In-Service Generic Teacher Training, Lewisham College

Notes from meeting with Graham de Smidt, PAL for Teacher Training, and Fiona Prendergast, 12 July 2004, 11-12.15am

The Cert. Ed. Course is designed and developed by Canterbury University as part of a consortium of Kent colleges, and delivered by Lewisham College. The structure is the same as the old C&G three stage system:

Stage 1   3 units   1st year, 1 term
Stage 2   3 units   1st year, 2 terms
Stage 3   6 units   2nd year, 3 terms

From September 2004, the required basic core of basic skills (literacy, numeracy) is to be embedded in the main generic teacher training (TT) programme. These skills are thus revisited at each stage of the TT. The PDC will contribute to this part of the TT programme.

Please find attached the requirements, assessments and scheme of work for the first year of this embedded Cert. Ed. [To follow]

After this generic training, teachers can then choose to go on to Level 3 basic skills training (currently non-compulsory, e.g. for vocational tutors) or Level 4 (for subject specialists). See attached chart [To follow].

Stage 1 and 2 are more practical; stage 3 more academic. Students have criticised this academic focus.

The Cert. Ed. is at HE Level 2; the PGCE at HE Level 3. If a student does not hold a first degree, they can choose to continue studying and build up to a BA (Hons.) Education; there is a decreasing demand for this route.

One of the major issues has been that applicants have displayed language needs. In the past, Lewisham TT Department would have advised such applicants to do a course elsewhere in English, and then re-apply. Now, bridging courses are being offered by the department itself.

About half the trainees come from Lewisham College itself; about half from community organisations. About one-third are basic skills teachers (this includes ICT teachers, which may refer to teachers who teach ICT within another subject or as a separate area).

Some of the trainees have qualifications only up to Level 2 themselves, e.g. ICT teachers may have IT qualifications up to Level 2 such as CLAIT, whereas teacher training now starts at Level 3. In response to this need, and to enable such tutors to participate on teacher training courses, Lewisham has now introduced a new Introduction to Teaching course at Level 3 for those with no L3 qualifications or those with no teaching experience. It acts as diagnostic input, and enables tutors to identify needs.

Wendy Forest is a consultant for initial assessments, working with the college to accurately identify needs.

This development is a response to new UK education initiatives:

- The **professionalisation** of basic skills teachers
- The raising of FE teacher training **standards**
- A change from a teacher to a **learner-centred** culture
- A focus on **inclusion** and awareness of **diversity** as part of **good practice** (for both teachers and students)
- A focus on diagnosing **dyslexia** and providing appropriate **learning support**.

The course was developed 18 months ago, and demand is increasing. Additional units are being introduced in September 2004 for ESOL and/or Language Skills. These are to develop tutors' own personal skill levels. (ESOL: Catherine Maloney; Language Skills: Diana Blofeld).

Previously, FE tutors could have taken the C&G 7307 teaching qualification, at Level 3, or the FAETC stages 1, 2 and 3 (with an optional top-up to Level 4 in a year). This has now been cancelled, and the government has stated that all teachers must be trained to HE Level 1 (equivalent to first year of university).

After their generic TT, teachers are encouraged to take either the Level 3 or 4 basic skills options. However, teachers have competing demands on their time, and work pressure issues, e.g. some vocational tutors may also be required/encouraged to study for NVQ assessor awards.

The Level 3 and 4 certificates take another year each (30 weeks), part-time, to complete. The Level 3 has less hours per week, and is a lower academic level.

Currently, there is no integration of the basic skills certificates with the generic TT; instead, this sub-routes system exists. This is due to the **heterogeneous nature** of trainees.