



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on
South West Wales Centre of Teacher Education

Dates of inspection: May 2012

by

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
and Training in Wales**



During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

This report was produced in accordance with section 18c of the Education Act 1994 (which was inserted by paragraph 13 of Schedule 14 of the Education Act 2005).

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court
Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW

or by email to publications@estyn.gov.uk

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Context

The South West Wales Centre of Teacher Education was launched formally in 2011. It is one of three centres of initial teacher training in Wales. It comprises teacher education provision at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David (TSD) and Swansea Metropolitan University (SMU). Trinity Saint David is the lead institution of the partnership. A full-time head of centre was appointed in April 2011.

Primary Education with QTS is based at Trinity Saint David on the Carmarthen Campus. All postgraduate programmes are based in Swansea on the Townhill Campus.

The South West Wales Centre offers the following teacher training programmes:

- BA Primary Education with QTS;
- PGCE Primary;
- PGCE Secondary; and
- Graduate Teacher Training Programme

The BA programme lasts for three years and the two postgraduate programmes for one year. In all courses except the PGCE Secondary, the medium of instruction is either English or Welsh, depending on the preference of the trainees. On the PGCE Secondary programme, trainees may opt to do elements of the course through the medium of Welsh. There is also provision for trainees who wish to learn Welsh and to teach Welsh as a second language in primary schools.

There are 319 trainees following the BA Primary programme (116 of whom are taking the course through the medium of Welsh). There are 153 trainees following the PGCE Primary programme (27 of whom are enrolled as Welsh medium trainees) and there are 314 trainees following the PGCE Secondary programme (20 of whom are taking the course through the medium of Welsh).

Primary partnership schools are located across a wide area of South Wales from Milford Haven in the west to Cardiff in the east. Secondary partnership schools are located across the whole of South Wales from Fishguard in the west to Abergavenny in the east.

All courses are subject to the requirements of the Welsh Assembly Government Circular 017/2009.

Summary

The provider's current performance	Adequate
The provider's prospects for improvement	Good

Current performance

The good features of the centre include:

- the good progress made by trainees towards achieving the standards for Qualified Teacher Status;
- the wide variety of challenging and stimulating learning experiences provided;
- the high quality of training on the undergraduate programme; and
- the good role models for trainees provided by many tutors.

However, current performance is judged as adequate because:

- a minority of trainees do not have good enough literacy skills;
- a minority of trainees do not develop their planning and reflective skills well enough;
- the quality of training is too variable across programmes; and
- assessment does not always identify deficits in trainees' skills.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects are good because:

- senior leaders have made very good progress in meeting the national requirement to create a centre of initial teacher training. They have managed change effectively and provided strong strategic direction;
- senior leaders have a clear vision for the development of the centre;
- there are clear links between the strategic and operational plans for initial teacher training and the institutional plans for the universities; and
- the centre's development planning is based on an accurate view of its strengths and areas for development.

Recommendations

In order to make progress, the centre needs to:

- R1 improve trainees' personal literacy skills and their ability to apply these skills in a teaching context;
- R2 improve trainees' skills of planning and reflection;
- R3 improve trainees knowledge and understanding of the Welsh language and Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig;
- R4 implement assessment procedures to ensure that tutors and mentors judge trainees standards accurately;
- R5 improve the consistency of training across all programmes;
- R6 ensure that tutors update their knowledge of current school practice; and
- R7 ensure that middle leaders monitor standards, training and programmes to secure improvement promptly and efficiently.

What happens next?

The centre will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations. Progress in addressing the recommendations will be monitored by Estyn.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Adequate

Standards: Adequate

Nearly all trainees make good progress towards meeting the standards for qualified teacher status.

Trainees have a good knowledge of the subjects they are training to teach. They understand the requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study and the Framework for Children's Learning in the Foundation Phase and they refer to these well in their lesson planning and in their written work.

In their school experiences, a majority of trainees use a wide range of effective teaching strategies to successfully engage pupils in their learning and employ a good and varied pace to activities. Most trainees create interesting and imaginative resources to stimulate pupils' thinking. However, a minority of trainees on primary programmes and a few trainees on secondary programmes do not set sufficiently interesting or challenging tasks for pupils and the pace of lessons is too slow.

Many trainees organise their classes and manage pupils' behaviour well. They work effectively with other adults in the classroom to support pupils' learning.

Most trainees plan lessons in detail and make good reference to the appropriate curriculum requirements. Many trainees organise pupils and resources well and a few sequence activities skilfully to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. Overall, trainees pay close attention to the development of pupils' skills. In particular, many trainees in secondary subjects such as history, RE and geography are aware of the need to plan to develop pupils' literacy across the curriculum. However, across all programmes a minority of trainees do not plan lessons with clear and specific learning outcomes, or design tasks that meet the intended learning for all pupils.

Many trainees use a good range of strategies to assess pupils' learning. They make imaginative use of assessment for learning techniques and give their pupils opportunities to reflect on their own learning. A majority of trainees monitor pupils' work effectively in the classroom and track pupils' progress appropriately. Trainees in a few secondary subject areas, such as business studies, have a very good understanding of examination requirements. However, in a minority of cases, because trainees are not clear about the intended learning outcomes for pupils, they do not assess pupils' progress successfully or reflect fully on the effectiveness of their teaching.

Trainees have a sound understanding of the Qualified Teacher Standards. Many trainees effectively monitor their own progress against the standards.

Almost all trainees have well-ordered files and are conscientious in completing their documentation. Most trainees make good use of the targets that have been set for them by their mentors and tutors and usually plan to address these promptly.

A few trainees have very good reflective skills and make perceptive comments about their progress and that of their pupils. Around half of trainees reflect honestly on their own progress and identify accurately their own strengths and areas for development. They are able to suggest strategies to improve their teaching. However, a few trainees do not analyse their own teaching effectively enough and a minority do not focus well enough on improving pupils' learning.

In their university studies, many trainees show a good understanding of the link between education theory and the practice of teaching. First year trainees on the undergraduate primary programme use a useful range of research approaches to develop their critical skills effectively. However, in their written assignments, a minority of trainees on postgraduate programmes do not make use of a wide enough range of texts to establish their arguments or to arrive at valid conclusions. They make too little reference to education in Wales and to up-to-date materials to support their ideas.

Most trainees have very good information and communication technology (ICT) skills, which they use for a variety of teaching and learning. However, a minority of trainees do not encourage pupils to use ICT in their own learning often enough.

A few trainees provide very good language models to the pupils that they teach. They use precise terms in their teaching, and extend pupils' vocabulary effectively. However, a minority of trainees do not have secure enough literacy skills. They make errors of punctuation and spelling in their written work and in the classroom, and a very few do not model oral language accurately.

Trainees have a sound understanding of safeguarding processes and procedures.

Many primary trainees, especially on the undergraduate programme, make appropriate use of the Welsh language in their teaching. A few use Welsh very well to instruct pupils and to increase pupils' vocabulary. However, a few primary trainees, who teach Welsh as a second language, seldom require pupils to respond in Welsh and do not challenge pupils enough to practise all their Welsh skills in lessons.

Trainees teaching through the medium of Welsh on the post-graduate primary programme have good Welsh skills and are good language models for pupils.

A few trainees on the undergraduate programme training to teach through the medium of Welsh and a few trainees on the secondary post-graduate Welsh second language programme do not offer a good language model to their pupils. They make grammatical mistakes or errors in mutation in their written work, in their planning and in their work in the classroom.

In university, many trainees demonstrate a sound understanding of Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig. However, only a few trainees plan effectively for Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig in their school experiences.

In 2009-2010, on the undergraduate programme, the qualifications that trainees had on entry were lower than the average for trainees across Wales. In 2009-2010, 54%

of trainees starting the postgraduate primary programme had good degree (a first or upper-second class degree). This was just below the overall figure for Wales of 55%. Fifty-three per cent of trainees on the post-graduate secondary programme had a good degree on entry, which is just below the overall Wales figure of 54%.

The proportion of undergraduate primary trainees who gained qualified teacher status in 2009-2010 is 93%. This is below the overall figure for Wales of 98%. The proportion of postgraduate primary trainees who gained QTS is 94%, which is above the overall figure for Wales of 91%. The proportion of postgraduate secondary trainees gaining QTS in 2009-2010 is 85%. This is just below the overall figure for Wales of 87%.

In the latest statistics that are available, the proportion of undergraduate primary trainees gaining teaching posts in Wales in 2009-2010 is shown as 55%. This is just above the overall Wales figure of 53%. The proportion of postgraduate primary trainees gaining teaching posts in Wales in 2009-2010 is 62%, which is just above the overall Wales figure of 60%. The proportion of postgraduate secondary trainees gaining teaching posts in Wales in 2009-2010 is 60%. This is above the overall Wales figure of 52%.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all undergraduate trainees and many post-graduate trainees have positive attitudes to keeping healthy and safe. Most trainees have a good awareness of issues relating to health and safety in teaching. Trainees fully understand the requirements for safeguarding procedures and are confident in applying these procedures in their school experiences.

Trainees demonstrate good professional characteristics and build purposeful and positive working relationships with their peers, with pupils, and with school and university staff. In their university studies, most trainees show high levels of motivation and interest. They participate enthusiastically, contribute very well to discussion and support one another in their learning.

All trainees recognise the importance of developing their own skills and most trainees participate in the wider context of school life, for example through involvement with extra-curricular activities. They attend a range of development activities in school to develop their wider knowledge of schools and to gain a good understanding of the curriculum.

Attendance in university sessions and on school experience is good. Most trainees are punctual and take their professional responsibilities seriously.

Trainees respond well to opportunities for them to contribute to the evaluation and development of programmes. The Student Self Evaluation Team contributes effectively to the centre self-evaluation. This body has raised important issues about learning and wellbeing, and is making a positive impact on trainees' experiences. Trainees generally feel that their views are taken seriously and that the centre acts on their concerns and ideas.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
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Learning experiences: Good

Overall, the undergraduate programme and the post-graduate secondary programmes provide a good balance of planned learning experiences. The curriculum studies and professional studies components of these programmes are well integrated to cover effectively all aspects of the Qualified Teacher Standards. School-based and university-based elements of the programmes generally complement one another well. All programmes meet the requirements of the Welsh Assembly Government Circular 017/2009.

All university-based programmes have variety and challenge. A few aspects of the provision, especially in the undergraduate programme and in a few secondary subjects, are very well planned to offer trainees very effective learning experiences. Learning opportunities such as peer tutoring, 'micro-teaching' and role play enhance effectively the experiences of trainees.

However, the professional studies part of the post-graduate primary programme provides a less coherent structure, and trainees do not always have opportunities to explore ideas in depth or to develop their knowledge and understanding of some areas thoroughly enough.

Guest speakers, including mentors and visits to relevant places of interest, enhance programmes well. There is a good range of enrichment opportunities for trainees.

On the undergraduate primary programme, the use of 'problem-based learning' is having a strong positive impact on increasing trainees' motivation and their attitudes to studying. Together with the use of specialist observation facilities in partnership schools, these new approaches are developing well these trainees' reflective skills.

The university audits regularly the trainees' literacy and numeracy and subject skills and knowledge effectively. Primary programmes pay good attention to the development of trainees' literacy and numeracy skills and the important part they play in children's learning. However, the extent to which literacy, numeracy and ICT are addressed in the secondary programme varies too much between subjects. There is particularly effective provision to improve trainees' literacy on the post-graduate primary programme and this is having a positive impact on trainees' skills. However, these approaches are less well developed across all programmes.

Overall, programmes give suitable attention to a wide range of cross-cutting issues including Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig and education for sustainable development and global citizenship.

Teaching: Adequate

In the university-based sessions many tutors are enthusiastic and have very good specialist knowledge. They are effective role models for trainees, exemplifying good classroom practice. They design sessions with well-defined aims and have consistently high expectations of trainees. Many tutors use a wide range of teaching

strategies that provide opportunities for trainees to explore their own ideas. A few tutors across all programmes draw very skilfully on their expertise to offer inspirational and stimulating learning experiences. All teaching on the undergraduate programme is good or better.

In a few sessions in university, the training is undemanding and does not match the trainees' needs, there are a limited variety of activities and the pace of the session is too slow. A few tutors do not have a good enough knowledge and understanding of current school practice.

In general, strategies to improve trainees' skills of critical thinking are too variable across programmes and secondary subject areas. Approaches to a few areas of the standards, particularly to addressing lesson planning, vary too much across programmes and subject areas.

Tutors on the undergraduate programme provide very good opportunities for trainees to develop their understanding of Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig and how to apply this knowledge to their teaching. However, this practice is more variable on the post-graduate primary programme.

In a few secondary subjects such as art, modern foreign languages and Welsh, tutors pay good attention to developing trainees' understanding Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig and the Welsh language. However, generally, on the secondary programme there is limited coverage of Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig and the Welsh language.

In the school-based training nearly all mentors establish good working relationships with trainees. Most mentors use their experience well to offer trainees good advice and guidance. In the school-based training, most tutors and mentors give trainees valuable feedback on their progress. There are good, detailed systems and clear criteria to assess trainees against the Qualified Teacher Standards. A majority of mentors make clear, perceptive evaluations of trainees' lessons, which identify trainees' strengths, weaknesses and targets for improvement. Many mentors question skilfully to encourage trainees to reflect on their practice and appropriate advice on the next steps of learning.

However, in a minority of cases, verbal feedback to trainees is too generous and a few mentors do not pick up on trainees' errors in their skills and subject knowledge. Too many tutors and mentors do not monitor trainees' files carefully enough.

Tutors mark trainees' assignments in a timely way and a majority make good use of assessment criteria. Most marking is supportive and encouraging. In the best examples, marking gives trainees detailed and accurate feedback and explains specifically how trainees might improve their work. However, the assessment of trainees' written work varies too much between tutors. A minority of tutors do not pick up on errors or give clear feedback to trainees. Too many assignments are marked too generously and the grades given do not accurately reflect the marking criteria.

All students are screened for literacy and numeracy levels on entry, with targeted support for literacy in Welsh, English and numeracy for those who need it. However, trainees who need support do not always access these programmes, and the centre does not monitor the progress of these trainees well enough.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Support for trainees is underpinned by clear university-wide policies. Trainees have good access to support services, which provide effective guidance, support and counselling. Most trainees are satisfied with the support they receive.

Overall, trainees regard highly the individual support they receive from tutors and mentors. However, for a few trainees, the quality of support in school is too dependent upon the individual mentor's approach. As a consequence a very few trainees do not get the personal support they need while in school.

The centre takes good account of trainees' personal needs when placing trainees in school. There are appropriate processes for preparing trainees for their school placements that help them to settle well into the school-based aspects of their programmes.

There are clearly published and programmed opportunities for students to share their experiences, including difficulties, during their school placements. Trainees are encouraged to communicate regularly while on school placements through the virtual learning environment.

There are good systems to monitor student attendance in both university and school, with clear criteria for attendance, and procedures for addressing poor attendance.

There are comprehensive procedures to support trainees with additional learning needs, through generic support services in both universities, and more specifically through the initial teacher training courses.

The centre has effective recruitment, disciplinary and reporting arrangements to ensure the suitability of students for undertaking initial teacher training.

The centre has an appropriate policy and procedures for safeguarding.

Learning environment: Good

The centre provides a safe and accessible learning environment for all trainees. Teaching rooms provide a positive learning environment. A particularly good feature is the number of dedicated subject-specific teaching rooms in both universities. Trainees value their role in developing visual resources and taking ownership for these teaching rooms, ensuring that they are vibrant learning spaces.

In most cases, partnership schools provide effective environments for trainees' school experience.

There is a wide range of specialist library and ICT resources that benefit trainees well.

The centre has a very effective virtual learning environment that houses a wide range of resources, facilitates effective communication between trainees, tutors and mentors, and encourages effectively the sharing of good practice.

Canolfan Peniarth produces very good Welsh language and bilingual resources that are used by schools and trainees. However, generally, there are not enough suitable Welsh language resources for trainees on the secondary programme.

The centre pays appropriate attention to recruiting trainees from under-represented groups and has a proactive marketing strategy for engagement with Community First areas, groups with disabilities, ethnic minority communities and Welsh medium learners.

There are suitable policies in place to support equality and diversity and these values are reflected in programme design.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Good
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Leadership: Good

Senior university leaders have collaborated effectively to meet the national requirement to reduce the duplication of initial teacher training programmes and to deliver courses through the medium of Welsh to meet national and local need.

The head of centre, along with senior leaders in initial teacher training, have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They have a clear vision for the development of the centre, which they share with staff. The head of centre communicates effectively with senior university leaders to secure agreements for the development of the centre. They communicate high expectations to those they manage, and they effectively drive forward the development of the centre within the context of wider university reorganisation.

The clear leadership and management structure takes good account of both university systems. Shared core values underpin the work of the centre and there are clear links between the strategic and operational plans for initial teacher training and the institutional plans for the universities. The head of centre shares the strategic plan with governors and all staff with the result that there is a clear understanding of the aims, objectives and aspirations for the centre.

Senior leaders in initial teacher training use data well to carefully monitor progress against the strategic, operational and management of change plans. Minutes of meetings focus clearly on action points and their prompt resolution. Senior leaders in initial teacher training have reviewed recently the roles and responsibilities of middle leaders. A performance management process has recently been put in place. However, it is too early to see the impact of this initiative on the provision.

The appointment of three university governors to link with the centre is a good feature. These link governors hold regular meetings with senior centre leaders to monitor the strategic plan. The governors provide challenge to the centre and explain the work of the centre to the governing bodies. This has contributed to the effective development of the centre.

Improving quality: Adequate

The centre has a clear quality assurance system in place. The centre management board regularly gathers and analyses programme data and the views of trainees, tutors, external examiners, partnership schools, headteachers and newly qualified teachers. It does this effectively through questionnaires, staff and mentor meetings, an advisory committee and reports. However, there is little first-hand evidence of university-based training and limited analysis of session observations. The peer observation process is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that best practice is identified and shared across the centre to improve quality. The centre management board takes good account of prioritised actions from programme reviews to develop a well-informed and balanced self-evaluation report. Self-evaluation informs key actions in the strategic plan. These actions are prioritised effectively and monitored for improvement.

The centre generally provides good opportunities to meet tutors' individual professional development needs. Most tutors take these up and they are involved in external networks relating to their professional practice, for example through research projects or subject associations, and bring up-to-date subject knowledge to their teaching. Most tutors work with other tutors to observe and share practice and to review each other's marking and assessment. However, middle leaders do not improve quality by sharing and monitoring best practice effectively enough among colleagues. This means that trainees receive a variable training experience, particularly on the secondary programme.

The centre provides regular opportunities for mentors to update their skills and to learn about new developments in programmes. The mentor training sessions are well focused on overall requirements for the school experience and specific generic issues, which tutors identify as a result of analysing data and reports on trainees' progress.

However, a minority of mentors do not attend these sessions. In many cases, tutors update mentors who cannot attend mentor meetings when they visit trainees in school and, in many cases, tutors observe trainees with mentors to moderate judgements. Nonetheless, a few mentors do not receive regular training or have the opportunity to moderate the trainee's attainment of the qualified teacher standards with the tutor. This sometimes results in inconsistency in the assessment of trainees' performance.

Partnership working: Good

The centre, in conjunction with mentors, has developed clear overarching principles for partnership with schools. The principles support effectively the good relationships between the centre and its schools. The centre and its partnership schools take good account of national priorities in the provision of training.

Many mentors play an effective role in the development of training programmes, the selection of trainees and as guest speakers for specific topics in university-based training. School experience handbooks and mentor briefings provide clear information to mentors about the overall requirements of the school experience

programmes. There are good administrative systems to provide mentors with up-to-date information about trainees' progress. The university partnership offices respond very efficiently to mentors, and mentors have confidence that they can talk to tutors promptly when problems arise. The recently developed system for primary mentors to report online is helping to further develop effective collaborative working between partnership schools and the centre.

The centre works closely a few of its partnership schools and with other universities in the United Kingdom to help schools develop effective action research techniques to underpin enquiries into school performance. The centre has good links with an international education project in Lesotho, and this has a positive impact on trainees' learning experiences.

Resource management: Adequate

Overall, tutors are well qualified and deployed appropriately to meet the needs of the training programmes. Tutors generally have sound subject knowledge. However, in a few cases, tutors do not have sufficient knowledge of current school practice to prepare trainees effectively for school experience.

The centre makes good use of Welsh speaking staff on the undergraduate course to enhance the provision on post-graduate programmes.

The centre directs resources efficiently towards its strategic priorities. For example, funding has been allocated appropriately to improve Welsh language learning resources through Canolfan Peniarth and to develop Foundation Phase provision. The centre takes good account of trainees' views when allocating resources, for instance by increasing tutor visits. The centre audits its spending carefully to support trainees' learning.

Although leaders manage resources effectively, taking into account the standards that trainees' achieve, value for money is adequate.

Appendix 1

Issues of non-compliance

There are no issues of non-compliance

Where the provision, or major aspects of the provision, is non-compliant with the requirements for ITT or other aspects of the criteria for the accreditation of ITT providers, HEFCW's procedures for addressing non-compliance will come into operation. Estyn will inform HEFCW of its judgement within two working weeks of the completion of the inspection. Completion of inspection will be the day that Estyn provides final verbal feedback to the ITT provider. Estyn will require the provider to provide an action plan to address all issues identified in the inspection, including those of non-compliance.

Appendix 2

Learner satisfaction

Estyn received responses from 293 trainees, selected at random from across the programmes.

Nearly all trainees think that the programme is preparing them well to meet the standards for Qualified Teacher Status.

Nearly all undergraduate trainees, most post-graduate secondary trainees and many post-graduate primary trainees think that their training programme is planned effectively. Most trainees feel that they have good quality school placements and all trainees say that they are encouraged to reflect on their progress.

All undergraduate trainees, most post-graduate secondary trainees and many post-graduate primary trainees say that they have regular feedback on their progress that helps them to improve their skills.

Nearly all undergraduate trainees and most post-graduate trainees say that they get good support in school. All trainees say that their tutors help them to make good progress towards achieving the standards.

Nearly all trainees feel safe and free from harassment in university and in school. Most undergraduate trainees and many post-graduate trainees think that the training programme has improved their attitudes to keeping healthy and safe, and that they are developing well their ability to deal with stressful situations.

Nearly all trainees enjoy their training programme and would recommend the programme to others.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Sarah Lewis HMI	Reporting Inspector
Penny Lewis HMI	Team Inspector
Ann Jones HMI	Team Inspector
Gerard Kerlake HMI	Team Inspector
Claire Morgan HMI	Team Inspector
Ceri Jones HMI	Team Inspector
Richard Hawkley HMI	Team Inspector
Sue Morgan AI	Team Inspector
Alan Lowndes	Team Inspector
Phil Bassett	Peer Inspector
Dewi Rowlands	Peer Inspector
Russell Grigg	Nominee