

Project SW0703: Models of good practice on L&S Sector ITE programmes

Interim findings:

Initial Assessment (IA) & Induction - Procedures vary from college to college:

Who administers the assessment?

In smaller provision screening is done by Directors of Curriculum, Human Resources as part of a Needs Analysis or the host college (for in-house delivery) – tutors are not involved in selection in this process. Otherwise, all members of the teaching team participate.

When is it done?

Where possible pre-course meetings with whole group, giving time for support to be put into place. On larger courses this is generally on the first day and is included in the induction process, delaying access to support – especially problematic on short courses (PTLLS).

Induction practices were more generic

Induction is standard at each stage and does not assume knowledge of college/university, or attendance on previous training. Ensure good ice-breakers, thorough explanation of what programme involves. Study skills, LRC, VLE inductions etc spread over several weeks and integrated into teaching and schemes of work, embedding it as a learning activity

What testing or diagnostic is undertaken?

The actual instruments used also vary:

- BKSB
- Written task and interview
- Interview alone - L2 Lit & Numeracy, mandatory teaching hours and subject qualifications are min course entry (inc PTLLS). No IA done after interview
- IA only done for external candidates and those with APEL
- No ICLT or Num assessment done at the colleges interviewed
- Questionnaire to provide background info, motivations, subject area and literacy levels. Additional literacy or language support during course if appropriate
- Specific IA to be written for discrete groups
- Application form covers motivations and expectations

Strengths

- Pre-course meetings set tone and highlight concerns prior to commencing
- Positive EV feedback
- Written task makes learners focus on future practice, an assessment requirement
- Have developed format to suit the needs of the community
- IA will become important in embedding min core

Areas for development or frustrations

- Time and resources necessary to administer and follow up support, including running study skills sessions
- Links with learner support to check progress etc rarely in place or maintained
- Little mention of how this relates formally to ILPs, although tutorials help

Recruitment procedures:

Great variety in practice between institutions, eg very evident in recruitment of under-represented communities, with some organisations being proactive and responsive to issue, and others claiming their cohorts represent local demographic

- Sept Open Days – display of testimonials and pictures from previous ITE courses
- Web page accessed easily through Google
- Course guides provide overview; detailed College prospectus details
- Applications via GTTR and individual interviews offered where appropriate
- Pre-course materials posted to applicants with invites to IAG sessions

- Community dev team and community elders may identify potential trainees
- For in-house staff, training needs identified at interview, appraisal or review and then form part of their CPD
- Structured progression between PTLLS and CTLLS

Strengths

- Responsive to and good links with local communities
- Mostly done through referral or word of mouth
- Flexibility of delivery mode and venue choice is a clear strength

Areas for development or frustrations

- Some communities reluctant to travel to college sites, wanting in-house courses, which are not always appropriate or cost effective
- Contribution to area's regeneration programme, leading to progression and increasing employability
- Staff resources is an issue
- Special Education sector unable to access LSC funding for ITE
- Literacy issues, particularly with 'internal' vocational staff
- Availability of training bursary restricted to shortage subjects

Support:

Huge range of issues, both common to all students at the institutions and those specific to ITE trainees, under the following key headings:

- **Mentoring** - Trainee have personal tutor and subject specialist mentor on placement, who liaise via termly meetings. Mentor handbooks generally available, but not everyone attends training events. New Mentoring coordinator trying to create tracking system between tutor, learner support and student
- **Peer** - Encouragement of learning community among trainees. Full-time group have *Facebook* site. Election of student rep to Programme Committee, acting as conduit to teaching staff. Other networks of support eg previous trainees
- **Tutorial** - Communication face-to-face or via email. Students encouraged to disclose needs on enrolment forms and at tutorials. In smaller provision informal 'drop-in' to see PC is possible too
- **Financial** - HE advisors assist with student loan process for PGCE/Cert Ed trainees. Bursaries available in skill shortage areas
- **Learner & Learning Support** - IA identifies areas for attention. Diagnostic assessment for dyslexia. Learner Services notified of support needs. Emphasise pre-enrolment guidance – '*the right trainee on the right course*'. Disability support assess learning needs tutor informed. Services advertised on intranet.
- **Online** – VLEs widely used, subscribe to C&G Smartscreen, support for staff and trainees
- **Other** - Sessions built around Crèche times. Tutorial offered for struggling trainees, often resulting in successful action planning to complete. Internal staff offered remitted study hours to support CPD

Problems

- Tutors may not follow up whether support accessed. Success hard to measure
- Course leader devotes lots of 'underground learning' time to trainees
- Restrictions of HE funding for trainees in FE seeking to access support
- Support to be reviewed and highlighted on application form
- Restricted allocation of full time training bursaries causes resentment
- Some literacy levels very poor
- Course surveys reflect prog's intensity and dissatisfaction with C&G materials

Strengths

- Highly supportive, community focused environment
- High retention due to support offered and accessibility of tutor – but '*would this be sustainable as the programme grows?*'