

# University of Brighton

## Initial Teacher Education inspection report

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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 Brighton provides a wide range of pathways to qualified teacher status (QTS): full-time and part-time, undergraduate and postgraduate, award-bearing and non-award-bearing programmes are available, while secondary provision includes shortage and non-shortage subjects. The initial teacher education (ITE) provision is designed to be attractive to participants from a broad range of backgrounds and many of these programmes provide progression opportunities from foundation degree or subject knowledge enhancement courses. The majority of the university's ITE provision is located within the School of Education on the Falmer campus, while the secondary physical education and dance provision is based in the Chelsea School on the Eastbourne Campus. The Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) is based within the School of Education. It is an employment-based, non-award-bearing programme working closely with partnership schools to provide joint training and quality assurance.

4. Many elements of the primary and secondary ITE provision are jointly managed and share the same processes and management structures. For example, there is a single ITE coordinator who leads all of the university's primary and secondary ITE provision.
5. The university also works with four further education colleges to provide pre- and in-service courses leading to a certificate, or postgraduate certificate, in education.

## **A commentary on the provision**

6. The following are particular features of the provider and its initial teacher training programmes:
  - the excellent range, quantity and quality of resources available to trainees in all phases
  - the high quality of mentoring
  - the highly effective communication throughout the partnership
  - a common approach to strategic planning which effectively facilitates improvement across the partnership.
7. The following areas, relating specifically to the further education phase, require further development to improve the quality of the outcomes for trainees:
  - the development of effective systems to help trainees plan and manage their own individual development
  - improve procedures for monitoring the progress of trainees.
8. The following recommendation should be considered to improve the quality of the outcomes for all trainees:
  - facilitate the sharing of best practice across all phases.

## Provision in the primary phase

### Context

9. The university works in partnership with around 250 schools in local authorities over a wide geographical area. At the time of the inspection there were 572 trainees following the four-year BA courses for teaching the 3 to 7 and 5 to 11 age ranges, and 122 following the one-year postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) course for teaching 5 to 11-year-olds. PGCE trainees are able to gain credits at Masters level.

### Key strengths

10. The key strengths are:
  - highly reflective trainees who demonstrate good subject knowledge and a breadth of understanding of how to teach
  - an excellent range of training experiences which effectively prepare trainees to teach in a diverse society
  - high quality school-based mentoring which prepares trainees to become good teachers
  - the highly effective communication and links throughout the partnership
  - the excellent resources available to trainees
  - leadership that is dynamic in its approach to anticipating change and solving problems
  - the excellent action planning that drives forward improvement.

### Recommendations

11. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the provider should:
  - review the timing of the complementary placement in the BA course
  - improve the liaison between trainees' first and second school placements so that trainees' development plans and targets are always properly shared.

### Overall effectiveness

**Grade: 1**

12. Overall levels of effectiveness are outstanding. Provision is of consistently high quality. Schools are actively encouraged to contribute to a partnership that endeavours to prepare trainees for teaching in a diverse and modern society.

13. Excellent recruitment procedures attract high quality trainees to all courses. The provider fully engages a significant number of senior staff from partnership schools in the interview process. Selection procedures are extremely thorough. They include a wide range of practical tasks and activities that identify trainees who have the potential to teach. Constructive feedback is provided at interview to unsuccessful applicants, who often reapply and subsequently secure a place. Well-designed induction, pre-course tasks and subject audits very effectively support the individualised approach to training on the PGCE course. The number of men recruited onto the primary courses has risen to average levels. However, despite an extensive range of strategies to increase recruitment, the number of minority ethnic trainees enrolled in 2009/10 fell slightly from previous improving levels.
14. Overall attainment across all courses is good, with nearly a half of all primary trainees being graded as outstanding in their teaching. Just over half of the trainees completing the four-year BA courses attained the highest levels of performance for the last three years. However, data based on revised and more rigorous assessment criteria indicate that the performance of trainees currently finishing the BA courses is not as strong as in previous years.
15. The vast majority of trainees in all courses make very good progress towards achieving the Standards for QTS. PGCE trainees demonstrate very good subject knowledge and many use interactive whiteboards and other audiovisual aids well to enhance their teaching and engage pupils in learning activities. Thorough lesson planning based on a common format facilitates good or better teaching. PGCE trainees quickly establish excellent relationships with pupils and staff in their placement schools. The principles of inclusion are understood well, as exemplified by trainees' very good understanding of how pupils who speak English as an additional language might be supported in lessons. Discussions with BA trainees and scrutiny of their files confirm their breadth of understanding about a wide range of educational issues. They demonstrate an ability to be critically reflective and display a high level of awareness about current national initiatives such as the teaching of early reading skills and current thinking about designing a more creative curriculum.
16. The quality of training and assessment is outstanding. Training programmes are very well designed to provide breadth and an excellent balance between university tuition and school-based training. Each programme systematically builds on the skills and professional knowledge relevant to the age ranges trainees are preparing to teach. Excellent use is made of experienced tutors from partnership schools to provide trainees with insight into current theory and practice. PGCE trainees cover all subjects in sufficient depth and audits in English, mathematics and science are used very well to identify any gaps in their knowledge. The professional studies modules comprehensively cover topics such as the *Every Child Matters* agenda, behaviour management and the teaching of pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Excellent, well-chosen assignments fully complement the course and lead trainees into a greater depth of study directly related to school-based work. The carefully arranged complementary placements and core weeks teaching experience in three different schools for the PGCE course are highly valued by trainees.

17. Trainees following the BA courses say that tutors are inspirational and provide excellent levels of support. Inspection evidence confirms that university modules provide a good breadth of study across a wide range of educational topics. Tutors model best practice in their teaching and provide an excellent balance between theory and practical experience. School placements in the first and second year of the course provide good opportunities for trainees to turn theory into practice in settings that complement each other. Trainees in the third year gain considerable insight into wider educational issues through a self-chosen complementary experience. They gain valuable experience by working in places such as a Chinese orphanage or a special school. However, the timing of this experience inhibits the continuous development of practical teaching skills in readiness for the school placement in the final year.
18. The individualised approach to training in schools is a key strength of all courses. Mentors provide very effective levels of support to trainees in each school placement. Lessons are regularly observed and recorded with clear reference made to the Standards. Skilful mentors provide high quality feedback to trainees. Targets effectively identify areas of improvement for trainees and, combined with detailed individual training development plans, provide a clear focus for further improvement. A wide range of data is used very effectively to monitor trainees' progress against the Standards. Assignments are marked in considerable detail against specific criteria. Trainees value the comprehensive assignment feedback cover sheets because they provide them with detailed formative advice on what they have done well and what they need to improve in future assignments.
19. Outstanding resources are used extremely well to enhance the quality of provision. Additional funding, such as that provided for engagement with the leading literacy schools project, is used efficiently. Communication between tutors and trainees and between trainees themselves is enhanced by an easy-to-use virtual learning environment (VLE). Well-designed multi-media training materials give trainees the opportunity to enhance their information and communication technology (ICT) skills at their own pace. Furthermore, an extensive range of partnership schools is used very well to provide PGCE trainees with the opportunity to work with pupils who speak English as an additional language. Trainees speak very highly about the quality and range of resources available to them in the open learning centre, such as science equipment and historical artefacts. However, its closure during the weekend limits trainees' access to these high quality resources.
20. Provision across the partnership is outstanding. Comprehensive documentation provides succinct, clear and helpful guidance to schools. This

ensures all school-based trainers are very clear about how to support and assess trainees. Furthermore, excellent communication across the partnership ensures that all key stakeholders and partners feel fully involved in both the current training programmes and future developments. Very good use is made of placement tutors and visits by external advisers to ensure consistency in the quality of school based training. The cluster support systems are excellent and used very effectively, for example, for mentor training, to improve the quality of provision. Mentors find the paperwork easy to use and it supports the incremental development of each trainee. End-of-placement reports provide an accurate record of trainees' progress and targets facilitate transition to the next placement. However, not all reports include targets and there are inconsistencies in the transition arrangements for some trainees.

21. The promotion of equality of opportunity and the valuing of diversity is good. University staff work tirelessly to ensure trainees with specific needs or from under-represented groups are provided with high quality personal support to enable them to succeed and complete their respective courses. Detailed policy documentation ensures that trainees are made fully aware of issues related to equality and diversity. Furthermore, trainees are being well prepared for teaching in a diverse society and the overwhelming majority of trainees gain the best possible experience in working with pupils from a range of ethnic groups within the constraints of the locality and region.

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

22. Visionary and innovative leadership is firmly rooted in accurate self-evaluation and comprehensive strategic planning. The senior leadership team is relentless in its drive to strengthen further the partnership with schools to ensure that the high quality outcomes for trainees evident over the last three years are sustained and improved.
23. Self-evaluation and review are excellent because senior management is dynamic in its approach to tackling problems and improving provision. Schools subscribe to the principles of the partnership because the provider regularly seeks feedback from all stakeholders. It uses this information extremely well to modify programmes and partnership arrangements: for example, by implementing the clustering arrangements for training activities in Hastings and Eastbourne to minimise the distances travelled by mentors in these areas. Data are used very effectively to analyse trends and patterns in trainee performance. This monitoring of performance is further enhanced through the effective use of external advisers to work with schools, undertake quality assurance visits and support cluster training. Regular meetings of the partnership in education committee are used to support the programme of self-review and improvement. The allocation of resources is monitored very closely by the faculty management group. Furthermore, external moderation is used effectively to assess the quality of provision,

- validate judgements against the Standards and evaluate the effectiveness of training.
24. The ability of leadership at all levels to anticipate change and to innovate is outstanding. The senior leadership team is at the forefront of extending the university's role within the overall partnership; this is highly valued by all partners. Curriculum design is under constant review and often amended in a bold way to test hypotheses. For instance, programme leaders have already noted that the complementary placement introduced into the third year of the BA course may be having an adverse effect on the performance of trainees completing their final-year school placement, with adjustments to the course already in hand.
  25. Long-standing problems are tackled systematically. For example, in order to improve their insight into the teaching of pupils who speak English as an additional language, PGCE trainees now visit specific schools as part of their core week experience. All course leaders respond quickly to local and national initiatives, such as the teaching of phonics and community cohesion. This not only ensures that trainees are fully prepared, but also helps partner schools to embrace change and manage initiatives.
  26. The quality of improvement planning is excellent. It is linked very closely to accurate self-evaluation and driven by the provider's clearly identified strategic imperatives. Outstanding use is made of a wide range of data and intelligence to set clear, measurable targets for improvement and inform action planning. In a genuine spirit of collaboration, issues identified by key stakeholders are considered fully at partnership level. Lines of accountability and timescales are explicit, while clearly identified success criteria linked to the outcomes for trainees provide a secure platform for measuring performance.

## **Provision in the secondary phase**

### **Context**

27. The University of Brighton offers ITE leading to QTS in a number of undergraduate and postgraduate courses. Undergraduate programmes comprise four-year BA (Hons) courses for teaching pupils aged 7 to 14 in English, ICT, mathematics and science and pupils aged 11 to 16 in physical education, and a two-year BA (Hons) course for teaching 11 to 16-year-olds in design and technology, ICT, mathematics and science. Postgraduate programmes comprise a one-year PGCE course for teaching pupils aged 11 to 16 in art and design, dance, English, design and technology, ICT, geography, mathematics, modern foreign languages, physical education, religious studies and science and pupils aged 14 to 19 in business education, and a two-year PGCE course, which includes subject knowledge enhancement, in design and technology, ICT, mathematics and science. PGCE trainees are able to gain

credits at Masters level. At the time of the inspection there were 803 trainees on secondary programmes.

28. The partnership includes some 500 secondary schools of all types across a wide geographical area in south-east England.

## Key strengths

29. The key strengths are:

- the high attainment of the very large majority of trainees
- the expertly designed and diverse range of programmes that respond to trainees' backgrounds, needs and interests as well as to national priorities
- the outstanding progress made by trainees as a result of training which enables them to fulfil their potential
- inspirational teaching, tutoring and mentoring that model the best teaching and give trainees the ambition to reach the highest standards
- the exemplary communications and standardisation procedures across the partnership which ensure a consistency and coherence of experience for trainees
- the comprehensive and incisive use of self-evaluation to review provision and inform planning for improvement
- a visionary approach to innovation and change.

## Recommendations

30. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment the partnership should:
- improve the liaison between trainees' first and second school placements so that trainees' development plans and targets are always properly shared
  - communicate information about their training and assessment more simply and clearly to trainees .

## Overall effectiveness

**Grade: 1**

31. Attainment is outstanding on the four-year BA course in physical education and on the BA course for pupils aged 7 to 14. In all subjects attainment was good or better in 2008/09, except in mathematics and science, where it was satisfactory. Otherwise, there is no consistent variation between the attainment of any identifiable groups of trainees. The proportion of trainees

who complete their course is high, with the exception of the PGCE courses, where the retention rate is around the national average.

32. Trainees rapidly develop their capacity to establish very good rapport with pupils and a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. The large majority of them develop dynamic vocal and physical communication skills that enable them to be an emphatic presence in their classroom. Having achieved this status, a few continue to be overly didactic. Trainees' planning and organisation are very thorough, including those variations that are required to engage the interest and advance the learning of pupils of different abilities and backgrounds. However, occasionally trainees do not know how best to extend the most able pupils. They employ an imaginative, even adventurous, range of teaching strategies and the most accomplished of them have the confidence to be creative and take risks in lessons. For example, inspectors observed trainees in both mathematics and English enabling small groups of pupils to explore topics in ways that elicited much animated yet sharply focused discussion. Their sense of guided discovery was palpable. Trainees' subject knowledge and pedagogy are very sound, although they are inclined to miss opportunities to connect ideas across subject areas. Their own peer appraisal and support of each other contribute significantly to their assured acquisition of professional attributes and skills. This dialogue is all the more valuable to trainees because it augments the astute self-critical insights they bring to their own work as they develop into exceptionally mature, reflective practitioners. Trainees demonstrate a very good grasp of the wider educational debate, and embrace with confidence the broader social role of the teacher within a modern school community. Their use of ICT is excellent and seemingly intuitive.
33. The university has successfully implemented a wide range of strategies to recruit trainees in subjects for which there is an urgent national need. It has been particularly successful in increasing the numbers of mathematics trainees. Shrewd steps have also been taken to try and correct proportional gender or ethnic imbalances in the trainee populations. The overall proportion of minority ethnic trainees in 2008/09, at 9%, exceeded that in the regional population. The recruitment and selection process is expertly nuanced and targeted at the needs, interests and backgrounds of an extensively diverse application pool without compromising the high quality of the end product. Pre-course tasks and school visits are eminently successful in preparing new recruits for the demands of their course. Trainees' particular strengths and weaknesses are keenly identified and their development targets and expectations highly personalised.
34. From these very well-defined individual starting points, the large majority of trainees make outstanding progress towards good or better final attainment. This is attributable to a number of factors working in concert: the premium placed on honing their evaluative reflections on their own practice, resulting in trainees evolving into their own best critics and assuming early responsibility for their own development; highly stimulating – often inspirational – training, tutoring, mentoring and assessment that enable

- trainees to come to a rich understanding of both how children learn and how their own subject can be explored and realised by pupils; sedulous analysis and monitoring of the progress made by each trainee against progressively demanding assessment criteria; and innovative ways of extending trainees' experiences beyond the two core school placements, such as the increasing use of paired placements, school swaps between trainees and additional placements in unconventional settings such as pupil referral or special needs units. Following a review, written assignments now derive more directly from classroom practice and therefore theoretical research can be better supported by school-based empiricism.
35. The allocation of resources within the partnership is highly efficient, transparent and responsive. Material resources are subject to scrupulous consideration and priority given to where investment is most likely to lead to improved outcomes for trainees, such as supporting the mentoring programme in schools. Human resources are particularly well deployed to ensure that trainees are supported and guided through the course to maximise their potential.
36. Schools in the partnership make an outstanding contribution to trainees' rapid development as fledgling teachers. School placements are very carefully selected to provide complementary but challenging experiences that enhance trainees' learning. A common sense of purpose and shared commitment to very high expectations pervade the partnership, and rigorous moderation of training and assessment ensure that trainees' experiences and the judgements made about them are consistent and equitable. Schools are proud to belong to the partnership, and this sense of prestige permeates to trainees, who assume high ambitions for their own outcomes. Communications across this large and complex partnership are superb, with school tutors eulogising about the rapidity and efficiency of all contacts with the university team and trainees reporting a very reassuring degree of consistency between the messages they receive from all trainers. In particular, issues relating to trainees who are giving cause for concern to their school mentors are dealt with promptly and sensitively. Inspectors were able to endorse all these judgements, but did find that for a small minority of trainees the transition between their first and second placements could be improved by better conveyance of evaluative information. Moreover, not all trainees have a secure understanding of how all the various elements of their training and assessment cohere into graded attainment and progress measures, and a few find the multiple tracking tools repetitive or burdensome.
37. Many schools have ceased working with some other university providers of ITE because they prefer to work predominantly with the University of Brighton. The university, however, continues to work in a mature collaborative way with one or two other regional providers to streamline processes, share best training practices and make life easier for those schools who take placement trainees from more than one provider.

38. The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Outcomes for all identifiable groups are statistically comparable. There is a wide range of opportunities for most trainees to teach in, or learn directly about, diverse educational settings, and to work with staff and students from different backgrounds. In their teaching and in their academic research and analysis, trainees demonstrate a good awareness of, and sensitivity to, the multifarious needs of their pupils and how to respond to them. These qualities make a significant contribution to trainees' progress and attainment by equipping them with insight, flexibility and resourcefulness in their teaching.

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

39. The progress of trainees continues to improve; good attainment has been sustained, as has the excellent employment profile of most trainees. Self-evaluation is exceptionally astute and is the result of comprehensive quality assurance processes being conducted throughout each year, rigorously, by all parties. Inspectors agreed with all the judgements made in the university's self-evaluation document, with the exception of improvement planning, which inspectors judged to be better than had the university. Data are meticulously gathered, collated and analysed so as to inform all members of the partnership about every aspect of provision, and to identify the relative progress, attainment and destinations of groups of trainees. Reviews at course and subject level are similarly incisive. The university effectively monitors the impact of all its initiatives, such as recent actions taken to improve trainees' exposure to pupils with special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language. The content, structure and modes of learning of all the secondary teacher training courses are regularly modified to reflect the constantly changing needs of trainees in schools.
40. Continual monitoring of the quality and impact of school-based training ensures not only that timely interventions are made to support trainees who may be failing to thrive, but also that university tutors are able to detect any practices in schools that fall short of what is required to guarantee the highest quality of training. Relations between the university and almost all partner schools are so good that frank and productive critical dialogue invariably leads to mutually agreed actions to improve outcomes for trainees. The moderation of trainees' placement and final attainment grades is scrupulous, transparent and fair, and ensures consistency of assessment and grading across a wide range of different courses. Trainees do not wholly understand, however, the precise origin or significance of their final attainment grade, nor the distinctive role of the link tutor who visits them on their school placement. All internal and external moderators and examiners are themselves very clear about their roles and responsibilities and make effective contributions to course evaluation.

41. The complex partnership is led with a fine blend of vision and pragmatism. The university is at the forefront of a number of initiatives looking to improve teacher training, and senior managers are dynamic engines of innovation. They have outstanding capacity to anticipate and embrace change, and to shape the work of the partnership in response to national and local initiatives in order to maintain for trainees the highest quality of current training experience. Trainees are prepared in an effective and timely way for current innovations in secondary and tertiary education, such as the 14 to 19 Diplomas. At the same time, the senior leadership team demonstrate highly creative solutions to potential barriers to continued improvement, such as the deployment of diminishing resources and the possible constraints imposed by the changing nature and employment conditions of the school workforce. Moreover, they generate a culture in which most changes are seen as opportunities to explore and experiment with better ways of working in order to improve outcomes for the beneficiaries of education and training, and this culture comes to permeate the working habits of many trainees.
42. Such a culture is also the foundation for outstanding planning to improve provision and for implementing and then evaluating those actions that are identified. Lines of responsibility and delegated powers are very clear so that middle managers are empowered to initiate improvements at subject and course level, and subsequent coordination and liaison between senior managers is exemplary. School-based trainers also feel that their contributions are valued and improvement actions are thoroughly communicated and understood across the partnership. This results in a continuous cycle of action plans which have the endorsement of the entire training team. Necessary resources are sharply targeted to meet identified priorities, and objective criteria are clearly set against which to measure any discernible impact on outcomes for trainees. Recent history confirms that a number of improvements have resulted in better outcomes for trainees.

## **Employment-based routes to qualified teacher status**

### **Context**

43. The University of Brighton provides an employment-based route to QTS through primary and secondary GTP pathways. The GTP partnership covers a wide area and includes schools in Brighton and Hove, Kent, Surrey, East Sussex and Hampshire. Secondary trainees are based at the Falmer site while primary training places are supported from both Falmer and Hastings.
44. There are 21 places for primary trainees who focus on training to teach either the 3 to 7 or 5 to 11 age range. Secondary trainees specialise in one of the shortage subjects of mathematics, science, ICT, modern foreign languages, design and technology or religious studies, where there are 11 places in total, or in one of the non-shortage subjects of art and design, business, English and geography, where there are two places. All trainees are funded through salary and training grants from the Training and Development Agency.

## Key strengths

45. The key strengths are:

- the reflective and highly committed trainees
- training that is personalised and very practical
- the high quality feedback provided by school-based mentors and by university placement tutors
- an excellent range of training experiences which effectively prepare trainees to teach in a diverse society
- the quality and consistency of the assessment of trainees' progress
- the vigorous and reflective leadership of the programme
- the responsiveness to need and the successful action taken for improvement.

## Recommendations

46. In order to strengthen the partnership and improve trainees' progress and attainment further, the provider should strengthen the programme by establishing a core group of partnership schools to:

- maximise schools' contribution to the training and development opportunities available
- secure partner schools' proactive engagement in monitoring and evaluating the impact of training.

## Overall effectiveness

**Grade: 2**

47. All primary trainees have been graded good or better since 2007/08 and there has been a significant improvement in the attainment of secondary trainees so that current trainees are now matching their primary colleagues.

48. This improvement is a result of good and improving arrangements for recruitment and selection. Where appropriate, secondary applicants are sometimes required to undertake some preparatory activities, often linked with developing their subject knowledge, before being permitted to join the programme. There are good plans at an advanced stage to further improve recruitment arrangements for the secondary programme by working in close collaboration with key school staff and locating selection processes in partner schools. Recruitment procedures for both primary and secondary programmes focus sharply and successfully on selecting trainees with the

attributes necessary to flourish on this employment-based route into the profession. Trainees have been very successful in securing teaching posts, with all completing the programme in 2009 doing so. The employment-based route enables many who would not otherwise have been able to enter teaching to do so, with the new provision in Hastings being particularly valued by primary trainees. Arrangements for recruitment and selection result in highly motivated and hard-working trainees. They get on well with pupils and manage their classes well. Trainees are reflective, self-critical and keen to do well.

49. The programme has been successful in attracting men into primary training but there has been limited success in recruiting trainees from minority ethnic backgrounds. The university is pursuing a concerted response to this difficulty by taking the lead in establishing a regional partnership of providers.
50. The very large majority of trainees make at least good progress, helped by highly personalised programmes of training and assessment in both their base and second placement schools. These are supported well by training opportunities at the university and in other schools. The support for trainees from their mentors in school is of high quality and plays a central role in the progress trainees make. Observations of trainees by mentors and by placement tutors from the university results in clear and accurate feedback on progress with appropriate priorities for action. Trainees contribute fully to the shaping of their programmes and meet weekly with their mentors to review progress and set targets for further improvement. The coherence of training and assessment is maintained through individual training and development plans, which are used very well by trainees as working documents to guide their progress. Provision for trainees and the progress they make are monitored carefully and effectively by university tutors when they visit trainees in school and remotely by using ICT to check trainees' portfolios.
51. Resources are used very effectively. The employment-based route benefits from being located within the university's wider provision and trainees can join those on other programmes on occasion as well as attending GTP training sessions. Trainees have benefited from the integration of ICT into university training events and from the provision of laptop computers, while new buildings provide improved facilities including an open learning centre, library, well-equipped teaching rooms as well as social areas. The course leader, quality assurance coordinator, placement tutors and school-based mentors are rightly very highly regarded by trainees and provide them with outstanding support and challenge.
52. The GTP handbooks and supporting documents are comprehensive and clear and guide trainees, university and school staff well. Placements meet trainees' needs very well and second-placement schools are carefully selected to ensure that they complement the experience provided in the base school. The grading descriptions for the different stages of the programme are explicit and play an important role in ensuring that the

assessment of trainees is accurate and consistent. In addition to joint observations by placement tutors and mentors, the course leader and the secondary quality assurance manager make regular visits to schools and conduct additional joint observations with university staff and mentors to ensure high quality assessment. There is a thorough package of training for mentors but the university has encountered some difficulties in securing all mentors' attendance at training events. University staff have acted quickly and effectively where this has been the case to find alternative ways of ensuring that mentors are full equipped to carry out their role.

53. The promotion of equality of opportunity and valuing of diversity is outstanding. No group of trainees has significantly lower outcomes than others. University staff are strongly committed to supporting the trainees and frequently go to considerable lengths to provide extra help and advice if any professional or personal difficulties are having a negative impact on trainees' progress. There are impressive examples of those in difficulties of one sort or another being offered every opportunity to continue on the programme. Trainees have benefited greatly in developing their understanding of cultural diversity from opportunities to visit schools in culturally and ethnically diverse locations as well as from contrasting second placement schools.

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

54. Vigorous and reflective leadership is constantly striving to improve provision further, underpinned by accurate self-evaluation and effective strategic and action planning. The provider has outstanding capacity to improve further.
55. Self-evaluation is rigorous and based on an extensive range of information gathered from monitoring trainees' progress closely and checking the quality of mentoring and other support. Data on trainees' attainment are analysed carefully and the programme is responsive to external examiners' recommendations. A key strength of the employment-based route is the extent to which leaders seek the views of trainees, mentors and other trainers. Leaders carefully evaluate and analyse the information gathered. Where appropriate, action is taken quickly, with adjustments to the programmes of individuals or revisions to provision for the cohort as a whole. For example, after training on the foundation subjects for primary trainees had been criticised as insufficient in 2008/09, significantly more time was allocated for this in 2009/10 and the training has been very well received. School-based trainers are confident that they have ample opportunities to communicate their views of the programme to university staff, particularly where they might have concerns, but they are not routinely involved in evaluating the programme. Leaders are already addressing this and the GTP management and steering groups have now merged into a single body where two members represent schools. There is

a clear and appropriate improvement plan for the programme for 2009/10 with practical and useful ways of measuring success.

56. The way in which the programme anticipates and responds to national changes has a very positive impact on trainees' development. Trainees have access to events at the School of Education, for example one on the *Review of Mathematics Teaching in Early Years Settings and Primary Schools*, and benefit from various prompts and reminders by email, communication through the VLE and from tasks focused on new developments, such as the outcomes of the report of the Byron Review. Trainees also benefit from training events in their placement schools, for example on new developments in the curriculum. Establishing a primary training route in Hastings is a very good example of the programme's responsiveness to local need. There has been great success in enabling trainees to take greater responsibility for their own professional development and this is now a strength of the programme.

## **Initial teacher education for the further education system**

### **Context**

57. The university works in partnership with four further education colleges. Around 87 trainees are working towards a certificate in education and 121 are working towards a PGCE. Both courses are endorsed by Standards Verification UK and lead to a Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector. Approximately 35 trainees are on full-time, pre-service courses and 173 on part-time, in-service courses.

### **Key strengths**

58. The key strengths are:
- the highly effective subject specialist support from mentors that helps trainees to develop and improve their teaching
  - the excellent feedback that helps trainees to make good progress
  - the good role modelling by teachers that helps trainees to develop critical thinking and effective reflective practice
  - the good professional development of trainee teachers
  - the good take-up of higher qualifications to improve trainees' career opportunities.

### **Recommendations**

59. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the partnership should:
- develop effective systems to help trainees plan and manage their own individual development
  - improve procedures for monitoring the progress of trainees.

## Overall effectiveness

**Grade: 2**

60. Trainees make good progress as a result of the highly effective support from their trainers and subject mentors. Since the previous inspection, the rates of successful completion for both pre- and in-service trainees have remained high across the partnership. The proportion of in-service trainees completing their programme has improved overall, although around a fifth of trainees in one college did not progress to their second year of study in 2009/10. A large majority of pre-service trainees gain employment in the post-16 sector.
61. The large majority of trainees demonstrate good professional standards and a strong commitment to their learners. They apply their own learning assiduously in the classroom and most develop good classroom control and effective questioning techniques.
62. The most adept trainees make good use of extended questioning to elicit differentiated responses from their learners. Most trainees demonstrate good levels of enthusiasm for, and knowledge of, their chosen subject. Their lesson planning is thorough and they demonstrate good, critical, reflective practice. Trainees know their learners well and understand their individual needs. However, this is not often enough captured in effective individual learning planning for their learners. Trainees use an appropriate range of relevant, high-quality resources to support their learners and to cater for different learning strategies. Trainees who work with learning support assistants share information with them effectively to ensure that they can contribute fully to the learning activities.
63. The recruitment and selection of pre-service trainees are inclusive and good. Selection procedures are very thorough and lead to the recruitment of high calibre trainees with the potential to be successful teachers. As a result of the comprehensive range of challenging assessments during the recruitment day, at which trainees have to make presentations and produce a short piece of free writing, trainees feel a strong sense of achievement at being offered a place. Trainees start to support each other at this event and form strong critical peer groups which aid their professional development. The university provides a good range of pathways to qualification, and uses these to build trainees' competence and confidence. Pre-service completion rates continue to improve but not at an equal rate for all of the colleges.

Not all colleges have a sufficiently clear strategy to promote the recruitment of in-service trainees from under-represented groups.

64. The university's induction process ensures that most trainees make good progress from the start of their training. All trainees have some form of literacy, numeracy, ICT and language assessment which leads to effective action plans for improvements. The university has identified dyslexia as a particular barrier to progress for some of its trainees, and provides good levels of appropriate support to those who declare a need for it. In the small minority of cases where dyslexia is identified later, a few trainees have to wait for several months to receive this support.
65. Training and assessment are good, and trainees attain well. Inspectors agree with the accuracy of the judgements on trainees' attainment across the partnership and acknowledge that the university's plans to further refine this process are appropriate. Trainees make good progress relative to their starting points, with some particularly good development for trainees from non-academic backgrounds. As a result of the highly effective training, trainees develop very good professional skills and are prepared well to teach. Trainers model teaching practice very effectively and trainees benefit from seeing theory put into practice and from analysing the strengths and weaknesses of their teachers' performance.
66. Subject mentoring is particularly strong and has improved further since the previous inspection where it was identified as a strength. Mentoring is highly effective and contributes to trainees making good and consistent progress. Mentors help trainees to develop their subject specialisms very effectively. They give high quality feedback on the lessons that they observe and monitor trainees' progress against identified action points.
67. Trainees receive excellent quality feedback on their classroom practice and on their written assignments. Written and oral comments are evaluative and incisive, and provide trainees with good stretch and challenge. Trainees receive very good support for their learning from their tutors and mentors as well as from additional specialist support staff where necessary.
68. The monitoring of progress is good. Tutorials are effective in helping trainees to monitor and evaluate their own performance and to support them in making further improvements. Trainers, mentors and trainees all contribute to monitoring performance thoroughly and effectively. However, although the recording of progress is comprehensive, it is not sufficiently well coordinated to provide a concise overview of trainees' progress. Many trainees find it difficult to develop systems to plan and monitor their own learners' individual progress because this has not been effectively modelled for them. The university is aware of this, and is seeking ways to improve the situation.
69. Trainees benefit from outstanding resources. In particular, the careful choice and allocation of mentors is instrumental in supporting trainees' good development of subject pedagogy. Teaching teams and mentors provide a

very good balance of subject and education specialists that ensures trainees understand educational theory and relate this effectively to their own practice. Training rooms are generally well equipped. Trainees have good access to ICT and to electronic journals. Libraries are well stocked and well used. Colleges store materials in virtual learning environments, and trainees make very good use of these. Trainees can also access the university's VLE, although only a minority do so.

70. Trainees have a good understanding of equality and diversity and relevant legislation. Training promotes inclusion and safeguarding well, and tutors monitor lesson planning satisfactorily to ensure that trainees take account of the different abilities and capabilities of their learners. Some trainees use their personal experience of different cultural norms very effectively to enhance their learners' experience.
71. The partnership pays close attention to its trainee profile by analysing trends in recruitment, retention and pass rates by gender, ethnicity and disability. The university has had some success in recruiting men to traditionally female-dominated areas of learning and is now trying to increase participation of trainees from specific minority ethnic backgrounds.

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

72. The partnership's capacity for further improvement is good, although the university judges it to be outstanding. Systems to evaluate and improve provision are mostly very effective. The programme leader and college course leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the provision, though in some cases the grading of these does not fully reflect the impact on trainees. Self-evaluation by individual colleges, determined by each organisation's own quality assurance systems, is thorough and leads to improvements. This information is collated and analysed by the university and forms an effective basis for action planning. However, there is, to date, little active participation in partnership-wide self-evaluation, although the university is acting to improve this. For example, new measures to evaluate the provision inclusively have led to the recent establishment of effective course leader meetings. These draw on a good range of qualitative evidence, including feedback from trainees, tutors, mentors, employers and external examiners. Where information gleaned indicates a concern or potential problem, managers take prompt action to ensure that trainees are not adversely affected. The partnership uses data effectively to evaluate the impact of its actions for improvement. However, it does not use data sufficiently to investigate where further improvements could be made.
73. The partnership has recently begun to grade the attainment of trainees and is refining this process to try to measure the extent to which the proportion of good and/or better teachers rises each year. The provider focuses well on improvement based on an analysis of trainees' progress and attainment.

- Trainers monitor trainees' progress very well through observations of teaching and learning and through the analysis of written assignments. Patterns occurring in trainees' performance are analysed and as a result the teaching of some topics, such as differentiation, has been enhanced. Action planning is well prioritised, and some initiatives, such as training teaching staff in how to give effective feedback to trainees, are already having an impact. The university allocates time, training and payment to all mentors to ensure that they can perform their role well. Mentors' performance is monitored and measures are being implemented to give further support, particularly to those mentors who are not college based. At present, not all mentors have sufficient links with trainers to be able to support trainees fully in some aspects of their pedagogy.
74. The partnership reflects changes in national policy and responds well to local need. Resources are being developed to give trainees a better understanding of changes such as the introduction of the 14 to 19 Diplomas. Course materials give good emphasis to the minimum core, and trainees are aware of the responsibility they have to teach this to their own learners. However, in a small minority of instances, trainees' mistakes in grammar, spelling and punctuation are not systematically corrected. The colleges are working collaboratively to ensure that there are good progression routes for trainees, including a Masters-level programme. The university also encourages those who have completed the Certificate in Education to take degrees where this is deemed appropriate.
75. Actions initiated by the programme leader have led to considerable progress in establishing a greater degree of consistent practice in each of the colleges to give all trainees access to high quality provision. For example, standard course documentation, including mentor packs, have been produced to help with quality assessment and monitoring. However, despite a reduction in paperwork, some documents are repetitive and do not help trainees or their tutors to work effectively. The university has good quality measures backed up by appropriate, thoughtful policies and procedures. However, some staff and trainees remain uncertain about some procedures directly related to their work. Actions to improve progression from first to second year provision have been largely successful.

## **Annex: Partnership colleges**

76. The partnership includes the following colleges:

- City College Brighton and Hove
- Northbrook College
- Sussex Coast College Hastings
- Sussex Downs College

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

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

### Overall effectiveness

		Primary	Secondary	Employment-based routes	ITE for FE
<b>How effective is the provision in securing high quality outcomes for trainees?</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
Trainees' attainment	How well do trainees attain?	2	2	2	2
Factors contributing to trainees attainment	To what extent do recruitment/selection arrangements support high quality outcomes?	1	1	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?	1	1	1	2
	To what extent are available resources used effectively and efficiently?	1	1	1	1
The quality of the provision	To what extent is the provision across the partnership of consistently high quality?	1	1	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	1	2

### Capacity to improve further and/or sustain high quality

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

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

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