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OFSTED: 'brief encounters of a second kind'?!

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1 **Ofsted – ‘brief encounters of a second kind’?!**

2 **November 2006**

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15 **Key words**

16 OFSTED, Inspection, Initial Teacher Training, Physical Education, Secondary

17
18 **Biographical note**

19 Lorraine Cale and Jo Harris are senior lecturers in the School of Sport and Exercise
20 Sciences at Loughborough University. Jo is also Director of Teacher Education and
21 Lorraine is Director of the Post Graduate Certificate in Education PE course.

25

26 **Ofsted – ‘brief encounters of a second kind’?!**

27

28 **Abstract**

29

30 **Background**

31 Since 1995, the Office for Standards in Education has inspected the quality of all Initial
32 Teacher Training (ITT) provision in England on behalf of the Training and Development
33 Agency for Schools (TDA). Ofsted inspection results are published and are highly
34 significant because the TDA has a statutory duty to take account of them when allocating
35 trainee numbers, funding ITT provision and making accreditation decisions. Yet, concerns
36 have been expressed over the reliability, validity and credibility of inspections as well as
37 over limitations in the methodology and/or the ‘high stakes’ involved. More recently
38 however, there have been revisions to the inspection framework and the current inspection
39 arrangements, which now comprise full and short inspections, propose to be effective,
40 efficient, cost effective and less burdensome (Ofsted, 2005b; Ofsted & TTA, 2004).

41 **Purpose**

42 The purpose of this paper is to provide a critical account of our most recent ‘short’ Ofsted
43 Inspection of ITT at Loughborough University as a follow up to earlier papers published by
44 ourselves and colleagues on the inspection of our secondary Physical Education ITT
45 provision (Hardy & Evans, 2000; Cale & Harris, 2003). In particular, we consider the extent
46 to which the process is effective, efficient, cost effective, less burdensome and represents a
47 ‘brief encounter’.

Method

The account is informed by data from various sources. ITT staff kept journals for a period of 7 months leading up to, during, and following the inspection in which they detailed their Ofsted activities, experiences and reflections. Staff periodically completed their journals recording the preparation, work and meetings they were involved in, and noting and reflecting on any problems, issues, concerns, anxieties, frustrations and/or other emotions they experienced. Documentary evidence in the form of Ofsted Handbooks, Guidance plus other paperwork the inspection generated was also collected for analysis. Finally, to augment and support the findings from the journals and documentary evidence, a review of related literature was undertaken. Analysis of the data involved identification of key issues.

Discussion and Conclusion

Based on our experiences and reflections and the findings from the literature, a number of issues and limitations with the inspection process and framework are highlighted. Given these, we declare that we remain cynical about the whole process and the validity of the outcomes. We contest the notion that the inspection process is effective, efficient and cost effective and feel that it still places an enormous burden on providers. Further, we suggest that the framework is fundamentally flawed which could have serious consequences not only for the future of our own course, but for the future of ITT.

Introduction – A ‘brief’ update on developments

Since 1995, the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted)¹ has inspected the quality of all Initial Teacher Training (ITT) provision in England on behalf of the Training and

Development Agency for Schools (TDA)² (formerly the Teacher Training Agency (TTA)). A number of possible purposes of inspection in ITT have been identified including assessment for improvement, comparison, resource management (Williams, 1997), or compliance (Blake et al., 1995). According to the current Ofsted framework, the main purposes of the inspection of ITT are to:

- ensure public accountability for the quality of ITT
- stimulate improvement in the quality of provision
- provide objective judgements on providers for public information
- inform policy
- enable the statutory link to be made between funding and quality
- check compliance with statutory requirements. (Ofsted, 2005a, p. 1).

Ofsted inspection results are published and are highly significant because the TDA 'has a statutory duty to have regard to the outcomes of them when funding ITT provision' (Ofsted 2005b, p.1). The evidence gathered from inspections is converted to grades and is taken into account in the allocation of trainee numbers and funding to ITT providers, and in accreditation decisions. If any aspect of provision is judged to be non compliant, accreditation of all the ITT courses an institution provides may be withdrawn (Sinkinson, 2004). Following inspection, the TDA use the Ofsted data to produce 'quality categories' on an A-E scale (where A is the highest category), which are published as 'league tables'. Thus, there is a close and crucial link between the outcome of the inspection of any course and the viability and reputation of the ITT provider (Sinkinson, 2004), with institutions standing to make significant gains or losses

consequent upon the outcome (Williams, 1997). Furlong et al., (2000) note how in some instances, quality ratings have led to the disciplining of higher education institutions (HEIs), whilst Ghouri & Barnard (1998) have reported that unsatisfactory inspection reports have led to the closure of courses, and in some cases, whole institutions. Similarly, Jones & Sinkinson (2000, p.81) warn how a poor Ofsted rating can lead to ‘...course closure, while even satisfactory ratings can lead to uncertainty over course quota, leading to a spiral of decline in course viability’. Indeed, Sinkinson & Jones (2001) note how issues concerning funding allocations, trainee numbers and institutional reputations, not to mention lecturers’ jobs, are a direct consequence of the outcomes of inspections and argue that it is therefore vitally important that all involved have confidence in the inspection methodology and judgments made.

Yet, generally the response to the inspection process from teacher educators has been negative (Graham, 1997; Sutherland, 1997) and inspections have been viewed as heavy handed and invasive (Furlong et al., 2000). Furthermore, concerns have been expressed over the reliability, validity and credibility of inspections (Campbell & Husbands, 2000; Cale & Harris, 2003; Graham & Nabb, 1999; Jones & Sinkinson, 2000; Hardy & Evans, 2000; Sinkinson & Jones, 2001; Sinkinson, 2004; 2005) and the methodology and/or ‘high stakes’ involved (Campbell & Husbands 2000; Jones & Sinkinson, 2000; Sinkinson & Jones, 2001; Tymms, 1997; Williams, 1997). For example, fired by a mix of dismay and frustration for the practices Ofsted and the TTA demonstrated in the 1996/97 inspection of our secondary Physical Education (PE) ITT course, Hardy & Evans (2000) highlighted numerous faults and limitations in the system

119 which they claimed needed to be addressed for it to have validity and credibility.
120 Following a survey of all HEI partnership providers of ITT courses, Graham & Nabb
121 (1999) reported that fewer than 10% of 152 providers were confident that the inspection
122 of courses was a valid, reliable and consistent process. Similarly, on the basis of
123 analyses of published Ofsted inspection reports for secondary mathematics (Jones &
124 Sinkinson, 2000; Sinkinson & Jones, 2001) and humanities courses (Sinkinson, 2005),
125 a number of variations and inconsistencies in reports were highlighted. Sinkinson &
126 Jones (2001) concluded that there was 'much room for development in order that all
127 participants in the process ...are confident that it is reliable, valid and robust' (p.235). In
128 2004, Sinkinson (2004) focused on the role of the managing inspector in effecting
129 consistency of judgement and reporting in reports of four HEI-based providers.
130 Revealing several important inconsistencies of reporting in the data and examples
131 given, she questioned how confident providers should be about the consistency of
132 judgements made through inspection.

133
134 Likewise, based on evidence drawn from inspections of ITT between 1996-1998 at the
135 University of Warwick, Campbell & Husbands (2000) argued that the inspection
136 methodology and the application of published criteria were insufficiently reliable to bear
137 the weight of the consequences of the outcomes. Tymms (1997) meanwhile, adopted a
138 simulation approach to estimate the likelihood of an institution being identified as non
139 compliant. From his analysis he concluded that 'very satisfactory institutions have a
140 high chance of failing an inspection' (p.1). In a previous article (Cale & Harris, 2003) we
141 noted how, the penalty for our 'mediocre' set of grades following our first inspection of

secondary PE ITT in 1996/97 was a 'dented' reputation and a 10% reduction in trainee numbers with an associated loss of funding, not to mention reduced morale. Following a successful inspection in 1999/2000, we still reported many limitations of ITT inspection, and suggested that 'the credibility of the process remains questionable' (Cale & Harris, 2003, p.136).

Given the above, and following two further inspections in the past three years, we have felt compelled to once again share with fellow professionals our experiences and reflections on ITT inspection, this time based on our most recent 'brief' encounter with Ofsted. We use the term 'brief' intentionally here as our previous two inspections have both been 'short'. Since last writing, there have been two further revisions to the inspection framework (Ofsted, 2002a; 2005a), and the current framework (Ofsted, 2005a) (as was the preceding one) is differentiated and comprises full and short inspections. According to the quality of provision, an institution receives either a full or short inspection (Ofsted, 2005a, p.1). Category A and category B providers receive a short inspection whereas category C providers receive a full inspection. According to Ofsted and the TTA, recent changes to the inspection arrangements propose to 'both improve the effectiveness of inspection in ITT and reduce its burden' (Ofsted & TTA, 2004, p.1) and aim to 'be efficient and cost effective for both providers and Ofsted' (Ofsted, 2005b, p.2). The focus of short inspections is on Management and Quality Assurance (M&QA) across an institution's ITT provision as a whole (referred to as the M cell), and the main purpose is to check that, overall, at least good quality training provision has been maintained (Ofsted, 2005b). Thus, although individual secondary

subjects are still centrally involved in the inspection, they are no longer individually inspected, graded and reported upon.

The secondary ITT course at Loughborough is a one year Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) course³ which trains approximately 130 teachers a year in three subjects, Design & Technology, Science and Physical Education. By way of comparison, and as a follow up to earlier commentaries, this paper provides a critical account of our 2005-2006 'short' inspection, reflecting on the inspection as a whole, as well as at subject level within one of the three subjects, Physical Education. In particular, we consider the extent to which the process is effective, efficient, cost effective, less burdensome and represents a 'brief encounter'.

The account is informed by data from various sources. From receipt of the news from Ofsted that we were to receive a second 'short' inspection until the publication of the final inspection report, a period of approximately 7 months, ITT staff kept journals in which they detailed their Ofsted activities, experiences and reflections on the whole process. The journals were completed periodically, with staff recording the preparation, work and meetings they were involved in, and noting and reflecting on any problems, issues, concerns, anxieties, frustrations and/or other emotions they experienced leading up to, during, and following the inspection itself. During this time, documentary evidence in the form of Ofsted Handbooks, Guidance plus other paperwork the inspection generated was also collected for analysis. In addition, to augment and support the findings from the journals and documentary evidence, a review of related

literature was undertaken. Analysis of the data involved identification of key issues, some of which the literature revealed to be common to ITT inspection and all providers, and others of which were unique to our experience. Based on our experiences and reflections and the findings from the literature, a number of issues are highlighted and discussed in the form of a chronological commentary.

As before (Cale & Harris, 2003), the commentary presented within this paper, whilst at times critical of the inspectorate and the inspection process, is not intended as a reflection of the quality of the individual inspectors involved, nor should it be taken to imply that we are anti-inspection. To the contrary, we accept the importance of accountability and strive for continuous improvement in our course. However, we agree with Jones & Sinkinson (2000, p.81) that the inspection of teacher education should be open to 'proper academic scrutiny' and that 'the Ofsted inspection process is not itself above critical examination'. As this paper reveals, we have also been very pleased with the outcomes, albeit not with the implications of, our last three inspections, a point which we re-visit later within the paper.

An expected 'brief re-encounter'

Gray & Wilcox (1996) suggest that the frequency and scale of Ofsted inspections since 1992 represents external scrutiny on a scale hitherto unparalleled in the world. Given our last inspection had been three years ago, it came as no surprise to receive official confirmation on 23rd November 2005 that we were to receive another 'short' inspection. The Ofsted Handbook for the Inspection of Initial Teacher Training (2005-2011) states

that 'providers will normally be informed of the inspection at least eight weeks before the first inspection visit' (Ofsted, 2005b, p.2). However, our inspection was to take place during the week commencing 30th January 2006 and the Managing Inspector (MI) was to make his preliminary visit on 9th/10th January, meaning we were given only 6 weeks notice to the first visit and 9 weeks notice to the inspection itself. With the Christmas holidays falling within this period, this left us with just 4 and 7 working weeks respectively to prepare.

Added to the above, we received news from the TDA on 21st December that, in line with cuts nationally, our ITT allocation was to be reduced. We were particularly concerned to discover that the allocation for PE was to be reduced by a total of 21 places between 2006-2008. In percentage terms, this represented a 26.3% decrease in places meaning we, along with one other much smaller provider, had been hit harder by the reductions than any other PE ITT providers in England, irrespective of Ofsted category rating⁴. Such cuts would have serious financial implications and pose a real concern for the sustainable future of ITT at Loughborough. Thus, far from satisfactory ratings leading to uncertainties over quotas and the viability of courses (Jones & Sinkinson, 2000), it now seemed that 'good' ratings could lead to the same uncertainties. On top of the Ofsted preparations therefore, lengthy and time consuming communication also began between ourselves and the TDA to urge them to re-consider this decision, as well as with Ofsted, the Association for Physical Education, our local MP and the Joint Advisor to DfES/DCMS to alert them to the situation.

The timing of the inspection week itself was not ideal in that it was to take place during one of the busiest weeks of the PGCE year. The inspection fell during the first week back for the trainees following their first block teaching practice. During this week sessions were scheduled for the trainees from 9am-4pm each day and a number of administrative and other tasks also required completion at this time such as audits, school evaluations and personal tutorials. Given there is only one week respite between the end of the first teaching practice and the beginning of the serial practice in a second school, these tasks need attending to urgently in order that the relevant information can be passed onto schools.

In ‘theory’ though, since this was to be a ‘short’ inspection, we should have been more than adequately prepared and able to cope with the associated pressures and demands. However, when scrutinising the new 89 page Inspection Handbook more closely (Ofsted, 2005b), it became evident that there was still much involved in preparing for the inspection. The pages of guidance notes outlining the process, requirements and inspection activities made us soon begin to doubt whether Ofsted’s interpretation of the word ‘short’ was the same as ours, and we suspected that this was going to be no ‘brief re-encounter’.

The ‘brief’ preparation begins

On receipt of the news of the inspection, one of the first tasks was to inform all parties concerned, which led to a flurry of e-mails and letters. In accordance with the requirements of Circular 2/02 (DfES & TTA, 2002)⁵, our secondary ITT course is based

on a model of partnership between the university and schools and the university works in partnership with over 50 schools spanning five counties. Thus, numerous individuals required notifying about the inspection including the Dean of Faculty, Heads of Department/School for the three subjects, all full and part time university-based ITT staff, plus staff in the 50+ partnership schools.

An urgent task was fully familiarising ourselves with the requirements and procedures for short inspections outlined in the latest Ofsted framework and Handbook (Ofsted, 2005a; Ofsted 2005b). As in previous inspections, a managing inspector (MI), with the support of an assistant managing inspector (AMI) and specialist (subject) inspectors (SIs) would carry out the inspection. The MI arranges the inspection programme in consultation with the provider, manages the inspection team, and leads on the inspection of M&QA. In short inspections, SIs make judgments in a sample of subjects about whether the quality of provision is at least good, and contribute to the judgment on the impact of M&QA on training and outcomes (Ofsted, 2005a). We would be informed of which subjects were to be focused on during the MI's preliminary visit but until such a time, preparations had to be undertaken across all three.

In summary, the short inspection comprises a preliminary visit by the MI and the inspection week itself. The process includes scrutiny of documentation, interviews with university staff, trainees, visits to schools and interviews with school-based staff including headteachers, professional tutors and mentors. These requirements were all familiar and reflected those of previous full inspections. Staff were thus well aware how

time consuming the above were going to be. A notable change from this to previous inspections however, was the emphasis placed upon self-evaluation. In reality though, the perception was that the only real difference between a short and full inspection was that the former did not involve the 'dreaded standard visits!' (Cale & Harris, 2003, p.154). The Standards visits assess the extent to which trainees meet the QTS Standards⁶ and involve providers 'grading' trainees against the Standards and inspectors judging the accuracy of this assessment. The issues and problems presented by these visits and the grading have been well documented (Cale & Harris, 2000; Campbell & Husbands, 2000; Hardy & Evans, 2000; Sinkinson & Jones, 2001; Tymms, 1997) and are not relevant here. Suffice is to say that their absence on this occasion was as a relief.

Another imminent task was collating and in some instances producing the documentation requested by Ofsted. On this issue, the Inspection Handbook states that 'the minimum information necessary to carry out the inspection will be requested' and how 'it is not intended to place heavy demands on providers to produce documentation specifically for the inspection...' (Ofsted, 2005b, p.4). The 'minimum information necessary' and requested for the inspection is summarised in table 1.

Insert Table 1

Whilst much of this information was already in place and simply required collating and presenting in a coherent fashion, in itself a time consuming process, other aspects took

a good deal of time to prepare. For example, as a provider keen to continually review, develop and improve our course, there had been a number of changes worthy of drawing to the attention of the inspectors within the 'summary of significant changes' and 'subject questionnaire' documents. It was important that we did not under sell ourselves by failing to provide full details of all such developments.

The tedious job began of printing, photocopying, collating and checking the documentation and organising it into evidence files for the inspectors. Administrative staff were paid over time to manage this task whilst tutors worked tirelessly without reward into the evenings and weekends to check the files. The outcome was four lever arch files (A-D) of documentation comprising: A: generic documentation; B: subject specific documentation; C: evaluation data; and D: record of training and meetings. On completion of this task, and to allow easy access to the documentation during the inspection week, the MI requested for the files to be duplicated three further times in order that each inspector had their own copies. To us this hardly involved providing the 'minimum information necessary...' (Ofsted 2005b, p.4) and entailed yet more time, effort and expense.

The Managing Inspector makes a 'brief' appearance

As noted earlier, the MI's preliminary visit was arranged for 9th/10th January. In readiness for the visit and on request, an office with telephone and internet access was set aside and prepared for the MI's use over the two days.

326 The objectives of the preliminary visit are to discuss any issues arising from the self-
327 evaluation, clarify and establish the procedures for the inspection, prepare a pre-
328 inspection commentary for the inspection team, and use preliminary evidence to form
329 hypotheses about how effectively the provider is meeting requirements (Ofsted 2005b).
330 During the visit the MI scrutinised the preliminary documentation and met with the
331 Director of Teacher Education (TE), the Partnership Manager (PM), and subject leaders
332 (SLs) from all subjects. He confirmed that two of the three subjects, Science and
333 Physical Education, would be under scrutiny. During the meetings, the inspection
334 programme and arrangements, including the schools to be visited, were agreed. In
335 addition, the general needs and requirements for the inspectors during the week were
336 discussed. These included meeting rooms, access to plug sockets, internet, printing,
337 and photocopying facilities, car parking, lunches, refreshments and maps.
338
339 During his preliminary visit, the MI appeared keen to re-assure staff and answer any
340 questions about the inspection and arrangements. Indeed, during a meeting with the
341 Director of TE, the PM and SLs, and presumably in an effort to give re-assurance, he
342 advised that we should 'regard the inspection as free consultancy'. This comment
343 raised a sigh of disbelief amongst the group as we pondered over the enormous cost to
344 the university already incurred by the inspection in terms of staff time (including over-
345 time), energy and resources. Before his departure, the MI shared with us areas that
346 were to be a focus of the inspection leaving us feeling reasonably clear about the
347 preparations that were required. Despite this, we realised that the main visit would
348 seem far from 'brief' and that it would no doubt present many challenges.

349

350 **The 'brief' build up**

351 During the 'brief' build up to the inspection, numerous meetings took place. These
352 included regular meetings between university staff, plus meetings between university
353 and school staff and between university staff and trainees. The former were held to
354 organise and agree the detailed arrangements, programme, procedures and protocol for
355 the inspection week and to agree common responses to questions. Given the
356 inspectors' numerous requirements and needs, and because staff and trainees were so
357 heavily committed during the inspection week and rooms were heavily booked for
358 teaching, planning the programme proved to be a complicated jigsaw.

359

360 An important undertaking during the preliminary visit had been agreeing the sample of
361 schools to be visited, based on the criteria the MI had given us. The MI and AMI would
362 visit four schools between them during the inspection week. The MI requested that the
363 schools selected should ideally train teachers in all three subjects, be in relatively close
364 proximity to the university, include a mix of high schools (11-14 years) and upper
365 schools (11-16/18 or 14-18/19), plus a school with a new mentor and a school that was
366 new to the partnership. In theory, given the number of partnership schools we work with
367 the selection should not have posed a problem. However, the criteria narrowed the field
368 and we were left with relatively little choice as to which schools could be involved. Four
369 schools which collectively met the criteria plus two reserve schools were eventually
370 selected. Whilst we have confidence in our partnership schools and nothing to hide, we

371 are also realistic and aware of the variable practice that exists amongst them and were
372 anxious about this being all too evident to the inspectors.

373

374 Immediately following the MI's preliminary visit, the schools concerned were contacted
375 to inform them of their involvement and of the details of the inspection. In addition, we
376 proposed for the Director of TE and the PM to visit the schools, including the reserves,
377 approximately 10 days to two weeks in advance to help them to prepare for the visit.

378 The intention was to meet with the headteacher, professional tutor and mentors in each
379 school to discuss the purpose of the inspection and the issues that were likely to be
380 pursued by the inspectors. Conscious of the disturbance these 'preparation' visits
381 would cause, each school was offered a financial contribution towards supply cover to
382 release staff to attend the meetings. Whilst this was both time consuming and
383 expensive, previous experiences of inspection had taught us that it was best to leave
384 nothing to chance (Cale & Harris, 2003). We wanted all involved in the process to be
385 well versed and to feel adequately supported and prepared.

386

387 Given the short notice we and subsequently the selected schools received and the
388 limited time therefore available in which to conduct the visits, it was perhaps not
389 surprising that some difficulties were encountered. The professional tutor who was also
390 the PE mentor in one school was away on a school trip during the week of the visits,
391 whilst the PE mentor in another was involved in off-site professional development on the
392 day of the visit. All meetings nevertheless went ahead with the staff who were available
393 and they agreed to 'relay' information to 'missing' colleagues, as appropriate. Follow up

phone calls were also made by the PE SL to offer support and discuss any issues that had arisen during the meetings.

Whilst school staff on the whole gave generously of their time and appeared appreciative of the support they were given by the university, it was interesting to note that, despite ITT being a partnership, the consensus view seemed to be that it was the university that was being inspected as opposed to 'the partnership'. This paralleled our experiences in previous inspections (Cale & Harris, 2003). On this issue, Cale & Harris (2003, p.138) remarked how, 'despite the requirements for partnership..., it is interesting that the base for an OFSTED inspection is the university, and the resulting report is issued to the university'. Similarly Williams (1997) has noted how, regardless of the level of control actually exercised by the university, the public perception is that it is the relevant and responsible organisation. Indeed, Furlong et al., (2000) suggested how, because schools' involvement in ITT is a voluntary commitment and one which, if they are found to be failing to deliver adequately, they can withdraw from at any time, it is those in higher education who are in effect held responsible. This point was perhaps exemplified by the comments made by staff in two schools during the visits who asked where they should send their invoices to cover the time they were to spend with Ofsted.

Equally though, it could be argued that we are in part responsible for and reinforce this view. On the one hand, and as we noted in 2003, we have endeavored over the years to involve all members of the partnership including school-based professional tutors and mentors in all aspects of provision and decision making. In fact, the progress we have

made in this respect has been formally acknowledged in our Ofsted and External Examiner reports in recent years. Yet, as in previous inspections, as soon as Ofsted arrived on the scene, aware of the high stakes involved and that, as highlighted by Williams (1997), we would ultimately be viewed as responsible, we reverted back once more to 'driving' the proceedings, temporarily abandoning the 'true ethos of partnership' we have worked so hard to develop (Cale & Harris, 2003, p.144).

Also of interest was the fact that the school-based ITT staff again appeared content for us to take the lead and grateful for our intervention. Our experiences during this and in past inspections (Cale & Harris, 2003) reinforce the findings of national survey and case study work which have revealed that, whilst the role of schools in ITT is changing and schools are generally willing to take on more responsibility for the support of trainees in developing practical classroom competence, the majority do not want to take on more than this and are unwilling to do so (Furlong et al., 2000). As a consequence, in the vast majority of courses those in higher education remain 'firmly in charge' (Furlong et al., 2000, p.113).

In addition to preparing the schools for the inspection, we also felt it necessary to prepare the trainees. During the preliminary visit the MI established that the inspectors would wish to meet approximately 50 trainees across the subjects. This number was to comprise 23 PE trainees (29.5% of the cohort) plus 6 reserves. Within the sample, the MI also requested for us to select 'special cases' or 'stories', which might include a 'high flying' trainee, a 'baseline' trainee, and one or two trainees with special needs who had

used the services offered by the university's Disabilities and Additional Needs Service (DANS). We had concerns with the MI's requests on a number of counts. Firstly, the number of trainees involved seemed to be excessively high. Secondly, for the inspectors to gain a representative view of the quality of the course we would rather them meet a representative sample of trainees as opposed to 'special cases' or 'stories'. It was also frustrating that the MI asked for additional information to be made available to the inspectors for each of the 'special cases' they were to meet, over and above the information already provided. This included a summary of the trainees' backgrounds and details as to how their individual needs were being addressed on the course. This request resulted in the PE SL having to produce detailed notes about the trainees specifically for the inspection, contradicting the guidance given on documentation in the Inspection Handbook (2005b). Extracts of these notes for two trainees are presented in table 2.

Insert Table 2

A final concern related to the MI's request to meet with trainees who had received support from DANS. This raised data protection and confidentiality issues in that permission had to be sought from the trainees to firstly share this information with Ofsted, and secondly to be interviewed by the MI about their needs, experiences and the support they had received.

462 Once the trainees had been selected, all were contacted and requested to attend a half
463 day meeting at the university on 16th January from 1-4pm. The meeting aimed to
464 explain the purpose and process of the inspection and to help the trainees prepare for
465 their involvement. Trainees were also asked to bring their teaching practice files to the
466 meeting, records of mentor meetings and targets, plus relevant assessment information
467 including coursework.

468

469 Given the trainees were undertaking their block teaching practice at this time, their
470 attendance required them to miss half a day of school. All partnership schools were
471 therefore contacted asking for those trainees involved to be released from teaching
472 commitments on this afternoon. To minimise the inconvenience this would cause and to
473 try to ensure continuity and progression of learning for the pupils affected by their
474 teachers' absence, the group were requested to plan any lessons they would have been
475 teaching in advance and pass their plans onto the usual class teachers. Thus, the
476 disruption caused by the inspection now extended beyond the university and the four
477 (plus two reserve) schools to be visited, to approximately 50 trainees, 30 more schools,
478 and hundreds of pupils.

479

480 During the meeting the purpose, requirements and programme for the week were
481 outlined and checks were made that trainees had all their paperwork in order. The
482 areas the MI had identified were to be a focus of the inspection were shared with the
483 trainees and the group was reminded of the course policies, processes and procedures
484 with respect to each. For example, we were aware that selection was to be a focus of

the inspectors' questioning but it was over 12 months since many of the trainees had been interviewed for the course. For some this experience had now become a feint and distant memory and some memory jogging was required.

The PGCE course is demanding and intense at the best of times and concerns have been expressed previously over the increased workload and pressure inspections place on all involved, including on targeted trainees (Cale & Harris, 2003). Whilst staff reassured the trainees they were not being assessed during the inspection they, as their predecessors before them did, found it difficult to disassociate an assessment of the course from what they felt would be an evaluation of themselves. Eager to present themselves in the best light, it was evident that some were already feeling the pressure and were concerned about the added burden the inspection was going to pose.

The 'brief' inspection gets underway

Predictably, the week beginning 30th January was particularly hectic and stressful for university staff. Not only did Ofsted appear on the scene but, as explained earlier, it was the first week back for the trainees following their first block teaching practice. The Inspection Handbook (Ofsted, 2005b) clearly outlines the activities to be undertaken on each day of the inspection week and this was closely adhered to.

The inspectors had a total of 16 files to read between them and set to work scrutinising them upon arrival on day one. Given the volume of paperwork the inspectors were faced with however, it came as a surprise that the MI should still want more. The MI

508 requested to see 'raw' school evaluation data which he was aware was being gathered
509 from the trainees that very morning.

510

511 At lunch time on day one an orientation meeting was held between the PE SI and PE
512 SL and mid afternoon the MI met with the Director of TE and the PM. The day
513 concluded with the PE SI meeting a group of 8 PE trainees for an hour. Given that this
514 followed a full day of sessions, we feared the trainees may not be at their best.
515 Nonetheless, they were under pressure to 'do their best'. During the meeting the
516 trainees were reportedly asked about a range of issues not dissimilar to those we had
517 anticipated and afterwards the general feeling was that the meeting had gone well.

518

519 Days two and three however, were when the school visits and the bulk of the interviews
520 took place. Given that we were pleased with the progress and developments that had
521 been made since the last inspection and the MI had forewarned us of the main issues to
522 be pursued during the inspection, the interviews were not expected to pose too many
523 surprises or problems. The MI had requested that the Director of TE, the PM, SLs and
524 a further 15 PE trainees be interviewed over the course of days two and three and
525 meetings were arranged around the school visits and the inspectors', though
526 unfortunately not the trainees' commitments. This inevitably led to some disruption to
527 sessions and to the learning experience for the trainees concerned.

528

529 The meetings with the trainees on these days involved separate group meetings with
530 the MI and AMI and a sample of trainees selected from each subject, as well as

531 meetings with trainees who had been placed in the schools they had or were due to
532 visit. Following these, the PE trainees again seemed reasonably confident that they
533 had gone well and from their feedback it was evident that the inspectors were consistent
534 in the issues and themes they were pursuing. Given the efforts we had gone to in
535 briefing all concerned on such matters, we just hoped that the inspectors were hearing
536 consistent responses.

537

538 A meeting was held between the PE SL, a senior PE colleague and the PE SI on day
539 two. The discussion focused predominantly on developments since the previous
540 inspection which we were keen and appreciative of the opportunity to elaborate on.
541 Some searching questions were asked with regards to the impact of the developments
542 on the trainees' and schools' practice, but we felt satisfied we were able to provide the
543 evidence of impact Ofsted was looking for. Two lengthy meetings were also held
544 between the Director of TE, PM and the MI which focused on a range of issues. Some
545 of these included the issues being 'pursued', whilst others had arisen from the
546 documentation and interviews during the inspection week.

547

548 Finally, the school visits went ahead as planned which involved the MI and AMI visiting
549 the four selected schools. This aspect of the inspection perhaps troubled us most for a
550 few reasons. For example, just as we were concerned about the increased workload
551 and pressure the inspection was placing on trainees, we were also worried about its
552 impact on schools, professional tutors, and mentors. Recognising that schools are
553 under no obligation to be involved in ITT, Williams (1997) suggests that schools may

well opt out if unreasonable demands are placed on them. School staff had already given generously of their time during the preparatory meetings and visits but it was also clear from these that a couple of individuals were not overly interested or enthusiastic about the prospect of their involvement. This left us wondering how well they would prepare and perform for Ofsted for, as has been acknowledged elsewhere (Williams, 1997; Furlong et al., 2000), whilst inspection and quality control in ITT are a priority for university staff, they are not for schools whose concerns are with its pupils. A final and related concern was that, despite public perception and Ofsted's view that we are responsible and accountable for the quality of the school-based training, in reality, we know we have minimal control and influence (Cale & Harris, 2003). Despite the above however, we were hopeful that most schools and staff would do their utmost to perform well in the knowledge that they were representing over 50 partnership schools. In speaking to school staff after the visits, it was reassuring to hear that they felt the visits had gone well and that there had been no surprises in the questions the inspectors had asked.

The 'brief' verdict

On day three, and following a review and moderation meeting involving all inspectors, the PE SI met with the Director of TE, the PE SL and a senior PE colleague to provide oral feedback on the subject specific elements of the inspection. According to the PE SI, the feedback was restricted to the 'major areas of strength' she had identified and the aspects that made the practice distinct. The feedback was extremely positive with a few of the more notable comments including:

577 'The overall judgement is that there are many elements of very good and outstanding
578 practice'.

579 'The course is innovative and there is an ethos of continuous improvement'.

580 'Loughborough trainees are real ambassadors for the course and the profession'.

581 'The course fully reflects best practice across the country'.

582

583 Such feedback naturally raised staff's hopes that overall we would achieve the outcome
584 we were hoping for. However, we were also well aware that under the new inspection
585 framework the focus was on the M&QA of the whole provision, and that whilst the
586 judgment made in PE contributed to the overall judgement, the quality across subjects
587 and the provision was also crucial.

588

589 On day four the MI and AMI met to collate, review and moderate the inspection
590 evidence, had a final meeting with the Director of TE and the PM, and spent the
591 remainder of the day drafting their inspection report. All that then remained for the final
592 day was for the MI and AMI to provide feedback to ITT staff on M&QA and on the
593 quality of training, during which staff listened intently as the inspectors relayed their
594 findings. Much to the relief of all, the feedback was again overwhelmingly positive with
595 'many excellent features'. A few minor issues were highlighted, some of which we
596 agreed with but some of which we felt could be challenged.

597

598 The above point raises questions with regards to how Ofsted conduct the business of
599 giving feedback. Whilst in both feedback meetings the atmosphere was pleasant and

the comments on the whole very positive, the sessions were not seen as a forum for discussion or an opportunity for professional debate. Following our first inspection in 1996, Hardy & Evans (2000, p.70) expressed their views of such a practice suggesting that 'to reduce discussion of the complexity of ITT provision to an across-the-table (one-way) 'exchange of views' was as preposterously risible as it was unhelpful'. Likewise, Campbell & Husbands (2000) have highlighted the limitations of such a system in which decisions are made without dialogue or discussion, arguing that a process designed to contribute to quality enhancement would be committed to outward looking dialogue. Nonetheless, during the meeting we tried unsuccessfully to engage in dialogue with the inspectors over a couple of points of inaccuracy.

Further frustrations with the feedback process were that, despite the amount of positive verbal feedback relayed to us, not all of it would appear in the final report and, because the report was yet to be moderated, no grade could be given to us until after this had taken place. With regards to the moderation of short inspections, the Inspection Handbook explains how, during the moderation meeting the MI and AMI 'will match carefully the evidence to the grade criteria for the M cell' which will 'lead to a recommendation for the provisional grade...' (Ofsted, 2005b, p.72). A moderation panel then meet to review the report and consider whether the evidence is accurately reflected in the draft report and to moderate and agree the provisional grade. Following this, a draft report is sent to the provider who is invited to check its factual accuracy prior to publication (Ofsted, 2005b). Thus, if we simply did not agree with the judgment or any of the content, we were relatively powerless to change it.

623

624 We sincerely hoped that the MI was to recommend a grade 1 for M&QA and present
625 sufficient evidence for this to be agreed at the moderation panel. Whilst in theory this
626 seemed a thorough process, we were still left wondering what exactly the moderation
627 process entailed and whether it had and would be afforded the time it deserved and
628 needed. Certainly flaws have been identified with the moderation of judgements in the
629 past. For example, in Sinkinson's (2004) study of the role of the MI in effecting
630 consistency of judgement and reporting on four HEI-based ITT providers, several
631 important inconsistencies were highlighted and discussed in terms of the actual and
632 potential role of the MI as the final moderator of consistency. Although Sinkinson
633 (2004) considers that a 'positive step forward' has since been made in that Ofsted's
634 recent frameworks involve on site moderation meetings at each stage of the inspection
635 (Ofsted, 2002b; 2005b), we still felt relatively in the dark and uneasy about the process.
636 On this note, Ofsted's procedures have been described as 'clandestine' (Campbell &
637 Husbands, 2000) and to be 'kept behind OFSTED's walls' (Sinkinson & Jones, 2001,
638 p.235). Sinkinson (2004) notes for example, how Ofsted does not yet allow public or
639 academic access to original inspection data, whilst Sinkinson & Jones (2001, p.235)
640 recommend that such '...evidence bases from which assessments are made and
641 moderated should be made transparent and explicit to all involved...'. According to
642 Jones & Sinkinson (2000), transparency is crucial if there is to be confidence in the
643 system.

644

645 **A 'brief' celebration**

646 Following the inspection week, many tasks remained. These included checking and
647 confirming the verbal feedback we had received during the feedback meetings with all in
648 attendance (which was important in the event of us wishing to challenge the outcome or
649 any aspects of the draft report), communicating the feedback to all concerned (including
650 school and university staff, trainees, the Dean of Faculty and Heads of
651 School/Department), and thanking them for their support. The latter also involved
652 sending personalised thank you letters to the schools, professional tutors, mentors and
653 trainees who had been directly involved in the inspection.

654
655 In addition, and in light of the feedback we had received, we wasted no time in writing to
656 TDA, Ofsted and our MP once again concerning our reduced ITT allocation. We wished
657 to share the feedback with them and also now question the rationale for cutting
658 numbers on a PE course described as 'reflecting best practice across the country'. In
659 addition, after the inspection was over we quizzed the MI over the anomalies within the
660 new inspection framework⁷ whereby a good (or very good) provider is unable to improve
661 its category rating from B to A. We also asked how a 26.3% reduction in our allocation
662 for PE could be justified when the course reflected 'best practice'. The MI replied that
663 these were interesting questions which should be pursued with Ofsted and the TDA.
664 We took his advice but this has been to no avail.

665
666 In April 2006 we received a copy of the draft report with confirmation that we had again
667 achieved a grade 1 for M&QA and we were pleased to read that, in Ofsted's eyes, 'the
668 partnership provides excellent training' (Ofsted, 2006, p. 5). Furthermore, a number of

key strengths were identified and only two relatively minor points for consideration. It was also satisfying to see that a number of very positive comments relating specifically to the PE course featured within the report. As we expected following the inspectors' verbal feedback, there were a few issues we wished to and subsequently challenged within the draft report. This resulted in yet further work but on the whole, our points were accepted and minor changes were made to the final report which was published in June 2006.

Whilst the grade 1 was well received, we were nevertheless amazed and exhausted by the work entailed by this 'short' inspection which, we had been led to believe, would be effective, efficient, cost effective and less burdensome (Ofsted, 2005b; Ofsted & TTA 2004). In our eyes, the inspection, far from being a 'brief encounter' had been an enormous burden on university and school staff and on trainees. With regards to 'cost effectiveness' and constituting the 'free consultancy' the MI proposed it to be, it had proven to be a huge financial burden on the university in terms of staff time, energy and resources.

In addition, the inspection could prove to be very costly to the university in other ways. For example, the time staff spent on preparing for, undergoing and recovering from the inspection detracted from and barred other important aspects of their work at the time such as conducting research and securing publications for the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise⁸. Potentially the greatest cost of inspection, however, is that under the new inspection framework, despite having undergone two successful short

inspections and achieving a grade 1 for M&QA, we remain a category B priority provider. In this respect, we are susceptible to further cuts in our ITT allocation and funding and therefore, in terms of our financial viability and future, continue to be vulnerable. This surely raises serious questions over the effectiveness and efficiency of the inspection. Earlier, it was noted how one of the purposes of inspection was to 'stimulate improvement in the quality of provision' (Ofsted, 2005a, p.1). In our view, a framework which fails to recognize or reward improvement, or which it could be argued in our case punishes it, is fundamentally flawed and can do little to 'stimulate improvement'. To the contrary, such a system leaves providers like ourselves feeling frustrated, dismayed and potentially de-motivated.

Further, given the limitations inherent in the inspection methodology, some of which have been highlighted here and others elsewhere (Campbell & Husbands, 2000; Cale & Harris, 2003; Hardy & Evans, 2000; Jones & Sinkinson, 2000; Sinkinson & Jones, 2001; Tymms, 1997), plus the measures we felt we had to take to prepare all involved, we remain cynical about the credibility of the whole process and the validity of the outcomes. Upon making a similar point in our earlier paper we asked 'What did the report and the grades really reflect and mean?' (Cale & Harris, 2003, p.156). Indeed, we believe that our inspection results in part reflect the lessons we have learned over the years in 'how best to organise, manage and manipulate the inspection process!' (Cale & Harris, 2003, p.157).

Make no mistake, we agree with Ofsted that the Loughborough PGCE partnership is a quality course. Further, we are keen to further develop and improve our provision. However, and particularly within the current framework under which we are destined to be forever 'good', this is in spite of, rather than because of inspection. Others (Campbell & Husbands, 2000; Graham & Nabb, 1999; Sinkinson & Jones, 2001) hold similar views that, contrary to the intended purposes of inspection, the process contributes little to improvement and quality enhancement in ITT. Sinkinson & Jones (2001) for example, note how there appears to be little confidence amongst providers that the feedback given by Ofsted contributes to the development of practice, whilst the survey conducted by Graham & Nabb (1999) revealed that three quarters of providers feel that the system receives insufficient overall feedback about good practice based upon inspection evidence. Similarly, Campbell & Husbands (2000) argue that an inspection regime designed to ensure compliance, and in which criteria are imposed, and decisions are made without dialogue or discussion is 'able to contribute little to system improvement' (p.47). It has even been suggested that, far from leading to improvements in ITT, the framework, with its limited conception of quality, failure to acknowledge 'value added', and narrowly defined orthodoxy of what is appropriate in ITT within which providers are required to simply comply, threatens development and innovation (Sinkinson & Jones, 2001).

A final 'brief' comment

As the situation stands at present, given 'the overall quality of our training is at least good', we are due to receive another short inspection in three years. By this time, we

will have lost 26.3% of our PE quota, trainees who Ofsted describe as ‘real ambassadors for the profession’, the financial implications of which could jeopardize the future of our ‘excellent training’ (Ofsted, 2006, p.5). Further, if we are to face a third ‘brief Ofsted encounter’, we will likely re-encounter the same process and frustrations and, at best, again be destined to the same positive yet punitive outcome.

Based on our experiences and reflections and the findings from the literature, we contest the notion that the inspection process is effective, efficient and cost effective and feel that it still places an enormous burden on providers. Further, as our account illustrates, the process hardly represents a ‘brief encounter’ and it certainly does NOT constitute ‘free consultancy’! What the cost of preparing for and undergoing the inspection itself was in terms of staff time, energy and resources is anyone’s guess but worryingly, the worst expense may still be to come. The current inspection framework which, in our view, is fundamentally flawed could ultimately cost us our ITT course. Our colleagues were ‘fired by dismay and frustration for the practices’ Ofsted and the TTA (now TDA) demonstrated in 1996/97 (Hardy & Evans, 2000, p.58). Disappointingly almost 10 years on, and despite revised frameworks and promises of improvement, we too are not only fired by dismay and frustration at their practices, but deeply concerned about the impact these may have on the future of ITT.

Footnotes

1. Ofsted is the inspectorate for children and learners in England. They are a non-ministerial government department accountable to parliament that inspects the

quality and standards of publicly funded education and child care services. They inspect, report on, and regulate schools, colleges, teacher training, childcare, children's services, and youth work.

2. The Training and Development Agency for Schools (the TDA) is an executive non-departmental public body of the Department for Education and Skills. It was formed in 2005 from the merger of the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) and the National Remodelling Team (NRT). The TDA have responsibility for the initial recruitment and training of teachers and for promoting teaching as an attractive career option. In addition, they have the wider remit for the training and development of the whole school workforce. With regards to ITT, the TDA has a statutory function to accredit and fund providers of ITT who can demonstrate that they will satisfy the Secretary of State's criteria for ITT and to allocate trainee numbers.
3. Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) courses are University-based initial teacher training courses for graduates and those with equivalent level qualifications, which, on successful completion, lead to recognition of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). The duration of a PGCE course is normally one year, with 24 weeks of the course being spent in at least two different schools.
4. The TDA has a legal duty to make decisions on ITT allocations based upon quality of provision and use Ofsted inspection gradings/categories as the quality measure. Due to achieving a grade 1 for Management and Quality Assurance following our previous inspection, Loughborough was assigned 'category B priority' status under the previous inspection framework. Under the formula that was applied, and in line with other category B priority providers, we were subjected to an overall 11%

reduction in numbers across three years. However, the other two ITT subjects offered at Loughborough are both shortage subjects and are therefore protected from any cuts. As a result, PE was particularly disadvantaged in that it had to carry the entire reduction.

5. Circular 2/02 (DfES & TTA, 2002) sets out the Standards for the award of qualified teacher status (QTS) and the requirements for Initial Teacher Training (ITT). The requirements for ITT specify what providers must do and are organised into four sections: trainee entry requirements; training and assessment; management of the ITT partnership; and quality assurance. Under 'management of the ITT partnership' all providers must, amongst other requirements, work in partnership with schools and actively involve them in planning and delivering ITT and in the selection and assessment of trainees.
6. The Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) Standards are outcome statements that set out what a trainee teacher must know, understand and be able to do to be awarded QTS. At the time this research was undertaken, these were organised in three inter-related sections: Professional Values and Practice; Knowledge and Understanding; and Teaching.
7. Presently, the only providers protected from the TDA's allocation cuts are category A providers. However, the current Ofsted framework does not allow good or very good providers to shift from category B to category A status following a short inspection. It only permits confirmation of a previous grade. Furthermore, as a good or very good provider, providers are not eligible to receive a full inspection.

8. The Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) is conducted by the Higher Education Funding Council for England and assesses the quality of research in universities and colleges in the UK. The RAE provides quality rating for research in each HEI across all disciplines and the outcomes are published. Its main purpose is to enable the higher education funding bodies to distribute public funds for research selectively on the basis of quality. Thus, institutions conducting the best research receive a larger proportion of the available grant.

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894 **Table 1 - Documentation requested by Ofsted (adapted from Ofsted, 2005b, pp. 33-34)**

List 1 - Documentation requested for the MI's preliminary visit
Examples of programme or course reviews undertaken since the last inspection, together with improvement/action/development plans
Summary of any significant changes to course design and structure, staffing, resources and partnership arrangements since the last inspection
Course handbooks, including handbooks in all subjects/curriculum areas and GPS
Equal opportunities and race relations policies
Details of the schools in which trainees were placed
The partnership agreement (including the rationale for the partnership) and partnership handbook
Details of how resources are allocated between central and school-based provision
Management structures for ITT and quality assurance arrangements, together with examples of committee meetings illustrating how the provision is managed and/or quality assured
A list of all staff involved in ITT and their main responsibilities
Job descriptions for senior ITT managers and for partnership management roles
External examiners' arrangements for ITT, terms of reference and reports
List 2 – Additional documentation requested for the main inspection
A selection of GTTR forms for trainees, including in those subjects for which there is no specialist inspector
Guidance for selection interviews and a sample of selection/interview records for each course, including in those subjects for which there is no specialist inspector
Assessment records and reports for a sample of trainees for each course
External examiners' reports for the previous three years (those not provided for subject inspectors)
Any quantitative data used for benchmarking or evaluation purposes (e.g., employment data)
List 3 - Subject specific documentation requested for the main inspection
The subject questionnaire (summarising the changes to the course since the last inspection)
A list of trainees giving age, ethnicity, gender and subject qualifications
A sample of ten GTTR forms for trainees
External examiners' reports for the past three years and any other monitoring or evaluation reports
Procedures for assessing and responding to the needs of individual trainees,
Plus, documentation for those trainees to be interviewed
Examples of mentor records to include weekly training plans and details of training activities
Examples of short and medium term lesson planning
Lesson observations and formative action plans
Subject knowledge and ICT audits or other assessments
Copies of completed assignments

895

Table 2 – Example summary information provided for the inspectors

Trainee 1 – female ‘high flyer’	Trainee 2 – male ‘baseline’
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduated with a first class honours degree from Loughborough University in Sports Science with Management in 2004. • Completed a number of pedagogy related modules (such as equity and inclusion in physical education, adolescence, and analysis and performance in sport (covering dance, swimming, basketball and hockey) as part of her degree course. • Prior to the PGCE course, worked as a teaching assistant in a local secondary school primarily working with children with severe learning and behavioural difficulties. • Is particularly strong in the area of invasion games (most notably hockey). • Acted upon all of the recommendations made to her at and post-interview (including gaining a first aid qualification, attending the booster course in gymnastics, and developing subject knowledge in cricket and rugby). • Has produced an excellent first piece of written work for PE (rated ‘very good’ - (subject to moderation)). • Has made very good progress in her teaching on the course to date. The professional tutor at her phase 1 school has specifically written to the TEU informing us what an excellent trainee she has been. <p>The trainee is being challenged via the general and subject specific methods and strategies outlined in the TEU policy paper ‘Meeting Individual Needs’ and within the PE Subject Questionnaire. A specific PE example includes her involvement in planning and delivering aspects of the PGCE hockey session to her peers in October, a challenge she responded very well to.</p> <p>She is also being challenged to further develop her subject knowledge in some areas by registering for relevant coaching courses organised by the Sports Development Centre here at the university.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduated with a 2:2 joint honours degree from Loughborough University in English, Physical Education and Sports Science. • Completed a number of pedagogy related modules (such as equity and inclusion in physical education, teaching and coaching studies, young people, physical activity and pedagogy, and analysis and performance in sport (covering rugby, football, athletics and dance) as part of his degree course. • Prior to the PGCE course was elected to work for a year in University Sport. • Is strong in the area of games (most notably rugby and tennis). • Acted upon 2 of the 3 recommendations made to him at and post-interview (due to limited availability of places, his application for the gymnastics and dance booster courses was unsuccessful). • Has produced written work in PE and GPS of a satisfactory (subject to moderation) and good standard respectively to date. • Has suffered a couple of personal setbacks during the course but has made adequate progress in his teaching during phase 1. <p>The trainee is being challenged via the general and subject specific methods and strategies outlined in the TEU policy paper ‘Meeting Individual Needs’ and within the PE Subject Questionnaire. A specific PE example includes the targets set/agreed for him for phase 1, which focus on developing subject knowledge and observing and gaining experience of gymnastics in schools (given he was not accepted onto the gymnastics booster course prior to the course), and gaining a first aid qualification (a recommendation made at interview that he did not achieve).</p> <p>The trainee’s prior work experience has given him a good deal of confidence and his social and communication skills are well developed. In this respect, he was invited to put himself forward as a candidate to represent his group on the staff-trainee committee (and was voted by his peers to assume the role of staff-trainee representative).</p>

	He is also a popular and well respected member of his practical group who has been instrumental in promoting the use of LEARN (the university's server for on-line teaching and learning') and the subject knowledge development groups (within practical groups).
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