

University of Sussex

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

Provider address	University of Sussex Falmer Brighton BN1 9RH
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Inspection dates	10–14 May 2010
Lead inspector	Paul Chambers 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

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 works in partnership with schools locally and regionally to offer one year secondary professional graduate certificate of education, or postgraduate certificate of education (PGCE) courses in a range of subjects leading to qualified teacher status (QTS) in either the 11 to 16 or 7 to 14 age ranges, and a one year employment-based Graduate Teacher Programme leading to QTS in the 11 to 16 age range. Many trainees also benefit from additional opportunities to gain experience in the post-16 age range. Management of these programmes is located in the university's Department of Education, within the larger School of Education and Social Work.
4. In addition, the university validates the provision at Central Sussex College which offers initial training for potential teachers and trainers in further education. This provision leads to a diploma award within the qualifications framework of the lifelong learning sector. Links with Central Sussex College are organised through the university's partnership office.

5. Secondary provision offers placements in a range of different types of school, mainly located in the local authorities of East Sussex, Brighton and Hove, and West Sussex, but also including some schools in neighbouring authorities. Further education placements cover a wide geographical area centred on Crawley, where Central Sussex College is located.
6. The university offers several courses that provide access to the PGCE and GTP programmes, mainly focusing on developing the subject knowledge of graduates who wish to teach. These include six-month subject knowledge enhancement courses in physics and chemistry, and shorter (four week) enhancement courses in physics, chemistry and mathematics. Central Sussex College offers corresponding access courses on preparing to teach in the lifelong learning sector.

A commentary on the provision

7. The following are particular features of the provider and its initial teacher training programmes.
 - The personal commitment of course managers and tutors that provides strong support for trainees' personal and professional needs.
 - For secondary programmes: the coherence of different elements of the training; the excellent use of resources; and, the partnership's responsiveness to national initiatives and changed local circumstances.
8. There are particularly strong features in some programmes that could be applied to other programmes or aspects of the provision.
 - The management expertise that exists in the university must broaden its scope to make extensive changes to the way Central Sussex College provision works in partnership with the university.
9. The following recommendation should be considered to improve the quality of the outcomes for trainees.
 - Develop further the consistency of placement-based mentoring. (This is a recommendation for secondary provision and a requirement for further education provision.)

Provision in the secondary phase

Context

10. The University of Sussex provides initial teacher training leading to QTS in the 11 to 16 and 7 to 14 age ranges. The partnership comprises over 70 secondary schools and at the time of the inspection there were 151 trainees on the programme. All trainees follow a one-year PGCE programme leading to a Professional Graduate Certificate of Education, or a Postgraduate Certificate of Education if they complete sufficient work at Masters level. Training in the 11 to 16 age range is offered in seven subjects: English, geography, history, mathematics, modern foreign languages, music and science. All these courses are full time except for music, which, in addition to full-time provision, offers a small number of part-time places. Full-time training in the 7 to 14 age range is offered in mathematics, modern foreign languages and science.

Key strengths

11. The key strengths are:
 - the excellent use of resources, including course input from staff with high levels of expertise, that make a strong contribution to trainees' progress
 - the partnership's action planning that has a clear focus on improving outcomes for trainees
 - trainees' use of a broad range of teaching materials that focus on pupils' learning
 - the way the different elements of the programme combine together well
 - the partnership's strong record of responding to change and extending trainees' experiences.

Required actions

12. In order to improve the recruitment and selection process, the partnership must:
 - ensure that publicity for the secondary course makes clear reference to the course's main focus on training in the 11 to 16 age range.

Recommendations

13. In order to improve the consistency of provision across the partnership, the partnership should:

- ensure that the high-quality mentoring in many schools is extended further across the partnership
 - ensure that targets from lesson observations form part of a continuous, rigorously-monitored process of professional development for trainees.
14. In order to improve recruitment and selection procedures, the partnership should:
- strengthen measures to assess applicants' numeracy skills as part of the selection process for the 7 to 14 course.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

15. The overall effectiveness of the provider in securing high quality outcomes for trainees is good.
16. Evidence gained during the inspection confirms the provider's judgement that trainees' attainment is good. There are no clear differences in attainment between different groups of trainees or across different subjects. Trainees show an enthusiasm for teaching that helps them to present a positive attitude in the classroom and convey high expectations of pupils. They plan their lessons well. In particular, they plan and employ a range of teaching activities, some involving information and communication technology (ICT), that focus on active learning. Trainees use effectively the ideas that they have gained from university-based training in their lessons. As a result, pupils feel more actively involved in their learning. Trainees have a good knowledge of safeguarding issues and how to respond when they have concerns.
17. Stronger trainees readily take responsibility for their own professional development and show the skills expected of a reflective practitioner. They use their strong subject knowledge to structure learning and explain key ideas clearly. They form excellent working relationships with staff and pupils. Weaker trainees do not plan sufficiently well for different abilities within the class, and miss opportunities to promote pupils' independent learning skills. In their lesson evaluations, some trainees focus too much on evaluating teaching and pupils' behaviour and give insufficient emphasis to evaluating pupils' learning.
18. The training fully meets the needs of the overwhelming majority of trainees. Trainees value the professional studies course in the university and enjoy the opportunities that they have to learn with others in their subject groups. They have a particularly high regard for the input to the programme from visiting speakers, which they say provides a wealth of ideas that they can put into practice in the classroom. Elements of the course combine together very well.
19. In schools, trainees benefit from personalised training, particularly in the second placement. Processes for identifying weaknesses or problems are highly effective and lead to interventions that give strong support to weaker trainees.

The 7 to 14 courses provide good training in the teaching of early reading and require all trainees to demonstrate an appropriate level of knowledge through providing evidence in an assignment. As a result, trainees are able to speak confidently about their role in developing literacy skills in pupils. Feedback from lesson observations is regular, of good quality, and has an appropriate focus on the QTS standards. Many mentors use challenging targets from lesson observations very effectively, enabling trainees to build their professional skills over an extended period of time. However, many targets recorded in mentor meetings are little more than tasks to complete and often do not refer to the lesson observation targets. The provider is aware of the need to promote stronger and more consistent practice by ensuring that mentors record targets from lesson observations more formally in their weekly meetings with trainees.

20. The partnership manager visits all schools and has a one-person overview of provision. Schools feel that this is more effective in helping them to develop a consistent approach than the previous link tutor system. Internal moderation within schools and moderation visits from course tutors confirm that assessments are accurate. Mentors feel that a particular strength of the partnership is the excellent communication between the university and the schools. In addition, the university facilitates communication between schools, and this helps the transfer from first placement to second placement to go particularly smoothly. Schools feel well supported and are confident that revisions are made as a result of their comments. Mentor training is well regarded. Mentors value the opportunity to share practice and to keep up to date with developments in the partnership. Inspectors saw examples of excellent mentoring. However, discussions with trainees and mentors identified that the quality of mentoring is not consistently high across the partnership and some mentors do not intervene early enough when trainees have recorded insufficient evidence against individual QTS standards. As a result, this aspect is judged to be good rather than outstanding, as stated in the provider's self-evaluation.
21. The efficient use of resources makes a significant contribution to high-quality outcomes. Trainees say that all resources needed have been available, and that ICT facilities in the university meet their needs fully. Where they have no easy access to a computer, trainees have the opportunity to borrow laptops. The web-based virtual learning environment is highly valued by trainees. It provides them with excellent opportunities to access and share ideas and materials, and is used frequently and very effectively for this purpose. In addition, the virtual learning environment provides an effective means of communication between trainees and university staff. Schools understand fully the allocation of resources. A small additional premium is paid to schools offering a paired placement, reflecting the priority that the university attaches to developing this model further. Trainees appreciate the excellent library facilities available to them, and benefit from working in well-equipped schools.
22. Recruitment arrangements enable the partnership to select trainees who have the personal skills and professional commitment to become successful teachers. The provision is meeting local needs well, as demonstrated by the above-average employment rates for those who complete the programme. All

- necessary safeguarding checks take place, and the partnership has plans to strengthen these further by including identity checks at the interview stage. The interview process involves mentors, follows set criteria and includes appropriate assessment of the candidates' subject knowledge in their specialist subject. Interviews for the 7 to 14 courses include thorough assessments of candidates' personal literacy skills, but numeracy skills are not assessed in sufficient detail. Appropriate conditions are set for acceptance on the course. For example, where candidates show strong potential to teach, but fall short of the subject knowledge criteria, tutors make successful use of subject knowledge enhancement courses. The individualised letter of acceptance that is sent to successful candidates, together with the directed preparatory tasks that trainees undertake, helps them to feel well prepared at the start of the course.
23. The provider generally meets target numbers, including sometimes in shortage subjects. The recruitment of trainees from minority ethnic heritages is slightly below target, but runs at a level that is above average for the local population as a whole. Managers have introduced a range of strategies to address the under-recruitment of minority ethnic trainees, but these have yet to have a notable impact. Retention and success rates are broadly average. Publicity for the secondary course does not currently give enough prominence to its focus on Key Stages 3 and 4, since not all trainees are able to gain full experience of teaching and assessing post-16 work during their school placements.
24. Inspectors found no evidence of harassment or discrimination suffered by trainees on the programme. Evidence suggests that trainees from different groups make similar progress. Trainees appreciate the wide range of training they receive in teaching pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and pupils who speak English is an additional language. As a result, they feel suitably prepared for teaching in a diverse society. However, not all trainees have a secure understanding of all the issues. For example, not all can provide clear explanations of how they would adapt their teaching for pupils from particular groups or backgrounds. Trainees value highly the excellent personal, as well as professional, support that they receive from university tutors. Inspectors saw evidence of several case studies that demonstrate the wide range of support that tutors offer to support trainees' individual needs.

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

25. The provider demonstrates good capacity to sustain high-quality outcomes and to secure further improvements. Self-evaluation is broadly accurate. Managers show a good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of performance across the partnership. Evaluations take account of inputs from a wide range of different people, including mentors and trainees. Regular meetings of mentors, together with more formal management committees, ensure that course developments take account of views from across the partnership and help mentors to feel fully involved. Trainees' evaluations of the support that they

receive in schools is summarised and fed back to the schools. As a result, professional mentors are able to identify more clearly the strengths and weaknesses of their provision and plan for improvement. Analysis of trainees' outcomes over time, including those for different groups, enables managers to identify any trends or differences that might develop. Managers make use of comparisons with national benchmarks to identify areas for improvement.

26. Appropriate and effective moderation procedures include external examiners: one in each subject and another to verify the overall professional standards of the trainees. External examiners provide strong supportive evidence that provision is of good quality and that assessments against the QTS standards are accurate. External examiners have commented positively on the provider's initiative to make the final assessment of trainees' progress against the QTS standards through a critical-review tutorial for each trainee.
27. Managers have introduced several measures to improve provision that have contributed strongly to maintaining high-quality outcomes. For example, the partnership has bid for, and obtained, funding for 14 to 19 diploma training. Managers have then made arrangements to ensure that all trainees benefit from the experience of visiting settings where diplomas are being taught. As a result of this and other training, trainees demonstrate good knowledge of 14 to 19 issues. In another example, managers identified that trainees in shortage subjects often had need of additional support. In response, they made new staff appointments in these subject areas and this has contributed to trainees feeling well supported during their time in schools. Training has taken full account of the recent national initiative to raise the profile of e-safety in educational settings. Consequently, trainees demonstrate an excellent understanding of issues relating to e-safety, both for themselves as teachers and for young people. Trainees on the 7 to 14 courses have a good understanding of issues surrounding the teaching of early reading and developing literacy skills. An innovative inter-professional conference, where they share activities with those training to be social workers, helps trainees to feel particularly well prepared for working with other professionals.
28. Appropriate roles and responsibilities for each member of the partnership are set out clearly in the programme handbook. Mentors spoken to in schools and in meetings confirm that they are clear about what is expected of them. Although the proportion of trainees being graded good or better has declined slightly in recent years, there are other examples of improved outcomes for trainees. For example, recent years have seen a trend of improvement in retention rates, and employment rates have been sustained at above average figures. Resource allocation is highly responsive to need. For example, where a trainee is judged to be making less-than-expected progress, managers allow time for additional visits by the university tutor to support both the trainee and the school.
29. Improvement planning is well organised, focuses on key issues, and has a clear focus on improving outcomes. Plans are reviewed regularly and are carried forward from one year to the next. Action plans are shared with schools, although not all mentors are fully aware of the current key priorities for the

partnership. All areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have been addressed. For example, trainees are now clear about the kind of evidence that they should collect in order to demonstrate achievement of the QTS standards, and what constitutes strong and weak evidence. Although there is scope for further refinement, target setting in schools now meets trainees' needs and makes a strong contribution to the good progress made by the overwhelming majority of trainees. Action planning has also improved, including at subject level. Plans now draw on an analysis of evaluation data and have a strong focus on improving both the training and trainees' outcomes.

Employment-based routes to qualified teacher status

Context

30. The University of Sussex offers an employment-based route for initial teacher education (ITE) through the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP). The GTP leads to QTS in the 11 to 16 age range. The university currently works in partnership with over 60 secondary schools. At the time of the inspection there were 48 trainees following the programme: in English, drama, geography, history, mathematics, modern foreign languages (MFL), music, physical education (PE) and science.

Key strengths

31. The key strengths are:

- the high attainment of the very large majority of trainees, and the outstanding attainment of trainees in subjects which are not designated as a national priority
- excellent early recruitment and selection processes shared with schools that ensure that the overwhelming majority of trainees have strong prospects of attaining high standards
- the outstanding progress made by trainees as a result of coordinated strategies that propel them to fulfil their potential
- highly-stimulating and well-integrated teaching, tutoring and mentoring that model very good practice in teaching and give trainees ambition to reach the highest standards
- innovative and effective responses to meet the specific needs of local schools and trainees
- incisive and highly effective action planning which has resulted over the last three years in significant improvements to the proportion of trainees attaining at an outstanding level.

Recommendations

32. In order to improve the consistency of provision across the partnership, the partnership should:

- improve the consistency of practice by mentors, particularly the ways in which they conduct observations of trainees' lessons.

33. In order to improve trainees' attainment the partnership should:

- continue to explore ways of measuring and evaluating the rates and extent of progress made by trainees from their different starting points
 - develop further the preparation of trainees to teach in a widely multi-cultural society, including pupils who speak English as an additional language.
34. In order to strengthen the quality and impact of self-assessment, the partnership should:
- include within the self-assessment process an evaluation of the quality of training in each of the partner schools.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

35. The university secures good outcomes for its trainee teachers on employment-based routes. The very large majority of trainees successfully complete their course and the attainment of almost half of them is now outstanding. This represents a significant improving trend in attainment at the highest level over the last three years. Trainees attain best in drama and English. Overall, the attainment of trainees in non-shortage subjects is higher than that of trainees in shortage subjects. Otherwise there is no discernable difference in the attainment of different groups of trainees. By far the highest levels of attainment are reached by trainees in their development of professional attributes, such as having high expectations of, and building strong rapport with, pupils. Trainees are incisively self critical, receptive of good teaching and mentoring by their trainers, and grow into mature, reflective practitioners. Their planning is meticulous. Their subject knowledge and pedagogy are very sound, and they demonstrate confidence in adapting their teaching methods and resources to stimulate and engage pupils in a wide variety of contexts.
36. The very best trainees are highly innovative and have the confidence and skills to take carefully thought-out risks with how children learn. For example, one class of thirteen-year-olds, who were reluctant to participate in drama lessons, became enthralled and vociferously animated during a skilfully-managed simulation. The pupils were made to experience arbitrary social selection and prejudice at first hand on the basis of the colour of their eyes. This experience not only opened to them the devastating feelings associated with social exclusion and oppression and the corrosive attractions of arbitrary power over others, but also persuaded them of the empathic understanding and fun to be afforded by drama.
37. Areas in which trainees tend to develop less well throughout their course include their use of data to inform them of how well pupils are making progress, and their capacity to become less didactic in the classroom so that pupils develop the habits of increasingly independent learning. A few trainees remain unnecessarily preoccupied with managing the behaviour of their pupils, which makes them anxious and hampers the effectiveness of their teaching.

38. The university has successfully implemented a range of strategies to recruit trainees who have the particular qualities necessary to make a success of this intense, empirical model of teacher training. The university works in close collaboration with its partner schools to act very early in the selection and preparation of prospective trainees. Comprehensive risk analyses are conducted and pre-course conditions set where appropriate. Consequently, most trainees make rapid and secure progress in the first weeks of the course. Imaginative use is made of a pre-GTP degree in English or mathematics education studies to recruit teaching assistants who wish to become qualified as teachers. The university has successfully corrected some previous imbalances in the recruitment of minority ethnic, disabled and male trainees, and these are now at average levels or higher. Over the last three years just nine trainees have failed to complete the course, representing an excellent retention rate of around 94%. Extensive support is given to those who are at risk of withdrawing, and in several documented cases trainees have been retained who might otherwise have left. On completion, almost all trainees secure employment as teachers, usually in one of their two placement schools.
39. The very large majority of trainees make good or outstanding progress through the course, although methods of measuring the rate or extent of this progress are embryonic, inhibiting the university's potential to intervene to improve outcomes still further. This progress is largely attributable to the excellent training and mentoring provided by the major training school and the university, working expertly together. Trainees often refer to one or more of their trainers as 'inspirational', exemplifying this with illustrations of how a tutor or mentor has transformed their practice by skilful guidance and coaching. Several spoke with enthusiasm of the sessions they had enjoyed on behaviour management strategies and the confidence they had thereby gained. Moreover, the acquisition and honing of trainees' subject pedagogy and teaching skills are very effectively monitored by all trainers. The continually-reflective, critical dialogue that takes place between trainees and their trainers shows impressive insight and is well focused on sharpening trainees' practice.
40. Trainees feel both supported and challenged in equal measure, their ambitions to attain to the highest levels are nourished by passion yet modulated by pragmatism. Central training sessions, particularly in subject groups, are highly influential as pedagogy and classroom management are expertly modelled. The different elements of the training, such as joint observations of lessons and the careful, contrasting selection of the second school placement, are synthesised to lead to the best possible outcomes for trainees. Trainees and mentors report that there is some duplication of documentation, which a minority find frustrating. Support given to trainees who may be struggling with aspects of the course or with the personal consequences of undertaking such a demanding programme is exemplary.
41. The allocation of resources within the partnership is highly efficient, transparent and responsive to need. Material resources of all kinds are fairly distributed and well used. Priority is given to where investment is most likely to lead to improved outcomes for trainees. Human resources, such as the programme of

guest tutors, are particularly well deployed to ensure that trainees are supported and guided through the course to maximise their potential.

42. Excellent communications exist between the university and its partner schools. All partners enjoy a common sense of purpose and very high expectations. Schools find the university team accessible, flexible and responsive to their concerns. Much good practice is effectively shared, and the rigorous joint observations of lessons ensure that grading is standardised. However, a few mentor practices are too variable to ensure evenness of experience by all trainees, particularly those relating to how mentors conduct lesson observations and give feedback. This is not yet sufficiently prominent in the training of mentors, who do not all have complete assurance about how to conduct lesson observations. This inconsistency is compounded by many trainees also being informally observed by other teachers, who have not been systematically briefed in what the trainee needs from this experience. Consequently, a small minority of trainees receive less assiduous scrutiny and support than their peers.
43. The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Outcomes for all identifiable groups are statistically comparable. Tuition and training about equalities and diversity are comprehensive. Trainees demonstrate a good awareness of, and sensitivity and responsiveness to, the multifarious needs of their pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These qualities make a significant contribution to trainees' progress and attainment by equipping them with insight, flexibility and resourcefulness in their teaching. However, trainees have limited exposure to schools with a high proportion of pupils from diverse cultures or who speak English as an additional language, and this constrains their full preparation to teach in a widely multicultural society.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality outcomes Grade: 1

44. The university has outstanding capacity to improve its employment-based provision further. The progress of trainees continues to improve; good attainment has not only been sustained, but the numbers of those attaining at an outstanding level has more than tripled since 2006/07. An excellent employment destination profile has been maintained for almost all trainees. Self-evaluation is comprehensive and uses data very well to analyse trends and the impact of actions to improve provision. Inspectors agreed with almost all the judgements made in the university's highly evaluative self-assessment report. Although all partners are involved in the self-evaluation process, the quality of provision in each school, which constitutes the most significant element of a trainee's experience during their training year, is not formally analysed or reported. Nor are the particular strengths and relative weaknesses that exist in the different partner schools evaluated or commented upon, neither by the schools themselves nor by the university team. Nevertheless, the university does indisputably know its partner schools well, and demonstrates

this intelligence in the way it tailors its support for each trainee in each school, and then selects second placements in order to effect a contrasting experience for trainees.

45. All internal and external moderators and examiners are very clear about their roles and responsibilities, and provide a valuable critical perspective on the quality of outcomes for trainees. The university undertakes regular and thorough reviews of the effectiveness of its resource allocation through the impact on trainees' progress and attainment. However, it has been slow to recognise the consequence of the very high turnover of mentors and, to a lesser extent, of professional tutors in schools, which it has analysed statistically in its self-evaluation report. As a result, there is some inconsistency in the way in which school-based trainers conduct lesson observations. The university regularly seeks the views of schools and trainees about the quality and impact of its provision. Such evaluations are highly favourable. Those responses that suggest improvements could still be made are taken fully into account as part of the university's unrelenting quest to improve outcomes for trainees.
46. The course leadership team is highly responsive to change, and is adept at looking ahead to anticipate it. The training programme is constantly being reviewed to reflect both national initiatives and local needs. Trainees have a very sound awareness and knowledge of a number of significant topics in the broader educational field, such as 14 to 19 diplomas. In identifying and responding to more specific, local needs, the university shows vigorous initiative. The particular requirements of the partner schools are of paramount importance, as are the declared requests of trainees. For example, in order to extend trainees' experience of working with pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, the university in 2008/09 established visits for all trainees to a range of special schools, extending the parameters of the partnership in order to do so. In addressing the acknowledged need to try and recruit more trainees from minority ethnic backgrounds, and more importantly to support them directly after enrolment and through their course, the university has appointed a minority ethnic support tutor. This creative and flexible response to the challenges that change brings establishes amongst trainees a similar willingness to embrace it, and this in turn enhances their professional capacity as teachers.
47. Planning for improvement is finely focused on key priorities and the university sets very high expectations for the outcomes of trainees. The small GTP teacher training team is able to share many practices and processes with the PGCE provision. Lines of responsibility are very clear, and the excellent communications that have been built across all the schools in the partnership result in rapid and determined actions taken to improve the experience of trainees and in efficient evaluation of their impact by all parties. The liaison between the core professional tutors in schools and the university tutors is excellent, leading to much candid debate about how well each trainee is progressing and how their development might be further advanced. These individual experiences directly inform partnership-wide discussions about training methodology and course structure. Good relations also exist with other

regional providers, which facilitate the streamlining of processes to the benefit of schools who take trainees from more than one provider. The university carries out regular 'impact assessments' of specific actions taken, such as those that focused recently on improving trainees' subject knowledge for teaching. Rapid and sustained improvements to the achievement of trainees over the last three years bear out the efficacy of the way plans are conceived, actions implemented and their impact evaluated.

Initial teacher education for the further education system

Context

48. The University of Sussex, through its partnership office, validates the provision of initial teacher education (ITE) for teachers and trainers in the further education system at Central Sussex College. Courses lead to the Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTLLS). They meet the statutory requirements and are endorsed by Standards Verification UK. The college offers part-time in-service provision for its own staff and for external candidates. Currently, 85 trainees follow these courses, around 40 of them being external to the college.

Key strengths

49. The key strengths are:
- the delivery of taught elements which model good practice
 - the programme of study on equality and diversity, which gives trainees a broad understanding of relevant issues
 - the high levels of informal support for trainees, including the support from the course leader
 - the responsiveness of the course leader to feedback from trainees.

Required actions

50. In order to ensure that trainees make good progress to fulfil their potential, the partnership must:
- establish for trainees a one-to-one target-setting and review process with a teacher trainer so that trainees are aware of their progress relative to both their potential and the standards for teachers in the lifelong learning sector
 - integrate the taught and work-based elements of the programme to enable trainees to apply theory to practice more effectively.
51. In order to improve the quality of provision the partnership must:
- establish effective quality assurance processes across all elements of the programme, especially mentoring and observation of teaching and learning
 - ensure that adequate resources are in place to address all identified areas for improvement.

52. In order to build capacity to improve, the partnership must:

- improve the accuracy of self-assessment through better use of trainees' attainment, progress and benchmarking data and evaluations from a broader range of quality assurance processes
- scrutinise and monitor action plans to ensure that all identified areas for improvement are put into action in a timely manner with clear criteria for measuring success
- ensure that the ITE team regularly shares good practice with other ITE providers including the university.

Recommendations

53. In order to ensure that trainees make good progress to fulfil their potential, the partnership should:

- embed reflection across all elements of the programme so that trainees become reflective practitioners
- evaluate trainees' ability to promote equality and diversity in their lessons and support mentors and observers to give more detailed and helpful feedback to trainees on promoting equality and diversity and preventing discrimination in learning environments
- develop strategies to recruit more trainees from minority ethnic heritages to the programme.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 4

54. The overall effectiveness of the partnership in securing high-quality outcomes for trainees is inadequate. Trainees' attainment is satisfactory and trainers are broadly accurate in their assessment. However, trainees do not make the progress they should because of the fragmented nature of the programme and the lack of targets and reviews of progress. Trainees' progress is not assessed against their potential or against the standards for teaching in the lifelong learning sector, and the assessments that take place are not sufficiently regular. The grading of teaching is at an early stage of development and evidence from different lesson observations is not yet drawn together as a measure of progress. The college has not graded the achievement or anticipated attainment of current trainees. Trainees' success rates in completing the course are satisfactory, although they were very low in 2008/09 and this was not identified through quality assurance processes. In that year a significant number of external trainees left the programme because of reductions in their teaching time. The college tracked reasons for leaving carefully.

55. Trainees use a variety of teaching techniques in their lessons, based on good modelling from trainers. They form good relationships with learners, know them well and are responsive to their needs. They implement practical ways to differentiate and cater for learners' individual needs. However, this is not always reflected sufficiently in their lesson plans. In their written work, trainees are able to describe how educational theory applies to their own teaching situation; however they are less confident of applying theory in their teaching itself. Although trainees are encouraged to reflect on their teaching, the programme does not develop their skills of reflection sufficiently. Trainees' skills and knowledge and standards of professional practice are satisfactory; nevertheless, they have a poor knowledge and understanding of the standards which they are developing.
56. Recruitment and selection arrangements are satisfactory. All trainees are appropriately interviewed and selected on the basis of their job role and initial assessment. Recruitment is inclusive, working within the college's clearly-stipulated entry requirements. Trainees with weaker formal qualifications can join the programme if they are deemed, through diagnostic assessment, to be academically capable. Opportunities for the accreditation of prior learning are good. The individual needs of trainees are identified early through detailed initial assessment of literacy and numeracy skills. Support for literacy needs is provided in a timely and appropriate manner, but trainees' identified numeracy needs are not addressed systematically. Information on trainees' starting points is not used to assess their potential as teachers. The recruitment of minority ethnic trainees is very low and there is no strategy to increase this. The college offers the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) programme starting at several dates throughout the year and is successfully recruiting from other under-represented groups.
57. The delivery of the taught element of the programme course is good and models good practice in teaching and learning. The teaching team has reviewed this aspect of the programme regularly and updated it to reflect changing needs and environments. Extra support for academic writing has been built into the programme as a result of feedback from trainees. The training team includes specialists across a range of disciplines and they use their specialist knowledge to good effect in the design and delivery of modules. Trainees receive high levels of informal support from a range of sources including some mentors. Trainees speak highly of the support that they receive from the course leader.
58. Nevertheless, the overall quality of training and assessment is inadequate. A lack of coordination across the different elements of training slows trainees' progress. Work-based practice is not integrated sufficiently with taught elements. Trainees show insufficient awareness of the standards for teachers in the lifelong learning sector. There is no formal communication between college-based trainers and mentors. The mentoring process is insufficiently structured and, as a result, there are unacceptably wide variations in the quality of mentoring. For example, most, but not all, trainees receive regular observations to assess and develop their teaching skills.

59. Assessment practice overall is poor. Assessment processes across the programme do not combine sufficiently to enable trainees to judge their progress or to inform training and support. Not all trainees have regular one-to-one meetings with their mentors to review their evidence of progress. Consequently, the monitoring of trainees' progress against both their potential and the standards is unsatisfactory. Because target-setting is weak and infrequent, trainees are not stretched sufficiently to achieve their potential. The individual learning plan recently introduced for first-year trainees is well thought out to encourage reflection and develop and monitor targets; however no review process has been developed to implement it fully. Written comments on the majority of assignments and observations are very brief and do not give sufficient guidance for improvement.
60. Resources for the programme are inadequate. Classroom resources, including access to information and communication technology (ICT), are good. Most trainees find the virtual learning environment a useful resource, although it is at an early stage in development. Trainees comment negatively on the availability of reference books in the library, they do not have lending rights for the university library. The college ITE team is under-resourced so that trainees do not gain full benefit from the skills and abilities of mentors and course tutors.
61. College quality-assurance processes are effective in maintaining the quality of the taught element of the programme. For example, an identified weakness in teaching in one area of the course was addressed decisively. However, there is insufficient quality assurance of other elements of the programme, including monitoring lesson observations by both trainers and mentors. As a result, trainees' experiences are inconsistent. Joint observations between trainers and mentors, designed to improve consistency, do not routinely take place. There is unacceptable variation in the quality of feedback to trainees, and not all observers monitor trainees' progress against actions identified in previous observations. Very few mentors attend training sessions for ITE mentors. The college has established a mentor portal within the virtual learning environment to update mentors but not all mentors are aware of it.
62. The promotion of equality and diversity in teaching and learning is satisfactory. Trainees are able to identify actions that they take to promote equality and diversity. The programme of study is good, it is understood by learners, and placements are diverse. The programme has been amended to increase the focus on behaviour management, at the request of trainees. The impact of training sessions on equality and diversity is evaluated insufficiently. Feedback to trainees from observations does not prepare or challenge them sufficiently to promote equality and diversity and prevent discrimination.

The capacity for further improvement
and/or sustaining high quality

Grade: 4

63. The provider's evaluation of performance across the partnership is inaccurate, and hence the partnership's capacity to improve is judged to be inadequate. The University of Sussex partnership office established appropriate quality assurance processes in advance of validation and applies these annually. In addition, the strategic partnerships between Central Sussex College and the university are strong. The university has appointed a suitably qualified and experienced link tutor to work with the college. However, the time allocation for this, one day per term, is insufficient.
64. Within the college, internal quality assurance and self-assessment processes are well developed and relationships with the external examiner are well established. The management team takes account of a wide range of evidence, especially feedback from trainees, in its evaluations. Outcomes of review are scrutinised by a range of committees. However, important aspects of the programme, such as the quality of mentoring, do not form part of the quality assurance process. This results in weak self-evaluation, as these significant areas are not considered sufficiently in self-assessment. The use of trainee data is weak because the outcomes of each cohort of learners are not evaluated. In 2008/09, this gave the partnership a false picture of attainment. The involvement of people external to the partnership within the quality assurance process is at an early stage. Despite these significant shortcomings, partnership quality assurance processes have identified many of the issues identified during the inspection, but have underestimated their significance in relation to trainees' potential and progress against the standards. Judgements within the self-evaluation are very significantly overstated.
65. The partnership's ability to anticipate change and respond to local and national initiatives is satisfactory. Course tutors have amended the content of the programme to include current initiatives such as safeguarding, equality and diversity, and local needs such as teaching learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The college is responsive to feedback from trainees and has made a number of changes to course content and process as a result. Members of the ITE team are suitably qualified and benefit from appropriate updating of their skills, mainly from within the further education sector. The link tutor role is making a positive contribution to the change agenda through identifying possible areas for improvement. The college is isolated in its provision of ITE and developments to reduce this are at an early stage. For example, the course leader has recently made contact with other ITE providers in order to share good practice, and the college has recently joined a local 'centre for excellence' in teacher training. However, it is too early to see impact from either initiative. The ITE team at the college are not involved sufficiently in university developments.
66. Planning for action is inadequate across the partnership, although action plans for 2009/10 show improved presentation and organisation compared with earlier plans. The recently-written quality improvement plan is clear in its presentation of areas for improvement, actions and success criteria. Managers have introduced this year a number of potentially significant actions, such as the revised individual learning plan and the grading of lessons. However, these initiatives are not fully in place and, as yet, their impact is not clear.

67. Current action planning does not tackle weaknesses with sufficient urgency. Some identified areas for improvement have too long a time frame before review, so that issues are not being addressed sufficiently for current trainees. A number of important issues identified from quality assurance processes, such as weak monitoring of mentoring and a lack of one-to-one review against the standards, do not appear in the quality improvement plan. Reports by the college to the university suggest that some weaknesses identified by the external examiner have been addressed, whereas inspectors identified that the same weaknesses remain. In addition, the partnership has not addressed sufficiently the monitoring of trainees' work-place support, which was identified as a weakness at the last inspection.

Annex: Partnership colleges

The partnership includes the following college:

Central Sussex College

Summary of inspection grades

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding; grade 2 is good; grade 3 is satisfactory; grade 4 is inadequate.

Overall effectiveness

		Secondary	Employment-based routes	ITE for FE
How effective is the provision in securing high quality outcomes for trainees?		2	2	4
Trainees' attainment	How well do trainees attain?	2	2	3
Factors contributing to trainees' attainment	To what extent do recruitment / selection arrangements support high quality outcomes?	2	1	3
	To what extent does the training and assessment ensure that all trainees progress to fulfil their potential given their ability and starting points?	1	1	4
	To what extent are available resources used effectively and efficiently?	1	1	4
The quality of the provision	To what extent is the provision across the partnership of consistently high quality?	2	2	4
Promoting equalities and diversity	To what extent does the provision promote equality of opportunity, value diversity and eliminate harassment and unlawful discrimination?	2	2	3

Capacity to improve further and/or sustain high quality

		Secondary	Employment-based routes	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	1	4
How effectively does the management at all levels assess performance in order to improve or sustain high quality?		2	2	4
How well does the leadership at all levels anticipate change, and prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives?		1	1	3
How effectively does the provider plan and take action for improvement?		2	1	4

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