

University of Southampton

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

Provider address	School of Education University of Southampton Building 32 (Education) University Road Highfield Southampton SO17 1BJ
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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

Explanation of terms used in this report

Attainment is defined as the standard reached by a trainee at the end of their training.

Progress is judged in terms of how well a trainee has developed professionally from their starting point to the standard reached at the time of the inspection or at a suitable review point.

Achievement is judged in terms of the progress made and the standard reached by a trainee at the time of the inspection or at a recent assessment review point.

The provider

3. The University of Southampton works in partnership with schools across the region to offer initial teacher education leading to qualified teacher status (QTS) in the primary and secondary phases. It works in partnership with five colleges of further education to offer in-service initial teacher education for teachers in the post-compulsory and further education system. The university also works with the Directorate of the Educational and Training Service (Army); this is an officer-only unit responsible, in the main, for the provision of promotion and basic skills teaching and support across the Army and operates across the world including in theatres of conflict. This provision was not included in the inspection. The university also offers an employment-based route (EBR) leading to qualified teacher status, although this is accredited as a separate provider by the Training and Development Agency as the University of Southampton EBR and is the subject of a separate inspection report. This provision is fully integrated with the university's other initial teacher education programmes and was inspected at the same time. The university has a strong regional presence and uses its very close links with

local authorities and other agencies in the region to link its teacher education provision to local and regional needs. This matches well with the university's aim to work more closely with the local and regional community.

4. The university has a strong model of research-led teaching that ensures that practice is informed well by the extensive and relevant research undertaken by university teaching staff. Increasingly, close relationships with other parts of the university are used to provide trainee teachers with a more rounded view of their place in the wider children and young people's workforce. The university makes full use of the regional science centre located on the campus as well as the specialist learning centres in mathematics and science.

A commentary on the provision

5. The following are particular features of the provider and its initial teacher education programmes:
 - the way in which the university offers a range of courses matched well to meeting local and regional needs for teachers
 - the quality of training provided by university staff, including the strength of the research-led teaching model
 - the commitment and enthusiasm of trainees on all routes and the manner in which they take responsibility for their own professional development
 - the quality of the support for trainees' personal well-being and the close matching of training to individual needs.
6. There are particularly strong features in some programmes that could be applied to other programmes or aspects of the provision:
 - the effective systems for tracking the progress of individual and groups of trainees on primary and secondary programmes could be applied to those on the post-compulsory/further education routes.
7. The following recommendations should be considered to improve the quality of the outcomes for trainees on all routes and programmes:
 - setting more challenging developmental targets for trainees
 - the closer involvement of all partners in self-evaluation and improvement planning
 - ensuring that all improvement plans have a clear focus on securing improvements in the outcomes for trainees.

Provision in the primary phase

Context

8. The university trains primary and early years teachers through the postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) and Bachelor of Arts (BA) (Honours) in Education and Training with QTS award. There are currently 145 trainees on the postgraduate programme and 10 in the final year of the BA course. The postgraduate course also has an allocation of 10 primary French trainees who are required to undertake a four-week placement in Strasbourg.
9. The partnership extends to over 400 schools in the City of Southampton, Hampshire, Portsmouth, Bournemouth, Poole, the Isle of Wight, Dorset and Wiltshire and, for the BA programme, with schools as far afield as Bracknell Forest, Somerset and Surrey.

Key strengths

10. The key strengths are:
 - committed trainees who are keen to seek and take advice and improve their practice
 - well-structured courses that prepare trainees effectively for their school placements
 - a good range of school placements that support trainees' good progress
 - university staff who are approachable, accessible and quick to respond to questions and concerns raised by schools and trainees
 - programme leaders who act effectively and enthusiastically to address identified priorities for improvement.

Recommendations

11. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment and to strengthen the partnership, the provider should:
 - ensure that trainees' action plans are more explicit about how to improve their practice in their next placement
 - improve the teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) in university-based training so that trainees are better able to build its use into their lessons on school placements
 - develop the partnership further to engage schools more proactively in evaluating provision and in identifying and delivering priorities.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

12. Attainment on both programmes has improved and in the last two years the large majority of trainees have been graded as good or outstanding. This is in part the result of good arrangements for recruitment and selection. These focus sharply and successfully on selecting motivated and hard-working trainees with the commitment necessary to flourish on courses where expectations are high. Trainees are keen to seek and take advice in order to improve their practice and a high proportion successfully complete their course and secure teaching posts, many in the local area. An increasing number of trainees achieve the postgraduate course at master's level.
13. There has been a steady improvement in the recruitment of male trainees with the percentage of applicants offered a place closing on the figure for females. Much effort has been expended in seeking to recruit more trainees with minority ethnic backgrounds, including attempts to link with local community groups. These efforts have been largely unsuccessful so far, and the data show no improvement in the number of applicants from these communities. Recruiting more trainees from minority ethnic communities remains a priority for the programmes. Current and appropriate activities include changes to the website in order to feature minority ethnic trainees to encourage applicants to consider Southampton, and using local authority contacts to assist in establishing further links with local communities. The BA programme tends to recruit trainees from the locality who have achieved a foundation degree or equivalent and who often have established commitments to family and the local community. The programme represents a direct response to a clearly identified need.
14. The large majority of trainees make at least good progress as a result of the good quality of the training provided in the university and in the good range of placement schools. Trainees particularly value the way in which university training is carefully designed to support them when they start their school-based training, for example through practical sessions providing ideas and approaches that can be easily built into lessons. Good examples include activities on teaching pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for the teaching of science. Sessions led by teachers from local schools are a developing feature of the training and are particularly appreciated by trainees. Trainees have also visited schools to observe and discuss good practice. The BA programme is flexible and adapted well to the particular needs of the trainees it recruits. Sessions on ICT are less highly regarded and a few trainees were not well prepared to use ICT to support pupils' learning in other curriculum subjects. The university has already identified this and the use of ICT has been built into some sessions, for example in mathematics, with further developments planned for next year.
15. The school-based training provides a good range of school experiences offering well-structured opportunities for participants to develop their thinking and practice; this is particularly the case with the French placement. Trainees meet weekly with their mentors to discuss progress and set targets for further

improvement which are followed up in subsequent meetings. Observations of trainees' teaching by mentors and link tutors result in generally clear and helpful feedback on progress with appropriate priorities for action, although sometimes mentors' feedback is rather general and lacks subject-specific guidance and precision on how to improve. There are good discussions between trainees, mentors and link tutors towards the end of placements about what needs to be achieved in the next. However, trainees' action plans for their next placement lack sufficient detail on the action needed to develop their practice. As a result, sometimes trainees are not clear enough on how to improve.

16. Resources are used effectively and efficiently so that the large majority of trainees make good or better progress. The use of human resources is a major strength of the programmes. The programme leaders, other university tutors, link tutors and mentors are highly regarded by trainees and their approachability is particularly prized. Questions or concerns raised by schools and trainees are quickly and effectively responded to by programme leaders or other staff. There is good use of teachers from partnership schools to contribute to the training.
17. The large majority of trainees make good progress as a result of the good provision across the partnership. Programme handbooks and other documents are comprehensive and clear, and relationships between schools and the university are good. New grading descriptions for the different stages of the programmes assist in the assessment of trainees; link tutors work closely with mentors in order to ensure accurate and consistent assessment. Some joint observations are undertaken, more frequently on the BA programme. The regular briefings for mentors prior to the start of a placement cover requirements in some detail and often include a session on a current educational issue or development. Mentors are very clear on what needs to be done to support and assess trainees, although the university encounters some difficulties in securing all mentors' attendance. Briefings do not currently contain planned opportunities for mentors to share good practice and learn from each other.
18. The promotion of equality of opportunity and valuing of diversity is good. The large majority of trainees make good progress as a result of the programmes of training, with no significant differences in the achievement of identifiable groups. The university offers a high level of support to all trainees encountering difficulty, striving to help them complete their training. The BA programme, in particular, effectively provides opportunities for trainees who might not otherwise join the teaching profession. Trainees have benefited from university-based sessions on minority ethnic communities and on particular groups, for example the Traveller community, as well as from the opportunity to visit schools in culturally and ethnically diverse locations and from contrasting placement schools. Subsequently, they have a good understanding of how to teach pupils from a range of backgrounds.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality

Grade: 2

19. The outcomes for trainees have been sustained at a good level with a trend of improvement over the last few years. Programme leaders act effectively and enthusiastically to address identified priorities for improvement, underpinned by accurate self-evaluation and effective action planning. The provider has good capacity to improve further.
20. Self-evaluation is based on a good range of information gathered from all involved in the course and at key points in the programme. Direct, informal lines of communication are also effective. The university works hard to maximise the number of responses from schools and a recent move to web-based communication is helping. Although schools are represented on the programme boards, partnership schools are not yet sufficiently proactively and systematically involved in identifying priorities for development. Much good work has been done by university staff recently to gather information on the progress of trainees across both programmes so that the progress of individuals and of groups can be more easily tracked. Programme leaders are also clearly responsive to external examiners' recommendations. The result is clear and appropriate priorities for further improvement, although success criteria do not always relate to trainees' outcomes and priorities are not readily understood in partnership schools.
21. The programme leaders anticipate and respond to national changes well, with a positive impact on trainees' development. Programme leaders have responded well to national developments in assessment and the teaching of phonics and to the Rose, Williams and Byron reports. Trainees have benefited from this and show some confidence in assessment matters and in the use of phonics. They are well informed about e-safety. A few trainees had a limited understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, although they had often observed teaching and learning in a relevant class. Trainees also benefit from professional development opportunities in their placement schools and from the work of local teachers in leading initiatives. Some BA trainees were less confident with the teaching of phonics and the university has already reviewed and modified provision.
22. Programme leaders have a good record of responding effectively to areas identified as in need of improvement. Good examples include the development of the 'pen portraits' to support more accurate judgements of trainees' achievement and addressing trainees' weaknesses in their understanding of assessment practice.

Provision in the secondary phase

Context

23. The university offers initial teacher education leading to QTS in ten secondary subjects: English, geography, history, ICT, mathematics, modern languages, music, physical education, religious education and science. At the time of the inspection there were 231 trainees on secondary programmes. Almost half of all secondary trainees are in mathematics and science, with increasing numbers joining from the 18- or 24-month extended courses; more than half of mathematics trainees join from this programme. The first six or twelve months of these courses focus on subject knowledge development and application, with trainees transferring to the one-year PGCE at the end of this period. The university identifies that around 25% of trainees are in one of the 'at risk' categories used in the selection procedures; these trainees often have non-standard backgrounds and qualifications, and many have to balance the demands of the course with their personal circumstances. All trainees can be awarded a professional certificate in education with more than 80% obtaining the postgraduate certificate (masters-level PGCE). Trainees are assessed against the QTS standards for teaching in the 11 to 16 age range, although trainees are prepared for post-16 teaching and this is assessed within the PGCE. The partnership includes schools across eight local authorities: the City of Southampton, Hampshire, Bournemouth, Poole, Dorset, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Wiltshire.

Key strengths

24. The key strengths are:
- providing opportunities for a wide range of trainees to enter the teaching profession
 - the effectiveness of the current leadership of the secondary programme in securing improvements in the outcomes for trainees
 - the systems for tracking individual trainees' progress
 - the quality of university-based training
 - the way the course structure supports trainees' progress.

Recommendations

25. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the provider should:
- support mentors in providing a sharper focus on raising trainees' achievement
 - show mentors how to set more challenging targets for trainees
 - develop mentors' use of a wider range of training strategies and matching these more closely to trainees' targets.
26. In order to improve self-evaluation and improvement planning, the provider should:

- undertake a more precise analysis of data on trainees' progress and achievements
- involve the partnership more in the process.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

27. The outcomes for trainees are good. Overall attainment is good and in line with trainees' starting points in each subject. There is a trend of improvement in the proportion of trainees being judged to be good or outstanding. The achievements of trainees in the 'at risk' groups and trainees from minority ethnic backgrounds are at least good. The moderation of assessments is thorough and rigorous. Retention and successful completion rates have risen and are at least in line with the national average. The high successful completion rates for trainees in the 'at risk' groups and for trainees from minority ethnic backgrounds are particularly noteworthy. Other than this, there are no significant differences in achievement across identifiable groups of trainees. Employment rates are also improving and are in line with the national average; many former trainees are employed in schools in the region and in partnership schools.
28. Secondary trainees show excellent commitment and enthusiasm for teaching and for their subjects. They establish good relationships with those they teach and with staff in schools. Trainees have good subject knowledge and apply this well to their planning and teaching. Trainees' evaluations of their teaching focus well on students' learning. Their planning shows good attention to developing the next steps in learning; the intended learning outcomes are matched well to how they will be assessed and trainees show a good understanding of formative assessment. Many trainees exhibit creativity in their teaching; they are prepared to take risks to develop further their repertoire of approaches to teaching and learning. Trainees are well informed about teaching students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and apply their understanding well when required to do so. They also have a range of strategies for teaching students who speak English as an additional language. They take full responsibility for their own professional development; they are able to reflect critically on their practice to help secure their own progress.
29. Many trainees need to develop further some aspects of higher-order teaching skills; this would improve the overall attainment. A minority of trainees, particularly in mathematics and science, lack depth of understanding in subject pedagogy. This varies across subjects and schools; in many cases it reflects the attention given to this by mentors. Trainees give good consideration to differentiation in their planning, but many use a limited range of strategies for differentiating their teaching. Trainees give much attention to ensuring that their lessons have good pace. For some, the focus needs to be more on the pace of learning not just on rapidly changing activities. A few trainees have a limited understanding of how to teach children from a range of diverse backgrounds, despite good training in the university. This is

particularly so for those placed in schools where this is not an immediate priority.

30. The good retention and employment rates indicate clearly that selection procedures ensure that appropriate trainees, with the potential to become good teachers, are recruited. The provider recognises that some trainees will not fully realise this potential until they have been teaching for two or three years. Improvements in recruitment mean that the university is able to select from larger fields, particularly in the shortage subjects, to meet recruitment targets. The university, in order to broaden the base of those entering the teaching profession, takes calculated risks in its selection process. Around one quarter of trainees are in one or other of the 'at risk' categories used as part of the selection procedures. These trainees have non-standard backgrounds and often require significant subject knowledge development; many have challenging personal circumstances. However, selection clearly identifies their potential for teaching and the university, and schools, provide high quality professional and personal support. These trainees have higher than expected retention rates and achieve well. Providing opportunities for these trainees to enter teaching contributes well to meeting local and regional needs.
31. All trainees make progress as a result of the training and support they receive. The very large majority of trainees progress at least as well as expected. There is a clear relationship between trainees' starting points, the progress trainees make wherever they are in the partnership, their current achievement and final attainment. However, the expectations and levels of challenge for some trainees are not high enough and this is a key factor in why the provision is good and not outstanding. Good use is made of information gathered at selection and early in the course to sharply identify trainees' strengths and areas for development. This enables clear targets to be set for early development in first school placement and leads to trainees making strong progress in the early stages of the course. There are good systems for tracking the progress of individuals and specific groups of trainees through a well-planned series of assessment points. The university has sensibly moved the 'prospect grade' that was decided at selection, to the end of the first period in school to provide a much better idea about trainees' potential and to evaluate future progress. Close analysis of the provider's data, confirmed through comparison with inspection evidence, indicates that at least three quarters of trainees are making good progress. This is consistent across the partnership.
32. The secondary trainees' assessment record provides an excellent system for recording trainees' reflections, targets, individual training plans and a summary of achievement at each of the assessment points. This is used well to monitor individual trainees' progress. Good formative use is made of a set of pen portraits at the assessment review points; these indicate the expectations of trainees at each stage of the course. Mentors provide very good feedback to trainees on the more practical aspects of teaching. The quality of this feedback has been improved through the introduction of a further set of pen portraits to evaluate trainees' lessons. All trainees are set developmental targets and these support their progress. However, there are

wide variations across schools and subjects in the expectations of trainees and in the level of challenge. While the pen portraits are used well to monitor progress, they lack a focus on pedagogy at the higher levels. Mentors do not focus sufficiently on this to challenge higher performing trainees. A significant minority of mentors make insufficient use of a wide range of training strategies matched closely to trainees' targets. While mentor training is frequent and well attended, some mentors lack understanding of how to ensure that high expectations are set and achieved by trainees.

33. The structure of the course, with clear progression through a series of six phases, supports trainees' progress well. Good use is made of a serial placement, when the trainee spends parts of each week in school and in the university, before each of the two block placements. This enables trainees to make effective links between the different elements of the course. It is supported well by mentors and by sets of university-based and school-based, often subject-specific, tasks. Most trainees are able to build on the high quality university-based training to improve their teaching. Complementary placements provide trainees with a good breadth of experience of, for example, different types of learner.
34. Resources are targeted well to support trainees' progress. Excellent use is made of specialist facilities in the university. Trainees are provided with high levels of personal, as well as professional, support; the attention given to trainees' personal well-being is excellent. University tutors are vigilant in detecting when trainees need additional support, intervening rapidly and effectively; they are often supported well in this by school-based professional mentors. The university is working extensively with teachers and local communities to ensure high levels of support for trainees from particular minority ethnic groups. There are significant pressures on tutors' time; this means that they are only able to routinely visit trainees once in the first school placement and twice in the longer second placement. While there is no direct evidence of this having a detrimental impact on progress, trainees would value greater direct contact with tutors when they are in school.

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

35. The outcomes for trainees have either been sustained at a good level or have improved. Retention and employment rates have improved and are sustained at levels at least in line with national averages; for some groups of trainees they are significantly above. Following a period where attainment was only just good, there is now a gradual trend of improvement in the proportion of trainees whose attainment is good or outstanding, with clear improvements in trainees' achievement. There are marked trends of improvement in the outcomes for specific groups of trainees.

36. There is strong leadership at all levels, with a clear understanding of the strengths and priorities for development across the secondary provision. Best practice is shared effectively. Well-established systems, such as the secondary trainees' assessment record, are applied consistently across all subjects. In other cases, a secure framework is applied flexibly to meet the needs of particular courses. For example, all subjects use a range of university-based and school-based tasks to ensure good coherence between the elements of the course, but these are specific to each subject. Professional mentors also enjoy the freedom to make the most effective use of the expertise in their schools, but within a clearly defined role. This gives the provider good capacity to further improve the outcomes for trainees.
37. The university's anticipation and response to change are good, with a clear focus on improving the outcomes for trainees. As a result of the training they receive, trainees have a good understanding of the implications of changes to the primary and secondary curricula for their teaching and are up to date with developments in their subject and current initiatives in schools. Trainees are less secure in their understanding of developments in 14 to 19 education; in this 11 to 16 partnership, the university should do more to develop trainees' understanding to compensate for the lack of alternative 14 to 16 provision across the partnership. There is interesting and useful collaboration with other parts of the university, and within the partnership, to develop trainees' understanding of their place in the wider children's workforce. The extensive, relevant research undertaken in the school of education is used well to enhance and develop the training.
38. The cycle of self-evaluation, improvement planning and monitoring the impact of actions to sustain and improve the outcomes for trainees, is good. Self-evaluation leads to clarity about what is working well and what needs further improvement. The recommendations included in this report had already been identified by university and are included in the secondary action plan. Self-evaluation takes account of evaluations from trainees and all those involved in the partnership. It also takes account of external examiners' reports, which provide a useful source of external feedback. This all provides good breadth and depth of data and information that covers all aspects of the provision. Although attention is given to the impact on outcomes for trainees, the evaluations do not focus explicitly on this. For example, when trainees are asked about the quality of the feedback they receive or the training sessions, they are not expected to evaluate the impact on helping them to make progress or how effectively they are able to apply it to their teaching. The university now collects extensive data on individual trainees, subject cohorts and other specific groups; analysis of this data on trainees' outcomes is used to contribute to self-evaluation. However, it is not yet analysed in sufficient detail to provide sharp insights into how well particular groups of trainees are progressing. The analysis of the achievement data needs sharper focus on how to raise attainment and further increase the proportion of trainees whose attainment is good or outstanding.
39. Improvement planning is informed well by the outcomes of self-evaluation and is focused on key priorities linked to improving the outcomes for trainees.

There is clear attention to specific groups, although sometimes analysis lacks sharpness. The secondary action plan clearly identifies what needs to be improved and how this will be achieved. Actions taken are monitored in terms of their impact on the outcomes for trainees; they have led to sustaining some good quality outcomes and with improvements in attainment. However, there is wide variation in how well schools understand the priorities for improvement and their role in securing these.

Initial teacher education for the further education system

Context

40. The University of Southampton operates in partnership with five further education colleges in the region. The provision consists exclusively of in-service training at level 5 Certificate of Education (Cert Ed) and level 7 PGCE route. One college, new to the partnership, delivers the first year of the course only, with the university delivering the second year. The number of trainees enrolled for the year in which the inspection took place totalled around 235, of whom around 150 were following the Cert Ed Route, and 85 studying for the PGCE. The university runs a Bachelor of Arts (BA honours) in post-compulsory education and training which provides a good progression route for non-graduates. All PGCE trainees complete masters-level units; those that do not are awarded the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education.

Key Strengths

41. The key strengths are:

- university tutors' high quality teaching and support for trainees
- the effective use of the professional standards throughout the training
- the good levels of professionalism demonstrated by trainees
- the extent to which equality and diversity are understood by trainees and are successfully embedded in their practice
- the feedback on assignments that is detailed, accurate and constructive.

Required actions:

42. In order to improve the quality of provision the provider must:

- ensure that the improvement planning process incorporates a much sharper focus on the outcomes for trainees
- ensure that data collection and analysis are comprehensive and targeted at specific strategies to secure course development and improvement.

Recommendations

43. In order to further support trainees' progress and attainment the provider should:

- ensure that all trainees receive good feedback on their teaching

- adopt a consistent and formalised approach to diagnostic testing which identifies appropriate interventions to meet individual trainees' support needs
 - use a wider range of strategies to assess trainees' progress and achievement
 - promote trainees' effective engagement with the university's virtual learning environment.
44. In order to improve partnership development the provider should:
- ensure that variations in quality across the partnership are identified and interventions are rapid and effective
 - place greater emphasis on the sharing of good practice, staff development and a shared self-evaluation process
 - provide more structured opportunities for strategic thinking relating to anticipating change and encouraging innovative practice.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

45. The effectiveness of the partnership in securing high quality outcomes for trainees is good. Given their prior experience and educational backgrounds, most trainees make progress from their starting points as a result of the good levels of support from their university tutors and subject mentors. Although overall success rates are high when averaged across the partnership, over the past three years there has been variation in success levels between the partners. There is currently no upward trend for successful completion. The recently introduced systems for grading trainees' teaching and written assignments are not yet mature enough to generate meaningful data, and predicted final grades available at the time of inspection show a low number of trainees attaining at a high level.
46. Trainees make significant effort to apply their newly acquired skills and understanding arising from the training to classroom activities and use an interesting variety of teaching and learning methods. When planning their lessons they incorporate clear learning outcomes and make relevant references to equality and diversity, health and safety, Every Child Matters and, where appropriate, safeguarding. Trainees are prepared to be creative and take risks in their teaching, confident in the support and feedback from their tutors to help them learn from this. Trainees improve and develop their use of information and learning technology as a result of the training, and recognise the stimulus that this brings to learning. They use interactive whiteboards and include video clips from the internet to illustrate their presentations.
47. For a minority of trainees, there are aspects where performance is less effective. This mainly relates to the planning of differentiated teaching and learning strategies to extend the knowledge of the more able learners and to support the less able. These trainees are not always effective in their use of

questioning skills to ensure that learners receive important formative and personal feedback.

48. Trainees have a clear sense of themselves as teaching professionals and develop good skills of reflection. This is underpinned by the effective use of the professional standards for teachers in the further education system; these are embedded well in the course. By the time they reach the end of their second year of training, trainees have a real understanding of their competency in relation to the professional standards and are confidently and enthusiastically describing their plans for future professional development to enable them to become better teachers. They also mention their desire to enhance their subject specialism by studying for additional, and frequently higher, qualifications. Many trainees are able to speak of the way in which their growing confidence has led to an increase in their teaching hours and, in some cases, to promotion.
49. There are thorough procedures and well-specified criteria for entry onto the course and these provide a firm basis for trainees to make progress. A level 2 qualification in literacy and numeracy is a pre-requisite for entry onto the course. There is, however, no university-led requirement for initial diagnostic testing in literacy which would identify timely interventions to meet individual support needs where necessary. A few trainees would have benefited from support for their writing skills earlier in the course. Other aspects of the induction process are good and include an analysis of trainees' strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats as they start the course. At induction they are able to establish a firm basis for their individual learning plans and these are good tools to motivate trainees, monitor their progress and drive improvement. While recognising the constraints, the partnership has made no specific efforts to increase recruitment from minority ethnic or other under-represented groups. Lack of initiatives to widen participation from under-represented groups, including newly established groups in the local communities, limits a few trainees' understanding of how to teach more effectively in an increasingly diverse society.
50. The overall quality of training and assessment is good and trainees receive high levels of support. They make confident links between theory and practice. For example, one trainee observed was able to design his lesson plan around a useful piece of learning theory to check that he was giving his learners the opportunity to reflect on their new learning, test it out, and apply it within that lesson. Trainees benefit from detailed and constructive feedback on their assignments and, in most cases, on their teaching. There is good evidence of the effective standardisation and moderation of tutor feedback; the grading of the teaching practice of second year trainees by tutors is accurate. The assessment methods used for course assignments is limited and is largely undertaken through essays, although a presentation has been introduced into one unit. A wider range of assessment methods would enable all trainees to demonstrate their achievement better, a point also made by external examiners, and facilitate better feedback on their progress.

51. A variety of resources contribute well to the good outcomes attained by trainees. Across the partnership there are well-qualified, experienced and enthusiastic teaching staff who provide a good range of skills and expertise. Their input is occasionally, and usefully, supplemented by visiting speakers. Subject specialist support in many cases is good; trainees have frequent formal and informal contact with their mentors leading to good development of their understanding of subject pedagogy. However, there are instances where the support is less frequent and effective. The feedback provided by mentors on trainees' lessons, although frequently detailed and supportive, is sometimes insufficiently subject-specific limiting the development of trainees' pedagogical skills. A minority of trainees also have targets that are not precise enough to secure further progress and achievement.
52. Access to good information and learning technology enables trainees to develop and implement their skills to the benefit of their learners. The university and its partner colleges all have virtual learning environments; resources from the university system are uploaded onto those in the colleges. However, trainees' use of the university's virtual learning environment is limited. Trainees use the system for administrative purposes, to access resources and also to submit assignments. However, many do not develop the skills in its use that would enable them to allow their own learners to develop greater autonomy in their learning. Trainees access on-line journals available via the university's virtual private network and colleges have good libraries and teaching spaces.
53. There is a clear focus on the promotion of equality and valuing diversity which is embedded in the curriculum and in assessment activities. Most trainees can clearly express how they promote these concepts in their own teaching. One trainee, who was observed teaching a very diverse group in terms of their learning needs, was able to explain sensitively and effectively the different strategies he used to meet these needs, and to set these effectively within the context of the learning for the whole group.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality Grade: 3

54. The provider's capacity to improve its provision and the quality of outcomes for its trainees is satisfactory. The outcomes are not yet consistently at a sufficiently high level across the partnership and there is currently no clear trend of improvement in these outcomes. The university's systems to monitor quality across the partnership are satisfactory but the variation in quality has not yet been dealt with effectively.
55. Self-evaluation is not rigorous enough and makes insufficient use of the quantitative analysis of data about the outcomes for trainees. Although data is collected in the colleges and at the university, it is not presented in a way that would facilitate effective analysis of trends over time. Because of this, the partnership cannot be sure that it is targeting support where it is most

needed. For example, improving the quality of mentoring has been a key area for development for the 2009/10 academic year, yet actions to achieve this are still not showing evidence of improvement mid-way through the year. In the meantime, a minority of trainees are not receiving mentoring of a good enough quality and this had not been identified and dealt with promptly. For some of the other actions identified progress has been slow, for example the required revalidation of the programme.

56. Partner colleges write annual course reports, which feed into the university's evaluation process, but these are not always sufficiently evaluative. These reports feed into the university annual report which is submitted to the academic standards and education committee. The university usefully produces a self-evaluation document in addition to this annual report. There are opportunities to gather feedback from trainees and issues they raise are dealt with effectively. Trainee representatives are elected and invited to attend the board of study meetings. However, attendance has been inconsistent, although trainee representatives have sent in reports. While feedback is obtained from mentors through formal and informal systems, feedback is not routinely provided to mentors on their performance.
57. Improvement planning is not focused on the outcomes for trainees. The university has acknowledged this fact. The absence of data impedes the setting of meaningful targets for improvement. Plans lack clear identification of the priorities for improvement and actions are not specific, focused on the outcomes for trainees or timely. Strategies for monitoring and evaluating improvement plans are weak with insufficient attention to the analysis of outcomes. The recent grading of second year lesson observations and assignments by tutors is a beginning to provide an accurate measurement of the progress of each trainee. However, the system is not yet sufficiently evolved to a point where it can provide a sound, holistic assessment of a trainee and contribute meaningfully to the analysis of proportions of good and outstanding trainees. Actions resulting from the last inspection, notably the changes to the individual learning plan, are showing some impact.
58. The partnership has made a satisfactory response to many national developments. For example, trainees are able to contribute to developing the skills of the workforce in many vocational areas and to support their learners' 'skills for life'. As yet, the partnership has not explored the implications of developments in 14 to 19 education and the impact on the curriculum. It is intended to incorporate it into the revalidated programme by the end of this academic year.
59. There are good relationships between all the partners even though there have been recent changes to the composition of the group. The decision to close down provision at one of the partner colleges followed extensive support from the university over a period of time. The partnership provides some limited opportunities for collaborative strategic planning, for example to work on the new personalised learning system, individual learning plans and to develop mentoring procedures. Small working groups focus on specific developments, such as assignments. However, the main opportunity for partners to meet is

at the board of study meetings. These meetings have provided some opportunities to share practice and to engage in some staff development, for example on the developments in grading trainees, but such events do not form part of a coherent plan to ensure that all staff in the partnership have the same access to developing their knowledge and skills. There are occasional opportunities for college staff to attend public lectures at the university, but there has been limited take-up of such opportunities. The university believes strongly in research-led teaching, but there are missed opportunities to foster this philosophy and encourage the engagement of its partners in action research projects relating to its own practices. Tutors and trainees believe the university adds value through its reputation, the credibility of its awards, high expectations and quality assurance processes. However, the lack of a formal link tutor system impedes the effectiveness of communications between the university and college-based trainees.

Annex: Partnership colleges

The partnership includes the following colleges:

Alton College
Bournemouth and Poole College
Isle of Wight College
Sparsholt College
Totton 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	2
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	3
How effectively does the management at all levels assess performance in order to improve or sustain high quality?	2	2	3
How well does the leadership at all levels anticipate change, and prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives?	2	2	3
How effectively does the provider plan and take action for improvement?	2	2	3

¹ The criteria for making these graded judgements are in the Grade criteria for the inspection of ITE 2008-11; Ofsted November 2009; Reference no: 080128.

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