

Case study for projects

ABOUT YOUR PROJECT

1. Project title

Employer-Led Initial Teacher Education

2. Project summary (max 50 words)

This may be the same as in the original submission, but please amend in light of changes you may have made during the duration of the project.

The ELITE (Employer-Led ITE) consortium focused on developing a model of initial teacher education (ITE) attractive to:

- **Employers** – who could see clearly how the programmes supported business development needs, would merit investment and would have clear, measurable impact on learner success
- **New and existing teaching staff** – who could see how programmes built on their existing skills, were equipping them to support the varied learners in the sector and lead into employment and progression opportunities.

The ELITE consortium set out to provide flexible and cost-effective programmes:

- developed **with employers**
- **building on the expertise and professional training** provided by employers
- to equip teachers for employment and with skills to engage and support the increasing numbers of **younger learners** across the sector.

A more central role for employers: Too often employers had been offered off-the-shelf ITE which did not reflect organisational and staff development needs, the profile of their learners or specific features of their setting. The motivation of employers to engage with ITE and have a role in shaping ITE programmes was a marked feature of the project – this is something which needs to be harnessed.

The consortium brought together expertise from across the learning and skills sector:

School of Education, Newcastle College
Success North Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training
Gen II Training
Sunderland AFC foundation
Linhope Pupil Referral Unit
School of English and Maths, Newcastle College
The Intraining Group
South Tyneside Adult and Community Learning
Rathbone
Newcastle Sixth Form College

One size does not fit all

The Success North team at Newcastle College have worked from 2007 on developing contextualised programmes to meet the needs of the wider sector and the range of learners and learning settings within it. The close involvement of employers in the ELITE consortium and the research strand which supported programme development highlighted:

- the variety of the settings in the sector

- the broad profile of the learners who were supported across the sector
- the diversity of the challenges and expectations placed on staff across learning and skills
- the need for initial teacher education programmes to be flexible to support providers and teaching/training staff

Too often employers had been offered off-the-shelf ITE which did not necessarily reflect their organisational and staff development needs:

“Teachers need qualifications but they need understanding of the setting first.” ACL employer

The ELITE project team and the project research strand highlighted a ‘one-size fits all’ approach to pedagogy which had traditionally been adopted by some teacher education providers. Research findings clearly highlighted demand from employers for a more context-dependent approach to meet the needs of the changing learner population, particularly in the 14-19 age group and in equipping staff to support Maths, English and Functional Skills delivery.

Our ELITE employer consortium consisted of experts in each setting who had a track record of engaging young learners, for example, South Tyneside ACL who focus their provision on helping people “who are the furthest from the job market or education or who have barriers to learning.” The expertise and input of employers supported the identification of key aspects of each setting which demanded a revised approach to teacher development and a suite of new programmes to equip staff for each setting.

In addition recognition of the investment in skills development undertaken by employers in the workplace was built into the ELITE model to ensure applicability of learning and skills, reduce duplication of learning and ensure that the model was cost-effective and efficient. Employer staff were trained in ‘supervisor’ roles to equip them to support teachers in training and develop capacity in each employer to drive forward the development of teaching staff.

The project activity supported the development of a commissioning approach to ITE as opposed to the purchase of off-the-shelf programmes. The ELITE project developed processes to support collaboration between ITE providers and employers to ensure that employer development needs were supported:

“You asked us what kind of programme we needed for our organisation and you gave us that.” WBL training provider

Guidance for employers outlining key areas to explore in procuring teacher education programmes was developed and disseminated and the commissioning process is outlined in section 4 of this case study.

3. Your ITE provision (approx 200-300 words)

Describe the ITE provision you are offering from September 2012, including as a result of the project: number of students (predicted or estimated if not confirmed), accreditation, delivery methods and target audience

The School of Education at Newcastle College already offered a broad range of ITE programmes from Level 3 to Level 7 which include:

- generic programmes (PTLLS, CTLLS, DTLLS, Certificate of Education, PGCE)
- integrated and additional route specialist programmes for literacy/English/ESOL and numeracy/maths.

The project team had identified the need to move away from qualifications mapped to externally set national standards to a more employer-led approach in which teaching qualifications were the result of a commissioning process (outlined in section 4 of this case study) and were designed to equip teachers/trainers and support learners in different settings of the learning and skills sector.

As a result of the ELITE project, the following ITE programmes were reviewed by employers, subsequently validated and launched from Sept/Oct 2012:

Specialist Foundation Degree Awards:

Foundation Degree Award (FdA) Education and Training for 14 – 19

Foundation Degree Award (FdA) Education and Training for English, Literacy and Language Specialists

Foundation Degree Award (FdA) Education and Training for Mathematics and Numeracy Specialists

The centre already offered ITE programmes at level 7 (Postgraduate Certificate in Education) for those with a first degree who were ready to start working at Masters level. Discussion with ELITE partners, including members of management and training/teaching teams highlighted the value of a foundation degree programme with a full teaching qualification built within. The benefit of integrating and shaping of a level 5 teaching qualification within the foundation degree was clear for ELITE partners where their trainers were interested in achieving a teaching qualification and working towards a first degree. The foundation degree would support the ELITE partners in developing trainer skills and also supporting their academic progression. The ELITE development work has resulted in a broad range of programmes to meet the needs of staff in different roles in different working environments. Recruitment began in September 2012, with 63 teachers/trainers recruited to PT Fd programmes.

It also needs to be noted that there was demand from ELITE partners for alternative programmes, including programmes at Level 4 with a specific emphasis on preparing staff to deliver functional skills, and for a staged approach which would allow trainers to take a more extensive approach to skills and knowledge development. Although the focus of the project was on level 5 teaching qualifications, the employer-led nature of the project led the project team to develop an additional programme to meet the demand for this needs staged approach. This additional work is discussed below.

Specialist Level 4 programmes:

Although the main thrust of the ELITE project was on HE qualifications, it also became clear as part of the research strand that some employer partners required programmes at **level 4**, specifically to equip teaching/training teams who would benefit from a more staged approach to their skills development. This programme would support staff

- delivering **Functional Skills**
- moving from Key skills or assessor roles to training/teaching roles
- staff moving into teaching/training roles for the first time

As a result, Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector with embedded functional skills was developed and rolled out from Oct with 60 teaching and training staff who would then move onto a Level 5 qualification from Easter 2013.

Future Developments:

Supporting teachers moving from mainstream roles: There was debate from some employers about the need to support development of secondary teachers moving from mainstream roles. Some employers in the consortium (e.g. Pupil referral units) had not been used to employing staff with qualifications mapped to the 2007 standards, but had traditionally had the expectation that their teaching staff held secondary post-graduate certificates of education. However, their experience of secondary qualified staff varied and in some cases managers lacked confidence in the effectiveness of the qualifications:

“Our learners lack confidence because of behavioural issues. A school teacher approach just exacerbates their feelings of disillusionment and dissatisfaction.” Employer, pupil referral unit

Specialist programmes: Several employers in the consortium (e.g. charity and community partners) are keen to take forward the development of new qualifications to equip teachers who specialise in supporting learners with learning disabilities and difficulties (LDD). New national standards for a specialism in LDD were published in August 2012 and the Newcastle School of Education team have now taken this forward for development.

Post-graduate qualifications: There is demand from some employers in the consortium for specialist postgraduate qualifications (e.g. teaching 14-19 year olds) and to equip staff to manage behaviour, and engage younger learners with a background of low attainment in their schooling.

Supporting pre-service teachers for the sector:

Employers in the consortium were interested in how they could support pre-service ITE students, help students develop their understanding of the different settings in the sector and contribute to the development of staff equipped to support the learners in their sector and develop a ‘grow our own’ approach.

4. Resources used *(you may decide upon the level of detail to be provided here)*

Outline the resources used to run this provision (outlined in 3 above) including: teaching time, resources used, tutoring/mentoring etc.

Where possible please provide a cost for these resources.

The Commissioning Process

The ELITE team at Newcastle College is keen to extend the commissioning approach out to more employers to ensure that a tailored programme is offered to meet their business needs. The project team demonstrated how the process below could be rolled out, could consist of face-to-face, or distance meetings (telephone, Skype etc) with more extensive or telescoped approaches for organisations of different size, with different development goals.

Commissioning Meetings

1 EXPLORE - initial meeting(s) with leaders and managers – focused on identifying the mission and goals of the organisation, its development plans, profiling programmes and learners, and identifying budget available and short, medium and long-term impact of engagement in ITE programmes

2 RESEARCH – a context research meeting with teaching/training representatives – exploring the training philosophy and approaches of the organisation, and identifying the profile of programmes and learners

3 SOLUTION – a presentation of the ITE solution: to leaders and managers, outlining programme options, costing model, resource allocation, including employer staffing

As a bespoke approach was taken to identifying solutions for different employers, an example solution costing is inserted below:

Example Programme

Pen portrait: Rathbone

- Rathbone is a youth charity focused on helping young people overcome barriers and gain the right skills to help them move into sustainable employment.
- The employer is focused on supporting disadvantaged young people facing great personal challenges in terms of their learning and social support needs.
- The provision reaches over 17,000 young people annually and is spread across Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales and England.

The provision is varied from specialist provision for young people aged 14+ who are partially or fully excluded from school, to advanced apprenticeships and includes a number of street level outreach projects which engage young people who are otherwise not in education, employment or the UK.

Commissioning Process

EXPLORE: An initial meeting had taken place in Dec 2011. At this stage, the focus was on identifying the development goals for Rathbone and reviewing ITE models to identify what would support the organisation. Subsequent meetings were attended by the Training and Development Manager for the Rathbone group, the Head of the School of Education, Newcastle College, teaching teams, members of HR etc.

RESEARCH: Rathbone were keen to focus on the development needs of tutors involved in Functional Skills Delivery. Many had experience as assessors and/or of Key Skills delivery but many had no experience of group teaching. Some staff held ITE awards or qualifications, ranging from introductory qualifications (e.g. PTLLS), to secondary PGCE qualifications. The solution would need to support a range of entry points to recognise prior learning but ensure that all tutors were engaged in refresher activity to ensure that their practice was current and that their English/literacy and Maths/numeracy skills were developed from the outset. **Any notes from Sher's meetings with Gina???**

SOLUTION:

A solution was presented to the organisation and followed by a schedule for the training programmes. The need for a communication plan which was broad in scope was a key learning point for the project and this is outlined in more detail in this case study in section 6 (advice to others).

The solution included refresher training for all staff (blended over 3 days), a booster programme (9 days blended) to prepare the staff for a full specialist ITE qualification (Foundation Degree in Education and Training/ DTLLS). Intensive APEL reviews ensured that staff received credit for partial qualification or for relevant and current experience, in some cases allowing them to enter the second year of the programme. This is also a blended programme which requires teaching observations. Training was provided for subject specialist supervisors to support the teachers and to undertake observations.

5. Achievement against aims and objectives of project, and lessons learnt (approx 400 words)

The main purpose of these projects was to set up new sustainable models of delivery of ITE (DTLLS and equivalents) which will:

- support providers to develop new and sustainable models of delivery to the highest quality standards;
- create efficient models of delivery, while maintaining fitness for purpose, with a focus on creating excellence in teaching and learning;
- develop ITE provision which is attractive, and affordable, to new trainees and employers and stimulate new partnerships and increased co-operation between subject associations, employers and providers.

Please comment on how well you believe your project has addressed these overall aims and objectives by answering the questions below. Any supporting evidence will be welcome here.

- What lessons have I learnt in terms of efficiency, quality improvement, costing and affordability?

Employer-led approaches have secured greater prominence in the sector over the life of the project and this has been further highlighted with the publication of the final report of the Lingfield review. The final report confirms the recommendation that the legal requirement for teaching/training staff to achieve qualifications to be replaced by autonomy for providers, as employers, to have the freedom and the responsibility to decide what arrangements are most appropriate for their organisations and their staff. A model where employers work closely with flexible ITE providers supports the development of autonomy and teacher education linked closely to business objectives and the desired impact for the teachers/trainers and learners in the setting.

- How can I implement the outcomes from this project in other similar provision?
- What should be avoided? What doesn't work?

In the past some employers have accepted off-the-shelf ITE programmes for teaching/training staff, or have simply opted for the cheapest offer. Our research strand has shown that this has resulted in dissatisfaction and training programmes which have not achieved the impact desired.

6. Advice to others

This case study will be made available to other providers via the Excellence Gateway. Please outline any advice you would wish to give to others who may be inspired to develop a similar model by answering the questions below. Where possible please highlight any resources (publicly available) that may be of use to others.

- What difference has this project made to our knowledge of running affordable and excellent ITE programmes as an organisation?
- What, if any, further developments are you considering as an organisation following on from this project?
- Will this project result in sustainable improvement? If so, how?
- How can the lessons learnt in this project be applied to other provision?
- What lessons are there about the strategic use of technology for ITE?

Lessons Learnt

The benefits of employer-led ITE

The employers in our consortium have all contributed to the development of new programmes to equip teaching/training staff for their roles.

Employers who responded to our survey were also clear of the benefits of an employer-led approach:

75.2% trainees experiencing real workplace settings

67.0% assignments and assessments linked to real working environments

65.1% quality placements supported by employer

63.3% mentors with time for their role

Additional comments highlighted the benefits employer-led programmes focusing on 'practical' skills development for teachers:

"too much emphasis on nice theories frequently gets in the way of learning about the practical realities."

Employer-led procurement and development of ITE

Employers engaged in the consortium and those who were interviewed as part of the research strand noted that the procurement of initial teacher education programmes for staff had been driven by price rather than quality considerations or by an analysis of impact, and that employers had opted for off-the-shelf programmes rather than procuring tailored ITE solutions for their setting. The development of employers in the procurement process and the collaboration between ITE providers and employers in developing bespoke ITE programme solutions would be of great value. As a result, one of the outputs of the project is initial guidance for employers on areas to explore in procuring ITE programmes for staff.

Communication

Essential that key contacts were made at leadership and a range of management levels – leaders and senior managers, training and development managers, HR nominee, line managers etc. traditional communication mechanisms between tutor and the teacher engaged on a training programme do not go far enough. Regular updates to all – communication open and credit given for work completed – even booking of venues and identification of staff for cohorts involves joined up work at range of organisational functions.

Updating is essential as an employer led approach involves the whole organisation and staff at a range of levels who need to understand the goals and operational needs of each programme. Regular updates to staff across organisations will help to ensure that buy-in is maintained, everyone is aware of their role in the process and that staff on training programmes get the support needed to complete their programmes and to maximise the impact of investment in training.

Future Developments:

Some employers in the consortium (e.g. Pupil referral units) had not been used to employing staff with qualifications mapped to the 2007 standards, but had an expectation that their teaching staff held post-graduate certificates of education. Their experience of PGCE-qualified staff varied and in some cases managers lacked confidence in the effectiveness of the qualifications.

QUOTE

In contrast there was some evidence that employers leading on secondary schooling valued the practical skills of staff trained through DTLLS routes and were opting for this as place of more traditional PGCE options:

There is demand from some employers in the consortium for postgraduate qualifications leading to specialism in teaching 14-19 year olds and to equip staff to manage behaviour, and engage younger learners with a background of low attainment in their schooling.

Several employers in the consortium (e.g. charity and community partners) are keen to take forward the development of new qualifications to equip teachers who specialise in supporting learners with learning disabilities and difficulties (LDD). New national standards for a specialism in LDD were published in August 2012 and the Newcastle School of Education team have now taken this forward for development. QUOTE

7. Contact information

Please provide contact information of the author of this case study and state whether you are willing to answer queries from others.

Diane Thurston, School of Education, Newcastle College

The School of Education Team are very happy to share the findings of the project with colleagues across the sector.

8. Resources available for others

Please provide details of the resources that can be made available to other providers as a result of this project. Examples may include teaching and learning resources, handbooks, spreadsheets to calculate costs, flyers and recruitment materials, procedure documents etc. These should be referenced in this report and submitted at the same time.

Guidance for employers – the procurement process

Survey results – over 100 respondents (employers and teaching/training staff)

Resources to be uploaded to the NSE microsite

DRAFT