Kingston University

Early Years Professional Status Audit by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

November 2012

Contents

Key findings about Kingston University

As a result of its Early Years Professional Status Audit carried out in November 2012, the audit team (the team) considers that the soundness of the Prime Organisation's present and likely future management of the accreditation standards of awards and links to the Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) standards **meets expectations**.

The team considers that the soundness of the Prime Organisation's present and likely future management of the quality of the learning opportunities and support available to EYPS candidates **meets expectations**.

The team considers that the soundness of the Prime Organisation's present and likely future management of the assessment and moderation systems and processes for EYPS **meets expectations**.

The team considers that the soundness of the Prime Organisation's present and likely future management of candidate data, financial data, internal staff and infrastructure **meets expectations**.

Good practice

The team has identified the following **good practice**:

- the active steps being taken by the Kingston Early Years Partnership to utilise the expertise of colleagues across the consortium through dissemination of their research work and published outputs to EYPS staff and candidates (paragraph 17).

The team has identified the following **strengths**:

- the rigorous processes of internal moderation and cross-moderation, which ensures a high degree of consistency in assessment decisions (paragraphs 5-7)
- the highly collaborative approach to the development of a common core of candidate learning and guidance materials (paragraph 33)
- the comprehensive and readily accessible online package of candidate materials to support learning (paragraph 34).

Recommendations

The team has also identified a number of **recommendations** for the enhancement of the provision.

The team considers that it is **advisable** for the Prime Organisation to:

- take action to ensure that risks that may arise from the use of substitute external moderators in external moderation are eliminated (paragraph 2)
- expedite measures to integrate discrete safeguarding, child protection and code of ethics sessions into all pathways, and to further enhance relevant tutor training (paragraphs 27-28)
- introduce formally recorded systems to check the suitability of mentors before their appointment, and complete the appointments and offer training in time to ensure that appropriate mentor support is provided to candidates from the beginning of their programme or placement (paragraph 35)

- develop and implement a formal, comprehensive and clear process to monitor and quality assure each delivery partner (paragraph 63).

The team considers that it would be **desirable** for the Prime Organisation to:

- continue to progress the development and full implementation of systems and processes to track Early Years Professional destinations and measure the impact of accreditation (paragraph 10)
- put in place a formal and consistent method of recording Kingston Early Years Partnership consortium meetings (paragraph 15)
- consider introducing a form of EYPS staff-candidate forum to provide a further mechanism for candidates to feed back on their programme (paragraph 21)
- formalise the system whereby Placement Support Tutors record and report feedback from placement settings and mentors, and monitor and report on the quality of candidates' experience in placement settings (paragraphs 22 and 37)
- continue to progress the development of systems and processes to allow candidates' employers to feed back on all elements of the EYPS programme (paragraph 23).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) Audit[1] conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) at Kingston University (the Prime Organisation). The purpose of the audit is to provide accessible information which indicates whether Prime Organisations have in place:

- effective means of ensuring that the award of EYPS is robust, rigorous and consistent in quality and standards across all pathways
- effective means of enhancing the quality of EYPS provision, particularly by building on information gained through monitoring, internal and external audits, and feedback from stakeholders.

The audit focuses on how the Prime Organisation discharges its stated responsibilities in seven key areas:

- the management of EYPS candidate outcomes
- approach to quality improvement
- approach to safeguarding and welfare of children
- approach to candidate support
- approach to data management
- approach to recruitment, selection and retention of candidates
- staff management and infrastructure.

The audit applies to those pathways leading to the award of Early Years Professional Status that the Teaching Agency has contracted with the Prime Organisations. The audit was carried out by Dr Sylvia Hargreaves and Mrs Carole Share (auditors), and Mr Alan Weale (QAA officer).

The audit team conducted the audit in agreement with the Prime Organisation and in accordance with the *Early Years Professional Status Audit: Handbook for Prime Organisations and delivery partners*.[2] Evidence in support of the audit included:

- action plans
- notes of consortium meetings
- safeguarding policy
- internal and external moderation documents
- assessor training and information packs
- assessment briefs and assessed candidate work
- candidate handbooks, learning materials and other candidate guidance materials, including materials online
- candidate evaluation of the programme
- staff development information
- data spreadsheets.

The audit team had meetings with Prime Organisation and delivery partner staff, candidates and setting mentors.

The audit team used as a key reference point the *Handbook for Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) Prime Organisations and their delivery partners (April 2012)* provided by the Teaching Agency.

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[1] www.qaa.ac.uk/institutionreports/types-of-review/pages/EYPS.aspx
[2] www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/EYPS-handbook-prime-organisations.aspx

Please note that if you are unfamiliar with any of the terms used in this report, you can find them in the glossary.

Kingston University is the Prime Organisation contracted for recruitment, training, assessment and accreditation of EYPS to meet the strategic priorities of the Department for Education and the Teaching Agency. The Kingston Early Years Partnership (KEY Partnership) is a consortium of delivery partners who deliver EYPS pathways for London and the South East, with the potential to establish bespoke, self-funded provision nationally and internationally. The delivery partners under the collaborative agreement are:

- London Metropolitan University
- University of Reading
- Buckinghamshire New University.

At the time of the audit, the Prime Organisation provided the following pathways for fully-funded and self-funded candidates, including one bespoke package with a local authority:

- Graduate Practitioner Pathway (GPP)
- Graduate Entry Pathway (GEP)
- Undergraduate Practitioner Pathway (UPP).

Delivery of the Undergraduate Entry Pathway (UEP) is due to commence in 2013-14.

Student numbers and recruitment to meet strategic priorities across the KEY Partnership can be found in Annex 1.

The Prime Organisation's stated responsibilities

Kingston University, as the Prime Organisation, is the main point of contact with the Teaching Agency and takes responsibility for meeting Teaching Agency requirements and for complying with its obligations under its contract with the Teaching Agency.
Kingston University has responsibility for the overall management of performance and quality of EYPS pathways to meet the expected quantitative and qualitative standards set by the Teaching Agency, and for providing robust quality assurance regulations and procedures to meet the needs of the EYPS pathways, as required by the Teaching Agency.

Kingston University's specific responsibilities include:

- coordinating a marketing strategy that focuses on recruiting suitable candidates from areas of disadvantage, and recruiting to agreed numbers
- coordinating financial and data management across the consortium
- coordinating a strategy to ensure sound and comprehensive training within each of the EYPS pathways, personalised to the needs of individual candidates, including coordination of assessment procedures
- coordinating procedures for recruiting, training, managing and quality assuring EYPS assessors
- ensuring that they and all partners have appropriate child protection policies and procedures in place
- managing a consortium website landing page providing links to the websites of each of the partners.

Detailed findings about Kingston University

1   Management of EYPS candidate outcomes

1   The KEY Partnership process for the appointment of the external moderator ensures that a suitable candidate is sourced and selected. The external moderator is appointed by Kingston University in accordance with the Teaching Agency criteria for appointment set out in the *Early Years Professional Status Audit: Handbook for Prime Organisations and delivery partners*, and following approval by the Dean of School. The contract is processed through Kingston University's procurement and recruitment procedures. The information provided for potential applicants is clear and detailed, setting out the purpose of the role, the deliverables, the provider specification and a full moderation timetable for the contract period, to 2015. The process has resulted in the appointment of a suitably qualified and experienced external moderator. Effective planning was undertaken within the KEY Partnership to create an external moderation timetable that articulated fully with the delivery pathway timeline.

2   The team, however, concluded that there was a weakness in a particular aspect of the provider specification, which stipulates that the external moderator must 'find someone of comparable expertise to cover, should they be unable to fulfil a commitment'. The audit team considers that this situation has the potential to put quality and EYPS standards at risk. In the absence of an express requirement for the formal approval of all individuals undertaking external moderator functions, the KEY Partnership remains unable to ensure their suitability. The audit team considers it **advisable** that that the Prime Organisation take action to ensure that risks that may arise from the use of substitute external moderators in external moderation are eliminated. In other respects, the systems and processes in place to source external moderators are fit for purpose and result in moderation outputs that meet expectations.

3   Systems and processes are in place to audit the external moderator reports and put recommendations into action as part of a continuous quality improvement process. Following appointment, the external moderator receives an extensive information package of KEY Partnership assessment documentation and associated information. In addition to the preparation and submission of a formal written report, the role incorporates visits to the Prime Organisation or a delivery partner to meet delivery partners, see sample scripts from all delivery partners and verbally share any issues regarding assessment or internal moderation. In meetings with staff from the Prime Organisation and delivery partners, the audit team was able to verify that these processes are being implemented effectively.

4   The Programme Lead undertakes an analysis of the external moderator report, which is shared with programme leads for dissemination to programme teams. KEY Partnership consortium meetings provide the forum for discussion of external moderator comments. The response is written by the Programme Manager and shared with the Director of Studies (Early Years) and Head of School before being sent to the external moderator, as well as being copied to programme leads for dissemination to programme teams and progressed for consideration within the Kingston University School of Education quality assurance framework. Consortium meetings are used to monitor the implementation of action plans, including actions arising from the external moderator process. In meetings with staff from the Prime Organisation and the delivery partners, the audit team was able to confirm that these processes are working effectively.

5   Internal moderation systems and processes are fit for purpose and robust. A very rigorous process of internal moderation within delivery partners is followed by cross-moderation at the Prime Organisation, with all partners involved. Internal moderation is

completed at each delivery partner. Cross-moderation, undertaken by programme leads and some Kingston University assessors, takes place at Kingston University over two days and incorporates a review of the moderation process.

6   The programme teams reflect on the moderation process and identify enhancements. Evidence of disagreement over grades between assessors and moderators led the external moderator to query whether assessors are provided with sufficient feedback from internal moderation. In this regard, the Prime Organisation recognised a need for the further training of some assessors. Remedial action was planned and is now being implemented, to include individual feedback to assessors as well as further reinforcement within assessor training. More generally, the internal moderation process is reviewed at the cross-moderation meeting and key points arising are collated and recorded, with a view to inclusion in assessor/moderator training.

7   The recent external moderator's report described the internal moderation process as being of 'high standard', noting in particular the soundness of cross-moderation. In reviewing the relevant documentation and meeting KEY Partnership staff, the audit team reached the same view. The audit team considers the rigorous process of moderation and cross-moderation, which ensures a high degree of consistency in assessment decisions, to be a **strength** of the provision.

8   The programmes delivered by the KEY Partnership meet pathway expectations and provide individualised candidate support. The quality of assessment, moderation and outcomes meets performance management criteria. Assessment design complies with Teaching Agency requirements, and teaching sessions are structured around the EYPS standards and the various elements of assessment. Both teaching and assessment are designed to deliver outcomes at level 6 of *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ). Candidate assessment work viewed by the audit team demonstrated appropriate reflection on practice; reference to theoretical frameworks, concepts and relevant legislation; and analysis of theoretical writing, linking this to professional practice. There are clear assessment guidelines for assessors and moderators, providing evidence of a consistent approach across the consortium. Data for the period 2011-12 relating to the GPP (the first completing cohort) show a successful completion rate of 91.9 per cent and a retention rate of 93.6 per cent, both exceeding the Teaching Agency target.

9   The assessment process is generally well regarded by candidates, and candidate evaluation for 2011-12 met targets. Of those candidates who responded to the End Survey (2011-12), 78.5 per cent regarded the support for written tasks to be effective and 70.7 per cent found the written tasks to be well organised and accessible. Candidates responding to the survey confirm the helpfulness of support sessions, though some felt that these should be held earlier to help them manage their workload more effectively, and would have liked more examples of what was expected. Candidates whom the audit team met concurred with the End Survey outcomes.

10   Systems and processes to track Early Years Professional destinations and measure the impact of accreditation are currently being developed through a one-year post-graduation survey, being piloted on the previous EYPS Long Part-time Pathway, 2009 (CWDC contract). Given that the tracking of Early Years Professional destinations is at an early stage of development, the audit team considers it **desirable** for the KEY Partnership to continue to progress the development and full implementation of systems and processes to track Early Years Professional destinations and measure the impact of accreditation.

11   In addition to the general skills content of the programme, the GEP curriculum has been developed to include support for Early Years Professionals when seeking employment.

Sessions covering career and professional development, career opportunities for EYPS and CV writing have been incorporated into the programme. Candidates completing optional 'master classes' covering aspects of professional practice receive a certificate - providing evidence of skills training for job applications - and first position references are written for all GPP candidates. From the relevant documentation and meetings with KEY Partnership staff, the audit team concluded that Early Years Professionals are supported when seeking employment.

12   The team considers that Kingston University meets the Teaching Agency quality criteria for the Prime Organisation's management of EYPS outcomes.

2   Approach to quality improvement

13   Action planning is an integral part of the staff teams' approach and processes are in place to allow for improvements to be made. The KEY Partnership has produced extensive action plans for 2012-13 and for the implementation of the EYPS revised standards. KEY Partnership consortium meetings are used as the major vehicle for cross-partner identification of areas for quality improvement and for consideration, monitoring and review of action plans.

14   The action plan for 2012-13 is clear and detailed, identifying issues and possible solutions, deadlines, persons responsible for implementation, progress monitoring by individuals, measures of success, and individuals, groups or organisations with whom engagement will be required. The plan for implementing the revised EYPS standards is equally detailed and thorough. It sets out clear actions on recruitment, learning, assessment and moderation, identifies persons responsible for implementation, and sets precise deadlines.

15   Action planning is informed by discussion and feedback from colleagues at consortium meetings, and action plans are monitored and reviewed within this forum. Core membership of these meetings is drawn from the Kingston University and delivery partner programme leadership, providing the route for forward dissemination to, and tracking back from, all the programme teams. Although meeting notes are produced, these are presented in different formats and with varying levels of detail; there is currently no single and consistent system of formal recording of consortium meetings, giving rise to an increased risk of key actions being overlooked. The audit team considers it **desirable** for the KEY Partnership to put in place a formal and consistent method of recording consortium meetings.

16   Training opportunities related to the EYPS programmes are available for staff at all levels. The KEY Partnership approach to monitoring and recording staff development is based on partner autonomy, with individual programme leads maintaining oversight of the activities of their respective teams.

17   Various training opportunities related to the EYPS programme are available to staff. These include assessor training; the Kingston, Merton and Richmond Early Years Professional Support Network programme (which for the current year comprises four-day training, focusing on developing skills and attitudes to leadership for collaborative working and continuous improvement); and, this year, the University of Reading Early Years Conference. The possibility of a cross-partnership conference is being investigated, focusing on the experiences of practitioners and former candidates who have completed EYPS. Delivery partners, along with Prime Organisation programme leads, have attended Children's Workforce Development Council/Teaching Agency workshops, and pathway tutors have attended national conferences. Some staff are also actively engaged in research

and some are accessing relevant master's degree modules. The Prime Organisation programme lead actively contributes to the Prime Organisation forum and regularly attends other Prime Organisation network meetings. The KEY Partnership is taking active steps to utilise the expertise of colleagues across the consortium through dissemination of their research work and published outputs to EYPS staff and candidates, which the team identified as a feature of **good practice**.

18   The assessor contracts typically build in a day of assessor training and a half-day of moderator training. Assessors and tutors from across the consortium meet at assessor training, allowing a useful opportunity for reinforcing a shared approach to the candidate experience through learning and assessment. The respective consortium members offer mentor training, providing appropriate information and guidance, though this is not accessed by all mentors, and in some cases the training is not well timed, taking place some weeks after GPP candidates start the course (see paragraph 35). A mentor handbook, in common format across the partnership, supplements this support. In the light of the relevant documentary evidence and meetings with staff, the audit team formed the view that appropriate training opportunities related to the EYPS programme are available for staff.

19   Systems and processes are in place to allow candidates to feed back on all elements of the EYPS programme. These comprise module evaluations, the End Survey and the Staff-Student Consultative Committee (SSCC). Candidates met by the team spoke highly of the accessibility of staff and of the opportunity to raise any matters of concern informally with staff, including through the candidate representative.

20   The KEY Partnership system of module evaluation, which is undergoing continuing review and development, informs Partnership quality assurance review. The End Survey is based on the Teaching Agency template, with some adjustments to the local context. It deals comprehensively with all elements of the programme, covering development and progress review, the placement, development of practice skills, tutor support, tutor organisation, understanding the standards, support for difficulties, support for written tasks, the assessment visit, and the overall effectiveness of the programme. It allows candidates to 'score' each area and to add free-text qualitative comments. The 2012-13 action plan makes reference to candidate evaluations gathered through the End Survey and identifies actions to address lower-scoring areas. The audit team found that informal mechanisms, module evaluations and the End Survey are used as effective vehicles for gathering student evaluations of their programme.

21   However, the nature, size and scope of the SSCC limits its effectiveness as a vehicle for the KEY Partnership to collect candidate feedback on the EYPS programme. The SSCC operates within Kingston University School of Education and covers the School's Foundation Degrees, BA (Hons) Top-Up degrees and EYPS. It has a very large membership, currently including one EYPS programme representative. While providing a useful vehicle for feeding EYPS candidate evaluation into Kingston University quality assurance systems, the SSCC is not the most appropriate vehicle for feeding candidate evaluation directly to the KEY Partnership. The audit team considers that the introduction of a form of KEY Partnership staff-candidate forum would provide a mechanism - in addition to the existing informal systems, module evaluations and End Survey - for identifying areas for enhancement to the programme. The audit team considers it **desirable** for the KEY Partnership to consider introducing a form of specific EYPS staff-candidate forum to provide a further mechanism for candidates to feed back on their programme.

22   The first GEP intake, which will complete in December 2012, has still to complete the placement. Processes to allow placement settings to feed back on the EYPS programme, including through the Placement Support Tutor, are being developed. The roles

and responsibilities of the Placement Support Tutor include liaison with the placement manager and mentor. Their twice-termly visits to candidates on placement provide the opportunity for them to record feedback from the setting and from setting mentors and pass this on to pathway tutors and programme leads. Currently, this process is not formalised and is not expressly included in the Placement Support Tutor role. Formalisation of this system would enhance its effectiveness. The audit team considers it **desirable** for the KEY Partnership to formalise the system whereby Placement Support Tutors record and report feedback from placement settings and mentors, and monitor and report on the quality of candidates' experience in placement settings.

23   Systems and processes to allow candidates' employers to feed back on the programme are also currently being developed. The Local Authority Forum provides opportunity for verbal feedback. A questionnaire to employers has been piloted with local authority Development Officers, and results from this pilot will inform the further development of the KEY Partnership's feedback processes. The audit team considers it **desirable** for the KEY Partnership to continue to progress the development of systems and processes to allow candidates' employers to feed back on all elements of the EYPS programme.

24   The team considers that Kingston University meets nearly all of the Teaching Agency quality criteria for the Prime Organisation's approach to quality improvement.

3   Approach to the safeguarding and welfare of children

25   The Prime Organisation's safeguarding policies are up to date and fit for purpose, and candidate training materials contain clear and accurate information on the safeguarding of children and the processes that should be followed in the context of EYPS assessment. Within the GPP cohort, some 'shortfalls' occurred for EYPS Standard 20 in the 2011-12 assessments, and during 2011-12 there were some recorded incidents of candidate weakness in candidates' research projects in the application of the confidentiality provisions contained in the KEY Partnership's 'Ethical Statement'. Measures have been adopted to address these matters.

26   The current KEY Partnership Child Protection Policy is informed by *Child Policy Outline* (Children's Workforce Development Council (2011)) and *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (HM Government (2010)). It is a clear and comprehensive document. It opens with key definitions and statements of principle, placing these within the national and international context of law and policy on children's rights and child protection. It moves on to cover definitions of abuse, children with a disability and confidentiality. The policy ends with clear advice on the action to be taken if it is suspected that a child is at risk of abuse. It sets out telephone contact numbers and online contact details to be used at any time of day or night, should the 'delegated person' within the KEY Partnership be unavailable. The policy is contained in the current candidate handbook and in assessor training materials.

27   For the January 2012 GPP cohort, some 'shortfalls' occurred for EYPS Standard 20, with some candidates providing weak evidence of their own roles within safeguarding and child protection policies. The KEY Partnership identified this matter and reviewed pathway content to ensure that effective safeguarding training is incorporated into sessions across all pathways. In addition, a discrete teaching session covering safeguarding and child protection has been developed and is integrated into the GEP. Similar discrete sessions are also integrated into the GPP at most of the delivery sites. Candidates' portfolio evidence involving the study of young children is regulated by the KEY Partnership's 'Ethical Statement', set out in the candidate handbook. This provides assurances about confidentiality to the relevant parent/carer and requires their express permission (which may be withdrawn at any time) for the work to be undertaken. The audit team learnt that, in the

academic session 2011-12, some submitted candidate portfolios included photographic evidence capable of allowing identification of individual children. The KEY Partnership has addressed this and, from the available evidence, the audit team concluded that measures were now in place to ensure full candidate awareness of this matter.

28   In reviewing relevant documentation and on the basis of discussions with staff in meetings, the audit team formed the view that the measures already adopted regarding safeguarding, child protection and the code of ethics - including implementation by tutors - are currently sufficient to provide suitable training for all candidates and opportunities for further development in this area. Nonetheless, the audit team considers it **advisable** for the KEY Partnership to expedite measures to integrate discrete safeguarding, child protection and code of ethics sessions into all pathways and to further enhance relevant tutor training.

29   As at February 2012, not every candidate had completed a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check, with 13 per cent being incomplete. The possession of a satisfactory CRB check is a mandatory entry criterion across all pathways. Candidates were made aware of this position, and no candidate was allowed to commence placement without a completed check. It was anticipated that the situation would improve for the September cohort, which would not be subject to the very tight recruitment deadlines experienced by the January cohort. As at November 2012, over 97 per cent of candidates registered on the KEY Partnership pathways had completed a CRB check. Of the four incomplete checks, none had placement implications for the candidates concerned. All candidates whose checks have not been received by the start of the course are checked against the barred list. Current practitioners are asked to bring their most recent CRB check to interview in the interim. The KEY Partnership has stated that, if problems were to arise, placements would be delayed, with candidates making up time during vacations. The audit team formed the view that processes are in place for ensuring that all candidates have undergone a CRB check prior to undertaking a placement.

30   The team considers that Kingston University meets the Teaching Agency quality criteria for the Prime Organisation's approach to safeguarding and the welfare of children.

4   Approach to candidate support

31   Candidate support processes are well regarded by candidates. The End Survey shows high levels of candidate satisfaction with tutor and learning support; 83.7 per cent of respondents found support to be effective and 88.4 per cent reported that tutors were effective in terms of their organisation and accessibility. Candidates commented that staff were approachable, well informed and professional; gave clear instructions and provided helpful handouts; and responded promptly to emails. Some candidates would have liked a more extensive overview of what was required of them at the beginning of the course. The proportion of respondents who had experienced difficulties with aspects of the programme and who found that effective support was available was 85.7 per cent. There was also positive evaluation of the support for the placement visit, with 87.5 per cent of respondents confirming it to be effective and 84.6 per cent finding the assessor's visit to be effective in helping them to demonstrate that they had met the standards. In particular, candidates commended the clear and precise information provided, including the summative assessment plan and other guidance documents. In meetings with the audit team, candidates spoke of the high level of support provided by staff.

32   Candidate handbooks, which have been developed as part of a collaborative process across the KEY Partnership, contain common substantive content and set out clear and comprehensive information on available support processes. This includes staff contact details; help and advice for pastoral, academic and personal support; learning resources; the

organisation of the setting experience; the student complaints procedure; and the 'cause for concern' process, which provides for intervention by tutors when candidate performance is such that additional support is needed. In meetings, candidates confirmed the usefulness of the information provided to them.

33   In meetings with the audit team, Prime Organisation and delivery partner staff described the close collaboration between them in creating, monitoring, reviewing and developing the common core of EYPS candidate learning and guidance materials. This collaboration occurs through formal channels, such as consortium meetings, and in less formal contexts, such as programme lead and other cross-consortium meetings. The audit team considers the highly collaborative approach to the development of a common core of candidate learning and guidance materials to be a strength of the provision.

34   Online information systems are updated regularly with timely, accessible and accurate information. All members of the consortium provide candidate materials online through their respective institutions' intranet systems. Core common learning and assessment materials - together with induction materials, handbooks, exercises, consortium news, skills support packages and extensive associated information such as recent publications within the discipline area - are readily accessible and clearly presented to candidates. The audit team viewed the online materials provided through the Kingston University intranet; these are substantially replicated through the delivery partners' respective intranet systems. The audit team considers the comprehensive and readily accessible online package of candidate materials to support learning to be a strength of the provision.

35   The majority (70.4 per cent) of candidates completing the End Survey reported that support from the work-based mentor was effective. However, the KEY Partnership has recognised in its self-evaluation that mentor availability and support is an area for development. The mentor role descriptors clearly indicate that the role demands significant levels of knowledge and skill. Mentors are identified by setting managers or proposed by candidates. Currently, the KEY Partnership has no recorded process for verifying their suitability for the role - a situation that has the potential to put standards and quality at risk. Currently, some of the GPP mentor training is offered several weeks after candidates start the programme, raising a risk that candidates are not sufficiently supported during the initial stages of the course. The team concur with the Prime Organisation's assessment that this is an area worthy of further development. The audit team considers that it is **advisable** for the KEY Partnership to introduce formally recorded systems to check the suitability of mentors before their appointment, and complete the appointments and offer training in time to ensure that appropriate mentor support is provided to candidates from the beginning of their programme or placement.

36   A documented placement selection process is in place and currently under review within the KEY Partnership. This process is robust in that it requires a documentary check, and only settings receiving 'outstanding' or 'good' Ofsted gradings are selected.

37   Formal processes for the effective management, quality assurance and review of placements are less developed. The Kingston University Placement Support Tutor is expected to ensure that the placement manager is aware of the content and requirements of the EYPS GEP. The KEY Partnership will also be able to make a broad evaluation of placements through the placement End Survey (see also paragraph 22). However, there is currently no formal, ongoing monitoring and reporting mechanism that can provide assurance to the KEY Partnership that quality and standards are being maintained throughout a placement. In the absence of a formalised process, there is a risk that problems may not be identified and addressed as they arise. The audit team considers it **desirable** for the KEY Partnership to formalise the system whereby Placement Support

Tutors record and report feedback from placement settings and mentors, and monitor and report on the quality of candidates' experience in placement settings (see paragraph 22).

38   Candidates judge that the programme helps them to clarify their understanding of the EYPS standards and how to meet them. Eighty-three point seven per cent of respondents to the End Survey said that the training was helpful in this respect, commenting that they valued the clear explanations, the master classes, sharing experiences with other managers, and the written materials. Candidates' evaluation of the support for the Development Review and Progress Review was less positive, with 73.3 per cent of respondents finding it effective. However, a greater proportion of respondents (77.8 per cent) found the feedback and follow-up from Development and Progress Review to be effective, especially in helping them prepare for the next stage of the programme. In meetings with the team, candidates said that they valued the one-to-one meetings with tutors, which are formally timetabled or offered on a booking basis, and which feed into Development and Progress Review. The audit team concluded that the Development and Progress Review process was working effectively.

39   Candidates' evaluation of the programme as a whole shows high levels of satisfaction, with 82.1 per cent of respondents to the End Survey reporting that the EYPS programme had been effective and useful in their professional development. Candidates said that the programme had increased their confidence, improved their leadership and management skills and helped them to reflect on their practice and to identify areas for enhancement within their own settings. This positive evaluation was confirmed by candidates in meetings with the team. The candidates were highly complimentary about the programme, particularly in supporting them to become reflective practitioners and agents for change.

40   The team considers that Kingston University meets nearly all of the Teaching Agency quality criteria for the Prime Organisation's approach to candidate support.

5   Approach to data management

41   The KEY Partnership has appointed a Business Development Manager, who is responsible for coordinating data collection from the partner institutions. Systems are established so that this data is regularly updated to enable the Prime Organisation to monitor and track the financial position of the Partnership. The Prime Organisation submits financial reports in a timely manner and in accordance with the requirements of the Teaching Agency.

42   There is a clear and efficient system in place to monitor candidate information. The Lead Administrator collates data from the delivery partners, recording the data required by the Teaching Agency regarding recruitment, diversity, withdrawals and deferrals, which is submitted to the Teaching Agency in the monthly reports. The KEY Partnership complies with the Teaching Agency requirements to submit data on candidate profiles and outcomes in a timely manner. The process is transparent and complies with the contractual requirements of the Teaching Agency.

43   As a result of scrutinising relevant policy documents and from meetings with representatives of the KEY Partnership, the team formed the view that the Prime Organisation complies with the relevant data protection legislation and Teaching Agency contractual requirements for information security.

44   The team considers that Kingston University meets the Teaching Agency quality criteria for the Prime Organisation's approach to data management.

6   Approach to recruitment, selection and retention of candidates

45   There is a clear marketing strategy in place. The KEY Partnership has adopted a corporate logo and shared website while retaining the individual characteristics of the delivery partners, including providing links to their websites. The Partnership deploys a range of marketing approaches to recruit suitable candidates from under-represented groups and areas of disadvantage, using a variety of tools.

46   Systems are in place to monitor the tracking and recording of enquiries, applications, offers and starters. The information is submitted to the Teaching Agency on a weekly basis during the four months prior to start dates. The team learnt that the KEY Partnership was considering the use of Twitter as a mode of communication to market the programme. While the representatives of the KEY Partnership acknowledge the value of using a diversity of marketing strategies, they have anecdotally found that the most effective approaches to recruitment were those that rely on personal recommendations, direction by managers, websites and networking between settings. The team learnt that the KEY Partnership had been in the process of gathering data pertaining to current recruitment and that it is now in a position to analyse the effectiveness of the strategies used. This should facilitate a more objective rather than anecdotal evaluation of the marketing approaches used so far. Consortium meetings provide the opportunity to review these approaches and to analyse the impact of recruitment drives. The team notes, however, that no such opportunity to explore these issues had as yet been recorded in the Consortium Diary, where plans for and records of consortium meetings are noted.

47   Data available for 2011-12 pathways shows that the KEY Partnership under-recruited across all pathways, with an overall achievement of 80 per cent of its allocation against the Teaching Agency's expectation of 100 per cent. Both the January and September 2012 intakes have also failed to reach the Teaching Agency recruitment target, reaching 83 per cent and 84 per cent respectively.

48   Initial research carried out by the KEY Partnership suggests that, despite funding for candidates, there are financial barriers for individuals that impact on the recruitment of candidates to the GPP and GEP routes. Other barriers that they have identified include the potential impact of the *Nutbrown Review: Foundations for Quality*[3] and the requirement to have both Maths and English GCSE Grade C or equivalent. In respect of this latter issue, the KEY Partnership has explored ways to support potential candidates in gaining these prerequisite qualifications.

49   The KEY Partnership has exceeded the target for recruitment of candidates from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds. The Teaching Agency target is set at 17 per cent; the GPP route achieved 26 per cent for the January 2012 intake and 25 per cent for the September 2012 entry. GEP recruitment demonstrates a high proportion of BME representation, with 71 per cent of the January 2012 cohort being drawn from BME groups and 50 per cent for the September 2012 entry. The priority to increase men in childcare through EYPS has a Teaching Agency target of 9 per cent; the KEY Partnership exceeded this, with 10 per cent men being recruited to the September 2012 cohort.
Selection processes are consistent across the delivery partners. Candidate entry requirements are those established by the Teaching Agency, and the KEY Partnership has established common interview procedures.

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[3] http://media.education.gov.uk/mediafiles/a/0/9/%7ba098ade7-ba9a-4e18-8802-d8d4b060858d%7dnutbrown%20final%20report%20-%20final.pdf

50   The KEY Partnership has identified that candidates entering the GEP programme with a degree unrelated to early years need support to gain knowledge and understanding of early years practice, child development and community practice. To address this and to support their candidates, one of the delivery partners has made an additional requirement that such candidates undertake a Postgraduate Certificate in Early Years Practice alongside the EYPS programme. The Postgraduate Certificate programme is supported and funded by the delivery partner concerned. Candidates valued this opportunity to gain credits towards a master's level qualification. One other delivery partner has a similar scheme, using modules from a BA programme, but without credit-bearing status. A third delivery partner has no such scheme. While acknowledging the endeavours by these providers to support their candidates, the audit team has some concerns about equality of opportunity for all candidates across the whole programme. The KEY Partnership will wish to give further consideration to the implications of this situation.

51   The induction, needs analysis and action planning processes are clearly established and effective. The process is well regarded by candidates, and lesson plans seen at the audit visit confirm the systematic support for candidates to meet their needs. Candidates talked about reviewing their action points and the opportunities made available for them to reflect and challenge their performance and practice. Evidence seen in candidates' assessment files and tutor records of meetings with candidates about their 'learning journey' endorse the comments made by candidates during the audit visit.

52   Candidates verified that the programme prepares them for EYPS and work in the early years sector. The process begins before the start of the programme at open days and preliminary meetings. The selection process is rigorously applied to ensure that applicants pursue the appropriate pathway to EYPS.

53   The Partnership has established a comprehensive approach to recording the candidates' journeys. Retention figures exceed the Teaching Agency target of 85 per cent retention. The review process and individual learning plan for each candidate is well established and enables the progress of each candidate to be monitored. Candidates who have withdrawn or deferred have undergone counselling and are offered guidance. Among the reasons for withdrawal, issues of redundancy are cited and the team learnt that the KEY Partnership has explored strategies to support candidates in this position.

54   Figures are available for successful completion for the January 2012 cohort only. The Teaching Agency target of 90 per cent successful completion is exceeded, with a 92 per cent successful completion rate.

55   The team considers that Kingston University meets nearly all of the Teaching Agency quality criteria for the Prime Organisation's approach to recruitment, selection and retention of candidates.

7   Staff management and infrastructure

56   The KEY Partnership has developed a range of internal processes to disseminate information to administrators, project managers, course leaders, assessors, moderators, candidates and settings. The Prime Organisation Administrator is responsible for ensuring that information is despatched to relevant parties. Meetings with delivery partners, candidates, assessors and mentors enabled the audit team to verify that the processes are established and are efficiently managed.

57   The KEY Partnership consortium meetings, as detailed in the Consortium Diary, provide a forum to explore issues and key topics under consideration and which arise from

the Teaching Agency requirements. While there is an identified programme for the year, the consortium is able to respond to Teaching Agency updates and internally identified initiatives. The information and action plans are disseminated to other parties through the appropriate network meetings for mentors, assessors and tutors. Candidates and settings are also kept informed through email and the intranet system. The Lead Administrator has responsibility for ensuring that administrators in the delivery partner institutions are kept updated about information so that it can be disseminated in a timely fashion.

58   Facilities at each delivery partner provide candidates with access to resources. Each delivery partner has taken steps to provide access to these facilities for their Graduate Practitioner and Graduate Entry Pathways. In order to do this, each delivery partner has a process in which these candidates are enrolled on their university's systems, thereby having access to library and university resources.

59   Key teaching and learning resources for the candidates are centrally developed by the KEY Partnership project leaders. These are made available to candidates through the delivery partners' intranet systems. Individual delivery partners develop resources and materials to personalise the learning for candidates. The audit team considers that the Partnership has effective processes in place to ensure that the provision of resources and materials is accessible and fit for purpose. Candidates valued the clarity and timeliness of materials published on the intranet. They commented on the range of materials readily available online, and commended the programme leaders for being responsive and proactive in updating the system.

60   The KEY Partnership has a commitment to staff training and development. Each delivery partner has a level of autonomy to provide development opportunities in their own areas of expertise. The KEY Partnership meetings provide the forum for expertise to be identified, and strategies to disseminate this are discussed. There is, however, no formal overview kept of staff development and expertise across the consortium. The view of the team is that such a record could enhance access to staff expertise across the KEY Partnership, but equally the team recognises that there are likely to be associated logistical constraints in managing this. Training and staff development relating to the EYPS programmes is focussed predominantly on Teaching Agency requirements, and programme leads have been directed to attend these training programmes, which they then disseminate to their staff teams. Research undertaken by academic staff is actively used by the programme teams to enhance the candidate experience, including involving candidates in research projects where appropriate.

61   All programme leads are actively involved with external networking forums, including the Prime Organisation Forum. Other forums for networking are taken as opportunities to share good practice and expertise. Early Years Conferences are planned across the KEY Partnership, which will afford Early Years Practitioners the opportunity to share good practice in workshops, alongside input from keynote speakers from the early years field. The Lead Administrator has coordinated training for partnership administrators to prepare them for the Teaching Agency requirements and to ensure that systems are used consistently in order that data collection is accurate and timely.

62   A noticeable feature of the KEY Partnership is the good working relationships that have been developed across the delivery partners. The team noted the corporate approach to delivery of the EYPS programme across all delivery partners and also to the development of marketing materials.

63   Kingston University, as the Prime Organisation, has responsibility for monitoring and quality assuring the delivery partners in order to establish that they meet performance requirements. The Prime Organisation's self-evaluation identifies that this is an ongoing

process which is being developed. The team was provided with an example of a 'visit form'. The team requested examples of completed visit forms and these were provided for some of the partners. Additionally, the team saw notes of meetings between the KEY Partnership programme lead and delivery partners. There was, however, no formal record of quality assurance visits and no formal record of recommendations or action plans. The audit team considers it **advisable** that the KEY Partnership develop and implement a formal, comprehensive and clear process to monitor and quality assure each delivery partner.

64   The team considers that Kingston University meets nearly all of the Teaching Agency quality criteria for the Prime Organisation's staff management and infrastructure.

Action plan[4]

Kingston University action plan relating to the Early Years Professional Status Audit November 2012

KEY to abbreviations and specific terms used in QAA EYPS Audit: Kingston Action Plan:

KEY Partnership	Consortium of Kingston University (KU) (Prime Organisation), London Metropolitan University (LMU), Reading University (RU) and Buckinghamshire New University (BNU)
EYP	Early Years Professional
EYPS	Early Years Professional Status
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
LAM	KEY Partnership's Lead Assessor / Moderator
QA	KEY Partnership Quality Assurance
Programme Manager	KEY Partnership's Programme Manager, across consortium
Programme Leads	Delivery Partner / Training Provider Programme Lead
Course Leads	Delivery Partner / Training Provider specific pathway / course leads
PST	Placement Support Tutor for Graduate Entry Pathway
Placement Facilitator	Kingston University's placement organiser for Graduate Entry Pathway
GEP	Graduate Entry Pathway
UPP	Undergraduate Practitioner Pathway
GPP	Graduate Practitioner Pathway
VLE / IT	Virtual Learning Environment / Information Technology

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[4] The Prime Organisation has been required to develop this action plan to follow up on good practice and address any recommendations arising from the review. QAA monitors progress against the action plan, in conjunction with the Teaching Agency.

Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The audit team identified the following area of **good practice** that are worthy of wider dissemination within the provider:						
• the active steps being taken by the Kingston Early Years Partnership to utilise the expertise of colleagues across the consortium through dissemination of their research work and published outputs to EYPS staff and candidates (paragraph 17)	European 'Toddler Project' - introduction for KEY Partnership tutors Research Case Studies of EYPs to be shared 'Professional love' research to be shared cross consortium Safeguarding and Child Protection expertise/research - EYPS tutors and assessors invited to BA (Hons) session 'Inclusive Education beyond disability' - EYPS tutors, assessors/candidates and delivery partner tutors invited	13 May 2013 13 May 2013 13 May 2013 15 and 17 January. 2013 9 Feb 2013	Toddler Project KU lead researcher Pathway tutors/ researchers cross-consortium Reading Early Years team KU BA(Hons) specialist lecturers Specialist KU staff lecturer/ guest speaker	Taught content of EYPS programmes across delivery partners includes research work and publications: -European Toddler Project research, information -EYP Case studies -'Professional Love' research EYPS candidate, tutor and assessor attendance at events where research and publications are disseminated	Toddler Project lead researcher EYP Case study researchers Reading 'Professional love' researchers Programme Manager Inclusive Education researcher	Tutors provide recorded feedback on relevance of disseminating research and publications in relation to: - own CPD - creating EYPS programme materials Candidate/tutor/ assessor evaluation of relevance of content of disseminated research and publications to: - staff/candidate CPD - early years practice

Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The audit team identified the following areas of **strength**:						
• the rigorous processes of internal moderation and cross-moderation, which ensures a high degree of consistency in assessment decisions (paragraphs 5-7)	Prime Organisation Lead Assessor/ Moderator (LAM) oversees process across delivery partners, including use of standardised forms	w/b 4 -18 March 15 July - 1 Aug. 18 Nov- 10 Dec 2013	KU LAM	LAM contact with each delivery partner	KEY Partnership Programme Manager Internal QA audit	Cross-moderation panel review of standardisation of assessment process (External Moderator report)
	Pre-moderation checks by each delivery partner - administration and senior assessors. Incomplete paperwork returned to assessor	w/b 4 March 15 July 18 Nov 2013	Programme Leads and administrators - KU, LMU, RU, BNU	All Assessment paperwork, using standardised forms, ready for moderation	Senior Assessor at each delivery partner	Senior Assessor at each delivery partner monitors consistency in paperwork completion and provides 1:1 support with individual assessors as needed.
	Internal moderation by assessors and programme leads. Recording of Reflective feedback at each session to inform assessor/ moderator training programmes	5 -7 March 22 -25 July 19 - 21 Nov 2013	Programme. Leads and assessor teams - KU, LMU, BNU, RU	All scripts internally moderated within time schedule, using standardised forms. Reflective feedback	Senior Assessors/ Programme Leads, LAM	LAM and delivery partner Programme. Leads collaboratively use reflective feedback responses to inform next

Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
				collected by each delivery partner.		consortium assessor / moderator training materials.
	Cross moderation - programme/pathway to include programme leads from each delivery partner	11 - 14 March 30,31 July 26 - 28 Nov 2013	Programme leads and assessor teams - KU, LMU, BNU, RU	Cross-moderation, using standardised forms, within time schedule, from each training provider, of a minimum script sample to include; -10% 'MET' - all 'NOT MET' - all discrepancies between assessor and moderators	LAM, Programme. Manager	Cross-moderation panel review consistency in assessment decisions External Moderator report
	Cross moderation panel meeting - confirm outcomes External Moderator present	18 March 1 Aug 10 Dec 2013	Programme Manager (Chair), programme leads and assessor teams - KU, LMU, BNU, RU	External moderator reports on the rigor of internal moderation and cross-moderation, providing recommendations Cross-moderator panel agrees 'next steps' to maintain high degree of	LAM, External Moderator Head of School Director of Studies Early Years Cross-moderation panel	Response to External Moderator report - April 2013, Aug 2013, Jan 2014

Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
				consistency in assessment decisions: April 2013 Aug 2013 Jan 2014		
• the highly collaborative approach to the development of a common core of candidate learning and guidance materials (paragraph 33)	GEP, GPP, UPP programmes - course leads share new materials with each other: - Diversity audit tool	7 Jan 2013	GEP tutors - KU, LMU, RU UPP, GPP tutors - KU, RU, LMU, BNU	Inclusion of shared materials evident across consortium in Course Content	Course leads	KEY Partnership consortium meeting - 13 May
	Cross-moderation panel highlights constructive materials identified to share	18 March 1 Aug 10 Dec	Programme leads	Inclusion of shared materials evident across consortium in Course Content	Course leads	Course Reviews 1 Aug 10 Dec
	KEY Partnership meeting - to share materials	13 May 2013	Course leads, from delivery partners	Inclusion of shared materials evident across consortium in Course Content	Programme manager	Course Reviews 1 Aug 10 Dec

Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
• the comprehensive and readily accessible online package of candidate materials to support learning (paragraph 34)	Course tutors place session plans and teaching materials on Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)	GEP Sep-June 2013 UPP Jan-Dec 2013 GPP Jan-Dec 2013	VLE/IT Leads	Current, accessible materials on VLE sites at all delivery partners	Programme manager	Course Review - VLE sites Candidate evaluations
	VLE Lead updates site as required	Jan 2013 Aug 2013 Dec 2013 KU - GEP Jan - June 2013	VLE/IT Leads	Current, accessible materials on VLE sites at all delivery partners	Programme manager	Course Review - 1 Aug
	E-portfolio pilot project: GEP Sep. 2012 KU intake to be introduced to e-portfolio EYPS assessment materials Candidates to self-select use of e-portfolio as option for submission of assessment evidence KU VLE Lead to support and monitor use, ensuring no disadvantage to assessment process		KU VLE Lead	Use of e-portfolio by self-selected candidates on GEP pathway as a means of submitting assessment evidence.	Programme manager	Pilot group, candidates, tutors and assessors evaluation July 2013

Advisable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team considers that it is **advisable** for the Prime Organisation to:						
• take action to ensure that risks that may arise from the use of substitute external moderators in external moderation are eliminated (paragraph 2)	Named person to be approved as substitute external moderator (already identified subject to contract approval)	January 2013	Programme Lead Head of School Dean of Faculty	Named person approved as substitute external moderator	Programme Lead Head of School Dean of Faculty	Contracts in place for External Moderator and 'substitute', will ensure external moderation throughout EYPS Assessment programme.
• expedite measures to integrate discrete safeguarding, child protection and code of ethics sessions into all pathways and to further enhance relevant tutor training (paragraphs 27-28)	Pathway leads at each delivery partner to ensure all programmes integrate discrete safeguarding, child protection and code of ethics sessions into all pathways	January 2013	Course leads ensure safeguarding, child protection and code of ethics are included discretely on session plans across programmes, where appropriate	Safeguarding, child protection and code of ethics are evident on Session Plans, as appropriate, and embedded within taught sessions.	Course leads	KEY Partnership Course Review 1 Aug, to reflect on and evaluate: - extent of integration of safeguarding, child protection and code of ethics into taught content -impact of Tutor Training Programme in achieving above
	Each delivery partner provides relevant tutor training	January - June 2013	Programme leads	Tutor Training Programme is available, accessed and relevant.	Programme manager	

Advisable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
• introduce formally recorded systems to check the suitability of mentors before their appointment, and complete the appointments and offer training in time to ensure that appropriate mentor support is provided to candidates from the beginning of their programme or placement (paragraph 35)	Practitioner Pathways: - on acceptance of offer, candidates provide details of mentor to training provider	Jan 2013 Sep 2013	Lead Administrator	Mentor details confirmed at start of programme	Course leads	All candidate records confirm an agreed named mentor
	- Development of a 'How to identify your work based mentor' sheet for candidates	Feb 2013	Lead Administrator	Mentor attendance at meetings/training	Course leads	Candidate evaluation
	- mentor details are finalised by tutors at start of programme	Jan 2013 Sep 2013	Course leads	Mentor details confirmed at start of programme	Course leads	All candidate records confirm an agreed named mentor
	- mentor guide sent	Feb 2013 Oct 2013	Lead Administrator	Mentor guides used by mentors	Course leads	Mentor/setting feedback
	- mentor meeting with tutors	Mar 2013 Oct 2013	KU, LMU Mentor leads	Mentors meet with placement support tutors	Course leads	Candidate end-of-placement feedback
	Entry Pathway: - Placement facilitator works with senior management at placement who select mentor	Sep 2013 Jan 2014	Placement facilitator, Setting management, Mentor	Suitable mentor selected for all candidates	Course leads	Placement feedback

Advisable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
	- Candidate gives mentor handbook to mentor at start of placement	Oct 2013 Feb 2014	Candidates Mentors	Mentors and candidates are guided by handbook	Course leads	Candidate end-of-placement feedback/ Placement feedback
	- Placement Support Tutors (PST) meet with mentor at start of each placement, clarifying mentor handbook content	Nov. 2013 March 2014	Placement support tutors and mentors	Placement support tutor and mentor meetings	Course lead	Candidate end-of-placement feedback/ Placement feedback
	- Placement Support Tutors share mentoring queries arising with course lead	Nov, Dec 2013 March, May 2014	Placement support tutors and course leads	Placement support tutor and course leads manage queries arising	Programme manager	Course review 1 Aug, 10 Dec

Advisable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
• develop and implement a formal, comprehensive and clear process to monitor and quality assure each delivery partner (paragraph 63).	Prime Organisation / Delivery Partner monitoring and QA annual cycle established	Jan 2013	Programme Manager Lead Assessor / Moderator Lead Administrator	Internal QA annual cycle established	Programme Manager	QA action plans and review 2013 - 1 Aug - 10 Dec
	QA self-evaluation template revised and sent to delivery partners for completion prior to visits	Jan 2013	Lead Administrator	QA revised templates completed before visit	Programme Manager	QA action plans and review 2013 - 1 Aug - 10 Dec
	Prime Organisation visits each delivery partner - action plan completed	4 Feb 2013 - LMU 6 Feb - RU, BNU	Programme Manager Lead Assessor / Moderator Lead Administrator	QA action plans completed during visit, *with SMART targets set*	Programme Manager	QA action plans and review 2013 - 1 Aug - 10 Dec
	Individual feedback by Prime Organisation as appropriate	Jan- Dec 2013	Delivery partner Programme. Leads and Programme. Manager	Individual feedback accessed as appropriate	Programme Manager	QA action plans and review 2013 - 1 Aug - 10 Dec
	PO/ Delivery Partner review action plan	1 Aug 10 Dec 2013	Delivery partner Programme. Leads and Programme. Manager	*SMART target monitoring, with adjustment if required*	Director of Studies Early Years/ Head of School	QA action plans and review 10 Dec. 2013

Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team considers that it is **desirable** for the Prime Organisation to:						
• continue to progress the development and full implementation of systems and processes to track Early Years Professional destinations and measure the impact of accreditation (paragraph 10)	Review data from Keypartnership Followup survey with the long part-time pathway (previous contract)	Mar 2013	Programme lead, lead admin	Revised questions	Director of Studies Early Years Kingston University	70% candidate response rate to survey
	Adjust questioning on 'Survey Monkey' in response to review and TA requirements (if forthcoming) Include ongoing CPD	Mar 2013	Programme lead, lead admin	Creation of updated survey, with ongoing links to CPD	Course lead, Programme lead	70% candidate response rate to survey
	Electronic survey sent to Candidates one year after completion	Jun 2013 Dec 2013 Mar 2014	Programme lead, lead admin	Candidate responses include qualitative data relating to impact of EYPS accreditation	Course lead, Programme lead	70% candidate response rate to survey
	Responses recorded and impact measured	Aug 2013 Feb 2014 May2014	Programme lead, lead admin	Information received to inform ongoing provision and next review	Course lead, Programme lead	Monitor candidate's opinion of the impact of accreditation on practice against current score (3.41)

Advisable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
	Daily checks of Twitter/Facebook incoming responses - relevant content forwarded to staff.	Daily	Lead admin	Increased following and use of sites	Course lead, Programme lead	Course review 1 Aug and 10 Dec 2013

Course review 1 Aug and 10 Dec 2013 |
• put in place a formal and consistent method of recording Kingston Early Years Partnership consortium meetings (paragraph 15)	Preparation of a consistent format for recording meetings across the consortium	January 2013	Lead admin	Template used for all meetings	KEY Partnership Programme Lead	Annual review of KEY Partnership consortium meeting documentation (Annual QAA audit)
	Complete template used at all KEY Partnership meetings circulated and stored electronically on local hard drives	From next meeting on 18 March 2013	Programme leads	All minutes are completed and stored electronically	KEY Partnership Consortium members	Annual review of KEY Partnership consortium meeting documentation (Annual QAA audit)
• consider introducing a form of EYPS staff-candidate forum to provide a further mechanism for candidates to feed back on their programme (paragraph 21)	KU pilot: GEP Student exploring practical arrangements for cross-pathway student/tutor forum	Feb 2013	GEP candidate and GEP Course Lead	Development of an accessible EYPS staff-candidate forum, in addition to the established Student Staff Consultative Committees	Programme Manager	KU GEP Candidate evaluations

Advisable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
• formalise the system whereby Placement Support Tutors record and report feedback from placement settings and mentors, and monitor and report on the quality of candidates' experience in placement settings (paragraphs 22 and 37)	Consistent KEY Partnership 'Agenda' for Placement Support Tutors (PST)/Course Leader meetings, to include: - PST Handbook, with record forms for candidate and mentor support - Programme timetable, to include PST deadlines for record completion and submission to Course Lead - PST report form, recognising quality of candidate experience in setting.	Sep 2013 Feb 2014	Placement facilitator/ Course leads (KU, LMU, RU) Programme Manager Placement support tutors	PST feedback shared at meetings PST records inform future placement provision	Course leads Course reviews 1 Aug, 10 Dec Placement facilitator	Meeting minutes Candidate evaluations Setting feedback survey
	Develop consistent KEY Partnership formal PST feedback sheet	Feb 2013	GEP Course Leads - KU, LMU, RU	KEY Partnership template used for PST reporting across consortium	Placement facilitator Course leads Course review 1 Aug, 10 Dec	PST feedback Course Reviews 1 Aug, 10 Dec

Advisable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
• continue to progress the development of systems and processes to allow candidates' employers to feed back on all elements of the EYPS programme (paragraph 23)	Prior to each pathway entry candidates provide details of setting manager and contact details	Dec 2012 Aug 2013	Lead admin	Full details of managers available at the start of the programme	Course leads at consortium meeting 13 May 2013	Review of setting manager feedback to inform ongoing programme development - Course Review
	A welcome email will be sent at the start of each pathway with contact details for use throughout the EYPS programme	Jan 2013 Sep 2013	Lead admin	Email sent to all setting managers	Generic feedback, relating to employer perspectives, to Local Authority Forum	Review of setting manager feedback to inform ongoing programme development - Course Review
	Development of Final feedback survey at the end of the pathway	March 2013/ July 2013/ Dec 2013	Lead admin	Creation of survey and setting managers completion of same	Course leads	Review of setting manager feedback to inform ongoing programme development - Course Review

Annex 1: Candidate statistics

January 2012 intake

	Kingston University	London Metropolitan University	University of Reading	Buckingham New University	Teaching Agency allocation	Total	% of allocation
GPP	29	22	11	0	75	62	82.7%
UPP	45	30	20	0	120	95	79.2%
GEP	18	13	0	0	40	31	77.5%
UEP	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
Total					**235**	**188**	**80%**

Recruitment to meet strategic priorities - January 2012 intake

	Candidates from deprived areas	% of cohort	Black and Minority Ethnic candidates	% of cohort	Men into childcare	% of cohort
GPP	43	69.4%	16	25.8%	N/A	N/A
UPP	60	63.2%	15	15.8%	N/A	N/A
GEP	N/A	N/A	22	70.9%	1	1%
UEP	N/A	N/A	0		0	0
Total						

Retention and success - January 2012 intake

	Enrolled	Withdrawn	Deferred	Completed or due to complete	% retained	Assessed	Successful completion	% success
GPP								
UPP								
GEP								
UEP								
Total								

September 2012 intake

	Kingston University	London Metropolitan University	University of Reading	Buckingham New University	Teaching Agency allocation	Total	% of allocation
GPP	38	26	9	11	100	84	84%
UPP	0	13	22	10	55	45	81.8%
GEP	10	6	4	0	60	20	30%
UEP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total					**215**	**149**	**69.3%**

Recruitment to meet strategic priorities - September 2012 intake

	Candidates from deprived areas	% of cohort	Black and Minority Ethnic candidates	% of cohort	Men into childcare	% of cohort
GPP	41	48.8%	20	25.0%	N/A	N/A
UPP	32	71.1%	8	17.8%	N/A	N/A
GEP	N/A	N/A	10	50%	2	10%
UEP	N/A	N/A	0	0	0	0
Total						

Annex 2: About QAA

QAA is the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. QAA's mission is to safeguard standards and improve the quality of UK higher education.

QAA's aims are to:

- meet students' needs and be valued by them
- safeguard standards in an increasingly diverse UK and international context
- drive improvements in UK higher education
- improve public understanding of higher education standards and quality.

QAA conducts reviews of higher education institutions and publishes reports on the findings. QAA also publishes a range of guidance documents to help safeguard standards and improve quality.

More information about the work of QAA is available at: www.qaa.ac.uk.

More detail about Early Years Professional Status Audit can be found at: www.qaa.ac.uk/institutionreports/types-of-review/pages/EYPS.aspx.

Annex 3: Glossary

This glossary explains terms used in this report. You can find a fuller glossary at: www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/glossary. Formal definitions of key terms can be found in the *Early Years Professional Status Audit: Handbook for Prime Organisations and delivery partners*: www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/EYPS-handbook-prime-organisations.aspx.

academic quality: A comprehensive term referring to how, and how well, institutions manage teaching and learning opportunities to help students progress and succeed.

academic standards: The standards set and maintained by institutions for their courses and expected for their awards. See also **threshold academic standard**.

assessor: Person employed by the Prime Organisation or its partners to assess a candidate's competency against the EYPS standards.

Code of practice: The *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*, published by QAA - a set of interrelated documents giving guidance for higher education institutions.

delivery partners: Any parties (as notified to and agreed by the Teaching Agency) that are required by the contractor to delivery any part of an EYPS contract.

Early Years Professional: A person who has achieved Early Years Professional Status. Early Years Professionals work across the diverse range of settings that make up the early years sector. They demonstrate excellent practice and leadership.

Early Years Professional Status (EYPS): A graduate-level professional accreditation for the early years workforce.

EYPS pathway: One of four packages of training, assessment and accreditation available for candidates to gain EYPS (as defined within the EYPS contract).

EYPS standards: The skills, knowledge and experience required to receive EYPS, as defined by the Secretary of State.

external moderator: The purpose of external moderation is to provide independent assurance that the quality and reliability of internal moderation and assessment is appropriate. The role of external moderator for EYPS is similar in nature, though not directly comparable, to that of external examiners used widely across higher education institutions.

feature of good practice: A positive aspect of the way a higher education institution manages quality and standards, which may be seen as exemplary to others.

framework: A published formal structure. See also **framework for higher education qualifications**.

framework for higher education qualifications: A published formal structure that identifies a hierarchy of national qualification levels and describes the general achievement expected of holders of the main qualification types at each level, thus assisting higher education providers in maintaining academic standards. QAA publishes the following frameworks: *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) and *The framework for qualifications of higher education institutions in Scotland*.

Graduate Entry Pathway (GEP): For people with a degree and limited experience of working with children from birth to five years of age, but who are looking to pursue a career working in early years. Normal duration 12 months; maximum duration two years.

Graduate Practitioner Pathway (GPP): For graduates currently working in the sector who require a small amount of learning or experience before they can demonstrate the EYPS standards. Normal duration six months; maximum duration nine months.

internal moderator: The Prime Organisation is responsible for carrying out internal moderation of all assessment outcomes. An internal moderator will:

- check that all judgements made during assessment are sound
- monitor the quality of assessment to ensure consistency and standards
- provide assurance that the standard and reliability of assessment is appropriate.

learning opportunities: The provision made for students' learning, including planned **programmes of study**, teaching, assessment, academic and personal support, resources (such as libraries and information systems, laboratories or studios) and staff development.

learning outcome: What a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completing a process of learning.

mentor: A person employed by the contactor to provide a development expert/novice relationship which supports a candidate to become autonomous through dialogue and skilled questioning.

moderation: The process by which the contractor will review assessment outcomes and ensure the consistent application of processes defined by the Teaching Agency.

operational definition: A formal definition of a term, which establishes exactly what QAA means when using it in reports.

Prime Organisation: The training provider with a direct contract with the Teaching Agency to deliver EYPS from January 2012.

programme (of study): An approved course of study which provides a coherent learning experience and normally leads to a qualification.

quality: See **academic quality**.

reference points: Statements and other publications that establish criteria against which performance can be measured. Internal reference points may be used by higher education providers for purposes of self-regulation; external ones are used and accepted throughout the higher education community for the checking of standards and quality.

setting: A childcare setting can be a nursery, crèche, pre-school, day-care centre, children's centre or the location of a childminder or nanny.

threshold academic standard: The minimum standard that a student should reach in order to gain a particular qualification or award, as set out in the **subject benchmark statements** and national qualifications **frameworks**. Threshold standards are distinct from the standards of performance that students need to achieve in order to gain any particular class of award, for example a first-class bachelor's degree. See also **academic standard**.

UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code): Guidance developed and agreed by the higher education community and published by QAA, which is used by institutions to ensure that their courses meet national expectations for **academic standards** and that students have access to a suitable environment for learning (**academic quality**).

Undergraduate Entry Pathway (UEP): For undergraduates completing a degree, for example in Early Childhood Studies. Normal duration 12 months; maximum duration two years.

Undergraduate Practitioner Pathway (UPP): For undergraduates currently working in the sector that require a small amount of learning or experience before they can demonstrate the EYPS standards. Normal duration six months; maximum duration nine months.

work placement: A sustained period of learning for candidates on EYPS pathways which takes place in a setting registered to deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and enable opportunity to develop the skills, knowledge and experience defined by the EYPS standards. A childcare setting can be a nursery, crèche, pre-school, day-care centre, children's centre or the location of a childminder or nanny.