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secondary headteachers' and ITT co-ordinators'  
perspectives**

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## **The Role of the Initial Teacher Training Co-ordinator : Secondary Headteachers' and ITT Coordinators' perspectives**

Paper delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Teacher Education in Europe, University of Wolverhampton 2007

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### **Background**

The roles of ITT co-ordinator (ITTC) and CPD co-ordinator have become well established in secondary schools in England. However there is usually a separation of responsibilities for these areas within schools. The introduction of a new Standards Framework and other government policies such as the remodelling of the workforce in schools (DfES, 2003, TDA, 2007a) provide schools with opportunity to revisit these roles. A consequence of remodelling has been a rapid expansion of support staff in schools to assist teachers and one aspect of this contractual change is that support staff are taking on administrative tasks, formerly done by teachers. A further aspect is that CPD Coordinators now have responsibility for staff development cross the wider workforce. During 2007, Schools have used remodelling as an opportunity to review their management structures throughout the school including the organisation of staff development and how the school is contributing to the training of new teachers. In this paper we consider how the role of the ITTC is changing using data from interviews with Head Teachers and ITTCs from a sample of secondary schools that are in partnership with Sheffield Hallam University. Data collection took place in April and May 2007.

The most important influence on how schools are organising the roles of CPD and ITTCs has been the adoption of a common framework of professional standards (TDA, 2007b), for initial training newly qualified teachers and experienced teachers (formerly these were developed independently of each other and at different times). This common framework was applied in September 2007 and has been a result of extensive consultation with schools, ITT and CPD providers (UCET, 2005) and teaching unions. The framework is underpinned by the importance of continued professional development throughout the career of a teacher. Identifying staff development needs at different stages of teachers careers has been addressed in the publication *Leading and coordinating CPD in secondary schools* (DfES 2005) where key CPD themes are related to DfES policies. These include for example: subject knowledge, pedagogy, inclusion, transition, underperformance, behaviour and attendance. However, until recently, there has been separate guidance for CPD and ITT with a separation of responsibilities for these areas within schools.

In the past a criticism levelled against the central control of CPD for teachers has been the limitation to professional autonomy and a tendency to depersonalise training with teachers receiving instrumental, information - led training ( Gray, 2005 ). This was recognised as an issue by the TDA when it commissioned a review of evidence - based informed practice that would assist policy makers and practitioners

in moving towards a more personalised training (EPPI, 2006). At the same time, Ofsted, reported on how effective schools organise CPD (Ofsted 2006). This study found that while senior managers identified the school's needs well, the planning and professional development of individuals was often weak, that few schools were evaluating the impact of CPD on teaching and learning and head teachers did not know how to assess value for money of their CPD policy. The report also notes that the workforce reforms that have provided additional classroom and administrative support for teachers have released time that could be used for teachers' professional development. In the most effective schools the CPD Coordinator had a clearly defined strategic role that included planning, ensuring coherence with the school's other planning cycles, quality assurance and the evaluation of impact. Impact is usually interpreted ultimately in terms of pupil attainment - but the influence of CPD is clearly difficult to disentangle from all other influences. The study also found that that CPD was less effective when the co-ordinators retained largely administrative responsibilities, and where related roles were divided between too many people.

A recent review of research into the impact of trainee teachers on the achievement of pupils (Hurd, 2007) concludes that training active schools achieve higher national test scores at ages 11 and 14, but there is no significant difference in test scores at 16 or 18. The review also reports that trainee teachers boost resources to schools as more adult helpers in the classroom and bringing in new skills and knowledge. The main negative effect of providing initial teacher training is an impact on teachers' workloads and time spent on coping with a trainee teacher experiencing problems. Hurd's review of research suggests that there is a greater impact on pupil achievement at 11-14 when there are a larger number of trainee teacher teachers - possibly a reflection on the level of commitment by the school towards ITT and CPD generally and the higher status of the co-ordinating staff. These roles are to some extent dependent on the size of the school, the age profile of schools and the school's commitment to ITT and CPD.

The TDA commissioned a research project in 2004-5: *The Role of the ITT Coordinator in Primary and Secondary schools* (Butcher, 2005). This study suggests the role of the ITTC has four dimensions - managerial, pedagogical, evaluative and pastoral. Our own research on the role of the ITTC (Evans et al 2006) in SHU partnership schools revealed a need to explore the ITTC's role further with head teachers, as they are the key shapers of school policy. We wanted to see how schools were preparing for changes in the national framework for the standards for classroom teachers, and whether this is leading to a more coherent professional development for teachers from initial training to mid career and later. A key issue was to explore the contribution of the role holder(s) to improving teaching and learning across the school.

School based initial teacher education is firmly established in schools in England and in secondary schools teachers are trained as subject specialists. This raises the question as to whether the ITTC has a role in helping to develop the subject pedagogical aspects of learning alongside subject mentors. In GTP routes in particular an individual training plan needs to be devised that meets the needs of trainees and ITTCs currently play a lead role in this. There is also an enhanced role of the mentor in the GTP route compared to the PGCE (Dunne, 2005, Brookes 2005). The identity of school based "educators", as distinct from school based trainers presents a current challenge (Burn, 2007). She queries whether mentors,

and those that support them (the ITTC) should not simply be passing on existing knowledge but generating new professional knowledge. This suggests that both mentors and ITTCs should have enhanced knowledge and skills especially in pedagogy. This raises the question as to whether or not ITTCs and mentors have the appropriate personal and professional development opportunities needed to fulfil their roles.

## **Methodology and Research Questions**

The key questions that we address are:

- How do head teachers perceive the role of the ITTC?
- How are schools reshaping/ linking the roles of the ITTC and CPD Co-ordinator?
- What are the quality assurance and professional development aspects of the ITTC's role in the school?
- What impact does the role and being engaged in ITT have on the future development of the school?
- How can HEIs help support the effectiveness of school- based training?

In-depth interviews were held with a representative sample (10) of head teachers and ITT/CPD co-ordinators from our partnership schools. These varied from large 11-18 schools to smaller 11-16 schools in the inner city. In order to explore further the data collected from these schools, three focus groups were held with ITTCs (30 participants) and data was collected by a short survey.

There are a number of issues pertinent to interviewing secondary school head teachers (HTs). Out of twelve approached for interview only two said that they didn't wish to be involved. This indicates that most HTs recognised that involvement in ITT was important to the school and were interested in knowing how other schools were organising ITT and also CPD. All interviews were conducted in school, usually in the HT's office. The role description of the ITTC (Appendix 1) and questions for discussion (Appendix 2) were sent in advance of the interviews in order to get a considered response, and in some instances the HT wished to be interviewed jointly with their ITTC or CPD Co-ordinator. This might be indicative that several HTs had not undertaken these roles before becoming a HT, and were perhaps unsure of what the role really entailed. HTs are the public face of their schools and would clearly want to provide a positive view to researchers about how their school organises ITT and CPD. Assurances were given that schools would not be identified by name in the report. There were possibly some underlying issues about the allocation of trainee teacher teachers by the University to schools in the future that may have influenced the HTs' responses. Also, as the interviewers were to some extent representing an ITT provider, HTs would be making some judgements about our role in supporting ITT and CPD for the school's staff. The design of the research questions to HTs was influenced by the methodologies suggested by Patton (2002). These were semi structured in order to allow for the very different ways of organisation of ITT and CPD that we had found in our previous research. As anticipated, several HTs deviated from the questions asked within the interview in order to promote their own agenda. A number of short closed questions were given to ITTCs to provide further data about their roles before the start of the focus group discussions (appendix 3)

This was followed by a wider ranging discussion in focus groups. The discussion focussed on identifying areas of strength and development for the boundary working between the HEI and the school.

The analysis of the data is reported in six sections:

- How the HTs view the role of the ITTC
- The impact of recent CPD and New Standards for Teachers on ITT mentoring
- Quality Assurance processes within schools
- How ITTCs perceive their changing role
- The impact of the ITTC in School Improvement
- Development needs of ITTCs and mentors

### **How the HTs view the role of the Initial Teacher Training Co-ordinator?**

In all of the schools visited the ITTC had a variety of middle or senior management roles in addition to their ITTC role. The roles variously included CPD, NQT, GTP responsibilities, Head of Department and staff tutors. In the focus groups this multi-role responsibility was confirmed, with all having both a teaching role and another role in the school. Half were also the school's CPD Co-ordinator. Also within this sample 80% were also the NQT co-ordinator. In some schools ITTCs have dual roles including teaching,

*He has 50% timetable which he considers adequate for the job. It was originally 60% teaching but after a year it was reviewed and considered that he had broadened the role and made it more meaningful and this was then reduced to 50 % ( School A)*

However, in three of the schools HT's mentioned that the post holder (ITT and CPD) is now a non-teaching member of staff (appendix 4). This may suggest that HTs feel the position has a high administrative load that needs to integrate with other management functions and would be difficult to combine with teaching, or it is desirable to have one person with a wider oversight of a group of related management functions. In these schools other professionals may undertake observation of lessons, co-ordinate mentors and coach trainee teachers. In one school the HT felt that a '*previous role holder (an Assistant Head) spent too much time on ITT and not enough time on strategic issues*', and he had therefore re-organised their management structure. However, in the sample of ITTCs surveyed, all felt that their role was not primarily administrative.

The amount of time allocated to the ITTC post varied between schools and depended upon a number of contextual factors relating to the school, including the size of the school, the number of trainee teachers taken and who holds the role. In a previous study in our partnership (Evans et al, 2006) we found that 60% of ITTCs had about one fifth of their timetable for organising school placements, mentoring and supporting trainee teachers. Our HT interview data suggests that the role is currently viewed by Heads as being one of great significance across all schools in our sample:

*'Having this as a senior position in the school says that this matters' (School C)*

*'The role is pivotal' (School B)*

*'The post holder feels valued within the school and has developed the potential for the role. He feels highly valued by the Head.'* (School A)

This last school (school A) is a 'Partnership Training' School and had successfully established links with four HEIs, and the role incorporates NQT and new teacher induction with the post holder also supporting teachers in their early years. The school leadership acknowledged the linkages with new teachers needing support. The role holder here is given a high level of autonomy. This also seemed to be the case in other schools where it is agreed that the role has various dimensions, both internal and external all of which are viewed as significant to the school;

*'They are a key person in terms of working with important stakeholders in developing the profession of teaching within the school. It's not just about working looking after students when they come on practice... they are the first point of contact in terms of our relationships with HE providers; relationships with LA and NQTs so they have an extensive brief in the school.'* (School F)

Where head teachers set a high value on ITT, they dedicated their own time to supporting the role, as within one training school (School G) where the head teacher had written accessible, informative, research-based guides for teachers engaged in ITT work. In school B the head teacher supported research relating to effective observation and non-judgemental feedback. In Schools C and A the head teachers met and held sessions with trainees relating to professional values as well as offering guidance to coordinators and directly liaise with HEIs when there were partnership issues. Some head teachers had begun to offer extra organisational administration support for the post holder, with one head teacher commenting that

*'This needs to be made more effective so that the ITTC can concentrate on the T&L part of the role; and the coaching part of the role.'* (School F)

Head teacher's viewpoints on the breadth of the role of the ITTC differed from school to school. There was some debate as to whether this role should be concerned only with ITT or if it should also include wider professional development such as NQT and CPD. In some schools the idea of the role holder taking responsibility for CPD appeared to be in place, with other schools embracing this as an idea, and feeling that it should be implemented.

Certain schools however had a number of staff members taking responsibility for different aspects of professional development and disperse activity across a range of staff,

*'the Training Manager's role includes ITT and NQT. It is not wise to also include CPD as well, as role is too concentrated. AH runs the CPD.'* (School G)

HTs held the view that the role may become too much to manage for one person alone. 55% of a small sample of co-ordinators also felt this to be the case,

*'I despair when I see schools give people un-do-able jobs.'* (School C)

*'There are two Assistant HTs; for Teaching and Learning development and Assistant HT for whole child development who will coordinate provision for NQT, GTP, ITT and CPD.... The lead mentor will work with these people.'* (School H)

Using workforce reform to support the new standards framework, the HT of school H intended to implement a structure within the school to link the support of ITT with support structures for the professional development of teachers. Teachers will become coaches or be coached themselves in order to create reflective practice. In this school, a system will be developed in which new coaches support trainee teachers and more experienced coaches support NQTs and CPD of teachers. The HT would use this as a coherent and cost effective structure which would extend skills of current ITT mentors into other areas and offer the opportunity of ITT mentoring as a professional development opportunity for newer, less experienced staff. In this way ITT would become incorporated in a wider range of sustained continued professional development.

It is difficult to create a cohesive approach for the role of the ITTC in schools. The variation in approach may be due to the role holder having a range of other leadership responsibilities in addition to their ITTC role,

*'the role holder has enough on as Head of Department and Head of Year and ITTC/NQT'. (School I)*

A head teacher for one particular school exemplified this stating 'no two schools are the same' (School C). This HT was adamant that the role linked in well with CPD, that it would be unmanageable for one person to take on this 'huge job' but that it was extremely important that the ITT and CDP Co-ordinators had an effective working relationship. The HT here was also clear in his views that ITT students were often expected to work to a level that was 'unsustainable' in the long term, and it was becoming the norm for them to put in many extra hours in the evenings and weekends. This led to the setting of bad working habits. This was often leading to trainees becoming exhausted early on in their teaching career, This HT commented that ITT students still need to ensure that they operate at a high level of proficiency, but needed to be shown how to manage their time better. He also suggested that the partnership should highlight the importance for trainee teachers to develop a work/life balance and to begin to learn how to sustain themselves through the professional and personal demands of the profession.

*'Current expectations and pressures are unacceptable and I cannot comprehend how it will be done over 40 years'*

It was seen as an important professional aspect of the role of an ITT and CPD Co-ordinator – to have 'the long view' and to nurture trainees and be a good role model in terms of working habits. This view is supported by the work of Day et al (2007) who found that the supportive influences of HTs and colleagues are crucial for teachers to remain committed, resilient and effective in the early years of teaching.

Some HTs evidently viewed the ITTC's role as primarily managerial, with the post holder being someone who oversaw processes, but was less directly involved in them,

*'The ITTC is a manager rather than a deliverer of staff development.... relies on mentors to do most of the work.'* (School D)

This person would delegate the work to others, but should be there to help if problems arise:

*'In the past the ITTC (an Assistant Head) spent too much time in direct contact with trainee teachers when they should have been more concerned with strategic work in the school. The ITTC can draw upon 54 members of staff... and match skills to task.'* (School D)

One head teacher thought that one of the main credentials for a non teacher ITTC was that the person should have certain specific knowledge and be up to date with any changes and initiatives:

*'Must understand the new breed of teacher e.g. technological interests and innovation in teaching and learning.... must be able to support the professional issues - e.g.GTP, Professional Associations, and know the new National Standards for teachers'. (School E)*

### HT views on ITT mentoring skills and new CPD priorities of coaching and mentoring

The introduction or development of training and coaching emerged as a common key theme across the schools; these methods were used for supporting ITTs as well as meeting the new requirements of CPD for teachers.

*'Teachers will be coached and will be coaches so process becomes more meaningful and about continual development. The school will develop a team of specialist coaches, where new coaches support ITT trainee teacher teachers and experienced coaches support NQT and CPD of teachers' (School H).*

This HT viewed the ITTC as having a role in the planned processes of a whole school coaching model. In this model two assistant heads would have responsibility for teaching and learning and would coordinate provision for NQT, GTP, ITT and CPD, and a professional development opportunity would be offered to a new lead mentor to work closely with them for ITT.

In another school the ITTC was a training school manager. Becoming a training school had a very positive influence on this particular school *'All impacts on the development of the school.'* (School G). Lesson observations took place for all teachers and proved to be extremely valuable for the teachers, to enable them to become more reflective in their work *'makes them think about their own lessons when being observed by trainee teacher.'* (School G). The inclusion of mentoring and coaching in the new standards framework overtly link ITT mentoring, CPD and the development of pedagogy.

All HTs had views on mentor training provided by the HEI. In at least two schools there were concerns about taking subject teachers away from the classroom *'our first job is to teach pupils'* (School I). This school relied on in-house training of mentors, raising a concern for consistency and coherence in the training of mentors across the partnership.

### HT views on school internal Quality Assurance processes for ITT

One important issue raised was that of ensuring quality school based training, 'the process of QA within the school is not strong enough' (School H). Two other head teachers stated that they had 'No formal QA' (School F) with one having 'no formal mechanisms for quality assurance.' (School A). In another school it appeared that

the QA was reliant on the familiarity of the ITTC with the mentors with whom they worked. Trainee teacher teachers were regularly observed and required to attend frequent meetings.

*'Would be interesting to see if this is sufficiently robust and whether this provides enough information about the quality of mentoring.'* (School F)

There was no formal quality assurance for the work of mentors in most of the sample of schools; however mentor's work was monitored by the ITTC in some schools, and formative feedback given at the end of the year. In only 50% of the sample of co-ordinators was the role formally recognised by a description in school documentation.

Much of the QA in these schools was, however, the responsibility of the ITTC through; *'sensitive discussions with mentors and cross fertilization of good ideas/ practice in other departments.'* (School A). Current arrangements were mainly based on an informal system of support which relied on a high degree of teacher professionalism. Our study supports Butcher's (2005) findings that *'the ability to be around the whole school, to be available to chat informally to mentors about how things are going is a vital element in successful ITT.'* Our data suggests that HTs acknowledged this and the skills and qualities required for this flexible and influential role. Whilst the interviews illuminated the actual jobs the ITTCs had, HTs also had a clear idea of the professional and personal qualities needed for the role. Opinions appeared somewhat polarised about some of the competencies a person should possess in order to be suitable to undertake the ITTC role. This could be very school specific, being dependent on the attitudes of the HT. One HT had quite precise attributes in mind :

*'Not a job for final 10 years of teaching. Can't be too young as not enough experience/credibility.... must have excellent communication.... must have a real enthusiasm for the job'..* (School G)

One school offered the role as a (supported) professional development opportunity to a good classroom practitioner in the early years of teaching (School H). However in at least two of the schools the role holders were in their final years of teaching and preparing for retirement. Most HTs viewed the role holder's qualification and experience as being vital to their credibility within the school and with trainees.

*'Excellent practitioner within the school.'* (School F)

*'A high quality practitioner in own right.'* (School C)

For trainee teacher teachers this is important as high quality support enables them to learn their pedagogy and practice. Other head teachers focussed more on personal qualities,

*'Encouraging, confidence building but capable of saying the blunt things that sometimes need saying.'* (School C)

*'Analytical about what makes good teaching... genuineness empathy but also tenacity to explore issues and tackle problems.'* (School H)

HTs showed concern for maintaining the quality of pupils' learning during ITT placements. The current emphasis on measuring and predicting learning and

teachers being accountable for pupil achievement was an added tension in the partnership. Two HTs specifically noted that trainee teachers being left alone in a classroom to practice was unacceptable since this was a poor training model: *'an inappropriate buy-out'* (School H). Furthermore for the school to avoid compromising teaching standards by having practising teachers in the classroom, it was important for teachers to 'work closely with trainee teachers'. Another HT supported this idea;

*'I insist that all teachers be in the classroom because the teacher is still responsible for the standards.'* (School B)

This HT was explicit that there should be a set model in place where the trainee and teacher work together in the classroom within a coaching (interventionist) model, but stressed that this was one of a number of strategies being implemented. This was thought to be important not only in terms of quality assurance, but also to challenge beliefs of those reluctant to take on trainees, making staff aware that trainee teachers should be perceived as an asset, not a hindrance to the school. Trainees should be welcomed as an additional resource for teachers and pupils.

*'I would fill the school with trainees if I could'* (School B).

This HT stated that the previous ITTC (recently retired) did not share this viewpoint claiming that it would be perceived as a burden by many staff who were not enthusiastic for the challenge. The HT felt that he had to acknowledge this viewpoint. The considerable additional workload of mentoring is acknowledged in Boyd (2001) who found that 72% of teachers agreed that *'dealing with the student teacher adds to the workload of the already busy teacher'* and 69% agreed with the statement *'The cost to the school in terms of time put in by members of staff is high.'* Boyd's work suggests that to fully develop ITT, schools need to take ownership of the development. Clearly in this case the (training school) HT's enthusiasm was not sufficient to gain large scale involvement, but he was clearly personally driving forward coordinated approaches to teacher professional growth which have strong links with ITT with the Senior Management Team

Schools get some funding for each placement they take. It is intended that this funding is used for time to mentor and coach the trainee teacher and provide any support as required. HTs were asked if they felt the resource was at the right level. In a couple of schools the subject mentors get an hour per week to carry out their role. In other schools funding goes into departments and they use it as they see fit (nb. the transfer of resource from HEIs to schools does not cover the role of the ITTC ). However within a training school, the training school manager is paid for a specific role and the training school grant covers the costs of the role. A HT in a rural school stated that they needed similar funding,

*'Our problem is that schools in urban conurbations get masses of money... We... tend to get nothing and people don't recognise that. We struggle dramatically. Having resources from the university are welcome.'* (R)

Heads in two schools felt that the resource for the ITTCs role was inadequate, *'not enough remission to do it properly'* but that schools did their best to *'absorb some of the costs of mentoring.'*

HTs recognised that a number of ITTCs have had no formal training for the role. A minority have attended training from their providing HEIs. There is some diversity in

formal training. In one school the role holder has a post graduate qualification in Human Resource Management in addition to their QTS. A number of ITTCs have trained for their role by either shadowing a former ITTC or deputising for them. In one school Leadership and Management training was seen to be essential training for the ITTC along with an understanding of pedagogy.

### **How Initial Teacher Training Co-ordinators perceive their role**

ITTCs identified a number of barriers that impacted on their ability to fulfil their role properly. In keeping with our previous research findings (Evans et al 2006) a general lack of time specifically allocated to the role emerged as a fundamental difficulty. Linked to this was the perception amongst some existing ITTCs, that the complexity and workload of their function were significantly underestimated particularly by HTs. In addition, one ITTC claimed the *'demands of current training courses are not fully recognised or appreciated by teachers or trainee teachers,'* adding it was therefore critical for ITTCs *'to make clear the demands of the job...explicit to both,'* from the initial briefing onwards (School A).

It was reported in one school that an existing ITTC had only been able to meet the requirements of their post through their own goodwill and willingness to work additional hours in excess of those formally assigned. This raised fears that the true nature and time implications of satisfactorily performing the role would be further obscured and overlooked, creating additional pressure on whoever inherited the position.

*'The current role holder is retiring - because she has given freely of her time and been delegated with full responsibility this means that the true complexity/time required of her role is not understood by the leadership team. She has one hour per week for the role - and now she is leaving the problem of time allocation etc, will not be recognised and is unlikely to be addressed.'* (School H)

This need to be flexible in terms of time to fulfil leadership and management roles in schools is of course not unique to the ITTC. Our data suggests that an ITTC has a multifaceted role, encompassing a number of challenging activities. 75% of the group plan, organise and deliver training, but trying to keep fully up to date with various policy changes emerged as a perennial difficulty, with *'forever changing employment law,'* (School D) *'national developments in ITT,'* (School G) and *'understanding what happens at HEIs and how school provision links in with that,'* (School B). Two ITTCs stated that setting up induction programmes was a particularly problematic aspect

*'creating an effective induction programme is complex and time consuming...it needs two days to organise it properly per year,'* (School H). Another ITTC argued that the demands from a trainee teacher were not mirrored by the amount of time they had available to deal with them, making regular contact difficult to manage.

*'Regular attention that needs to be paid to students, for example asking if job applications are in, tackling or giving support on issues that arise through student surgeries,'* (School H)

ITTCs thought the role of mentors to be fundamental to the success of an ITT programme. Many acknowledged that *'mentoring of student teachers is difficult'* (School I) and lamented how, as ITTCs, they often lacked the means to offer credible

incentives to recruit new mentors or motivate those currently in post who had become disillusioned. Confidence in the ability of mentors was high. In 95% of the sample of co-ordinators it was felt that mentors are generally well informed enough to deliver high quality training. The training of mentors tends to be led by the HEIs as only 33% of schools provided in-house training for mentors.

*'Not yet discussed how schools might recognise the real skills and abilities of mentoring. Some mentors do think it is a burden. They need incentives to do the role.'* (School A)

In addition it was claimed that insufficient timetable time had been reserved for mentors to meet with their ITTC. This precluded meaningful reflection or discussion surrounding possible problems encountered and/or examples of good practice undertaken.

*'Support needs to be offered to mentors on a less ad hoc basis in order to move provision on.'* (School H)

This lack of time investment was seen as detrimental to the overall quality of ITT provision. One ITTC drew attention to the difficulty of adequately monitoring quality assurance in relation to ITT.

*Actually knowing what is going on, where and how? You're effectively working through other people and it's very hard to get a handle on it. It's not always an easy question to answer what is exactly going on.'* (School C)

Perhaps unsurprisingly given the reported lack of training and allocated timetable time reserved for mentors, a good number of ITTC s found *'getting the confidence of mentors'* (School G) and *'shifting attitudes of more reluctant mentors'* (School B) to be considerable hurdles to overcome. Many ITTCs considered the possession of excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to maintain *'good working relationships with staff in all the subject areas'* (Schools A and I) to be necessities. Moreover seniority, level of experience and existing reputation within the school were all seen as important additional indicators of how successful an ITTC would be once in role.

*"Needs to have status within the organisation, to have had a senior role, significant presence and clout with senior leadership team to make policy changes etc, needs to have credibility with other mentors, charisma and personality"* (School A)

*"Experience this is very important in being able to respond sensitively and authoritatively with students, high level skills in handling adults, being encouraging about the profession and their experiences, not being hypercritical, ensuring a positive experience of the school"* (School H)

## **The Impact of the ITTC on future development of the school**

Most ITTCs thought their role was related to school improvement and pupil achievement. However, the extent to which the ITTC and the ITT issues they represent, directly influenced the content of School Improvement Plans (SIPs) and other school policies appeared was variable. For example some ITTCs were adamant that their role and ITT fed directly into a schools overall strategy.

*'CPD and ITT leads to SIP which then leads to pupil achievement.'* (School D)

*'My role contributes to the whole school improvement plan. I respond to school needs, rather than identify them.'* (School G)

Contrastingly, a different ITTC reported that ITT did not feature within their schools SIP, that there were *'no links between ITT and CPD policy which is considered separately'* and *'no formal collection of evidence on positive impacts of trainee teachers on pupils'* (School A). A possible reason for this disparity, may relate to an issue previously raised about the level of status an ITTC has within any given school and their relationship with the Senior Leadership Team.

At one school the ITTC felt the main way they contributed to school improvement and pupil achievement was through the monitoring of teaching quality to ensure standards were kept high to benefit the school, its pupils and the trainee teachers themselves.

*'Mainly supervisory role checking with Head of Faculty that children's progress is not impeded by trainee teachers.'* (School A)

*'The role backs up what is said at department level so consistent message is given ...it supports individual mentors and ability to offer advice based on wide range of experience. Tutorials with the ITTC throughout placement embrace school improvement and achievement and make the school expectations clear to trainee teachers, they meet staff, and pupils in variety of lessons so they can see how they should fit in to the context.'*(School H)

55% of the ITTC focus group felt that the CPD role should not include that of the ITTC. Comments were made however that this would be dependant on a number of contextual issues within individual schools, relating for example to the size of the school and the number of ITT students. It was suggested that a tiered management system, line managed by the CPD Co-ordinator could be the way forward, as CPD and ITT are interlinked within the leadership team.

*'The ITTC role needs to be an academic and teaching role rather than an administrative one. The ITTC is a lynchpin, who coordinates..... quality assurance, having overview of impact of trainee teachers on children.'*

Indeed the focus groups backed up what heads stated and reinforced credibility issues stating that trainee teachers feel resentful if the role holder does not have considerable expertise in teaching and learning.

*'We need someone with a vision for ITT within the school -someone who is a good teacher.'*

It was reported that the increasing 'modularisation of the curriculum' with additional exams in year 10 and 12 had resulted in a *'limited amount of time to prepare students for exams.'*(School C) This was said to have made teachers increasingly "reluctant" to delegate full responsibility of their class over to a trainee teacher, for fear of compromising their performance in the exams. This underlies the importance of the ITTC in ensuring that the needs of the trainee are balanced by a school's duty not to compromise pupil's chances of achieving their best within exams. In one school the ITTC stated that the timetables of trainee teachers are carefully co-ordinated to ensure that pupils do not have too many trainee teachers impacting on their learning.

## Professional Development needs of the ITTC

It was felt by one ITTC that their role had "grown" and become "increasingly complex" (School E) had not been matched by the level of additional training and support received. ITTCs were generally appreciative of any opportunity afforded them to share and discuss their experiences with other ITTCs. However, in practice the extent to which ITTCs had a forum to exchange views or actually receive training/support varied.

One ITTC endorsed the formal training days at one local HEI because they felt it provided them with both a theoretical and practical understanding of ITT/mentoring issues; thereby greatly assisting their ability to undertake the role.

*'Four training days at ...University were useful – giving guidance on styles of mentoring, focussed observation techniques applicable to a variety of subjects. Particularly useful is the explanation of some of the principles behind why we have got to where we are today in teaching training which has really helped him have a comprehensive overview and enabled him to do the role.'*(School A)

Two ITTCs mentioned that studying how ITTCs from other schools went about role would be beneficial. One specifically wanted to be able to make "more visits to other schools" (School G). An additional recommendation was how it would be helpful to hold an initial meeting at the HEI where trainee teachers were arriving from, prior to their placement beginning;

*"A meeting at the university, for ITTCs before students arrive looking at best practice and target setting, with trainee teacher teachers would be appreciated".* (School H)

As has previously been alluded to, the morale and motivation of mentors are perceived to be critical to the smooth operating of ITT programmes. Understandably therefore a concern that arose from the interviews was the alleged dearth of training and support offered to mentors. One ITTC admitted assurances regarding ongoing support and training for mentors offered at the time of their recruitment were often not adequately seen through in practice,

*'and would have appreciated having case studies, good practice guidance, materials to support mentors, lists of the key things that mentors need to do/ key issues for one to one sessions lesson observation forms, summative reports and anything within a subject specific context.'*

Despite one ITTC feeling that their role needed to be "more defined" (School E), the majority of ITTCs stated they did not wish to alter anything within their role description as specified in the Partnership Agreement. However, in keeping with their responses to other questions throughout the interviews and focus groups, they were keen to highlight how a lack of time, often impeded their ability to practically perform all aspects of their role description.

## Key findings

- All HTs highly value the role of the ITTC. Most say that teaching experience and knowledge, credibility with other teachers, being a good practitioner and high level interpersonal skills are important for the role.
- As a result of workforce reform there is an increased variety in the range of practices of how ITT is coordinated in school but most schools do not have a

formal role description for the ITTC and most are not part of the Senior Leadership Team. In some schools the responsibility of co-ordination of school based ITT is being shifted to that of an highly skilled administrator with increased responsibility for mentors.

- The majority of participants and all HTs consider a joint role of CPD/ITT coordinator as too large for one person to undertake effectively and prefer a lead/support approach.
- HTs consider the resource to support school-based requirements for ITT is inadequate but that systems within their school are robust.
- ITTCs are satisfied with the role description given in the Partnership Agreement Handbook but feel they do not have sufficient time to undertake the role adequately - in particular the quality assurance/ liaising requirements of the role.
- ITTCs feel that HTs significantly underestimate the complexity and workload of their ITT role: in particular their contribution to developing professional value and practice; quality assurance of mentors and the extent of the need to champion the positive benefits of whole school engagement with ITT.
- All HTs and most ITTCs consider it an essential part of the ITTC role to ensure that high standards of teaching and professionalism are maintained by trainee teachers across the school and have strategies for this.
- An increased number of HTs are developing an understanding of the full potential for sustained staff professional development through mentoring and coaching opportunities including those opportunities provided by engaging with ITT.
- In some schools less experienced members of staff may become ITT mentors as the demands increase on more experienced ITT mentors to mentor/coach members of the permanent staff.
- The work of the ITTC has become more complex and there has been inadequate training.
- ITTC s want HEI to play a more prominent role in supporting school based training in particular facilitating the exchange of ideas, materials and expertise, offering external networking opportunities, having a greater grasp of HEI based training and in the support of weak trainees.

## **Glossary**

<b>AST</b>	Advanced Skills Teacher
<b>CPD</b>	Continuous Professional Development
<b>DfES</b>	Department for Education and Schools (Now Department for Children, Schools and Families – DCSF)
<b>GTP</b>	Graduate Teacher Programme
<b>HEI</b>	Higher Education Institute
<b>HT</b>	Head Teacher
<b>ITT</b>	Initial Teacher Training
<b>NQT</b>	Newly Qualified Teacher

<b>OFSTED</b>	Office for Standards in Education
<b>QA</b>	Quality Assurance
<b>QTS</b>	Qualified Teacher Status
<b>SEF</b>	Self Evaluation Framework
<b>SIP</b>	School Improvement Plan
<b>ITT CO-ORDINATOR</b>	Senior Liaison Tutor
<b>TDA</b>	Training and Development Agency

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## Appendix 1

Senior Liaison Tutor (This is a different name for the ITTCs role in our partnership) – school/college based (extract from the SHU Secondary Partnership Agreement Handbook)

The Senior Liaison Tutor (SLT) is the key person in ensuring Quality Assurance (QA) within the school-based placement. They will take responsibility for co-ordinating the overall placement experience and assessment programme of trainee teacher teachers on placement. The SLT takes responsibility within their institution for ensuring that the trainee teacher experience supports the work of the institution and for managing any internal matters that arise as a direct result of the placement. The SLT takes on a key role within the programme for ensuring the appropriateness and quality of the trainee teacher experience whilst on placement. Within the programme the SLT is responsible through the HT/institutional head to the Assistant Director (ITE) at Sheffield Hallam University for ensuring that the terms of the partnership agreement are fulfilled. In many cases, the SLT will also be a general ITTC encompassing other training routes as well as acting as a Mentor.

The SLT plays a key role in ensuring a whole institution approach to the education and training of trainee teacher teachers. The specific responsibilities of the SLT are to:

- Overall QA within the placement.
- Co-ordinate and moderate the work of the Mentors within the school.
- Be the major link person with the University through the placement office.
- Ensure that all Trainee teacher teachers are provided with a suitable induction programme.
- Co-ordinate a programme of general seminars for the trainee teacher teachers (e.g.: on behaviour management, special educational needs as appropriate)
- Monitor/co-ordinate the dispatch of forms/reports to the university partnership office by the agreed dates
- Ensure that the trainee teacher is aware of school procedures, schemes of work and record-keeping methods
- Alert the University and trainee teacher promptly about any problems related to the placement
- Illustrate the way in which the school uses the services of supporting agencies.
- Involve trainee teacher teachers, when appropriate in staff meetings and other activities
- Monitor the quality of trainee teacher training provision within the school and identify targets for improvement as appropriate
- Set up appropriate Primary School visits.
- To meet on a regular basis with the Mentors to offer support, provide a forum for debate and to achieve consistency of experience and assessment
- Develop and work to employment based training plans
- To contribute to Programme and Partnership developments as appropriate
- Monitor the Career Entry Development Profile for their Trainee teacher teachers

There is also an overlapping set of responsibilities for the SLT for Employment Based Routes (the trainee teacher is in this case employed as an unqualified teacher at the school rather than being on a placement).

SLT Role in Employment Based Routes (GTP/RTP/OTTP) extracts from the Yorkshire and Derbyshire Training Partnership Secondary GTP Handbook 2006-7. SHU is the lead partner working with trainee teacher teachers in mainly with Derbyshire, Sheffield and Rotherham Local Authorities.

- coordinate the work of mentors within the school
- ensures appropriate QA in all aspects of the school based element of training.
- allocate mentors to trainee teacher teachers
- ensure that mentors have received appropriate training for their role
- oversee the arrangements for induction, training and mentoring the trainee teacher and monitor his / her general progress
- provide the trainee teacher with appropriate documentation e.g. the school booklet, curriculum policies, planning formats, Ofsted reports, the school improvement plan, observation formats, assessment systems and formats
- ensure that the trainee teacher is aware of health and safety policies
- oversee arrangements for visits to or placements with other schools and ensure that the staff at the other schools have a clear understanding of the purposes and requirements of the visits or placements
- ensure that the trainee teacher keeps records of such visits based on the purposes and requirements of the visits or placements
- arrange for the trainee teacher to attend staff meetings, parents' evenings, curriculum development days and courses
- ensure that training plans are in place for the trainee teacher by the required dates
- monitor and review the trainee teacher's training plan with the mentor and discuss any modifications that are proposed by the mentor or the trainee teacher
- formally review the training plan after the first term
- liaise with the moderator to discuss any proposed changes to the training plan or about any other issues or concerns
- liaise with the University / LEA Adviser about broader issues concerning partnership
- ensures that any required documentation is returned to the University by the mentor.

## **Appendix 2**

Questions to Head teacher:

These are indicative questions of the issues we would like to explore with you.

1 How important is the Senior Liaison Tutor role to the development of the school?

2 What personal and professional qualities would you be looking for in the role holder?

3 Can/should the role be just concerned with ITT, or should it also include wider professional development e.g. NQT and or CPD.

4 If you have a senior colleague with overall responsibility for professional development e.g. at AH/DH level do they delegate aspects of the role and why?

5 The SLT usually holds the role for a number of years, but most schools have a high turnover of subject mentors. To what extent does the SLT provide training and support for mentors? Does the SLT quality assure the work of mentors?

Is there a formal mechanism for reporting back on quality issues to the SLT?

6 Schools usually work with several ITT providers, and support training in a variety of routes including employment based training, making the role of SLT administratively complex. Do you consider that the role is being resourced at the right level? Are mentors being resourced adequately?

7 Should the SLT have specific training for the role - before taking the role, ongoing, accredited training? What would you see as being key features of any training?

### **Question for SLT on same visit.**

Could we please have a copy of your current role description?

1 What do you see as the main challenges for new colleagues taking on the role of the SLT ( in schools generally)?

2 How does your SLT role link to school improvement and pupil achievement?

3 What additional support and training do you feel is necessary for the role?

4 Is there anything you would like to change in your role description?

### **Appendix 3**

Questions for SLT at focus groups.

In your school:

1. Is the SLT role holder a member of the teaching staff? Y / N

2. Is the SLT also the CPD Co-ordinator? Y / N

3. Is the CPD Co-ordinator the Line Manager of the SLT? Y / N

4. Is the SLT also responsible for NQTs? Y / N

5. Is the SLT a member of the leadership team? Y / N

6 Do you hold other roles in addition to being an SLT (TLR or other leadership roles)? Y / N

Other roles:
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Any roles you delegate to other teachers?
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7. Do you think the CPD role should now include that of the SLT? Y / N
8. Is the CPD + SLT too big for one person? Y / N
9. Is your role mainly administrative? Y / N
10. Is the SLT role formally described in school documentation? Y / N
12. As an SLT do you provide school based training for mentors in:
  - generic mentoring skills Y/N
  - planning and organising school based training Y/N
13. Do you think mentors are generally well informed enough to deliver high quality school based training? Y/N
12. What are you looking for in the choice of mentors working with ITT trainees?  
(e.g. minimum amount of teaching experience, role model, proactive in own professional development .....)

## **Appendix 4 ITT Coordinators Role (example)**

### **School D**

- Co-ordinate GTT & NQT programmes - arrange training, induction, ensure observations, meetings, etc are taking place
- Oversee cover/absence
- Line manage admin assistant
- Line manage 5 cover supervisors - arrange training, resources, induction, observations, meetings, 'nuts and bolts'

### **Performance Management**

- Write/update policy
- Evaluate training requirements of teaching and support staff
- Implement policy
- Write/update spreadsheet for all teaching staff re PM
- Liaise with team leaders to ensure all staff receive their entitlement

### **CPD**

- Deal with course requests - liaise with WM/DR, Admin assistant in charge of Cover, Finance to ascertain possibility
- Provide feedback to colleagues if course request refused
- Keep procedure up-to-date and staff informed
- Look for courses/training opportunities for individuals

## **Staff**

- Meet Business Manager and admin assistant in charge of cover, every month re pay/roles/any staff issues
- Write job descriptions
- Deal with requests from all staff, e.g. Threshold, salary information, maternity/leave arrangements, etc
- Write references for HT
- With Admin Assistant - letters to Local Authority re all staff changes - new starters, performance increments, temporary contracts etc

## **Recruitment/Selection**

- Job adverts - devise, submit, prepare interviews
- Ensure correct procedures adhered to re CRB, qualifications, application forms
- Interview support staff

## **Absence Management**

- Adapt policy/procedures
- Monitor
- Approve absence requests
- Liaise with Business Team re absence procedures, doctor's notes, information to Local Authority
- Refer individuals to Health & Well Being
- Liaise with and set up meetings with HR re long term absentees

## **TLRs**

- Liaise on structure
- Produce job descriptions/schedules for interviews
- Inform staff of changes/structure

## **School E - HR Manager Strategic Responsibilities**

1. To operate as a member of the Senior Leadership Team in providing strategic leadership in all aspects of the support services within school.
2. To lead on the development and implementation of the overall ethos and aims of the school.
3. To play a leading role in the strategic management of the processes that support school improvement plans, including those associated with student support.
4. To manage the long term revenue and capital financial planning strategies and the development and determination of the annual base-budgeting process to ensure resources are continuously targeted at priorities.
5. To lead and manage on all financial and premises matters.

6. To take an active development role in the drive for Business and Enterprise and extended/ full service school status.
7. To lead on Workforce Remodelling, developing strategies and staffing structures that meet the strategic aims and objectives of the Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body.
8. To lead on the development of Continuing Professional Development strategies and opportunities for all staff.
9. To contribute to the development of strategic ICT policy and practice to ensure school MIS and curriculum needs are identified and prioritised in line with school development and improvement plans.

### **Financial Management**

To lead on all aspects of schools finance and budget, ensuring effective reporting and management systems to the Headteacher and Governing Body are in place. Responsibilities include:

1. Advising the Headteacher and Governing Body on policy and the use of resources and management of budgets.
2. Developing an innovative and business approach to the role that seeks to maximise income and effect expenditure efficiencies.
3. To manage procurement and be responsible for securing relevant sponsorships and maximising additional funding streams e.g. via Government initiatives, Industrial and Business Sponsorship, European Funding, New Opportunities Funding, Objective 1 etc.
4. Develop annual and longer term budget priorities in line with school development and improvement plans.
5. Preparing an annual budget/spending plan for the Governing Body.
6. Developing and managing the role of the Finance & Admin Manager to ensure effective and accurate financial and accounting procedures and systems that comply with financial regulations.

### **Human Resource Management**

1. To play a leading role in Policy making and ensure good practice in all Human Resources issues.
2. To develop and implement systems for staff, including, recruitment, induction, performance management, CPD and mentoring systems.
3. To advise Governors/ Headteacher on aspects of Human Resource Management e.g. recruitment, salary assessment, sickness, maternity, redundancy etc.
4. To develop strategic overview of Continuous Professional Development linked to school improvement planning.

5. To promote Continuous Professional Development for all staff and to actively encourage participation.
6. To actively seek out opportunities and funding streams to enhance provision and access to CPD.
7. To play a leading role in communication/consultation processes with all staff but in particular with support staff trade unions.

### **Support Services**

1. To be responsible for the planning, development and monitoring of support services, including commissioning and delegation of relevant activities.
2. To ensure that support services within school effectively support the core activities and focus on school improvement and development priorities.
3. To ensure provision of a quality service to all customers to and within school.
4. To ensure development and implementation of effective ICT solutions to underpin all aspects of management within school.
5. Development and management of the Systems Manager to ensure ICT support meets the needs of the school.

### **Facilities Management**

1. To be responsible for the development and management of facilities to meet the priorities of the school as determined within the school development and improvement plan.
2. To oversee the development of new buildings programmes ensuring school priorities and needs are met.
3. Through the development and management of the Facilities Manager ensure that all Facilities Management and provision meets Health & Safety, Risk Management and Best Value principles.

### **Other Responsibilities**

1. To promote the school to different audiences and raise the profile within the local community.
2. To assist with the development of school policies and procedures e.g. child protection, health & safety, security, ICT, data protection etc.
3. To actively promote diversity and ensure equal opportunities for all.
4. To develop constructive relationships and communicate with other agencies/professionals.
5. Participate in training and other learning activities and performance development as required.

6. Recognise own strengths and areas of expertise and use these to advise and support others.

7. To undertake any other additional duties that fall within the remit of the post as may be reasonably determines by the Headteacher.

## **Appendix 5**

List of schools, age phase and 5\*A-C achievement data ( 2006)

<b>School</b>	<b>Age range and size</b>	<b>Rural/Urban/Inner City</b>	<b>Achievement Date %5A*-C 2006</b>
<b>A</b>	11-18 (1967)	U	75%
<b>B</b>	11-18 (1169)	IC	58%
<b>C</b>	11-18 (1570)	IC	65%
<b>D</b>	11-18 (988)	IC	20%
<b>E</b>	11-18 (1188)	IC	63%
<b>F</b>	11-18 (1216)	IC	84%
<b>G</b>	11-18 (1089)	R	80%
<b>H</b>	11-18 (1196)	IC	58%
<b>I</b>	11-18 (1252)	R	85%

## Results of SLT Surveys

