

The Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET)

An Evaluation of the Impact of Lifelong Learning Sector
Initial Teacher Education (LLS ITE)

Evidence Synthesis for UCET by Jim Crawley, Bath Spa University – April 2012

Key Sources

Association of Centres for Excellence in Teacher Training / LLUK (2010) LLUK *Workforce Reforms Project Report*. London: LLUK

BIS (2012) BIS RESEARCH PAPER NUMBER 66. *Evaluation of FE Teachers' qualifications (England) Regulations 2007* London: Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

Key Themes / Issues

Teaching Development / Professionalisation

- There is evidence that good progress has been made towards ensuring a qualified and expert teaching profession with new entrants to the sector enrolled on or having achieved a recognised teaching qualification. Approximately 80% of all teaching staff within FE colleges (regardless of their start date in the sector) are estimated to have or be working towards a recognised qualification. This figure is estimated to be slightly lower in WBL and ACL providers.
- There is evidence that new staff systematically being enrolled on and obtaining the ITT qualification equips them with increased confidence, the ability to use different teaching methods to support learners with varying needs and learning preferences, and increased reflective practice.
- ITT resulted in improved skills in the following specific areas:
 - Planning lessons effectively.
 - Differentiating between learning preferences.
 - Assessment.
 - Using ICT effectively in teaching.
 - Ensuring equality and diversity in teaching.
 - Reflecting on teaching practice.

(BIS 2012, Machin 2010)

- As would be expected just four years since the introduction of the Regulations, it is too early to see evidence of an impact on learner achievement, participation, progression and retention. The evidence of improvements to teaching suggests that an impact on learners may be evident in the medium to long term future.
- There is evidence that many of the intended short- term outcomes of the Regulations have been achieved or are starting to emerge. These include increased aspirations among teachers to progress in their careers, linked to a clearer qualification and career pathway; increased confidence that they have the skills required to do their job; feeling supported in their roles; increased knowledge and understanding of different teaching and assessment methods which they apply in practice; as well as improved levels of numeracy, literacy and ICT.

- There are also signs that the Regulations are achieving some intended medium-term outcomes. Teachers reported that they are more able to reflect on the impact of their learning, more able to change their practice to incorporate different ways of engaging with learners, and increasingly participate in continuing professional development.
- It is not just new teachers who have benefited from the Regulations. The Regulations have contributed to the creation of a professional FE environment in which there is an expectation for all staff to be skilled and qualified.
- An important way in which the Regulations have contributed to create a culture of professionalism is the introduction of a clear career pathway that new entrants are aware of from the moment they enter the sector.
- Although the Regulations have not led to significant changes in mentoring and observation practice in terms of the level of investment in mentoring, existing mentors are being used in some providers to effectively support staff through the ITT and subsequently. However, mentoring support appears variable among colleges and there is evidence mentors are used less in WBL and ACL providers, where informal and ad hoc peer support is more common.
- A relatively small number of teachers have achieved A/QTLS to date (2,915) or are committed to achieving it (5,037).
- More experienced staff who have been qualified for a number of years, are less likely to see the benefits of professional formation.
(BIS 2012)

Workforce development

'The case for compliance has largely been won' (BIS 2012). There is almost universal support for the new qualifications as a means to raise the professional knowledge and status of teachers and to improve learning. Issues which emerge from the evidence include:

- Major concerns about the availability of funding for teachers to take part in Initial Teacher Education and Continuous Professional Development. Many teachers receive little or even no remission from teaching to undertake Initial Teacher Education.
- The LLUK national standards are often not yet internalised into their practice by new teachers, whereas there is some evidence that more experienced teachers have developed more familiarity with them.
- The varied contractual and cultural arrangements across the sector, make the implementation of a country-wide approach difficult and complex, and this has hindered progress made in some cases. Some practitioners (e.g. Adult Community Learning, Work Based Learning and part time Further Education) can be seen to have unequal access to training and support, and this can slow their progress to qualification and progressing with Continuous Professional Development considerably.
- The effectiveness of these reforms could be compromised by a combination of under-funding, poor integration of initial teacher training into human resource policies within some provision, and an over-prescriptive curriculum.
- There are still many areas of the sector where the reforms have had little impact.
- There is evidence that provider size affects the approach to implementing the Regulations

(BIS 2012; Broad 2010; Harkin 2008; Hulin 2010; Lawy and Tedder 2009b; LLUK 2010b; Thomson and Robinson 2008; Sampson 2009; Wooding 2008)

Universities and Centres for Excellence in Teacher Training have been and could continue to play an important role in supporting, implementing and embedding the reforms in the sector. (Thompson, J. and Simmons, J. 2009; Wooding 2008)

Very good progress has been made on the changes needed to ensure that teacher education and training are linked to other functions such as quality assurance and human resources, with OfSTED reporting that 'almost all of the providers had taken steps to address this important aspect of quality improvement'. (BIS 2012; OfSTED 2009: 6). These linkages are not always successfully made however, and this can be in smaller, non FE organisations, but also in some larger further education colleges (LLUK 2010b). Overall Further Education is better placed to support this model of workforce development than the rest of the Lifelong Learning sector (BIS 2012; Broad 2010; Hulin 2010)

The new structures have increased the focus on the minimum core elements of literacy and numeracy with the aim of improving trainees' personal skills in these aspects and developing trainees' capacity to support their students' acquisition of these skills in the context of the specialist subject. The new structures have had little impact on the minimum core element of information and communication technology, which is still not embedded in the practice of many teachers. The expectation is that teachers know how to use computers but this is not the case.

There is limited development of application of the minimum core within organisations and few teacher trainers or subject specialist mentors undertake training in this area. Organisations may benefit from ensuring effective staff development programmes in the application of the minimum core are in place and that this training is extended to Initial Teacher Education teams. (BIS 2012; Giles and Yelland 2010; OfSTED 2009; SWitch CETT 2009).

The specialist qualifications for Skills for Life teachers are less embedded in the sector than generic qualifications. More research into understanding of the additional dimensions of the role of a Skills for Life teacher would be beneficial (Loo, 2007; OfSTED 2010).

There is a lack of understanding in some cases by organisations of what teacher education is all about, and a need to relate workforce development more closely to organisational development. There is still some confusion and organisations are at different stages in their understanding and development of workforce planning. How the information relating to the reforms is communicated and disseminated within an organisation appears to be very reliant on the internal communication and management structures within that organisation. Approaches to advice and guidance for teachers and others on the reforms works best when co-ordinated effectively and distributed through networks and professional groupings.

The complexity of the sector as a whole and the difficulties individual providers can face in implementing the reforms are significant barriers to effective workforce development.

(BIS 2012; CETTIL 2008; Hulin 2009a; Hulin 2010; Hulin and Lahiff, 2009a; LLUK 2010b; OfSTED 2010; Waller, Thompson and Simmons 2009; Wooding 2008)

Greater alignment between QTS and QTLS is overdue (BIS 2012; Children, Schools and Families Committee 2010; Skills Commission, 2010)

In regard to increased employer and learner investment in learning, although there is limited evidence so far that this has happened, a few WBL providers actively promote that they have a fully qualified workforce regulated by a regulatory body. They perceive this to be an important marketing tool that helps employers to see training as worthwhile value for money. (BIS 2012)

There were concerns among many WBL and ACL providers that the Regulations in their current form are less applicable to their areas of the sector and that, similarly, the initial teacher training (ITT) qualifications introduced by the Regulations are designed more for teachers working in a traditional classroom environment than trainer assessors in the workplace. (BIS 2012)

Good practice indicators

- Strong leadership from senior management teams
- Making the link between the Regulations and the quality agenda.
- Regular monitoring linked to staff appraisals and key performance indicators.
- Changing pay scales to build in increments at each stage of qualification to reward and recognise professionalism and to embed the policy within the organisation.
- Offering support to staff during the process of professional formation.
- Delivering PTLLS over an extended period of time rather than as a very short, intensive course
- Working closely with awarding organisations to tailor initial teacher training provision, especially for WBL providers wanting to ensure that provision reflects a wide range of teaching settings.

Possible Future steps

- Becoming active centres for initial teacher education.
- Providing support for effective professional formation.
- Monitoring impact of revised CTTLS qualification
- Avoid 'diluting' the key message that staff must be qualified.
(BIS 2012: p12)

Collaboration, Networking and partnership

There is good evidence to indicate that working collaboratively across organisations is effective and that there is a willingness to do so across the sector. Collaboration across providers can be a powerful tool to overcome problems and issues, and to devise and share solutions. There are significant differences in the reach of collaboration both within and cross organisations. At a micro level (personal / departmental), evidence of collaboration is sound. Evidence at a macro level (e.g. Higher Education / Further Education) is less consistent, with high quality examples across one or more geographical areas, and

including many organisations at one end of the scale, and little or no collaboration at the other. There has been little collaboration in delivery and assessment of the minimum core.

Some of the best practice of working collaboratively for which evidence was found included:

- Universities and Centres for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETTS) acting as facilitators and hubs for development
- The promotion of networking and dialogue
- Inclusive cross sector approaches
- Developing collaboratively devised, centrally managed and Quality Assured, shared programmes with devolved operation.
- Developing delivery and credit-gaining approaches, including blended learning
- Embedded impact assessment
- Identifying and pursuing external funding possibilities
- Developing strategic and co-ordinated approaches to Initial Teacher Training and Continuous Professional Development

Areas for development for future collaboration include the need to:

- Relate workforce development more closely to organisational development
- Embed the reforms in organisations
- Promote networking and peer to peer support

(BIS 2012; Broad, 2010; Giles and Yelland 2010; Hardman, Knight and Hankey 2008; Harkin, Cuff and Rees 2008; Hulin 2009b; Hulin 2010; Lawy and Tedder 2009; SWitch CETT 2009)

Lucas and Nasta (2010) The findings of Lucas and Unwin provide evidence that there is a significant gap between the rhetoric of recent standards-led reforms and the reality experienced by many in-service trainees in FE colleges.

Mentoring and workplace support

Mentors in further education colleges now frequently provide trainees with good support in acquiring the specialist skills to teach their subject. Nevertheless, the quality of mentoring is still variable and not monitored well enough to bring about overall improvement. Training is often available to mentors but they do not always undertake the training offered.

Trainees who were employed in work-based and adult and community learning settings continue to be the most disadvantaged in the quality and extent of their workplace support. Typically, mentoring arrangements and workplace support for these trainees is too informal and reliant on goodwill.

This weakness in mentoring persists despite £30m of additional funding in 2007/08, which was targeted at employers to support continuing professional development and mentor support for trainees, but which was not monitored or evaluated closely.

Mentors themselves still have difficulty gaining professional acceptance, and organisations need to focus on continuing to develop mentoring models and frameworks that improve the quality, training and professionalisation of the mentoring role.

Workplace support of trainees and mentors is often still problematic and this can be particularly the case for those in Adult and Community Learning (ACL), Work Based Learning (WBL) and part time Further Education settings.

Benefits of mentoring have included:

- Better retention, achievement and success rates of students
- Improved integration of teacher trainees into teaching teams
- Enhanced reputation of organisations involved
- Making a contribution to the retention of staff
- Improved learner behaviour
- Technology can enhance mentoring process and relationship

Evidence shows (Standards Unit 2007) that there is a wealth of ideas, innovation and motivation focused on establishing and developing effective mentoring schemes within Initial Teacher Training delivery.

Issues still to be addressed with mentoring include:

- Mentoring in the broad Life Long Learning sector ought to be established as a professional role so that it has a similar professional status to 'teaching'.
- Preparation for mentoring is not solely a technical issue that can be enabled by a simple training programme on how to perform teaching observations and give feedback.
- Mentoring does not always work well in Work Based Learning contexts or where mentors are hard to find.
- The culture of sector in relation to contractual and employment arrangements has important impacts on the context and specific parameters of mentoring
- Mentors 'struggle' to gain 'professional acceptance'
- There are limited opportunities in the Learning and Skills sector for what Lucas (2007) describes as a 'pedagogy of the workplace'
- 'What mentors hope to achieve appears to be hampered by the lack of consistent and appropriate training, lack of mentoring infrastructure and chronic sector under-funding
- Although mentoring is arguably an important part of subject specific support for teacher trainees, it is only one ingredient in the mix'
- The underpinning principals of a successful model of mentoring practice should include:
 - A multi model of engagement approach
 - Commitment to face to face mentoring
 - An appropriate level of training and support for mentors and mentees

(BIS 2012; Broad 2010; CETTIL 2008; Eliahoo 2008a; Eliahoo 2008b; Garside et al 2010; Hardman, Knight and Hankey 2008; Harkin 2008; Harkin, Cuff and Rees 2008; Ingleby and Hunt 2008; Lawy and Tedder 2009; Lucas and Nasta 2010; OfSTED 2009)

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

The best examples of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) show a whole organisation, strategic approach. CPD and Initial Teacher Education are however often not integrated. Although there is some evidence of greater alignment between Human Resource or Personnel Departments/roles and Initial Teacher Education Team/role, a full strategic linkage between Human Resource, Initial Teacher Education, Continuous Professional Development and Quality Assurance is rare.

Time and cost are important barriers to effective Continuous Professional Development for individuals and organisations.

The development of co-ordinated, consortium led (e.g. by Universities or Centres for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETTs) Continuous Professional Development, themed on important areas (e.g. mentoring; e-learning) would be extremely helpful.

Some employers manage Continuous Professional Development as a performance target and this is counter to the Institute for Learning (IfL) model of professional practice which has generally been welcomed by the sector.

A range of routes for the different roles of practitioners seeking Associate Teacher (Learning and Skills) and Qualified Teacher (Learning and Skills) status (ATLS and QTLS) status needs to be recognised and developed, and a range of support services and systems to support teachers in the sector.

At the same time, providers need to exploit fully the potential of blended learning opportunities for Initial Teacher Education and Continuous Professional Development, for instance, to meet the needs of the dispersed Adult and Community Learning workforce.

Universities, Centres for Excellence in Teacher Training and groups of organisations can effectively develop and support more flexible delivery, including use of blended learning as a more accessible route to initial professional training.

Greater clarity is needed around what constitutes CPD, and what meets the regulatory requirements if the current approach to professionalise the workforce is to receive any credibility and status with teachers and managers alike. Couch CPD in the language of 'entitlement' rather than 'requirement'.

Middle Managers have a key role to play in driving forward the CPD agenda and should be encouraged to understand the importance of developing staff, in order to achieve strategic aims and objectives for organisational growth. This is a difficult task if no real encouragement or support is made available to staff.

(Bailey and Browne 2009; BIS 2012; Broad 2010; CETTIL 2008; Hardman, Knight and Hankey 2008; Harkin 2008; Hulin 2009a; Hulin 2009b; Hulin 2010; Hulin and Lahiff 2010; Ingleby and Hunt 2008; LLUK 2010; OfSTED 2010; SWitch CETT 2009; Waller, Thompson and Simmons 2009; Wooding 2008)

The configuration of the qualifications

The way in which the qualifications have been developed has led to some over assessment, particularly in the evidencing of practical teaching. There are examples of programmes where constructive alignment of assessment is not well developed.

The current standards and associated units of assessment are felt to contain limited coverage of classroom management and on the use of ICT and e-learning.

Although the new qualifications have been in place for more than two years, indications were that the requirements pertaining to the minimum core may not have been fully embraced.

The relationship between PTLLS / CTLLS / DTLLS is unclear to some, and the structure appears not to anticipate progression from an associate to full teaching role, whereas this does become an option for many teachers. There is also confusion around the legacy courses, terminology and the NVQ in teaching and development

There have been examples of trainees 'marooned' on PTLLS (i.e. unable to progress), and others where organisations appear to consider PTLLS as a 'stopping point' not a 'starting point', this is symptomatic of organisations not being fully cognisant of the teacher education regulations and changes.

The 5 year timeframe for completion of Qualified Teacher (Learning and Skills) status (QTLS) can present problems such as:

- Where gaining a teacher training award and a specialist award is necessary
- Where a teaching role lacks the breadth to address all aspects of the qualification
- Where trainees have difficulties gaining / sustaining the required teaching hours.
- Where trainees wish to progress from other awards to DTLLS and places may not be available

There is an impact as a result on course completion. Another issue is that people whose roles have only enabled them to get CTLLS are unable to develop their studies further and plan for a full-teaching role (DTLLS) unless they are in the full teaching role. There needs to be a way identified for teachers who want to obtain the DTLLS before they take on the full role.

More specific and detailed information on gaining recognition for existing qualifications, and how to map them across to the new qualifications would be helpful.

(Giles and Yelland 2010; Harkin 2008; Hulin 2009a; Hulin 2010; LLUK 2010; OfSTED 2010; Pye and Diment 2009; Sampson 2009; Wooding 2008)

A greater emphasis in the current reforms on inclusion and inclusive learning for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities would require the development of more specialist content in the standards on inclusive learning (CETTIL 2008).

Models of teaching and learning

Literacy, Language and Numeracy needs of trainees can add further challenge to the achievement of Initial Teacher Education qualifications, but good progress has been made in supporting those trainees through to achievement. Development of bridging support and modules would further improve the situation. (OfSTED 2009, 2010; Sampson 2009; Tummons 2008)

Trainee satisfaction with Initial Teacher Education has been seen to be rising through the early period of the reforms (IfL 2010; Pye and Diment 2009)

There has been a confusion of subject knowledge with subject pedagogy by government and regulatory bodies (Eliahoo 2008b).

There has been concern that the model of teaching and learning which is developing across the sector is leaning towards a more instrumental and managed model, and that the reflective practice and critical professionalism of teachers in the sector could be undermined by this.

There has been progress in raising the 'self image' of teachers in the sector as 'dual professionals' (i.e. managing the dual demands of often being a subject / vocational specialist and teacher). In some cases however, individual teachers have been shown to perceive themselves as 'another professional', rather than as 'a teacher', and they do not have a well-developed perception of themselves as professionals.

(BIS 2012; Broad 2010; Children, Schools and Families Committee 2010; Hulin and Lahiff, 2009; Lawy and Tedder 2009a and b; Nasta 2007; Sampson 2009; Thomson and Robinson 2008)

There is a need for procedures that recognise and value informal, collaborative and expansive work-based learning as part of the embedding of the reforms (Broad 2010: 48).

Teacher Education and Teacher Educators

Teacher Educators are committed, critically engaged practitioners and professionals who play a vital role in the workforce reforms, and trainees value their skills and support highly.

There is a lack of a national consensus on the roles, responsibilities and professional knowledge of teacher educators. What knowledge teacher educators should teach is contentious. Teacher educators themselves have a particular range of support needs. There is sense of disempowerment amongst teacher educators both in relation to their capacity to effect change, and the degree to which they often appear to be outsiders.

The following steps would enhance the status and situation of teacher educators.

- Agreement on the 'core' knowledge, skills and attributes needed by a teacher educator in the sector.
- Clarification of the role and responsibilities of teacher educators.

- A coherent structure and resources to support effective updating for teacher educators on new developments.
- A resource bank for teacher educators.
- A support and professional development programme for potential, new and experienced teacher educators.
- A funding regime that will adequately support the delivery of high quality teacher education provision

(Clow and Harkin 2009; Crawley 2010; Harkin, Cuff and Rees 2009; Giles and Yelland 2010; Lawy and Tedder 2009; Noel 2009; Sampson 2009)

- There was an overall consensus of opinion amongst many interviewed that the current framework offers an academically sound and rigorous qualifications structure that has assisted in the overall improvement of delivery.
- On the whole, the feedback regarding the current delivery model was positive with suggestions as to how this could be improved.
- Feedback regarding what should be the essential elements and outputs for any qualification that will equip teachers for the future should include: equipping initial teacher training students with generic teaching skills, specific subject skills, teaching practice and teaching observation, mentoring, the effective utilisation of learning technologies and the effective use of blended learning.
(AoC 2011)
- Most teachers and trainers were very positive about their experiences of the ITT qualifications and considered that doing the qualification(s) had helped them to gain confidence as a teacher or trainer.
- Some senior managers too have noticed a difference in terms of the confidence of staff that have undertaken the PTLLS, CTLLS or DTLLS qualifications and those that have not. (BIS 2012)
- From the literature, it is clear that ITE observations are welcomed by ITE trainees, seen as positive and supportive, are developmental and have clear links to PDRs and CPD. In contrast, quality observations are perceived as judgemental snapshots which tick boxes to satisfy Ofsted demands. (Clarke 2010)

Establishing a culture across the FE sector in which the nurturing and development of new teachers is seen as an essential and integral feature of the workplace and, as such, is valued and supported by teachers and management alike is a major challenge. (Dixon, Jennings, Orr & Tummons 2010; Orr and Simmons 2010)

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