

# The initial training of further education teachers

Findings from 2006/07 inspections of courses leading to national awarding body qualifications

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This report sets out the findings from the inspection of initial teacher training for further education. Trainees are often already employed as further education teachers when they undertake their training. Training programmes cover a mix of taught and practice elements. The quality of the taught element of the training is good and continues to show improvements since last year, with increased modelling of good practice by teacher trainers. Providers were responsive to the findings of previous inspections with the best actively seeking ways to improve trainees' experiences through partnership working. Nevertheless, concerns about the quality of the workplace element of the training persist.

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Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE  
T 08456 404040

[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

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## Executive summary

This report sets out the findings from the inspection of the initial teacher training for further education teachers' courses which lead to national awarding body qualifications. It covers the third year of a four-year cycle of inspections and is the third annual report on initial teacher training provision for further education teachers. The evidence is derived from inspections carried out during the academic year 2006/07 by Her Majesty's Inspectors and Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated higher education institution and national awarding body provision in 26 colleges. The findings from the inspections of higher education institution-validated courses are published in separate institutional reports. This year inspection teams continued to review the progress of the national improvement strategy for Skills for Life and trainees teaching these subjects were again included in the sample.

Trainees are often employed as full-time or part-time further education teachers when they undertake their training; many already have substantial experience of teaching or working in learning support roles. Their initial teacher training courses include a mixture of taught and practice elements. The taught element usually involves attending a part-time course for half a day a week. The practice, or workplace, element takes place wherever they are employed as teachers. For many of the trainees, this workplace element involves teaching in a college, although an increasing proportion of trainees work in a community or adult education setting, in a hospital or prison, or with private providers of work-based learning.

In 2006/07, the quality of the taught element of the training was most often good, with effective modelling of good practice by teacher trainers. Nevertheless, concerns remain about the quality of the practice element of the course, despite this being largely satisfactory with more than half of the trainees observed demonstrating good or better teaching skills. The concerns, as in previous inspections, relate to the development of the trainees' subject specialist knowledge and skills which is not always supported by effective mentoring. As a consequence, not all trainees achieved their full potential.

Improvements continue in course content and structure, the quality of training, resources and the quality of assessment. There is some improvement in meeting the needs of trainees, but the follow-up of trainees' literacy, language, and numeracy skills development is not systematic enough. Initial teacher training now has an appropriately higher profile in most institutions that provide it. In many instances, organisational adjustments are made to secure more effective links with other aspects of the management of human resources and quality improvement. Teacher trainers continue to provide a good level of personal and academic support for their trainees with the taught element of the courses.

In 2006/07, most trainees reached a satisfactory or better standard in their teaching and a few were outstanding. Typically, they planned their lessons effectively and, in the best examples, made skilful use of stimulating activities and resources to engage their students. Trainees' skills in reflecting on teaching to develop their practice had

improved and overall they were highly motivated and enthusiastic. For some, the continued development of their subject-specialist teaching skills was inconsistent due to the variable quality of the specialist support available to them in their teaching practice. Weaknesses in mentoring were particularly evident for those trainees who worked outside the institution providing the training, sometimes in small work-based learning or voluntary settings. Typically, these trainees find themselves in the position of having a very narrow teaching experience which restricts their development and capacity to undertake a full teaching role. Trainees are not always prepared well at a sufficiently early stage in the training to manage the challenging behaviour of a minority of younger students.

The report highlights further improvements this year in the planning, delivery and assessment of the minimum core in literacy, numeracy and language. However, with occasional weaknesses in their own skills, trainees were still not confident enough to systematically identify and address the literacy, numeracy and language needs of students in their lessons. As in 2005/06, there were instances where the links between Skills for Life specialists and teacher trainers were not being made and this was often detrimental to the trainees' experience. Overall improvements in the assessment of trainees' progress were noted, particularly in the assessment of written coursework. Arrangements for the assessment and moderation of teaching practice were less well developed. Consequently, not all trainees had the best guidance for addressing areas for attention in their teaching practice. Mentors' skills in making accurate judgements about teaching and learning varied, in particular about the boundaries between pass and fail grades. As a result, the potential of trainees' teaching practice to further enhance their teaching skills was not always fully realised.

## Key findings

The key findings below are presented under the three main headings of the framework for the inspection of the initial training of further education teachers.

### Trainees' achievement

- Trainees demonstrate a strong commitment to the values of the post-16 sector and to ensuring the success of their students through the promotion of good working relationships in their lessons.
- Trainees' ability to reflect on teaching skills to develop their own practice has improved.
- Trainees plan effectively for teaching and learning and use a wide range of approaches to engage their students' interest.
- Trainees do not develop the skills to address the inappropriate behaviour of a minority of students early enough in their training.

- Trainees do not systematically identify or address the literacy, numeracy and language needs of their students and some are constrained by their own weaknesses in these skills.

## Quality of training

- The taught aspect of the training is good with teacher trainers modelling much generic good practice.
- Trainees are not sufficiently exposed to the breadth and range of learners in the post-compulsory sector in either their teaching practice or through the taught courses.
- The development of subject-specialist knowledge and skills remains inconsistent across all aspects of training.
- Teacher trainers provide good personal and academic support for trainees on taught courses.
- The delivery and assessment of the minimum core of literacy, numeracy and language need further development.
- There is insufficient monitoring of the take-up of support to improve trainees' literacy and numeracy skills where learning needs are identified.

## Management and quality assurance

- Operational management, strategic planning and systems for assuring the quality of taught courses have improved.
- The systems for monitoring and improving mentoring are not rigorous enough.

## Recommendations

Senior managers in further education colleges should:

- Raise trainees' awareness of the breadth and range of teaching in the post-compulsory sector and ensure that they are supported by teacher trainers and employers to extend their practical experience.
- Prioritise the development of trainees' subject-specialist skills and knowledge across all aspects of the training.
- Improve the quality of mentoring and in particular the feedback provided for trainees on their teaching practice.
- Ensure that trainees are given sufficient guidance on behaviour management at an early stage in their course so that they feel confident to manage challenging behaviour in their lessons.
- Ensure that trainees who have development needs in literacy, numeracy and language receive focused and successful support.

National awarding bodies should:

- Work with centres to continue to improve the assessment and moderation of practical teaching, and in particular the clarification of the pass/fail boundaries.
- Provide the necessary training and monitoring to ensure that feedback to trainees always gives clear guidance for improvement and specific guidance on the development of subject knowledge and skills.

## Evaluation

### Trainees' achievement

#### Professional values and practice

1. Overall, trainees make satisfactory progress. Many of them bring significant experience of teaching to their training. Over half of those observed this year demonstrated good or better teaching skills and this was similar to the previous year. Typically, they were highly committed to ensuring that their students achieved. Trainees were particularly sensitive to students' social and economic backgrounds and clearly understood the barriers they faced. In the planning and delivery of teaching and learning trainees showed good awareness of equality and diversity issues. They treated students with respect and established a good rapport with them that fostered successful learning. The process of initial assessment was understood by trainees who, in the main, showed good responsiveness to individual students' needs.

Trainees in one college worked with learners whose previous achievements were very limited, including 14 to 16-year-olds excluded from school, 16-year-old asylum seekers, adult ex-offenders and adult learners on an access to higher education course. They were very committed to helping these often vulnerable students to progress and provide additional support for them outside their taught sessions.

2. The majority of trainees were suitably qualified for the subjects they taught, although in Skills for Life there was still insufficient evidence of the uptake of the Skills for Life specialist qualifications. Trainees readily sought support from workplace mentors where they had access to them.
3. Although for the most part trainees' reflective skills were developed appropriately and the majority undertook regular evaluation of their teaching, there were still cases where reflection had not been translated into clear action points which were monitored systematically by trainers, personal tutors and mentors. As a result, weaknesses in teaching practice often persisted. In one example of good reflective practice:

A trainee's reflection on a critical incident, when a dispute between two learners broke out, demonstrated a clear depth of thought and a high

standard of evaluation. The trainee reflected on the importance of re-establishing learners' confidence and sense of security, and devised an effective and thoroughly thought out action plan to deal with the situation. In the achievement of a successful outcome, the trainee drew upon the skills needed to establish respectful learning environments and demonstrated an in-depth understanding of how to combat racism.

## Teaching and learning

4. Trainees showed considerable enthusiasm for their subjects and for teaching them. They translated this into the effective selection of a wide variety of teaching and learning strategies, activities and resources to stimulate and extend their students' knowledge and skills. They were comfortable with group work, pair work, quizzes and demonstration. Typically, they knew how to maintain the momentum of learning and keep students motivated.
5. Most of the trainees demonstrated effective planning for teaching and learning: they set realistic and achievable learning outcomes and selected appropriate and often stimulating resources. In observations carried out in 2006/7 the trainees paid closer attention than in the previous year to planning differentiated activities to meet the needs of individual students in the same group, and to address the targets in individual learning plans. In the least effective planning, it was usually the choice of assessment strategies that failed to take account of the different abilities of students.
6. Trainees' written justifications for their choices when planning and selecting teaching strategies demonstrated good awareness of the principles of teaching and learning. The best trainees had the confidence to adjust their planned strategies to meet new or emerging learning needs.

In an English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) lesson the trainee's schemes of work and lesson plans were prepared carefully, with clear and appropriate aims and well-focused learning objectives. There was close mapping to the core curriculum and lessons linked closely with the planned outcomes and requirements of external awards. Careful planning for differentiated activities and the mixing of strong with weaker students was evident in lesson plans. The trainee had a thorough understanding of the range of approaches and teaching techniques for ESOL. Very effective use was made of a wide range of resources, including the nationally produced curriculum materials. The trainee used coloured pens and speech bubbles on the whiteboard and flip chart effectively to illustrate and explain more difficult concepts such as embedded questions. Instructions for activities were given clearly, and materials were carefully sequenced to build progressively on previous learning. The trainee took care to recap and consolidate at each stage of the lesson.



7. Trainees were generally well organised and managed their classes effectively. They created secure and controlled learning environments with good attention to health and safety. Where trainees' skills in managing students of different abilities in the same group were less well developed this impacted adversely on teaching and learning in a few instances, especially where behaviour was challenging. Trainees teaching the younger age groups did not always have the necessary confidence and classroom management skills required at a sufficiently early stage in the training.

One trainee's initially poor classroom management skills did improve over time and the professional development journal indicated a more confident trainee as the course progressed. Insufficient specific and tracked action planning at an early stage of the training with tutors and mentor, however, inhibited the trainee's development. The emphasis had been on strategies to manage students' bad behaviour rather than on adopting strategies that would focus student learning and therefore stimulate better behaviour.

8. In cases where appropriate and timely attention was given to understanding the principles underlying good classroom management, there was a significant improvement in the trainees' practice as the following example demonstrates:

The trainee was highly skilful in planning to meet the needs of individual students, selecting relevant and engaging materials which corresponded to individual learning preferences, and in adopting a professional and supportive approach which won the students' respect and led to productive working relationships.

9. The trainees' increasing exposure in 2006/07 to the use of information learning technology by their trainers had a positive impact on their own teaching. Most trainees developed their skills considerably during the course and became more aware of the ways in which the use of technology could enhance their learning. Many of them were producing high quality learning resources, but there were still instances where trainees were teaching in environments which did not support the use of information learning technology. Consequently, they were unable to practise techniques they had learnt.

### **Assessment and student support**

10. Trainees demonstrated sound knowledge of the principles of assessment. Most of them carefully monitored their students' progress and tracked this thoroughly. Many trainers were involved in the wider assessment processes, including the internal verification of other assessors' judgements. However, there were still too many trainees who did not have the opportunities to practise a range of assessment techniques, particularly where they were only teaching one subject level or group.

11. Trainees' awareness and application of the outcomes of the initial assessment of their skills in the minimum core of literacy, numeracy and language were inconsistent. Exposure to the minimum core, in taught sessions, enhanced their understanding of issues related to weak literacy, numeracy and language skills. Nevertheless, trainees were not working consistently to address gaps in their own skills, where they had been identified, or to develop strategies to enable them to support their own students' needs.
12. Compared with the situation in 2005/06, there were improvements in trainees' use of questioning as a teaching tool. They were more aware of the power of this technique for extending learning and for the systematic checking and monitoring of students' understanding.

A trainee who used good questioning techniques throughout the session demonstrated an understanding of the students' previous learning, checked current learning and identified students' level of understanding. Information was used effectively in adapting planned strategies to ensure that the learning outcomes were achieved.

13. The trainees provided effective support to their students formally and informally. In lessons they used positive, motivating feedback to build confidence and self-esteem and were quick to respond to emerging needs. Those employed in a more traditional further education context showed clear understanding of the support services available and how their students might access these. In non-further education contexts, trainees were hampered by their inability to refer their students' to support for specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia.

## Quality of training

### Content and structure

14. Taught courses were well planned and most focused appropriately on the integration of theory and practice. This was evident in trainees' confident handling of theory when planning and evaluating their teaching. Progression routes were clear with courses frequently offered in a variety of modes, in different locations and at different times. Providers generated comprehensive documents which outlined the requirements of the courses and enabled prospective trainees to make appropriate choices.
15. Course content and structure supported the development of trainees' evaluation skills appropriately. Issues identified in previous inspection reports relating to the over-assessment of national awarding body courses were being resolved. Assessments were planned to promote further improvements in trainees' practice. Trainees were generally more comfortable with content that was revisited at a deeper level at different stages of the training than they had been in the previous year.

16. As was the case in 2005/06, teacher trainers gave due regard to updating trainees on issues of national importance. Typically, trainees had a good understanding of the content and application of Every Child Matters and continued to demonstrate a thorough appreciation and understanding of the principles of equality and diversity. The vast majority of teacher trainers ensured that these key issues underpinned the content of every session.
17. Progress has been satisfactory overall in embedding the minimum core for literacy, numeracy and language in training. In most cases it has been mapped effectively against the different stages of the courses and assessment planning is in place. Nevertheless, the picture across the institutions inspected in 2006/07 remains patchy and teacher trainers sometimes left this aspect of the training too late in the year for trainees to fully absorb its importance. Those colleges drawing on the expertise of a member of the specialist Skills for Life team continued to make the best progress. Compared with previous years, more focused attention was being given to the core skill of information and communication technology with many trainees undergoing an initial assessment in the related skills.
18. Taught courses were planned appropriately to meet the needs of trainees from diverse sectors and with different subject specialisms. Centres were making some progress in planning for the development of these specialisms, either through provider-based training or through the use of subject-specialist mentors. In the former case, teacher trainers often planned opportunities for trainees to work in subject-specialist learning sets and some were providing supporting materials through the imaginative use of information learning technology. Nevertheless, the provision of effective support and development for subject specialisms, through mentoring, continued to challenge both providers and employers. This was a particular issue for trainees working outside a further education college setting. In the worst cases, suitably qualified mentors were not available, or did not have the flexibility to meet with trainees or attend appropriate training. As a result, mentors' capacity and skills to support trainees presented a very mixed picture.
19. There were still too many instances where trainees were exposed to a very narrow range of teaching opportunities, such as teaching on one course, at one level and with one age group. Teacher trainers and employers did not pay sufficient attention to devising ways of compensating for this narrowness of teaching experience. Partnership working was not used to best effect in remedying deficiencies.

In one college there was no systematic approach to ensuring that trainees were teaching and assessing across a sufficiently wide range. For example, one trainee's teaching practice consisted of demonstrating retail products to the general public; another only ever taught very small groups of students with learning difficulties.

As a result, trainees were still able to complete the courses without having tested themselves effectively in a range of teaching contexts. There were instances where trainees commenced the course with no or limited teaching hours and, as a result, were unable to make a meaningful connection between the taught aspects of the course and regular practical experience of teaching for several weeks.

## Effectiveness of training

20. As in previous inspections, the taught element of the training was good in the majority of providers inspected. Teacher trainers planned carefully and prepared well-developed resources, often in the form of packs of materials, many of which were stimulating and reflected current education thought and practice. Training rooms catered more effectively for the delivery of subjects in education and pedagogy, and were often well resourced. Teacher training, as a subject area, was usually well supported by college learning centres.
21. Teacher trainers were committed to the principle of modelling good practice in teaching and learning. In the best examples of this, the modelling was explicit and used to promote reflection there and then, as in the following example.

Trainees in one college were given frequent opportunities by trainers to comment on the training sessions or on specific activities within them. One tutor who had tried out a new activity with trainees asked for immediate evaluation. This provoked honest but mixed feedback. The tutor summarised where the activity had worked less well and suggested what might be done to improve it. This process strongly supported the trainees in developing their own skills of evaluation, and provided them with a model that they could try with their own students.

22. Skilful use of the trainees' own experience and expertise helped to keep theory relevant. Group work, often in subject-specialist groups, involved trainees in discussion and problem solving activities. Teacher trainers challenged and inspired their trainees to further research and study. Typically, they facilitated the sharing of ideas very effectively. Equality and diversity issues were invariably, and appropriately, to the fore in training sessions.
23. In the best practice, teacher training teams reflected a broad range of experience and included other college staff when a particular specialist perspective was needed; for example in addressing the minimum core, or issues such as quality improvement. Such approaches enabled trainees to engage with a wide range of teaching styles and methods. Teacher trainers were themselves frequently engaged in higher study, and used their own learning experiences to invigorate their practice and to keep the content of training sessions current.
24. In 2006/07, trainers were more adept at using interactive whiteboards than in 2005/06. In some centres, effective use was made of virtual learning

environments to communicate with trainees, to keep a record of and monitor their progress, and to promote further reading through the provision of resources and Internet links.

25. The minimum core of literacy, numeracy and language was more generally referenced in session plans than in the previous year, but it was not always implemented effectively. In many instances this remained a discrete aspect of the course. In one good example:

At one college there was highly effective implementation of the minimum core. The two key elements, professional knowledge and skills and personal skills, had been very carefully embedded throughout the awarding body programmes. Trainees carried out a thorough initial assessment of their own levels of literacy and numeracy. Well structured input was given by specialist tutors of literacy, ESOL, and numeracy to raise trainees' awareness of professional issues. Subsequent individual presentations and group work helped trainees to develop and map their own literacy skills, and to explore ways in which they could support their own students in the classroom.

26. Trainees engaged well with their training sessions and were well motivated. They showed enthusiasm for acquiring knowledge of theory and developing the skills for applying this to their own teaching contexts. In group work and learning sets they were keen to explore the practical applications of learning theory. Trainees were good at contributing examples from their own college or wider vocational experience to contribute to the sessions.
27. The trainees frequently commented on the beneficial effect that their trainers had had on their teaching, both in modelling good practice and in encouraging their continuous reflection on the process.
28. As in previous years, concerns about the opportunities for trainees to further develop their subject specialist skills and knowledge persist. A key source of these concerns was the difficulties experienced by trainees in finding a suitable mentor who could play an active role in their subject development. Although there were some good examples of this happening, usually in colleges where mentoring was part of an established process, mentors outside the traditional further education college setting were less sure of what was expected of them.

### Meeting the needs of trainees

29. Although satisfactory overall, and with improvements on the previous year noted, this aspect continued to be the weakest element of the trainees' experience. While around 90% of this aspect of provision was satisfactory or better in the colleges sampled, still only a third of the provision was judged to be good.

30. Arrangements for interviewing and selecting were generally good. Trainees were well informed about their options in terms of different courses and levels of study. They were invariably guided to the right programme.
31. The majority of providers had appropriate procedures in place for the initial assessment of trainees' literacy, numeracy and language skills. However, too many trainees with an identified need did not take up the offer of additional support or were not encouraged to do so by their trainers. The follow-up of trainees' skills needs in numeracy was a particularly weak area. There were exceptions:

In one college, the support for developing trainees' literacy, numeracy and language skills was extensive and ranged from individual sessions to nine-hour discrete mini-courses and continued support from teacher trainers. The college had very good additional learning support with good connections to the teacher training team.

32. In the best provision, there were strong links with the adult learning support service in colleges. Target-setting was used effectively and the progress in skills development was formally monitored. In one example of good practice, electronic individual learning plans were accessible to trainers, personal tutors and mentors.
33. Trainees usually completed some form of professional development journal and the best of these journals were designed successfully to help identify further skills development requirements and to promote ideas about how to improve them. Good practice in this area resulted in the regular achievement of short-term learning goals.
34. Despite concerns about the continuing lack of systematic and formalised support in the workplace, the majority of trainees were very appreciative of the accessibility of their trainers and many mentors. They valued the timely, individual pastoral and academic support they received, either face to face, or by telephone or email.

### **The assessment of trainees**

35. There was a slight improvement in the overall quality of assessment on national awarding body courses, with just over half of this aspect judged to be good.
36. Assessment decisions on written work were fair and accurate. In most of the centres inspected, assignments were phased appropriately throughout the programme. Good tutorial support was frequently provided by teacher trainers in the form of written assignments, especially in the early stages of courses.
37. Although the majority of trainees received helpful and constructive feedback on their written work, this was not consistent practice across providers or within course teams. In the better examples, further suggestions and action points

challenged the trainees to make improvements, with errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar and referencing corrected where necessary.

Assessment feedback practice in one college was inconsistent. Although there was often detailed feedback on lesson observation forms, it was rarely translated into clear targets for improvement. Similarly, on written assignment feedback, comments were sometimes detailed but there were also examples where the comments were brief and vague. Opportunities were not taken to use the pro forma supplied to give specific feedback on the way trainees had addressed the assessment criteria and marking tutors restricted their feedback to general comments at the end.

38. Feedback on lesson observation outcomes, in particular feedback provided by mentors, was not focused sufficiently on the impact of teaching on learning, or on subject-specialist issues. Where paired observations were taking place to monitor the quality of mentor feedback, this was beginning to have a positive effect on trainee progress.

## Management and quality assurance

### Procedures for selecting trainees

39. Overall procedures for selecting trainees and providing prospective recruits with clearly detailed information on applying for courses were satisfactory and in a third of providers were good. Guidance generally included careful explanation about accreditation of prior learning and experience. In most colleges, human resource departments contributed to the process, making sure that employed trainees were fully aware of their contractual requirements. Applicants from other contexts were also supplied with good information. Prospective trainees were often given guidance as to how they could best prepare themselves for entry to the course by means of reading lists and, where necessary, on how to develop and improve academic skills.
40. Providers were beginning to use their equality and diversity data to identify and promote applications from previously under-represented groups. In one good example, teacher training teams worked with college marketing staff to make links with the local community and workforce with a view to attracting different groups of prospective trainees. This action led to a substantial increase in the participation of trainees from minority ethnic backgrounds.
41. The best colleges continue to improve structural and communication links between initial teacher training and human resource functions, including continuing professional development. In many cases a further link had been made with the quality assurance and improvement functions. Members of initial teacher training teams often formed part of the internal observation and training team.

One college had made substantial progress in developing the HR function to link effectively with staff development and teacher training. The selection, recruitment and induction processes for new teachers are managed effectively within the current structure. The Continuing Professional Development Centre provided an excellent base for staff at the college to further develop their professional skills and some of the training on offer was available to trainees on the course who were from other institutions.

There were also very good links within the current structure between teacher education and quality improvement activity. Overall the quality of teaching and learning at the college has improved significantly over the past three years and the data testifies to the increased numbers of staff either fully trained or in the process of being trained and the positive impact this is having on observation grades. The programme manager for teacher education contributed to quality assurance processes such as training lesson observers, as well as acting as a moderator in appeals against observation grades. Members of the teacher education and training team were also involved in delivering the rolling programme of staff development.

### Management of training

42. The overall management of courses was satisfactory. While the management of the taught elements of the training was frequently good and improving, judgements continued to be constrained by weaknesses in securing equity of experience for trainees in the workplace. Providers were responsive to the findings of previous inspections, with the best actively seeking ways to improve trainees' experiences through partnership working. Many were developing a clear strategic direction in response to the national agenda for the reform of initial teacher training across the further education sector, to be implemented in September 2007. However, there were insufficient creative solutions to fully address the challenges of providing effective workplace support.
43. Teaching teams were typically well qualified and experienced. They drew on other staff to supply expertise which added to the richness of the trainees' experience. Teacher trainers communicated well with each other and met regularly to discuss the progress of trainees and the quality of the courses. Planning for the taught aspects was good. Teaching rooms used for 2007 were well resourced and in particular exploited information learning technology and the possibilities of the virtual learning environment
44. Ensuring that trainees made good progress in their workplace teaching practice remained one of the weakest aspects of the management of the training. In the colleges sampled the situation was improving, with the mentor role generally being acknowledged by some abatement of mentors' own teaching commitments, although there was considerable variation in the tariffs applied.



In non-traditional further education contexts, mentors frequently operated with no remission or acknowledgement of the time needed to carry out the role.

### Quality assurance

45. Arrangements for monitoring the quality of the taught aspects of provision were usually thorough and conformed to institutional procedures for quality assurance and improvement. Course review and self-assessment were satisfactory overall but there were cases where areas for attention had not been identified or actions proposed to secure improvement were not always viable. In those colleges where teacher training provision remained fragmented from other aspects of human resource management and quality improvement, the outcomes of evaluation presented little opportunity for transferring good practice.
46. Procedures for monitoring and improving the impact and effectiveness of the workplace elements of the training were given even higher priority by the providers sampled in 2006/07. Nevertheless, they remained insufficiently secure across the range of workplace settings which was to the detriment of the subject-specialist development of trainees' teaching skills. These weaknesses were not always recognised by course teams due to some poor communication with mentors. Procedures for moderating the assessment of teaching observations, although improving, were still not well developed, especially in securing the pass/fail boundaries of trainees' practice. For example:

In one college there were no procedures in place to assure the quality of mentoring, with no clear strategy for training mentors. Halfway through the course many national awarding body trainees still did not have a mentor and there was no system for auditing mentor observation and feedback practice.

47. Arrangements for internally verifying trainees' written coursework were usually thorough and in line with institutional policies on assessment. However, where there were weaknesses in a team's assessment practice, for example generalised comments which did not result in clear action points for trainees to improve, these issues were not identified by internal and external verifiers as a matter of routine.
48. Colleges generally produced detailed analyses of data which highlighted key issues, such as the retention and pass rates of all trainees. Plans were often in place to address weaknesses identified but, as reported in 2005/06, the participation and achievement of under-represented groups were not evaluated systematically enough to inform further action to bring about improvements.

## Notes

In November 2004 the Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education announced the Government's proposals for the reform of initial teacher training for the further education sector. Many of the changes were based on the findings of the Ofsted inspection survey report. These were reinforced and developed in the further education White Paper *Raising skills, improving life chances* in 2006, which expanded the scope of the reforms to include the wider further education learner base, such as work-based learning and adult and community learning. On 1 September 2007, legal and contractual requirements were implemented to support the reforms. These include:

- revised teaching qualifications for new teachers and a professional status for all teachers in community learning and development, further education, offender learning and work-based learning
- continuing professional development requirements for all teachers
- principals' qualifications for all newly appointed principals of further education institutions.

The focus of this report is on the national awarding body general teaching qualifications endorsed by Standards Verification UK, formerly the Further Education National Training Organisation (FENTO). These qualifications must meet the 2001 statutory requirement for teachers in further education to gain an endorsed teaching qualification, based on the standards for teaching and supporting learning in further education. In almost all cases, the trainees were studying on a part-time and in-service basis, while working as full- or part-time teachers.

The evidence is derived from inspections carried out during the academic year 2006/07 by Her Majesty's Inspectors, Additional Inspectors and inspectors from the Adult Learning Inspectorate, which merged with Ofsted in April 2007. The inspectors evaluated national awarding body provision in 26 colleges. The quality of training and management and quality assurance procedures were inspected during the first phase, which took place in the autumn of 2006 and the spring of 2007. During the second phase, inspectors concentrated on evaluating the achievements of trainees through observing their teaching and gathering evidence of their progress during the course. Phase two of the inspection was completed in June 2007.

Over 90% of the trainees enrolled on the courses inspected were studying for the City & Guilds Certificate in Further Education Teaching. This is a three-stage programme with stages one, two and three together making up the full certificate. Each stage is a qualification in its own right. The vast majority of trainees aimed to progress to the Certificate in Education or post-graduate certificate in education courses on successful completion of stages one and two of the qualification.

Qualifications based on the National Standards are offered by both higher education institutions and national awarding bodies. In accordance with the procedures outlined in the *Framework for the inspection of the initial training of further*

*education teachers*, the findings on higher education institution qualifications are published in separate institutional reports based on the lead higher education institution.

In 2004, the Department of Education and Skills (DfES) announced extensive reforms to the system including a new Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills award comparable to Qualified Teacher Status for teachers in schools. The reforms are being introduced in full in 2007/08. In the period leading up to 2007, different aspects of the reforms, such as the use of mentoring schemes, were piloted.

## **Annex. Colleges inspected during 2006/07**

- \*University of Brighton
- \*University of Derby
- \*University of East London
- \*University of Greenwich
- \*Liverpool John Moores University
- \*Northumbria University
- \*Nottingham Trent University
- \*Oxford Brookes University
- \*University of Plymouth
- \*London South Bank University
- \*University of Southampton
- \*University of Warwick
- Barking College, Romford
- Bexley College, Belvedere
- Bicton College, Budleigh Salterton
- Brockenhurst College
- Brooklands Technical College, Weybridge
- Castle College Nottingham
- City College Birmingham
- City College Coventry
- City of Bristol College
- Evesham and Malvern Hills College
- Exeter College
- Guildford College
- Halesowen College
- Hastings College of Arts and Technology
- Havant College
- Lambeth College
- Lancaster and Morecambe College
- Liverpool Community College
- New College Nottingham
- Newbury College
- North East Worcestershire College
- Oaklands College, St Albans
- South East Derbyshire College
- South Nottingham College
- Southampton City College
- West Kent College, Tonbridge

\*Note that findings on training for qualifications validated by higher education institutions are published in separate institutional reports.