address these points, facilitated by the subject tutor's enhanced quality assurance rôle. The response has been effective in improving the quality of training. In particular, the links between university-based and school-based training have been strengthened, with commonly agreed school-based activities and certain schools taking an enhanced training rôle. All training is firmly focused on providing opportunities for trainees to make progress in their teaching standards, including regular reference to general professional strands of the course. Monitoring of trainees' progress while in schools has improved.

Grade 2

Points for Consideration and Action

The partnership should consider how to:

- ensure that all mentors comment sufficiently on trainees' planning, and encourage trainees to cover the full range of the Programme of Study;
- ensure that all trainees make a good start on assessing and recording during their first school placement.

T2 THE ACCURACY AND CONSISTENCY OF THE ASSESSMENT OF TRAINEES AGAINST THE STANDARDS FOR QTS

Assessment procedures

- 28. The Record of Professional Development (RPD) is the main means of assessing trainees' progress towards achieving Circular 4/98 standards throughout the year. It is used by trainees and mentors in regular review meetings where trainees identify evidence which is verified by mentors, who then set further targets. Most elements of the RPD are generic but some elements reflect specific modern foreign language requirements. The RPD is an effective means of assessing trainees against the standards, and it also provides all the evidence required to enable accurate completion of the Career Entry Profile.
- 29. Trainees gather evidence of their progress towards the standards in log books which record all aspects of their experiences in schools, including their completion of school-based activities. There are also separate files for auditing and monitoring trainees' language and cultural enhancement, ICT and developing knowledge of 14-19 issues. Log books and files are regularly checked, and assessed.
- 30. In addition to the school-based activities, trainees complete two written subject assignments linked to their subject course and experience in schools, as well as a negotiated school-based investigation in the Summer term. These all contribute to developing and assessing trainees' standards in modern foreign languages. Overall, assessment procedures are thorough and an effective way of monitoring trainees' progress throughout the year, as well as assessing them against the standards for QTS.

Progress reviews and target-setting

- 31. The procedures for monitoring trainees' progress operate very well. While trainees are on school placements, they have weekly meetings with their mentors, who review their progress and set targets, for example for improving aspects of linguistic competence or trainees' standards in assessment. There is a clear focus on the standards and competent trainees are encouraged to continue to make progress. In isolated instances an inexperienced mentor needs more guidance on target-setting and review, but there are some excellent examples of mentors analysing trainees' performance carefully, setting challenging but achievable targets, and reviewing these in a systematic way.
- 32. Trainees' progress is also carefully monitored by part-time university subject tutors, and the subject course leader. They visit regularly and provide detailed feedback on trainees' teaching, as well as monitoring their log books and files. In addition, review and target-setting tutorials take place in the university at key points, enabling further training to respond to trainees' needs, for example giving a specific focus to their observations during serial weeks at the beginning of the second placement or identifying the need for trainees to visit other partnership schools to plug gaps in their own experience.

Assignments and tasks

- 33. Trainees complete two subject-specific assignments, plus a school-based investigation which has a subject focus. They also complete school-based tasks, covering ICT, 14-19 issues, assessment, evaluating teaching materials, and subject knowledge. These contribute effectively to trainees' knowledge and understanding of teaching modern foreign languages, as well as ensuring more consistency in their experiences while in placement schools.
- 34. Trainees' completion of school-based activities is generally at least good, though a small minority of trainees have difficulties completing ICT tasks because of limited access in their placement school. Their assignments and investigations show that most read widely, are capable of analysing research literature and identifying the implications for their own teaching, and are capable of conducting small-scale investigations and producing useful resources. Marking by the subject tutor is thorough, based on clear criteria and cross-referenced to the standards, and internally moderated by a tutor from another subject area. The subject tutor provides detailed and helpful feedback on assignments, including suggestions for trainees' induction year.

Final assessment

- 35. Course content and assessment procedures are designed to ensure that trainees meet all the standards for QTS. Since the last inspection, there has been an improvement in the way in which procedures operate, and a very positive response to points raised in the action plan. Effective internal moderation includes visits by teacher moderators, as well as an increased number of visits from the subject tutor. There is also some joint observation with all mentors. Mentor training has focussed on assessing trainees against the standards and mentors have been given clear subject-specific guidance on what the standards mean.
- 36. This results in very effective internal moderation of the pass/fail borderline, and for the current cohort, very accurate assessment of their teaching standards. External examiners are not subject specialists. They see a sample of trainees teach. All trainees are provided with accurate and appropriately completed Career Entry Profiles.

Grade 1

Points for Consideration and Action

The partnership should consider how to:

— provide further guidance for inexperienced mentors in target-setting and review.

ST1 THE TRAINEES' SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- 37. The trainees are well qualified in their main teaching language, and the large majority offer a second teaching language. Almost all have had extended periods of residence abroad and they have a secure knowledge of the country and its culture. They speak and write fluently, and are capable of responding accurately to pupils' questions. One trainee has made progress during the course and now provides an adequate spoken and written model for pupils.
- 38. All trainees have a good knowledge of the National Curriculum Programme of Study and attainment target levels, and some have a very detailed understanding through reviewing their coverage regularly. They are all familiar with GCSE syllabuses and their awareness of post-16 syllabuses and standards is good an improvement on the performance of the 1997 cohort.
- 39. Most trainees show in their assignments a good awareness and use of recent research evidence on modern foreign language teaching and learning. Some make good use of inspection findings, and by the end of the course all were aware of the most recent summary of inspection evidence for languages. A small minority make no, or limited, reference to inspection evidence in their assignments.
- 40. Trainees have a good range of experiences of working with children before they begin the course, many as foreign language assistants. In their teaching, and in their assignments, they show a good awareness of pupils' difficulties when learning a foreign language, and a broad understanding of factors which affect pupils' attitudes. Some, for example, conduct school-based investigations on the problems of low ability learners, or on boys' underachievement.
- 41. Most trainees begin the course with good personal skills in ICT, and the small minority who are less competent make progress during the year. The university-based course and their experiences in schools provide trainees with a sound understanding of the contribution ICT can make to language learning. This includes visits to a Language College for those trainees placed in modern language departments with limited access to ICT. Overall, the trainees' subject knowledge is good, and very good for a significant minority.

Grade 2

Points for Consideration and Action

The partnership should consider how to:

 ensure that all trainees consult and use recent inspection evidence on teaching and learning modern foreign languages.

ST2 THE TRAINEES' PLANNING, TEACHING AND CLASS MANAGEMENT

Planning

- 42. Trainees' planning is mostly good. They take account of the Programme of Study and relevant examination syllabuses or departmental schemes of work, and all plan sequences of lessons. A small minority of trainees are very good at medium term planning, with good progression from one lesson to the next. Others tend to plan lessons more in isolation, and there is some loss of continuity.
- 43. Trainees make progress in their planning of individual lessons and are particularly well aware of the needs of lower ability pupils. They plan a good range of activities in listening and speaking, reading and writing, and provide opportunities for pupils to work individually, in pairs and in groups. The best trainees plan in the detail, think clearly about teaching objectives and how they will be achieved, and review these with pupils. However, a weakness in three of the trainees seen teaching was that they did not provide sufficiently broad coverage of the Programme of Study to stretch more able pupils. On occasion, trainees also need to think things through more at the planning stage to ensure greater consistency and avoid missing out important steps.

Teaching and class management

- 44. Almost all trainees are at least good at managing their classes: this is a significant improvement on the performance of the 1997 cohort. Trainees seen teaching had high expectations of pupils, and kept them on task in a pleasant way. One trainee was very good at dealing with inattention and had clearly gained from visits to another school to observe an experienced teacher working with less motivated learners. A small minority of trainees are less consistent in their ability to establish and maintain a purposeful working atmosphere.
- Trainees are mostly good, and a minority are very good, at teaching vocabulary and grammar. They sustain momentum through learning a good range of activities, using the target language consistently and making effective use of resources, including ICT when available. They provide ample consolidation including setting appropriate homework. Sometimes, otherwise good trainees need to pay more attention to correcting pupils' errors at the drilling stage, or to encouraging pupils to speak at greater length. The best trainees are very good at teaching grammar, with very clear exposition. The small minority of less competent trainees use too much unnecessary English and do not involve all pupils during whole class teaching.
- 46. Trainees are familiar with the Code of Practice and are aware of pupils' learning needs, though not all have seen individual education plans. Most evaluate their own teaching quite critically, and the best trainees focus clearly on what pupils gain from the lesson, using this to formulate next steps. A minority do not evaluate their lessons regularly or in a sufficiently analytical manner. However, overall, the trainees' planning, teaching and classroom management are good. This is a significant improvement on the findings of the 1997 inspection.

Grade 2

Points for Consideration and Action

The partnership should consider how to:

ensure that all trainees plan lessons which contain sufficient challenge for more able learners;

- improve trainees' techniques for error correction and fostering greater pupil use of the target language;
- ensure that all trainees evaluate their own teaching critically and use this to improve.

ST3 THE TRAINEES' MONITORING, ASSESSMENT, RECORDING, REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- 47. By the end of the course, all but a very small minority of trainees are good, or in a few cases very good, at monitoring, assessing, recording and reporting. This represents a significantly higher standard of achievement than in 1997, and is the result of more rigorous and consistent expectations of trainees on both school placements.
- 48. Almost all trainees evaluate their lessons regularly, referring to lesson objectives and identifying next steps. The best trainees focus very clearly on pupils' learning. They all mark pupils' homework and classwork regularly, especially in Key Stage 3, and most provide helpful oral and written feedback. On occasion all trainees, even the better ones, could give pupils clearer indications of how to improve their written work, and monitor pupils' pronunciation more carefully.
- 49. Trainees assess and record pupils' progress systematically, maintaining orderly markbooks which include reference to pupils' performance across the four attainment targets, as well as routine classwork. Two very good trainees were using this information to identify pupils who needed support and set individual targets for improvement. A minority still have insufficient experience of recording pupils' progress in Key Stage 4, although they are involved in the marking and moderation of GCSE coursework.
- 50. All trainees attend parents' evenings and are aware of statutory reporting requirements. They do not all have the opportunity to contribute to written reports, but they know their pupils well, and the best can discuss pupils' progress in detail, drawing on carefully collected assessment information. This includes National Curriculum attainment target levels, which trainees record regularly. Trainees' understanding of the standards required at GCSE and at post-16, both Advanced level and GNVQ, is almost always sound a significant improvement on 1997. A small minority still have limited practical experience of these standards. Others work very hard to improve their knowledge, for example by marking mock exam papers and then sitting in on grade moderation.
- 51. Overall, the university subject and professional courses, together with school placements, combine effectively to give trainees a good understanding and experience of the various purposes and types of assessment.

Grade 2

Points for Consideration and Action

The partnership should consider how to:

- ensure that all trainees give pupils sufficient indications of how to improve their spoken and written work;
- ensure that all trainees gain experience of assessing and recording pupils' progress in Key Stage 4 and at post-16.

ANNEX: THE QUALITY ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

CENTRAL ASSESSED AREA						
ST: QUALITY OF TRAINEES' TEACHING AGAINST NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR THE AWARD OF QTS						
ST1: The trainees' subject knowledge and understanding	ST2: The trainees' planning, teaching and class management	planning, teaching and monitoring assessment,				
	MAJOR CONTRIBUTORY AREA					
T: QUALITY OF TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT OF TRAINEES						
T1: The quality of the training		T2: The accuracy and consistency of the assessment of trainees against the standards for QTS				
M: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE TRAINING*						
OTHER CONTRIBUTORY AREAS						
S: SELECTION AND QUALITY OF TRAINEE INTAKE						
S1: The appropriateness and selection process	of the admissions policy	S2: The trainees' qualifications and suitability for ITT				

^{*} These aspects underpin good training and will always be considered by inspectors when evaluating the quality of training and the assessment of trainees on individual courses. In addition, the overall effectiveness of providers' management and quality assurance arrangements may be inspected and graded as a separate cell in certain types of inspection. When this is the case, advance notice will be given.