

THE ESSEX PRIMARY SCHOOLS TRAINING GROUP

ACCESS AGREEMENT

1. Introduction

The Essex Primary Schools Training Group is a consortium of Essex primary schools originally formed to offer Initial Teacher Training (ITT) leading to the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). We are currently working towards accreditation for trainees in a 2 year PGCE.

It provides high quality initial training to give the opportunity to acquire:-

- Excellent professional attributes
- Good subject knowledge
- Well-developed skills in learning and teaching and will further support the school improvement objectives of partner schools, other local schools and the LA with relevant professional development for the entire schools workforce.

Its one-year initial teacher training course will offer education and training for the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and furnish trainees with the knowledge and skills to teach the core and foundation subjects competently and independently across this age range. To mirror the pattern of education within the schools, trainees will also be given a short but significant experience in either Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2. Trainees are loaned their own laptop for the duration of the Course and a set of 'essential' course books relevant to the elements of the course to a value of £500.00 per trainee. In 2007/8 we are piloting an Associate Scheme running over the training and NQT years, to enhance continuity and induction into the teaching role. We're exploring possibilities of accreditation of this as outlined above.

It has the following strategic aims:-

- To respond positively to changes within the context of national Initial Teacher Training as a provider of high quality education and training.
- To confirm the Partnership's position within its locality and to develop mutual support with its partner schools, other local schools and the LA with high quality contributions to relevant professional development and positive responses to local recruitment needs and initiatives.
- To continue to develop the Partnership's self-assessment procedures, including the use of appropriate comparative data, to ensure continued improvement so that the current TDA quality category is maintained at the next review.
- To continue to develop the human and capital resources required to sustain high quality education and training
- To be involved in research to support the development of high quality education and training
- To continue to develop strategies for recruitment to make its intake more representative of society at large and to increase the proportion of high quality trainees employed within Essex.

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- In order to meet the need for suitably prepared entrants to deliver the National Language Strategy, we aim to recruit and offer additional training to applicants with strengths in language skills.

2. Length of agreement

- 2.1 This agreement is for 5 years from the academic year 2008/09.

3. Bursaries and other financial support

- 3.1 If Essex Primary Schools Training Group charge a variable TOP UP fee we will ensure that in 2008-09 all trainees on full state support receive a bursary of £500. In subsequent years trainees in receipt of full state support will receive increased bursaries in line with the current differential.
- 3.2 In addition we will give; a bursary of £310 to those students who receive means tested partial state support but are not in receipt of the initial £500 bursary.
- 3.3 These are payable in two equal instalments in February and May.

4. Fee limits

- 4.1 We will charge a fee of up to £3,145 for all of our full-time postgraduate ITT courses leading to Qualified Teacher Status from the 2008/09 academic year. This agreement is for 5 years. The fee limit will rise with inflation (in line with annually published Government regulations).
- 4.2 The actual fees charged for the September 2008 are yet to be determined. The fee levels will be reviewed annually in the light of:-
- the impact of the fees on increasing the number of successful outcomes from under-represented groups
 - the impact of the fees in recruiting suitable applicants to the course

5. Publicising fees and financial support

- 5.1 A number of methods will be used to ensure that prospective students are as clear as possible about the fee charged, and the amount of student support to which they may be entitled. These are outlined below:
- 5.2 The website www.essexteachertraining.com contains a page on finance, including fee and support information, and includes links to other sources of information. This information includes institutional support and support available through the government through the maintenance grant, teaching bursaries and student loans.
- 5.3 This information is published in our prospectus.
- 5.4 Applicants will be issued with the details of fees to be charged and bursaries offered, when they are offered an interview. The details will be repeated in the letter offering a place. This information will therefore be clearly articulated to applicants at offer stage, before they make their key decisions on whether to accept a place.

6. Outreach Work

The Essex Primary Schools Training Group works in close partnership with its training schools. It accepts and seeks to develop its continuing professional development responsibility for its linked schools and associates. This will include:

- 6.1 providing training for:
 - The 25 headteachers of the schools in the partnership, through sharing of good practice
 - Teacher mentors in the schools.
 - The provision of professional development opportunities for the course tutors.
- 6.2 Research. It is important that the Essex Primary Schools Training Group widening participation strategy is underpinned by research, consequently the Essex Primary Schools Training Group proposes to identify a budget to provide support for its own research projects.
- 6.3 To establish clinics with Advanced Skills Teachers to work with small groups of trainees to address individual needs.
- 6.4 Both the bursary scheme and outreach activities are in addition to current provision.

7. Institutional Targets and milestones

- 7.1 We currently collect data on degree subject of applicants. We currently monitor the numbers of students participating in our institution who are in receipt of full or partial means tested support. We will return to OFFA to amend our agreement once targets have been developed – by May 2010.
- 7.2 We will seek to maintain or increase the proportion of students in our under-represented groups. We will continue to monitor and maintain our targets in relation to ethnic minorities and the under-representation of men in primary.

8 Monitoring Arrangements

- 8.1 We will formally monitor the progress of the access agreement at least once a year through the Management Group who will report annually to The Essex Primary Schools Training Group Steering Group. Initial monitoring will be concerned with participation rates and the development of data on lower income and other under-represented groups, against which to monitor. When baselines targets and milestones are determined we will look to monitor against these.
- 8.2 Our report to the Steering Group meeting of The Essex Primary Schools Training Group Board will form the basis of our annual monitoring report to OFFA.