

# Leeds Metropolitan University

## Initial Teacher Education inspection report

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Provider address

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Inspection dates  
Lead inspector

23 – 27 February 2009  
Jan Smith HMI

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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 consortium 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

## The provider

3. Leeds Metropolitan University validates Initial Teacher Education (ITE) qualifications delivered locally by four colleges in the Yorkshire and Humberside and Tyneside regions. The colleges provide higher education courses leading to the award of Certificate, Professional Graduate or Post Graduate Certificate in Education. Two of the partner colleges offer additional diplomas in literacy and numeracy, and one in English for speakers of other languages. The qualifications meet statutory requirements and are endorsed by Standards Verification UK (SVUK). The Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTLLS) is also incorporated within a foundation degree in post compulsory education offered in one college. There are currently 632 trainees on the college courses, of which 35 are pre-service. There is no direct delivery by the university.

4. Leeds Metropolitan University validates primary, secondary and further education provision in initial teacher education. The colleges are directly funded through the Higher Education Funding Council for England for their initial teacher education provision. The university manages the validation and quality assures provision delivered by the colleges through its Regional University Network (RUN), a partnership of 23 colleges delivering a range of higher education programmes. One of the four colleges offering teacher training is new to the consortium, having joined in 2008. The university is a partner in the Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETT) led by one of the colleges.

## Initial teacher education for the further education system

### Key strengths

5. The key strengths are:

- trainees' good progress and attainment
- thorough initial assessment that is used well to support trainees' progress
- good facilitation in developing new teaching qualifications
- strong commitment to increasing the participation of trainees from diverse backgrounds
- trainees' particularly effective and innovative use of information and learning technology
- trainees' good understanding of equality and diversity which underpins their teaching.

### Required actions

6. In order to improve the quality of training for all trainees the consortium should:

- ensure greater consistency and coherence across those delivering provision.

7. In order to improve management's assessment of performance and the impact of action planning the consortium should:

- improve the use of data by the university to monitor performance across those delivering provision.

### Recommendations

8. In order to improve the quality of training the consortium should:

- ensure that all trainees have access to high quality subject specialist mentors.

9. In order to strengthen management's assessment of performance and the impact of action planning the consortium should:

- strengthen formal arrangements to ensure continuous improvement.

## Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

10. Attainment is good across the provider colleges. Success rates are high, with only a few trainees failing to complete the programme successfully. In the few instances of weaker attainment, colleges have identified reasons for this and taken appropriate action to bring about improvement.

11. Trainees make particularly good progress in developing their practical teaching skills, some from a starting point of little experience of teaching or of academic study. Employers note rapid improvements in, for example, planning and behaviour management skills. Many trainees are able to discuss in an informed way the range of strategies they can use to help their learners progress. Trainees report favourably on the impact of the training on their professional competence, some gaining sufficiently in confidence to apply for promotion as a result of attending the course.

12. Trainees are particularly effective in their use of information and learning technology (ILT) to enrich their students' learning. The use of the virtual learning environment is increasing and enhances trainees' access to high quality teaching and learning materials. The use of ILT is developed well through the training courses, in which trainers model good practice in the use of technology such as electronic whiteboards, and encourage trainees to experiment in their own teaching. As a result of experience in one of the training sessions, for example, a trainee reluctant to use technology was inspired to develop weblogs within her family learning groups.

13. Trainees demonstrate a good understanding of equality and diversity issues. This is reflected in their ability to meet a wide variety of learners' needs. For example, trainees make skilful use of differentiated activities in the classroom to ensure all learners make progress. Trainees help to raise the awareness of their students' understanding of equality issues. For example, one trainee made good use of a tutorial session with his media students to discuss racism, harassment and bullying. In the best practice, trainees apply the principles of 'Every Child Matters' very well in planning lessons. A minority of trainees make too little use of individual learning plans to target the needs of students with learning difficulties and disabilities, including for example, those with dyslexia.

14. Trainees' understanding of the requirement to develop their students' literacy and numeracy skills is developed well through the training programmes. This is demonstrated clearly in trainees' teaching. For example in one community based learning lesson, the trainee helped students improve their skills in using measurement, ratio and fractions through a practical pattern-cutting task. Trainees in a learning centre for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities now identify many opportunities in work based activities to develop literacy and numeracy skills. This benefits both the learners and their employers.

15. Initial assessment is effective in ensuring that trainees' needs are identified at an early stage. This is particularly rigorous in two of the partner colleges, where a

detailed assessment process evaluates commitment and motivation to the teaching profession, as well as potential ability to succeed on the programmes. Trainees are offered support through introductory courses if they are not ready for full teacher training. Good progression routes across the consortium enable trainees and former trainees to return for higher qualifications at both undergraduate and postgraduate level.

16. Most trainees have opportunities to teach in an appropriate range of contexts. However, in one college there was insufficient focus on identifying whether or not trainees would have opportunities to gain sufficient breadth of teaching practice.

17. Trainees are supported well by flexible and committed staff to progress to the best of their ability. In the best practice, teams offer trainees personalised learning by delivering extracurricular sessions in the personal and professional development sessions. The teaching team identifies topics for these sessions from an analysis of lesson observation feedback forms. Trainers model good practice in the training sessions, inspiring trainees to develop their own teaching practice. The very positive impact of the training on teaching performance is valued by trainees and confirmed by employers and managers of current and previous trainees.

18. Trainees have good access to support for their own additional needs. In one college, trainees are particularly well supported through a large specialist department. Trainees can access help in a variety of ways through, for example, discrete classes, email, or face-to-face individual support.

19. Most trainees have a clear understanding of their progress as teachers and the actions they need to take to improve. In the best practice, tracking of progress, especially within practical teaching, is coherent and well structured, making effective use of the personal and professional development portfolios. However, the progress of a few trainees is not systematically monitored against the assessment requirements for the qualification. For most trainees, the standard of marking, both of lesson observations and coursework is high. The marking contains constructive and detailed improvement advice and in one college the turnaround time for marking is particularly rapid. In the best practice, the detailed marking criteria stretch the development of the more able as well as the less confident. Written assignments help trainees develop their higher level literacy skills. This includes, in the best practice seen, trainees already performing at a high level.

20. The quality of mentoring, particularly to support subject specialist teaching, is variable. Although most trainees have a mentor and receive good informal support, including support for developing key skills, not all trainees are linked to a subject specialist mentor. Some mentors have not been trained, and some have not yet observed trainees teach. In the best practice, mentors draw on a range of strategies to develop subject specialisms. Managers support the mentoring role and encourage staff to use and record this as continuous professional development. There is not yet dissemination of the existing good practice already established in one college, but the consortium has accurately identified mentoring as a priority for action.

21. Trainees have access to a wide range of resources to support the development of their professional practice. Well-designed handbooks and materials in some colleges ensure that trainees and their mentors have very clear guidance about what is expected of them in terms of developing professional teaching skills.

22. Across the provider colleges there is a strong commitment to increasing the participation of trainees from diverse backgrounds. Introductory teacher training courses broaden access by inexperienced teachers, and the partnership supports progression to higher education through the range of programmes. Before taking colleges as partners, the university maps the college's equality and diversity policies against their own requirements. If the college policies are equal or superior to those of the university, then the college is able to retain its own system. Leeds Metropolitan University ensures that appropriate measures are in place to safeguard trainees and their learners, requiring all partners to show that their trainees have been checked by the criminal records bureau.

## The capacity to improve further and/or sustain high quality outcomes

Grade: 3

23. The provider's capacity to assess performance and improve or sustain high quality is satisfactory. The university has not adopted a strong leadership and management role in the planning or quality improvement of the further education teacher training provision. To do so extends beyond the current agreement with the colleges. It has instead relied substantially on the colleges' internal quality systems, supplemented by the university's procedures. Trainees' outcomes are good, and colleges have successfully brought about improvement. However, the university's approach limits the extent to which it can ensure consistency across the partner colleges in the assessment of national teacher training standards and the promotion of continuous improvement.

24. The university procedures include annual review, regular quality visits to the colleges, and external examiner reports. The Associate Dean responsible for the Regional University Network, or their representative, carries out monthly visits to check aspects of quality. Colleges are required to submit annual reviews of their higher education provision. However, these checks cover all the higher education programmes offered by each college and do not focus in sufficient detail on the ITE provision or trainees' attainment.

25. Leeds Metropolitan University makes effective use of external examiners to monitor academic standards in each of the colleges. Constructive and detailed reports show that attainment is good across the partnership. They lead to specific actions for improvement such as the enhanced use of the professional development portfolio to monitor trainees' progress. However, these reports do not fully reflect the requirements of the new professional qualifications and do not report on practical teaching standards across the partnership. As they are carried out by four different examiners, they do not ensure consistency of reporting on all aspects of quality.

26. The quality improvement arrangements at college level are robust. Course review is used effectively to improve ITE provision. For example, one college strengthened its advice and guidance procedures to ensure trainees understand the academic demands of the postgraduate qualification. Another college responded to trainees' feedback by providing a training base room and resources to equip it. Improved staffing levels and the introduction of flexible learning models have enabled another college to extend offsite provision to a wider range of employer needs.

27. Colleges have good arrangements for the internal moderation of written and practical assessments. However, these are not cross-moderated across the consortium, leaving scope for possible variation in standards. It is not clear from the assessment of some written work how marks are allocated and percentages arrived at. This makes it difficult to compare standards across the colleges. Some but not all colleges allocate grades to observed lessons. Where grades are allocated colleges are in a stronger position to assess trainees' progress and attainment in their practical teaching.

28. Individual colleges have taken good account of workforce development initiatives to provide teacher training qualifications for their staff and others in the local and wider community. One college, for example, is particularly responsive to local employer needs in the public, private and voluntary sector. Colleges have responded well to the introduction of the new teacher training standards for further education. The need to develop revised programmes and apply for Standards Verification UK endorsement has been a significant catalyst for joint activity with Leeds Metropolitan University.

29. Consortium members have collaborated through the Regional University Network and through the Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training, to improve the quality of provision. For example, the university has hosted the delivery of option modules to extend the range available to the four colleges. New modules for personal and professional development and work-based learning are in the process of validation. A project to develop progression pathways for those employed or seeking employment within the learning and skills sector has also begun. Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training subject-specialist modules have enabled trainees to share ideas about subject pedagogy.

30. The university has made effective use of the very recent self-evaluation document, the first produced by the consortium, to identify priorities for development over the coming year. These have been identified in consultation with the colleges, but have not yet led to a specific quality improvement plan. The self evaluation document is based on the colleges' own evaluation of their provision, draws on a wide range of evidence, and is accurate in many of its judgements. Inspectors agreed with the self-evaluation grade of the overall effectiveness. The self-evaluation view of the capacity to improve further, however, is overly optimistic. Self-evaluation does not always make clear the link between judgements and the impact on trainees' outcomes, and is too descriptive in parts.



31. The university makes too little use of data to evaluate performance and plan improvement. Attainment data in the SED is not presented in a consistent format across the colleges, and is not summarised for the partnership as a whole. There is no use of progression data. Recruitment and attainment by different groups is not analysed. However, where this is done, the analysis shows no significant variation in success rates between groups of trainees. The partnership has identified the use of data as an area for attention in the self-evaluation document.

## Annex: Partnership colleges

The partnership includes the following colleges of further education:

Bradford College  
Hull College  
Newcastle College  
Park Lane College, Leeds

## Summary of inspection grades<sup>1</sup>

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?		2
Trainees' attainment	How well do trainees attain?	2
Factors contributing to trainees' attainment	To what extent do recruitment / selection arrangements support high quality outcomes?	2
	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?	2
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?	3
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

<sup>1</sup> The criteria for making these graded judgements are in the *Grade criteria for the inspection of ITE 2008-11*; Ofsted July 2008; Reference no: 080128.

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