

University of Huddersfield

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

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Inspection dates	30 March - 3 April 2009
Lead inspector	Garry Jones 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 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, through its School of Education and Professional Development, works in partnership with schools within the surrounding local authorities to provide initial teacher education (ITE) leading to qualified teacher status (QTS) in both the primary and secondary phases.
4. The courses offered include a Bachelor of Arts honours degree in early primary education with qualified teacher status (Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1). A one year postgraduate certificate in education is offered in seven secondary subjects.
5. A particular feature of ITE at Huddersfield is the large scale in-service provision for further education (FE) and lifelong learning sector teachers delivered through an extensive network of 27 partner colleges. These colleges cover an extremely wide area of the north of England. The partnership includes colleges in Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Lincolnshire, Humberside and the North East as well as Yorkshire. This provision is managed through the Consortium for Post Compulsory Education and Training (CPCET). In addition the University offers pre-service courses at its campuses in Huddersfield, Barnsley and Oldham as well as through colleges in Darlington and Grimsby. The trainees include a significant number of mature trainees and those with non-standard qualification who have other relevant experience.
6. In 2007 the University was awarded Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training status and the Huddersfield University Distributed Centre for Excellence in Teacher

Training (HUDCETT) was established. HUDCETT is actively involved in research, training and the dissemination of good practice.

A commentary on the provision

7. The following are particular features of the provider and its initial teacher education programmes:

- the good quality of training resulting in high levels of satisfaction from trainees and enabling the large majority to achieve good standards
- the consistently high quality of personal and academic support for all trainees on all programmes to ensure their well being
- the effective use of high quality resources across all programmes to support trainees.

8. There are particularly strong features in some programmes that could be applied to other programmes or aspects of the provision:

- the strong focus on continuous professional development and in particular research within the further education sector.

9. the following areas require further development to improve the quality of the outcomes for trainees:

- the rigour of quality assurance to identify best practice and to ensure greater consistency within the partnerships
- the systems for establishing an initial judgement of trainees' potential and tracking their progress as individuals and in groups
- the quality of strategic planning through the use of data and the inclusion of more precise success indicators.

Provision in the primary phase

Context

10. The University of Huddersfield works in partnership with 40 schools which serve a diverse range of communities in five local authorities. The partnership includes nine infant and nursery schools and one independent school. It offers an Early Years/Key Stage 1 course leading to the award of a Bachelor of Arts degree with qualified teacher status (QTS). At the time of the inspection there were 72 trainees. The partnership operates with 40 schools in five local authorities serving a diverse range of communities from rural to a large inner city. It includes nine infant and nursery schools and one independent school.

Key strengths

11. The key strengths are:

- the provider's understanding of current national and local initiatives and their application to ensure trainees' thorough understanding of contemporary issues
- the drive, enthusiasm and experience of the professionals leading and delivering the course
- the high level commitment to ensuring the trainees' pastoral and academic needs are recognised and consistently met
- the good quality of the training which excites and motivates the trainees
- trainees' ability to articulate and put in to practice a strong early years philosophy
- partnership schools' appreciation of trainees' expertise in early years education.

Recommendations

12. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment the provider should:

- make even better use of information about high quality practice within the partnership to enhance school and centre based training
- make consistent use of the lesson feedback format given to trainees in English across all subjects so that, where appropriate, it focuses more on pupils' learning in specific subjects.

13. In order to develop further the planning for improvement the provider should:

- sharpen development planning, particularly at subject level, so that all actions are related to specific outcomes for trainees.

Overall effectiveness

Grade:2

14. The overall effectiveness of the provider in securing high quality outcomes for trainees is good. Over the past three years trainees' attainment has improved, with the current Year 3 trainees on target to achieve well; over half are expected to achieve an outstanding grade and none below good. It is also expected that there will be a 100% completion rate. A key factor in the trainees' dedication to the course is the close attention paid to their individual needs both by the provider and the partnership schools. Honest and open records of trainees' strengths and weaknesses mean that schools are fully aware of what trainees can do and where they still require development. Effective teaching techniques are modelled by both centre and school based staff so that trainees have a good understanding of professional conduct and successful teaching skills. Feedback following lesson observations is clear and accurate, ensuring trainees are fully aware of what must be done to improve.

15. Trainees have a thorough understanding of the attributes needed to become a successful teacher. The commitment of the partnership to effective early primary and early years practice is clear. It ensures trainees are steeped in a well-researched philosophy of education which they are more than able to put in to practice in the classroom. Trainees have a solid grasp of current Early Years classroom practice. For example they are confident in the delivery of phonics and the teaching of reading as well as the play-centred curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

16. This popular and oversubscribed course has been full for the last four years. The provider succeeds in its aim to recruit trainees with a strong potential to become good and outstanding early years and Key Stage 1 teachers. At the end of 2008 over 75% of trainees were graded good or outstanding although a minority failed to reach their potential. The provider has a clear focus on local and national issues and as a result a significant number of local schools choose to employ trainees because of their in-depth early years knowledge.

17. Recruitment and selection are effective and contribute well to the good attainment achieved by the large majority of trainees. The selection process is robust and has been further strengthened this year to identify rigorously trainees' potential to teach and only those graded outstanding or good are accepted on to the course. The provider takes appropriate action to comply with safeguarding requirements and criminal record bureau checks. This year the partnership schools have a greater involvement in the interview process. Trainees' individual academic needs are well served by a range of pre-course reading and tasks. Some trainees with specific identified needs are urged to attend a Teaching and Development Agency workshop before the course begins. The provider serves an area with a large minority ethnic population in West Yorkshire. This group is not yet fully represented in the course intake but much is being done to develop recruitment strategies. Literature promoting the course gives a clear summary of opportunities and

expectations and appropriate illustrations indicate the culturally diverse local community.

18. The quality of training and assessment is good. Expectations for trainees are high and they are worked extremely hard, but for their part they are enthusiastic and keen to do well. A strength of the course is trainees' immersion in a strong philosophy of early primary education from the outset. Trainees rapidly incorporate this into their practice in the classroom. Current research and government initiatives are given a very high profile in both school and centre based training. For example, trainees are well versed in the teaching of phonics and have an in-depth understanding of the impact of the Williams' review of mathematics. Trainees' evaluations of training are all at least good, although not yet consistently reporting it to be outstanding; where it is, many speak of 'inspirational' practice which they aim to emulate in schools.

19. Weekly reviews of progress ensure trainees are well prepared for school placements. Good quality training enables trainees to make links between centre and school based training. Whilst in schools, trainees keep a reflective 'learning journal,' documenting pupils' achievements and their own experiences. School-based tasks are highly relevant to the age range. Trainees are able to build successfully on their centre and school-based training. For example, following a successful local authority input on inclusion trainees made links to their own school experiences of using the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) programme. Schools have a good knowledge of what training has taken place at the centre and are keen to take on training themselves.

20. Assessment is accurate and supports the development of the trainees' knowledge and skills. The provider keeps a close watch on trainees' achievement ensuring extra support is provided where necessary. Assignments are marked accurately and the feedback to trainees is prompt. There is moderation and external validation of the accuracy of assessment. Currently, however, the format for recording trainees' achievements does not allow for easy analysis of the rates of progress of different groups, for example, those with additional needs or trainees from minority ethnic backgrounds. Mentors monitor trainees' progress files carefully indicating where they are meeting the Standards. Lesson observations clearly identify targets which will feature in the next observation, leading to good rates of progress. Feedback always refers to the Standards and trainees' progress in meeting them. The lesson observation form in English is specifically designed to give subject specific feedback. However, in other subjects feedback focuses on generic teaching skills rather than being related directly to the subject covered and pupils' learning. There is scope to develop the use of the format used in English across all subjects to give more focussed and subject specific feedback. The partnership committee have this as a development point for next term.

21. Resources are deployed well to support the development of trainees. Recent research evidence is used effectively in training. Course readers contain up-to-date journal articles and texts. Course tutors teach on other university early years courses so have a broad understanding of the *Every Child Matters* agenda. A priority for the provider has been to improve resources for information communication technology (ICT). This is now a strong feature of trainees' lessons and its use is modelled

effectively by university based tutors. Trainees evaluate this area as highly effective. A feature of school based training is the available database on schools' different areas of expertise. This information can be accessed by trainees to identify where they might best fill any gaps in their learning. Equally, should the need arise, trainees can attend drop in sessions in clusters whilst on placement. Trainees really value the provider's electronic communications network and the ready response of course tutors. Effective use is made of external speakers from the partnership and other external bodies.

22. Provision across the partnership is of good quality. The provider works in the main with schools identified by Ofsted as successful in their overall effectiveness. All Early Years Foundation Stage provision is at least good with nine settings which are outstanding overall. Partners value link tutors' face-to-face meetings as well as the speed at which the provider responds to their needs and concerns. For their part trainees feel well supported because schools understand their individual needs. Feedback on mentor training is positive. Mentor training is successful in securing highly committed mentors who are dedicated to their roles. School based mentors find the joint observations with the university link tutor very helpful, together with the subsequent observation of feedback to the trainee. However a number of mentors raised the possibility of receiving more detailed feedback beyond their joint observations in order for them to develop their skills further.

23. The provider promotes equality of opportunity well and fosters good race relations. Trainees have a good understanding of community cohesion issues and value the diverse community in which they teach. There is a clear focus on inclusion and the links to local authorities ensure a wide range of expertise can be called upon to offer training on local and national issues such as the teaching of pupils with English as an additional language and those with physical impairment. For example, trainees experience the 'teaching music for the deaf' initiative.

24. The provider is willing to make any adjustment in order that there are no barriers to trainees succeeding. For example, trainees with additional needs are able to use a dictaphone to record immediate reflection after lesson and these are evaluated in this format by tutors. Higher attaining trainees willingly mentor those with additional needs, for example by peer reading assignments for those who require support. Where trainees have experienced difficulties with their placement in a partnership school the provider is swift to remedy the situation and has de-selected schools where poor working relationships have hindered trainees' progress.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality

Grade: 2

25. The provider has good capacity to sustain high quality outcomes for trainees, and there is a positive track record of continuous improvement over the last three years.

26. The process of self evaluation is effective and identifies clear areas for improvement. Once a year the link tutors conduct an audit of each partnership school and combine this with the most recent Ofsted information to evaluate the

suitability of provision. However, there is scope to go deeper to find further strengths and good practice within partnership schools to enhance school based training. The provider takes good account of evaluations by trainees and mentors on the quality and impact of centre based training. Trainees' evaluations of training are strong although not yet consistently high in the outstanding category. Self-evaluation involves the partnership committee and the course director seeks the views of ex-trainees who are newly qualified teachers (NQTs), but does not formally seek the views of the employing head teachers. The external examiner's report is incisive and of good quality, raising points about academic and professional training. The provider takes prompt action on lines suggested for improvement, for example in ICT, which a year ago was a weakness and has become a strong feature of the course. Consultation with the partnership committee highlights specific training needs for example their intentions is to develop subject specific feedback in to the partnership.

27. The partnership committee meets frequently and discusses the issues for action, but its role in evaluation is less well developed. For example the committee did not have the opportunity to evaluate the outcomes from last year's final trainees so that their focus is on dealing with issues rather than analysing any data on outcomes.

28. The provider is at the forefront in ensuring it is fully aware of, and in some cases directly involved with, all national and local initiatives. All feature highly in training, for example the Every Child Matters agenda, the Rose and Williams reviews. Trainees demonstrate a deep-seated knowledge of current early primary and early years research. Their choices of dissertation are well founded on classroom practice and range from the rationale behind the Forest school approach to arguing the phonics debate. This year a lead mentor is working with a local authority on the Every Child a Talker initiative designed to raise achievement in schools and broaden trainees' classroom practice. A number of school based mentors who deliver centre-based training are on the master's courses and are developing and articulating their philosophy of early years education.

29. The university ensures that its aim to meet local and national needs by providing outstanding early years and early primary teachers is clearly linked to their action planning. Already it is reaping the rewards for their forward thinking in improving the proportion of good and outstanding trainees and moving their satisfactory trainees to good. Year-on-year there are improved academic and pedagogical outcomes. Those responsible know how to improve to get more outstanding trainees. Most trainees fulfil their potential and those with additional needs all meet their potential because of support and planned actions to ensure their differing needs are met both in university and when on school placement.

30. Action planning identifies and prioritises all the relevant areas which will lead to improvements to the course. Overall course planning has a clear focus on outcomes for trainees. The provider takes good account of evaluations by trainees and mentors on the quality and impact of centre based training. Analysis of emerging issues is swift and leads to required changes to improve provision for trainees.

31. Whilst there is a good deal of evaluation of training both at university and in schools its consistent use in action planning is underdeveloped. For example within the 'Capacity' action plan the success criteria is; '70% of trainees are happy with their training in the foundation subjects'. This is not as incisive as it could be and does not evaluate either the quality of training or the impact on trainees' performance in the classroom. Furthermore, at subject level, the success criteria are not directly linked to improved outcomes for trainees and time lines lack precision.

32. The partnership management committee meets regularly and agendas focus on partnership development and subject specific training needs. Partnership committee members know the priorities in the action plans and the actions they can take to bring these about. Partnership members understand their roles and responsibilities, however, school representatives on the committee have a tendency to express and present their own views rather than expressing those of the partnership.

Provision in the secondary phase

Context

33. The University of Huddersfield works in partnership with a large number of secondary schools and other educational establishments to offer initial teacher education (ITE) leading to the award of qualified teacher status (QTS). Through successful completion of academic assignments, trainees are able to gain the award of a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE), which includes academic credits at Masters level. The provider offers training in the 11-16 age range in design and technology, mathematics, music and science. It offers a 14-19 course in business education with optional citizenship enhancement and 11-18 courses in history and information and communication technology. 141 trainees were recruited to start in September 2008.

Key strengths

34. The key strengths are:

- the good progress made by the trainees
- excellent academic and pastoral support provided by course tutors helps trainees to achieve their potential
- rigorous and inclusive selection procedures promote applications from under-represented groups and support good outcomes for trainees
- good communication helps to provide a consistently high quality of training across the partnership.

Required actions

35. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the partnership should:

- improve its use of data to monitor the progress of individuals and groups.

36. In order to improve the way it plans and takes action for improvement, the partnership should:

- ensure that improvement planning at all levels focuses more clearly on measurable outcomes.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

37. The overall effectiveness of the provider in securing high quality outcomes for trainees is good. Trainees achieve well because of the excellent support they receive from course tutors, the extensive resources available to them and the comprehensive training that helps them to meet the QTS Standards. All elements of the training combine well to provide a broad experience in a range of settings. A

good level of consistency is promoted through strong documentation and good communication between all members of the partnership.

38. The provider enjoys a good reputation locally and approximately half of the trainees qualifying from the course take teaching posts in local schools. Past and current trainees are very positive about the course. Among many effective aspects, they particularly appreciate the enthusiastic input from subject tutors and the detailed and rapid feedback that they receive on their work. Local schools are similarly supportive.

39. Trainees reach good standards by the end of the course. This confirms the provider's own judgement and is a direct result of the good quality training that trainees receive. Outstanding trainees assimilate information from different areas of their training and use them to develop excellent classroom skills. They involve pupils in assessing their own work and encourage pupils to reflect on their learning. The best trainees use plenary sessions effectively to review how well pupils have achieved the lesson objectives.

40. Inspectors confirm that the provider's judgements on trainees' progress are accurate; most trainees achieve well. Course tutors know the trainees very well and provide extensive academic and pastoral support. They also know how well individual trainees are progressing and when additional support is required. Procedures for assessing trainees' progress towards the QTS Standards are not yet robust enough. For example, the use of baseline and other data is underdeveloped and as a result, tutors and managers have only limited data to identify and track trainees' progress.

41. The provider's good recruitment and selection processes are rigorous and inclusive and support the good outcomes that trainees achieve. Recruitment procedures fulfil all requirements, including checks on applicants' identity and qualifications. The interview process is well designed to select candidates who have suitable qualities for teaching, including assessing subject knowledge, presentational and writing skills. The provider successfully promotes equality of opportunity in preparing candidates for interview by using a set format in each interview. In addition, the admissions tutor has worked alongside all subject interviewers to ensure that all are applying consistent and rigorous criteria. One of a small team of teachers from the partner schools is present during interview days and contributes to decisions on whether to offer a place; these teachers are trained and supported well in their role. The provider keeps careful records of applications and success rates over time although the monitoring of the relative success at interview or application of different groups is underdeveloped.

42. The provider meets its admissions targets in all subject areas except for science and mathematics. After a drop in applications in 2007-08, current applications show a clear rise on the figures attained in both the previous years. Mathematics and science numbers, although still low in mathematics, are boosted by the provision of subject enhancement and booster courses, which enable a wider pool of people to access the courses. A concerted drive to increase applications to the mathematics course, including a particular emphasis on current undergraduates

at the university, has led to recent increases in the number of applications, but has yet to have an impact on raising numbers on the course.

43. The quality of training and assessment is good. Centre-based training covers appropriate areas of study and helps trainees to make progress in the level of their professional skills. Training takes account of trainees' individual needs; the initial needs assessment and subject knowledge audit enable trainees to identify and work on their areas of weakness by setting themselves targets which carry forward into the first school placement and add to the coherence of the training.

44. The general professional studies course is strong. It is well structured and coherent, and although there is some variability in quality from session to session, it is well appreciated by the trainees. Trainees are encouraged to explore issues in greater depth through reading, completing set assignments and following up particular issues in school. Centre-based training makes a good contribution to the trainees' understanding of issues relating to the primary school curriculum. As a result, all trainees have a sound understanding of the teaching of early reading and mathematics trainees appreciate how numerical concepts are developed through pupils' use of informal methods. Several aspects of centre-based training contribute to trainees' good knowledge of their subject. For example in science, the use of 'triads', where trainees with different subject backgrounds support each other is very successful in promoting trainees' subject knowledge development.

45. The quality of the school-based training is effective and makes clear contributions to trainees' good progress. Trainees benefit from the good and regular feedback they receive on their teaching; it is detailed and individualised and contains clear targets. However, some targets are simple tasks that do not contribute to meeting the standards and some are not followed up sufficiently. Some trainees do not engage with assessing themselves against the QTS Standards early enough in the course. Assessment of trainees' strengths and weaknesses is accurate, but current measures of progress lack detail, and some mentors are unclear about the criteria used.

46. Overall the quality of the partnership is good. School-based mentors give good support to trainees through weekly meetings, which help trainees to know their strengths and weaknesses. Mentors involved in the partnership believe that the communication between the provider and the partner schools, the high quality of the documentation that they receive and their understanding about their general roles and responsibilities are strong. Clear documentation and the regular use of joint observations secure a good level of consistency across the partner schools in training and in grading lessons. Lesson observation grades are verified by external examiners. The general professional studies programme is followed up in placement schools with a training programme delivered by professional mentors. The quality of this aspect of the school-based training is too variable. Where this training is weaker, trainees have more limited evidence of their progress towards the QTS Standards.

47. The use of resources to support the trainees to develop their potential is good, including those provided for the central training. For example, in the university all training rooms are fully equipped with ICT resources, enabling tutors to deliver

training using a range of media and enabling trainees to experiment for themselves on how to use a range of technology available in schools. This contributes to the trainees' confident use of ICT in their teaching. Library resources are a strength and a web-based communication system is enabling trainees to access materials and notes electronically and also helping them to share their ideas, successes and difficulties with their tutor and other trainees. Trainees and school-based tutors value the opportunities offered by this system. All university based trainers are subject specialists and are well qualified to provide appropriate training and support. The allocation of resources is responsive to need in that additional monitoring and support is provided to trainees who require it.

48. The provider's policies for promoting equal opportunities and valuing diversity establish a good framework for staff to deal with any incidents. Trainees report that they are well supported and that they can contact tutors easily for advice or guidance. No complaints in relation to equal opportunities, harassment or discrimination have been lodged and trainees feel that they are well prepared for teaching in a multi-cultural society. Weaknesses in tracking trainees' progress mean that information on the performance of groups of trainees is insufficient to make comparisons either between groups or over time. Because of this, inspectors judge the promotion of equal opportunities to be good rather than supporting the outstanding grade given in the provider's self-evaluation.

49. The provider is very successful in promoting equality of access to the programme for under-represented groups; publicity material makes it explicit that applications are welcomed from people from a wide range of backgrounds. Open days and taster courses and a range of promotional activities, including some targeted at minority ethnic applicants, have helped the provider to meet consistently its demanding targets for minority ethnic recruitment. The provider has a track record of providing well-focused support to trainees with declared disabilities.

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

50. The provider has good capacity to sustain high quality outcomes for trainees, where these already exist, and to take the actions required to secure improvements where necessary.

51. Overall the quality of evaluation is good. Self-evaluation clearly indicates that the provider knows its strengths, weaknesses and areas for development in all major respects to provide a basis for further improvement. As a result, the provider has an accurate view of provision but it does not yet rigorously analyse data on outcomes to monitor whether all groups reach their potential. Course tutors know the placement schools well; all schools are checked to ensure that they provide a suitable training environment. Evaluations are used effectively to improve performance. They take account of the views of a broad range of stakeholders, including course tutors, trainees, representatives from partner schools and external examiners. Professional mentors are positive about their involvement in the partnership and feel that they contribute to evaluation and development through the course committee. Trainees' evaluations and external examiners' comments contribute to the improvement

process and are increasingly positive. The provider responds appropriately to recommendations from external examiners. Many course tutors act as external examiners elsewhere and this gives them access to a range of benchmarking activities.

52. Subject training, general professional studies and school-based training are managed effectively. The provider responds well to local needs when circumstances change. For example, target numbers on the music course were increased to maintain the flow of newly qualified music teachers into local schools when another local provider closed its music course.

53. The programme is appropriately responsive to recent educational developments, sometimes through making good use of external funding. General professional studies sessions have been reviewed and include training on schools' use of data and the national Assessing Pupils' Progress initiative. Training has good coverage of the changes to the 14-19 curriculum. For example in science, training includes sessions that focus on the How Science Works examination and the vocational applied science course. In mathematics, a local partner school that is involved in the pilot for functional mathematics has been used to improve trainees' knowledge of how functional mathematics will be taught and assessed as part of the new diplomas. In ICT, the provider's extensive and well chosen hardware resources have made a major contribution to the success of new developments such as the trainees' e-portfolios.

54. There is some variability in the quality of improvement planning, but overall, its impact is good. There is clear evidence that actions have been taken to improve provision and that courses are reviewed continuously based on feedback and the need to adapt to new circumstances. However, improvement plans are insufficiently focused on clearly identified and measurable outcomes for trainees. Monitoring and evaluation are used to set an agenda for course improvement, for example through using external examiner reports and through reflecting on the trainees' outcomes. However, the use of student evaluations for improvement planning at subject level is uneven.

55. Course tutors act cooperatively and consistently; they anticipate, plan and take successful action in response to the provider's monitoring and review processes. Action plans consist of appropriate issues and proposed activities to address them, but are insufficiently focused on outcomes for trainees. Some action points lack rigour and challenge; others do not give clearly measurable criteria for success.

56. Leaders and managers have a good understanding of the different elements of the programme and their commitment to improving provision has led to a better integrated course that responds well to changes in educational practice. Where the provider implements change, it is facilitated by the strong communication that exists across the partnership and has a clear impact on trainees' progress. For example in science, the course development plan led directly to changes in practice across the partner schools; as a result, school-based trainers set clearer targets about trainees' involvement in out of school activities and parents' evenings and trainees were able to make more rapid progress towards meeting the QTS Standards.

Initial teacher education for the further education system

Context

57. The University of Huddersfield works in partnership with 27 colleges across the North of England to provide initial teacher education for teachers and trainers in the further education system. Courses lead to the University's Certificate; Professional Graduate and Postgraduate Certificate in Education (Post-Compulsory Education and Training). The qualifications meet the statutory requirements and are endorsed by Standards Verification UK. Provision is offered across the partnership on a part-time in-service basis. In addition the University offers pre-service courses at its campuses in Huddersfield, Barnsley and Oldham as well as through colleges in Darlington and Grimsby.

58. Currently, over 2,600 trainees are following the two certificate courses. More than 200 trainees are on pre-service routes and around seven % of all trainees are from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Key strengths

59. The key strengths are:

- the culture of cutting edge action research that anticipates national and local change and leads to improvement
- the high success rates and the very good progression of pre-service trainees to employment
- the good development of trainees as reflective practitioners who evaluate the impact of their teaching on learning to improve their performance
- the good personal and specialist support with constructive feedback from tutors on assignments and lesson observations which help trainees to progress
- the outstanding resources promoting good use of information communication technology and creative teaching methods which enhance learning.

Required actions

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

- improve the consistency of the analysis of trainees' skills at entry and the clarity of action points for improvement in personal development plans
- ensure that all mentors are equipped with effective lesson observation skills.

Recommendations

61. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment the partnership should:

- establish a clear system for evaluating the progress individuals and cohorts of trainees make given their different starting points.

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

- ensure the consistent use of data to inform planning and target setting for improvement at centre and partnership level
- increase the timeliness of the cross-partnership implementation of good practice.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

63. The overall effectiveness of the partnership in securing high quality outcomes for trainees is good. Trainees' attainment is at least good and has been so for more than three-quarters of trainees in the previous three years. Teacher trainers across the partnership are accurate in their assessment and trainees' success rates are high. Trainees make good progress and attain well because of the very effective personal and subject specialist support they receive. This is enhanced by helpful feedback on assignments and lesson observations which provides the basis for them to become very good reflective practitioners. Furthermore, the outstanding resources, which are used very well, include highly professional teacher trainers who are active participants in leading edge action research to improve the provision.

64. Trainees' skills and knowledge and standards of professional practice are good. They are well aware of many of the key issues facing teachers, trainers and trainees in the further education system. Nevertheless, a few have insufficient understanding of *Every Child Matters* and safeguarding issues in relation to 14-19 provision and provision for vulnerable adults. Opportunities for pre-service trainees to experience a broader range of teaching practice have been enriched by split placements and skills development in different settings, for example in prison education. Most in-service trainees have an appropriate range of teaching but, for a small number of trainees, their teaching is limited to a few hours a week, with the same age group, and at the same level. This narrow focus, whilst compliant with the endorsing body's requirements for teaching hours, slows their progress.

65. Overall, trainees make at least good progress. Teacher trainers model good practice and encourage trainees to test out creative approaches to learning to good effect. Trainees develop good skills in the use of information communication technology, for example in producing interesting web-based resources. Many of them have excellent vocational experience and use this skilfully to inspire their own students, typically in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. In trainees' lessons, good use of question and answer techniques differentiates and extends learning. In the main, they plan their lessons well and are adept in deploying a range of methods, including teacher-led discussion, demonstrations, small group

activity and creative approaches to keep their learners motivated and on track. Trainees understand the relevance of developing literacy, numeracy and information communication technology skills in the context of their specialist subject but a few of them lack confidence in doing so. They are very good reflective practitioners and most of them know what they need to do to improve, however the targets they set in personal development plans are frequently too broad to enable them to undertake a systematic evaluation of the full extent of the progress they make.

66. Recruitment and selection arrangements are good. The number of trainees recruited from work-based learning providers has increased and the content of training courses takes appropriate account of the wider further education workforce. The partnership is responsive to employers who view the provision as the 'university of choice'. Many speak highly of the value added to their own workforce by the good quality training they receive. Flexible attendance options and modes of study cater efficiently for trainees' differing needs. Appropriate regard is given to equality and diversity issues and the promotion of courses to under-represented groups. A number of successful taster courses were piloted. The outcome has been a contribution to the increase in the proportion of minority ethnic trainees across the partnership from four per cent to six per cent; although the model is yet to be applied across all centres.

67. Candidates receive clear guidance prior to starting the course. Opportunities for the accreditation of prior learning, for trainees with different starting points, are good. The provider takes appropriate action to comply with safeguarding requirements and criminal record bureau checks. The efficiency and effectiveness of the initial assessment of trainees' individual learning needs at the start of the course is patchy. The links between the initial assessment and planning for improvements in trainee performance are not consistently well-established. A pilot scheme, to be implemented across the partnership in September 2009, aims to improve this and the approach to the development of trainees' personal development plans.

68. Training and assessment are good, providing a secure foundation from which trainees progress well. Teacher trainers set high standards of professional practice. The creative use of learning resources is promoted well in taught sessions. Consequently, trainees are confident in testing out new techniques, often very successfully, in their own lessons. Teacher trainers provide very good personal support for individuals and groups of trainees. Subject specialist support for trainees has been strengthened and is now good. Trainees have access to tutors with a broadly similar subject specialism to their own. Much of the lesson observation feedback trainees receive is detailed and helps them to progress. Revised quality assurance arrangements aim to improve the consistency and quality of feedback to trainees from their mentors in the workplace. These systems are at an early stage of implementation and the feedback from some mentors is generic, focussing insufficiently on the development of the trainees' subject specialist teaching skills. Feedback to trainees from teacher trainers on marked work is very thorough. Professional development planning requires trainees to be self-critical and set improvement targets. The relevance and validity of this process is not universally understood by trainees and some of them remain unchecked in setting targets that are too broad; for example 'attend behaviour management workshop'. Such targets

are insufficiently focussed to inform trainees' progress or the actions needed to bring about improvement.

69. Outstanding resources are used by teacher trainers and trainees very effectively to promote good learning. Funds are allocated openly and transparently across the partnership. Capital funding is available with a particular focus on state of the art technology. In centres, much accommodation is dedicated to initial teacher education and these rooms are often furnished to a very high standard. As one trainee said, 'this was beyond my expectations; I would aspire to teach in places like this'. Teacher trainers are supported very well through a broad range of continuing professional development opportunities. A strong culture of action research, to inform improvements and to tackle barriers to learning, is very well promoted. Teacher trainers participate widely in research at the centre and in partner colleges. This work is enhanced and supported well through the close association with the Huddersfield Centre for Excellence in teacher training (HUDCETT) which is based at the university.

70. The overall quality of the provision across the partnership is good but there is some variation in the quality of trainees' experiences across centres. Very robust moderation procedures monitor the assessment of written coursework and sample feedback to trainees on their teaching practice. While information is gathered to inform the professional development of assessors, this is yet to impact sufficiently on a consistent evaluation of the quality of trainees' action planning for improvement. Trainees comment positively on their courses and improvements they suggest are acted on. The good communication across the partnership is supported by designated academic liaison officers appointed by the university. Centre leaders attend valued and productive monthly network meetings which showcase good practice and disseminate the outcomes of research. Nevertheless, the good practice developed is not implemented in a timely fashion across all centres. More flexible arrangements to encourage the take up of mentor training are in place, but not all mentors have received training to secure their skills in observing trainees teach.

71. The promotion of equality and diversity in teaching and learning, both in training sessions and in trainees' teaching practice, is good. The training prepares trainees to foster values of respect for others' views and backgrounds and they implement this ethos very well in their lessons. Trainees feel safe and well supported. Those with learning needs are not afraid to declare them and take up the range of support available across centres. The culture is very open and enables trainees to declare their learning needs and to accept support. Beyond the pilot projects, the partnership's analysis of recruitment and attainment by different groups of trainees is underdeveloped.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality

Grade: 2

72. The partnership has good capacity to sustain high quality outcomes for trainees and to take the actions required to secure improvements. The self-evaluation document was compiled with the contribution of managers at all levels and all partners were engaged in its development. Although overly descriptive, with

some higher grades than those awarded by inspectors, managers are clear in their understanding of the key strengths of the provision and of the main areas to work on to secure improvements in outcomes for trainees. Appropriate action is taken to address issues identified, for example in the significant improvements in subject specialist support put in place since the last inspection. Success rates have improved and around 90% of pre-service trainees progress to employment in further education. Improvements are informed by the views of trainees and employers but there is insufficient detailed analysis of the performance of different groups of trainees to support in depth planning for continuous improvement. The self-evaluation does not include an analysis of the performance of different groups of trainees, or of the full extent of the progress they make, given their different starting points.

73. The provider has outstanding ability to anticipate change and prepare for, and respond to, national and local initiatives. This ability has been strengthened further by the inception of the centre for excellence in teacher training, in 2007, and the information exchange it offers to improve outcomes for trainees through a national programme of incisive research. The partnership has made a very good response to the development and implementation of provision to meet the requirements of the national agenda for reform for teachers and trainers in the further education system. Course content and delivery have been adapted to meet the needs of trainees from a diverse range of settings and the increasing numbers of those trainees employed by work-based training providers. New partners are supported very well and this engenders a high level of commitment to a strong, democratic and inclusive partnership. Generous and high quality resources are equitably distributed to partner colleges and these are used very effectively to respond to individual and local needs

74. University quality assurance procedures are well understood and rigorously applied. Clear structures track accountability through centre managers, course committees and partnership networking groups. The colleges' own quality assurance systems ensure trainees have a further chance to comment on the quality of provision and that tutors are regularly observed teaching. The university also observes college tutors as a further quality check. University moderation procedures of written work and teaching observation are comprehensive but observations of trainees' teaching practice by workplace mentors are not subject to systematic quality assurance arrangements.

75. Appropriate steps have been taken to address the issues arising at the last inspection and the shared vision for continuous improvement and development is well-articulated across the partnership. However, course development plans are not yet linked routinely to individual centre action plans. Plans lack specific, timed and measurable targets for improvement and are insufficiently informed by a rigorous and consistent analysis of relevant data. A well-considered research project is underway to establish a model for assessing the progress of trainees, given their different starting points, and to provide a more secure basis from which to evaluate the impact of the training on outcomes for trainees. University appointed designated academic liaison officers work with centre managers to ensure that the university's requirements are met. They facilitate very good communication across the partnership, fostering valued and supportive working relationships with partner colleges. Nevertheless, there is insufficient test and challenge, between the formal,

university cycle of quality assurance arrangements, to bring about a more rapid rate of improvement and to facilitate the timely implementation of the good practice developed across centres.

76. Leaders and managers at all levels demonstrate a clear commitment to trainees' success, the success of the partnership, and the value added to the professional skills of the team of teacher trainers involved. As a consequence, the majority of trainees attain well and make at least good progress given their starting points. They speak very highly of the very good personal support they receive from their tutors and the good subject specialist support now in place. The words of one trainee, on successful completion of the 2007/08 programme, are a fitting testimony to the partnership's good capacity to sustain high quality provision; "I joined the course as a painter and decorator who did some teaching. I am leaving as a teacher who paints and decorates".

Annex: Partnership colleges

At the time of inspection the partnership included the following colleges:

Accrington and Rossendale College
Bishop Burton College
Boston College
Calderdale College
Craven College
Darlington College
Dearne Valley College
East Riding College
Grimsby Institute of Further & Higher Education
Harrogate College
Hull College
Joseph Priestley College
Kirklees College
Leeds College of Technology
Leeds Thomas Danby
Manchester College
Nelson and Colne College
North Lindsey College
The Northern College
Park Lane College – Keighley
Redcar and Cleveland College
Rotherham College of Arts and Technology
Selby College
South Tyneside College
Stockton Riverside College
Tameside College
Wakefield College
York College
Yorkshire Coast 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

		Primary	Secondary	ITE for FE
How effective is the provision in securing high quality outcomes for trainees?		2	2	2
Trainees' attainment	How well do trainees attain?	2	2	2
Factors contributing to trainees' attainment	To what extent do recruitment / selection arrangements support high quality outcomes?	2	2	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	2	2
	To what extent are available resources used effectively and efficiently?	2	2	1
The quality of the provision	To what extent is the provision across the partnership of consistently high quality?	2	2	2
Promoting equalities and diversity	To what extent does the provision promote equality of opportunity, value diversity and eliminate harassment and unlawful discrimination?	2	2	2

Capacity to improve further and/or sustain high quality

		Primary	Secondary	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	2	2
How effectively does the management at all levels assess performance in order to improve or sustain high quality?		2	2	2
How well does the leadership at all levels anticipate change, and prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives?		1	2	1
How effectively does the provider plan and take action for improvement?		2	2	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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