

Sector summary

Initial Teacher Education

2022-2023

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Learning and well-being

What's going well

- Most students develop their professional attitudes and behaviours well.
- Many students have a good range of generic classroom skills. They communicate clearly, are developing their questioning skills well and manage pupils' behaviour sensitively and with increasing skill.
- Many students are developing helpful research skills. They explore a suitable range of educational theories and texts.

What needs to improve

- A majority of students do not plan clearly enough what they expect pupils to learn. This hinders their ability to choose the most effective teaching approaches and means that they are not able to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching in terms of pupils' progress well enough.
- Too often, students' progress in their understanding of teaching and planning is limited by what they experience in school
- A majority of students do not reflect analytically or critically enough on their teaching. Too many do not consider the link between their teaching approaches and pupils' progress well enough in their evaluations.
- A minority of students do not develop their phase or subject pedagogies well enough
- They do not use what they have learnt from their reading and research well enough to consider how they might improve their day-to-day teaching.
- A minority of students struggle to manage the competing demands of completing assignments, uploading evidence to their professional Learning Passport, and planning and evaluating lessons.

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Teaching and learning experiences

What's going well

- School-based training days where students are able to explore aspects of teaching and learning in context. In the best instances, these opportunities help students to understand theory in practice.
- In a few instances, teaching in university is excellent. Tutors have exceptionally strong expertise, not only in their subject or phase but in developing their students' subject and phase pedagogies. They develop students' critical thinking very well and understand the needs of a novice teacher.
- In a minority of cases, mentors are proficient in developing their students. They help students to consider their practice critically, support creativity in the classroom and draw students' attention to pupils' progress as a measure of effective teaching.

What needs to improve

- Although all programmes have been designed in accordance with the accreditation criteria, there are aspects of all programmes that are not planned well enough to provide a coherent learning experience for students. Where there are the most serious shortcomings, the partnership has not considered the progressive development of the student teacher well enough in the design of the programme.
- Overall, teaching and mentoring is too variable.

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Leadership

What's going well

- Ongoing commitment from schools and university partners to the ITE partnerships.
- The development of a research culture in ITE.

What needs to improve

- Leadership structures are not always effective enough to bring about continuous improvement, with school partners not taking a strategic enough role.
- Tracking students' progress is too closely aligned to aspects of the Standards for QTS to be helpful to the partnership's understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in ITE.
- Overall, processes for self-evaluation and planning for improvement are not effective enough.
- Professional learning for tutors and mentor development does not focus well enough on the most effective practice in developing student teachers.

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Overview of recommendations from inspections

It is notable that the three partnerships inspected had recommendations in similar aspects of their work, in particular:

- the quality of teaching and mentoring
- continuity, progression and coherency of programme design
- the development of joint leadership

In each inspection, there were aspects of the partnership's work that had not been evaluated well enough through internal processes. A key area for development in ITE is the quality assurance and self-evaluation of students' learning experiences. All partnerships had shortcomings in identifying clear aspects for improvement in programme design and in the quality of teaching and mentoring.

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Reflective questions

Questions to help partnerships **reflect on self-evaluation and planning for improvement and the provision of teaching and learning experiences:**

Self-evaluation and planning for improvement:

How well do your self-evaluation processes identify the precise areas of strength and areas for improvement in learning, provision and leadership?

- Are your processes efficient and effective?
- How well do you use data to support our findings?
- How effectively are you triangulating information from a range of first-hand evidence?
- How effective are your improvement plans? Are they SMART?
- Does the partnership have secure and timely plans to monitor progress? Does this include milestones and effective ways to gather evidence to know how well the partnership is progressing?
- How well do you use these processes to make improvements in year?
- How suitable are the timescales for self-evaluation and planning for improvement?

Teaching and learning experiences:

Does the programme support students effectively in their journey towards becoming a teacher?

- What information do you need to gather so that you know that the programme design enables student teachers to make good progress?
- How well does each module / programme component link to ensure that students make good progress?
- How can you check that there is an effective blend of theory and practice?
- How can you gather information about the quality of teaching and mentoring?
- How can you check that assignments help students to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding? Are they varied in nature? Do they inform students of the progress they need to make? Are they at the right time on the programme?
- How will you find out how well the school and university partners know the programme?