

University of Teesside

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

Provider address

School of Social Sciences and Law
Middlesbrough
Tees Valley
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Inspection dates

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Lead inspector

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Introduction

1. This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors supported by a team of four 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

The provider

3. The University of Teesside's School of Social Sciences and Law works in partnership with Middlesbrough and Hartlepool colleges to provide initial teacher education programmes. These lead to the university's Certificate and Professional Graduate Certificate in Education: Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector. The qualifications meet the statutory requirements and are endorsed by Standards Verification UK. The provision at the two colleges is offered on a part-time in-service basis, whereas that at the university is for full-time pre-service trainees. Middlesbrough College has been running similar programmes since 2005, whereas Hartlepool College's provision started in 2007/08 and the university's in-service programme started in 2008/09. The provision has grown since 2005, because of the work carried out with five partner colleges which are members of the Higher Education Business Partnership.

4. Currently, 226 trainees are following the two certificate courses, of whom 208 are on in-service provision. Nearly two-thirds of trainees are female, just over two-thirds are aged 25 to 49, and six are from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Initial teacher education for the further education system

Key strengths

5. The key strengths are:

- the outstanding planning and management of significant growth in provision in accordance with the national workforce requirements
- the significant increase in success rates in the last three years
- the very supportive and constructive feedback on assignments and lesson observations which help trainees' progress
- the outstanding resources which aid learning
- the very good encouragement of the trainees' voice to effect improvement in the quality of the provision.

Required actions

6. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the partnership must:

- provide all mentors with training on mentoring and lesson observation skills.

Recommendations

7. In order to improve the quality of the provision, the partnership should:

- increase the promotion of the courses to groups under-represented in teaching or training in the lifelong learning sector
- improve the analysis of trainees' recruitment and performance data by different groups and take action to address under achievement of any group
- improve the effectiveness and timeliness of communication processes within the partnership
- refine the self-evaluation document to be more precise and incisive.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

8. The overall effectiveness of the partnership in securing high quality outcomes for trainees is good. Trainees' attainments are good. In each of the last three years, more than 80 per cent of trainees' attainments have been good or outstanding.

Members of the partnership assess trainees' progress and attainment accurately. Success rates have risen and are high. The small number of trainees who are aged over 50 and the very small number of trainees from minority ethnic backgrounds do not succeed as well as other trainees. The factors enabling trainees to progress and attain well are the very helpful and formative feedback they receive on assignments and lesson observations, the outstanding resources which they use well, and the improvements made to the provision based on their suggestions.

9. Trainees demonstrate a wide range of skills and knowledge. Their understanding of many of the current issues in lifelong learning is good, but their awareness of workforce reform and community cohesion is slight. Pre-service trainees are on course to achieve sufficient and appropriate teaching practice experiences. Most in-service trainees have a broad and suitable range of teaching and learning experience and are involved appropriately in wider aspects of further education and training. Not all trainers, however, monitor trainees' experiences of teaching and the lifelong learning sector sufficiently to identify gaps and to share expertise. It is clearly evident from their marked assignments, lesson observations and reflective blogs that trainees make significant progress. They relate theory well to practice. Trainees are willing to try out new and unusual methods in their lessons and they learn from each success or failure. Some trainees exhibit very good class management skills. They plan carefully to ensure that their learners of all abilities are involved in challenging and interesting activities. They relate topics and assessed work well to each learner's interests and experiences. They use information and learning technology (ILT) very effectively to aid learners' understanding. Other trainees lack self-confidence in large group sessions, but work very well with small groups or with individual learners to help them progress. Trainees know their learners thoroughly and in most cases have developed a good working ethos with them. Their understanding of how they might contribute to the development of their learners' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills is well developed. Trainees have good subject knowledge. They make good use of perceptive self-reflection and constructive peer reviews to identify areas for improvement.

10. Recruitment and selection arrangements are good. Marketing materials are balanced in terms of gender, age and ethnicity, but some documents do not include a statement on equality and diversity. Staff target work-based learning providers to encourage their staff to become appropriately qualified and to meet the requirements of the workforce reforms. Colleges are responsive to employers in and outside their immediate locality, and the university amends its usual procedures to facilitate prompt responses to employers. The range of attendance options and modes of study is wide and flexible to meet trainees' needs. The partnership, however, is insufficiently proactive in its promotion of the provision to groups under-represented in teaching and training in the lifelong learning sector. The open days are very useful and informative. Trainees receive very clear, helpful and detailed entry requirements. Placements for pre-service trainees are subject to comprehensive health and safety checks. The provider takes appropriate actions to comply with safeguarding requirements. The initial assessment of literacy and numeracy needs is good. It is comprehensive and is completed at the start of the

course. It enables trainees to know their areas for improvement and to include relevant targets in their individual learning plans.

11. Training and assessment are good and enable trainees to progress well. Trainers model very good or outstanding practice, which trainees try out in their own lessons. Trainees enjoy the wide mixture of activities in the training sessions, and the very effective use of ILT and the virtual learning environment (VLE) which aid their understanding. Trainers embed the minimum core aspects of literacy, numeracy, language and information communication technology in the training sessions. They set work which trainees can use in their own teaching. Trainers give good support to trainees through personal tutorials. Lesson observation feedback is very helpful, professional and detailed. It has a major impact on trainees, enabling them to improve rapidly. The use of joint lesson observations standardises judgements and grades effectively. The lesson observation proforma includes reminders on minimum core, but not on equality and diversity. The links between tutors' and mentors' lesson observation action points to check trainees' progress are underdeveloped. Assessments are well planned and phased throughout the year. Assessment feedback is very thorough and detailed and aids improvement. Marking is mostly very accurate and helpful, but occasionally spelling and grammatical errors are not corrected. Internal verification and, in particular, external moderation procedures are robust. Trainees benefit from their individual learning plans. They use them to check progress and support their self-reflection. Individual learning plans require trainees to be self-critical. The best individual learning plans contain detailed comments and very challenging targets which guide trainees' progress. Some individual learning plans, however, are not monitored by tutors thoroughly or sufficiently frequently. Mentors' very good feedback enables trainees to develop their own subject specialisms significantly. Mentors are very supportive. They help trainees improve their subject knowledge and develop the teaching of their specialist subjects. Trainees keep useful logs of mentoring meetings, which show the positive impact of the process on improving their skills and knowledge.

12. Resources are outstanding and they are used very effectively by trainees and trainers to aid learning. The university's learning resource centre (LRC) is excellent; it is accessible to all trainees and is available during extensive opening hours. It is very well resourced and used. The quality and quantity of resources are very good and meet trainees' needs successfully. LRC staff are dedicated to the course and liaise very closely with trainers, trainees, and college staff. Staff in the drop-in support area enable trainees to improve their ICT skills significantly. Although accommodation at the university is of a high standard, trainees are dissatisfied with the frequent room changes. College accommodation is also of a high quality, including dedicated teacher training rooms. Materials and resources are up-to-date. Trainers, mentors and trainees use the VLE extensively and well. Trainers and mentors are well qualified and experienced and are highly regarded by trainees.

13. The quality of the provision across the partnership is good. Course team staff monitor each assessor's assessment practice annually. Effective module moderation meetings include checks on grading and assessment, standardisation and double marking and provide useful material for the external examiner. Managers encourage the trainees' voice and take action wherever feasible. Trainees complete module

questionnaires which are mostly very positive. They make good use of the many communication channels to suggest improvements to the provision. Many of these have been implemented, such as the separation of modules. The introductory information for trainees on the aims, learning outcomes and assessment strategy for each module is good. All partners are thoroughly involved in the quality assurance meetings. Cross-partnership liaison is good; all staff develop and share good practice. The partnership provides training for mentors, but not all mentors have received training to improve their mentoring skills or lesson observation techniques. Pre-service trainees receive little administrative support in obtaining their teaching placements.

14. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. A good emphasis on equality and diversity and inclusive practice is integrated in the modules, but the introduction of equality and diversity themes is sometimes late in the course. There have been no complaints regarding bullying, harassment or unlawful discrimination, and trainees feel very safe. The culture is very open and enables trainees to declare their learning needs and to accept support. One college has produced excellent equality and diversity materials. The promotion of the provision to groups under-represented in teaching and training in the lifelong learning sector is insufficient. The partnership's analysis of recruitment and attainment by different groups of trainees is underdeveloped. Most in-service trainees have a good awareness of equality and diversity issues from their workplace, and they use strategies well to involve individual learners in their own lessons.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality Grade: 2

15. The partnership has a good capacity to sustain high quality outcomes for trainees and to take the actions required to secure improvements where needed. Managers clearly know their strengths and areas for improvement and they take prompt action to address matters of concern. The self-evaluation process is inclusive and the ensuing graded judgements are accurate. The effectiveness of managers at all levels and in each institution in assessing performance so as to improve trainees' outcomes is good. The self-evaluation document is detailed and contains evidence to support judgements. It covers all aspects of the provision and uses trainees' views well. It contains much description, however, and does not highlight all key strengths and areas for development. It also does not include sufficiently analysed data on different groups of trainees. A wide range of reviews and quality monitoring visits informs partners of the quality of the provision. The integrated annual review system takes account of self evaluation and self assessment at various levels and in each partner institution. The review leads to appropriate action points. Quality improvement procedures are rigorous.

16. The provider is outstanding in its ability to anticipate change and prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives. Leaders and managers at all levels have been very proactive in increasing both trainee numbers and providers. They demonstrate very good planning for, and implementation of, growth, whilst

continuing to provide high quality provision. The partnership is responsive to the government agenda and has increased numbers, modes of attendance and responsiveness to employers' needs for training. The university facilitates a smooth transition of new providers into the partnership. It has been supportive in appointing new staff and funding growth, whilst ensuring quality assurance processes are in place. The university has been, and is, a catalyst for change and growth in the training of teachers for the lifelong learning sector in the area. Each institution in the partnership meets the workforce reform requirements fully and the colleges have utilised the workforce reform funding very effectively. Leaders and managers have a strong commitment to developing higher education provision. The partnership has been successful in attracting new partners for 2009 and 2010. It meets local needs very effectively and responds very well to national initiatives.

17. The partnership has a very wide range of quality assurance systems and procedures which are inclusive of partners, staff, trainees and managers. Mentors are less involved. The sharing of good practice between partners and within sections of the university is good. Quality assurance reports are reviewed and moderated by peers for moderation. The university and the colleges have good records of securing improvements to the provision, often based on trainees' views. Communication between partners has improved, but the effectiveness and timeliness of communications and of meetings are areas for improvement. Leaders and managers at all levels have a good capacity to maintain the current high quality standards and to improve. Human and physical resources are at least good. Course teams are effective and well qualified; they are proactive in driving forward improvement. Leaders and managers have improved provision over time and the partnership has a good capacity to continue this improvement, even as the partnership grows and the number of trainees increases. Each partner has good planning for improvement, based on good self-assessment and evaluation processes. Success rates have improved in the last three years, attainment is good and trainees make good progress.

Annex: Partnership colleges

The partnership includes the following colleges: Middlesbrough College and Hartlepool 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?		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?	1
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?	3

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?		2
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?		1
How effectively does the provider plan and take action for improvement?		2

¹ 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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