

Roehampton University

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

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Introduction

1. This inspection was carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectors supported by a team of specialist inspectors in accordance with the *Framework for the Inspection of Initial Teacher Education (2008–11)*.
2. The inspection draws upon evidence from all aspects of the provision to make judgements against all parts of the inspection evaluation schedule in the framework. Inspectors focused on the overall effectiveness of the training in supporting high quality outcomes for trainees and the capacity of the partnership to bring about further improvements. A summary of the grades awarded is included at the end of this report.

Key to inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Explanation of terms used in this report

Attainment is defined as the standard reached by a trainee at the end of their training.

Progress is judged in terms of how well a trainee has developed professionally from their starting point to the standard reached at the time of the inspection or at a suitable review point.

Achievement is judged in terms of the progress made and the standard reached by a trainee at the time of the inspection or at a recent assessment review point.

The provider

3. Initial teacher education has been provided at Roehampton University and its predecessor organisations for over 100 years. The university works in partnership with more than 600 schools in several London boroughs and neighbouring counties to provide initial teacher education (ITE) leading to qualifications to teach in the primary and secondary sectors.
4. The primary programme offers undergraduate and postgraduate routes to qualified teacher status (QTS) and the secondary programme provides training leading to QTS and a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) or a Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) in 10 subjects. The University works in partnership with three other higher education institutions (HEIs) for its secondary provision as part of the South West London Teacher Education Consortium (SWELTEC) and, for its primary provision, both within the London Providers' Harmonisation & Development Group and its cooperation with two other HEIs.

A commentary on the provision

5. The overall effectiveness of the provider in securing high quality outcomes for trainees and its capacity to secure further improvements and/or to sustain high quality outcomes are good in primary and outstanding in secondary. The key difference between the phases is the effectiveness of recruitment and selection procedures, which are outstanding in secondary and satisfactory in primary. In addition, the university works more closely with partnership schools to contribute to the quality of school-based training in secondary than in primary.
6. The following are particular features of the provider and its ITE programmes:
 - the effective focus on national priorities so that trainees are well prepared to teach early reading and phonics and pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities, and to manage behaviour.
 - trainees who are well prepared to teach in a culturally and socially diverse society.
 - the high expectations and levels of academic and professional challenge.
7. There are particularly strong features in the secondary programme that could be applied to the primary programme, namely:
 - the well-planned allocation of school placements to address the professional needs of trainees
 - the very effective recruitment and selection procedures which ensure that trainees who begin the programme have the potential to complete their courses and achieve well
 - the strong and balanced partnership between the university and schools in which the expertise of school-based trainers is used well, both to strengthen school-based training and to contribute to the overall provision and its direction.

Provision in the primary phase

Context

8. The university works in partnership with around 500 schools to provide primary initial teacher training courses. There is a three-year, undergraduate Bachelor of Arts (BA) route and full-time and part-time PGCE routes. The BA course is taken with a subject specialism and trainees choose to focus on either the 3-7 or 7-11 age groups. Around 800 trainees are on the undergraduate course, 250 are on the postgraduate full-time course and 25 on the postgraduate part-time course.

Key strengths

9. The key strengths are:
- well-planned courses which make good links between theory and practice and include a strong emphasis on the QTS Standards
 - the integration of training in special educational needs and/or disabilities, English as an additional language, cultural diversity and managing behaviour, resulting in trainees who are well prepared to teach in diverse settings and cater for pupils' individual needs
 - the effectiveness of training in the teaching of English, including early reading and phonics
 - courses which provide a high level of academic challenge, not least in subject specialisms, which enable trainees to become highly reflective and critical thinkers
 - courses which enable trainees to benefit from a wide range of enrichment opportunities.

Required actions

10. In order to improve the quality of provision, the provider must:
- significantly improve the selection procedures in order to ensure that trainees are recruited with the potential to succeed.

Recommendations

11. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the provider should:
- make better use of school partners' expertise to contribute to the trainees' school experiences and their progress on placements

12. In order to improve the way it plans and takes action for improvement, the provider should:
- sharpen the self-evaluation processes so that benchmarking information is better used to identify the key areas for improvement in relation to trainees' outcomes and in comparison with other providers
 - use the expertise shown in areas such as English to identify weaknesses and implement realistic action plans so that the impact on trainees' outcomes is clear and measurable
 - strengthen the partnership so that school-based trainers are more effectively involved and influential in contributing to, evaluating and steering programme design.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

13. Most trainees make good progress from their starting points and the proportion of trainees judged to be good or better has been consistently high over a three-year period. Trainees demonstrate secure subject knowledge, plan good lessons using a range of teaching methods and include activities which support independent learning. They have high expectations of behaviour and are able to use effective behaviour management strategies and recognise the links between strategies which engage children in their learning and good behaviour. They are confident in personalising the learning in order to meet different needs, including those of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They are reflective and self-evaluative, particularly in relation to the Standards met and those still to be achieved, although there is further scope to improve the depth and clarity of the recording and tracking of their own progress. Trainees establish positive relationships with adults and children. However, they do not always make good use of other adults during all parts of lessons.
14. Trainees welcome the support and guidance given to them prior to interview and they feel welcome, valued and listened to during the selection process. The university is successfully increasing the participation of under-represented groups, and uses access courses well to encourage applications from these groups. The procedures for safeguarding, identity and qualification checks are rigorous. Drop-in sessions mean that trainees are guided through the process while also making sure that the checks are completed in a timely fashion. The rate of onward employment is good.
15. Recently, there have been improvements to ensure that interview procedures are consistently applied and there is evidence that some, but not the majority, of PGCE trainees benefit from useful pre-course activities such as assignments that involve classroom observations and specific reading. However, there are weaknesses in the current selection arrangements which mean that completion rates and the retention of trainees in the programme are lower than the sector.

This is particularly the case with the BA route, where a much higher-than-average number of trainees withdraw or are asked to leave. The selection procedures do not ensure that all selected trainees have the potential to become teachers or complete the academic requirements of the courses. School-based trainers are rarely involved in the selection process and most interviews are conducted on a one-to-one basis, which limits moderation. The university is implementing improvements but it is not clear whether these changes will be sufficient to resolve the problem.

16. Trainees are carefully tracked from interview to final placement and this shows that most make good progress. This is because the quality of training and assessment is good. The courses are well planned, with a strong set of values at their core. They are well designed to build up critical thinking and enquiry and to enable trainees to deepen their subject knowledge and pedagogical understanding. There is good whole-curriculum coverage in all courses. However, despite the coherence of course design, there are differences in expectations across subjects.
17. There are strong links between theory and practice and reflective assignments are used well to deepen understanding. Aspects such as special educational needs and/or disabilities, inclusion, behaviour management, English as an additional language and diversity are threaded through subject courses and reflected in assignments and school-based tasks. An example of this is the excellent practice in English, where training in early reading and phonics links personal understanding, theory and practical application in schools and then revisits each element to deepen understanding. As a result, trainees are confident to apply their learning to teaching. The university analyses trainees' feedback and confidence levels and has revised the programme to provide additional input where confidence is weakest, such as in the teaching of physical education. There is evidence to show that when this has happened the outcomes are good.
18. The courses enable most trainees to experience a wide range of experiences and placements such as museums, outdoor play, art galleries, special schools and rural schools, and these enrich their practice. Trainees welcome the BA subject specialism as it extends their learning and builds on something they are particularly interested in. There is good support for trainees' individual needs where these are identified. For example, trainees' knowledge and confidence benefit from booster groups in mathematics and information and communication technology. There is well-focused specific support for individual needs such as dyslexia.
19. The university enjoys many very longstanding relationships with its partnership schools and visiting tutors. Many of the schools have ex-Roehampton trainees on the staff. This helps to establish a shared understanding about course expectations. The trainee's initial meeting with the class teacher and the school experience tutor is valuable and sets out clear expectations for each placement. Trainees have very good understanding of the Standards which enables them to make a valuable contribution to the initial-, mid- and end-of-placement

reviews. These reviews are used well to track and guide trainees' progress. The systems for moderation are rigorous and effective.

20. During each placement, school experience tutors generally provide regular, good quality feedback with 'smart' targets and a clear understanding of what trainees need to do to improve. There is a heavy emphasis on this process, with further resources available to provide additional time when needed. During placements, the role of the school-based trainer is to provide support and informal guidance rather than to drive training and monitor progress. As a result, there are missed opportunities to capitalise on school-based trainers' skills and knowledge.
21. A shortage of suitable school placements poses some difficulties in placing trainees in good time. Despite this, the partnership involves a wide variety of schools, and, as a result, trainees generally gain experience and confidence in diverse contexts. Although the provider does not make full enough use of school-based staff, partnership teachers are used well to enrich centre-based training such as in early reading and behaviour management. Trainees have good access to key staff for individual support and guidance. The use of information and communication technology to enable trainees to access and share information, concerns and ideas is growing and is seen as a very valuable resource by trainees.
22. The match of trainees to their school placements takes good account of their personal needs but is less effective in satisfying trainees' professional needs; some trainees have limited opportunities to experience a range of age groups or types of school. The procedures for monitoring the quality of placements are becoming more systematic but these are still at an early stage of development and their impact on trainees is not yet clear.
23. The university places a strong emphasis on respecting and valuing each individual and this underpins the courses and is a strength of the training. Trainees show a confident understanding of diversity and equality issues. The provider is successful in recruiting from under-represented groups and members of these groups appreciate the arrangements to support them both pastorally and academically. The university is particularly successful in ensuring that trainees with specific needs, such as physical disability, are fully involved and supported. It remains the case that male and minority ethnic trainees are more likely than others not to complete the courses and although projects are in place to encourage retention it is too early yet to evaluate the impact.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality

Grade: 2

24. Senior leaders work well together and share a strong vision of what constitutes a good teacher and good education. They oversee very well-designed courses which have the potential to produce very good teachers. The university uses a range of qualitative and quantitative data, including feedback from tutors, newly qualified teachers, students and external groups, and there are well-organised systems at all levels to analyse and evaluate the provision. There are also good systems for ensuring that trainees have well-organised and extensive opportunities to comment and feed back on their experience. This is taken seriously so that it does make a difference. Good use of internal and external moderation ensures the quality of provision and the accuracy of final assessments.
25. Despite the comprehensive nature of its evidence gathering, the university's self-evaluation is too generous and senior leaders have not evaluated the trainees' outcomes accurately enough against similar providers. As a result, they have not used the information incisively to identify and address the significant weaknesses in recruitment, selection and retention.
26. The university responds very well to national and local initiatives. The very good response to national priorities, such as early reading and phonics, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and behaviour management, has resulted in marked improvements in trainees' confidence in these areas. Centre-based trainers maintain valuable links with professional groups and these often translate into interesting and enriching experiences for the trainees, such as the recent work on personal financial management and activities related to the science, technology, engineering and mathematics course. The development of an outdoor learning area underpins the university's commitment to experiential learning and good early-years provision and practice.
27. Senior leaders have managed the recent major departmental changes well, including the changes in programme leadership, and there are improvements in cohesion, as seen in the now much stronger links between the full- and part-time PGCE routes. However, partnership schools are not yet sufficiently involved in the evaluation of training or influential in programme design.
28. Regular reviews at subject and programme level identify aspects which would benefit from improvement. There is good evidence that in some subjects, such as English and physical education, there is a close analysis of data to identify weaknesses and that these are tackled systematically, leading to improvements which have a considerable impact in a short time. Programme-level improvement plans are identifying some targets relating to trainee outcomes, although these tend to be rather general and the impact is not yet measurable.

Provision in the secondary phase

Context

29. The university offers one-year postgraduate secondary courses in art and design, business education, design and technology, English, history, mathematics, modern foreign languages, music, religious education and science. There were 192 trainees enrolled on the secondary programme at the time of inspection.

Key strengths

30. The key strengths are:
- the high levels of individual support, which meets trainees' individual learning needs and ensures that their progression through the course is outstanding
 - the excellent support provided for mentors and the exceptional quality of communication within the partnership
 - the high quality of school-based experiences, helped by the excellent knowledge of the context of schools in the partnership, which enables the university to place trainees appropriately
 - the high regard in which the trainees and training are held, which helps to ensure trainees' subsequent employment
 - the impact of the various monitoring and review procedures, in particular the feedback from partner schools and trainees, on the provision
 - the use of technology to support training, mentoring and the sharing of resources
 - the provider's response to national initiatives
 - the high level of academic and professional challenge offered by the training
 - the continuous improvement driven by highly effective leadership.

Recommendations

31. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the provider should:
- assess trainees against clear criteria earlier in their training.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 1

32. The secondary training at Roehampton is held in high regard in the local area. As a result, trainees are highly sought after both for training placements and for employment. Relationships with local schools are exceptionally strong. For example, many schools provided inspectors with long lists of current staff who had trained at Roehampton, including at least one secondary school where one third of the staff are former Roehampton trainees. Additionally, trainees often rise quickly to posts of responsibility in schools. Surveys of newly qualified teachers show that former trainees' satisfaction with all aspects of provision is significantly and consistently above the national average.
33. High-quality selection procedures together with rigorous entry requirements make a very positive contribution to the attainment of trainees. A new focus on group discussion in interview helps to assess candidates' likely professional attributes. The provider tries to involve schools in the selection process, although is not always successful; some interviews have taken place in schools. The selection of high-quality trainees with the potential to be good teachers is a major factor in the consistently good and often outstanding progress made by trainees.
34. Even though the number of applications far exceeds the places available, the provider adopts an inclusive approach to target under-represented groups, from which it recruits strongly. Very extensive use is made of a range of enhancement and top-up courses brokered by the university, especially in mathematics and science, but also in other subjects. Many trainees undertake specific activities to enhance either their subject knowledge or school experience before beginning the course.
35. The quality of training across the partnership is consistently high. At its heart is the university subject tutor, who has a close knowledge of trainees' needs and their progress. The review and monitoring of trainees' performance are rigorous and coherent and effectively track their progress against the Standards. School-based training is of high quality, with consistently good mentoring across the partnership. For example, improvements in trainees' classroom management show the impact of the target setting, monitoring and review process. Sharpening the assessment criteria between some placements leads to confusion for some trainees.
36. Trainees have good subject knowledge and an understanding of the associated pedagogy. They plan lessons in detail and incorporate a range of interesting activities to help maintain good pace and good levels of learner engagement. Central training has a very strong emphasis on the national priorities of behaviour management, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, basic literacy and phonics; the successful impact of this emphasis was seen by inspectors in schools. On the other hand, some aspects of training are a clear response to initiatives in local schools. For example, all trainees were given a brief by two partnership schools to design a Key Stage 3 activity

that integrated subjects, incorporating a museum visit. The headteacher of one of the schools and head of learning at the other judged the team entries, the winner being an engaging cross-curricular project around the theme of a pirate ship and based at the National Maritime Museum.

37. Communication with central tutors is very effective, resulting in a swift response and a rapidly arranged visit to the school. Cause-for-concern forms are used to identify issues quickly before they escalate, so that action can be taken and support put in place to deal with them promptly and effectively.
38. Resources are deployed very effectively. In addition to the usual tutor visits, which double as training opportunities for mentors, additional visits are arranged if there are any concerns, or if trainees wish to have additional guidance on aspects of their teaching. Some trainees with particular skills enhance their experience by offering them to schools. For example, a trainee who is an expert in teaching English as a foreign language gave English as an additional language support in school while some music trainees directed school orchestras and used music technology with students. Centre-based training regularly draws upon schools with particular expertise by inviting teachers to the university. Trainees speak very positively about the library facilities and also about specific teaching resources that are available.
39. The partnership is strong and cohesive, with a clear commitment to achieving the best outcomes for all trainees. School-based professional tutors and university subject tutors take on a quality assurance role and help to ensure the accuracy of the assessment of trainees' performance. School-based trainers and university tutors meet regularly to discuss trainees' progress, share good practice and review the provision, contact highly valued across the partnership. Schools' commitment to the provider is exemplified by the number of schools offering placements and in the number of placements they offer.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality

Grade: 1

40. The provider's analysis of the secondary programme and its impact on outcomes for trainees is detailed and evaluative. For example, self-evaluation identified a fall in trainees' attainment in history last year and this has been immediately tackled and reversed. Subject tutors have identified which areas of their courses need strengthening and have improved recruitment strategies, for example, by introducing group activities into interviews. The university's long association with its partner schools means that a strong understanding of quality requirements is well embedded across the partnership and tutors work very hard to sustain this, reflecting a strong capacity to secure high-quality outcomes.
41. Leaders and managers work extremely effectively as a coherent team to review provision and seek further improvement. For example, any weaknesses

identified by trainees' feedback are quickly relayed to schools through professional mentor newsletters, and school-based training is suitably adapted. Most recently, trainees requested more focus on parental engagement and so schools were immediately asked to update their school-based training programmes accordingly.

42. External examiners' reports help to inform improvement, while subject tutors share expertise and provide an element of moderation through the joint observations for one another's trainees. A very large amount of quantitative and qualitative data inform continuous improvement to the training.
43. In the partnership schools visited, the capacity of leaders and managers to effect change and support trainees was at least good, and in many cases outstanding. Support for mentors by the university is outstanding. For example, a compact disc has been distributed to all mentors containing all relevant generic and subject-specific documentation tailored to the needs of each particular mentor. What makes this particularly innovative and effective is the inclusion of audio clips of trainees discussing what makes successful mentoring. Newly appointed mentors who have not yet attended meetings are supported effectively by the provider, who visits them individually. The university is very quick to respond to individuals in difficulty and quickly arranged school visits make an important difference to the trainees. SWELTEC's documentation is rigorous, clear and helpful; expectations are well understood by schools. Robust action is taken when placements are not working, including, if necessary, deselecting schools from the partnership.
44. Trainees are well prepared for current pedagogical developments, such as those relating to the assessment of pupils' progress and the teaching of basic literacy skills, and are kept abreast of the latest reports and legislation. Current thinking around special educational needs and/or disabilities and the changing provision for students who speak English as an additional language is incorporated into the course and other national priorities, such as behaviour management and literacy and phonics, are given a very high profile. Centre-based training in these areas often involves expert practitioners from local schools. Leaders have responded very well to the 2010 Equality Act by ensuring that issues of race and equality are well integrated in the course material.
45. The partnership is continually evolving and improving through self-evaluation, careful planning and regular review. Centre-based trainers support professional development in schools; for example, the secondary programme leader works with a consortium of schools. The track record of maintaining and building on high-quality outcomes with year-on year improvements, moving across an Ofsted grade boundary from good to outstanding, provides clear evidence of the provider's outstanding capacity for sustained, high quality outcomes.

Summary of inspection grades¹

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding; grade 2 is good; grade 3 is satisfactory; grade 4 is inadequate.

Overall effectiveness

		Primary	Secondary
How effective is the provision in securing high quality outcomes for trainees?		2	1
Trainees' attainment	How well do trainees attain?	2	2
Factors contributing to trainees' attainment	To what extent do recruitment/selection arrangements support high quality outcomes?	3	1
	To what extent does the training and assessment ensure that all trainees progress to fulfil their potential given their ability and starting points?	2	1
	To what extent are available resources used effectively and efficiently?	2	1
The quality of the provision	To what extent is the provision across the partnership of consistently high quality?	2	1
Promoting equalities and diversity	To what extent does the provision promote equality of opportunity, value diversity and eliminate harassment and unlawful discrimination?	2	1

Capacity to improve further and/or sustain high quality

		Primary	Secondary
To what extent do the leadership and management at all levels have the capacity to secure further improvements and/or to sustain high quality outcomes?		2	1
How effectively does the management at all levels assess performance in order to improve or sustain high quality?		2	1
How well does the leadership at all levels anticipate change, and prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives?		2	1
How effectively does the provider plan and take action for improvement?		2	1

¹ The criteria for making these graded judgements are in the *Grade criteria for the inspection of ITE 2008-11*; Ofsted November 2009; Reference no: 080128.

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