

**Secondary Initial Teacher Training
Partnership based on**

Kingston University

**School of Education
Kingston Hill
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**A short inspection report
2005/06**

**Managing Inspector:
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Introduction

Kingston University works in partnership with over 150 schools in the South West London Teacher Education Consortium (SWELTEC) to provide secondary initial teacher training (ITT) in history, modern foreign languages and science (11-18), mathematics (11-16) and business studies (14-19). Training in all subjects leads to the award of a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE). At the time of the inspection there were 100 trainees.

Context

The inspection was carried out by a team of inspectors in accordance with the *Ofsted Handbook for the Inspection of Initial Teacher Training (2005-2011)*.

This report draws on evidence from a short inspection of the provision and an inspection of the management and quality assurance arrangements.

Grades are awarded in accordance with the following scale

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

Main inspection judgements

Management and quality assurance: Grade 2

The overall quality of the training is at least good.

The provider will receive a short inspection in three years.

Key strengths

- the very good organisation and management of the partnership which ensures consistency of training across schools and subjects
- very strong coherence between centre and school-based training
- the thorough implementation of rigorous selection procedures
- the very good leadership and management at all levels including very robust systems for evaluating the quality of provision
- the strong role played by professional co-ordinating tutors in the support of trainees and in the training of subject mentors
- the very good training materials provided for new mentors and the support offered through very well-produced monthly subject newsletters.

Points for consideration

- making more systematic use of self-evaluation to inform improvement planning
- enabling subject mentors and professional co-ordinating tutors to have access to the full range of the university's resources to support their work in schools.

The quality of training

1. The high quality of the secondary PGCE course has been maintained since the last inspection and in some respects it has improved. The course is very well designed, enabling trainees to make steady progress towards meeting the Standards, and fully meets the Requirements. The serial and block placements are sensibly sequenced and guarantee that trainees spend the required amount of time in schools; all trainees have the opportunity to teach across the designated age range for their subject. Pupils' progression from Key Stage 2 to 3 is covered well through generic tasks on the pre-course primary placement and in subsequent subject sessions. Training is supplemented by five well-judged assignments, all of which are closely mapped to the Standards.

2. Centre-based sessions are clear in purpose, very thoroughly planned and achieve a stimulating balance between the practicalities of teaching and the work of educational theorists and researchers. Much of the general professional studies programme is very well integrated into subject studies. Sessions cover planning, preparation and evaluation of lessons and, from the beginning of the course, trainees are made aware of the need to meet the differing learning needs of pupils. University trainers model good teaching and trainees are prepared well through pre-session tasks that link one training element to the next.

3. There is a very strong coherence between centre and school-based training, and trainees and subject mentors have access to high quality documentation and training materials. Subject mentors and professional co-ordinating tutors in schools would further benefit from access to the virtual learning environment operating on the university's intranet. Subject mentors are supportive and systematic, and use a well-designed programme to ensure coverage of key topics.

4. From the outset, tutors very effectively identify trainees' prior experiences and relevant subject knowledge. Analysis of trainees' pre-course tasks enables tutors to respond well to specific training needs. The subject knowledge and information and communications technology audits set trainees on individual pathways supported by thoroughly documented weekly training reviews. Good communications between the training partners and the systematic monitoring of trainees' progress ensure training is focused on their needs in relation to the Standards. Lesson observations by tutors, mentors and other staff are frequent, detailed and referenced well to the Standards.

5. Trainees are systematically assessed throughout the course to track their progress towards the Standards. They receive regular feedback on their teaching, and termly profiles provide detailed audits of their achievement. These profiles are models of good practice, both in their design and implementation; the profile at the end of the autumn term identifies areas of strength and future needs and provides a good focus for dialogue between trainees and mentors at the start of the second placement. The assignments which contribute towards trainees' subject knowledge

and professional development are very carefully graded and include supportive and developmental comments. External examiner reports confirm that robust and secure systems are in place to ensure the rigour and accuracy of the final assessment.

Management and quality assurance

6. Marketing and recruitment procedures are very effective and the course is successful in recruiting trainees from a range of ages and diverse backgrounds. Selection procedures are very thorough and rigorously applied. The roles and responsibilities of all those involved are clearly delineated together with detailed guidance on interviewing and systems for checking candidates' suitability. Arrangements for checking candidates with the Criminal Records Bureau are very effective. The university looks for appropriate motivation and expects candidates to have spent some time working with young people.

7. Interviews are rigorous and fair. Interviewers are supplied with a very well-designed record form for the recording of selection judgements; a useful summary of the Standards is attached to the form to help focus judgements. Judgements are cogent and reasons for rejection are readily apparent. Most interviews are conducted by a minimum of two university tutors, who are able to cross-moderate their judgements, and involve a mentor from a partnership training school. As a result of this rigorous process, the quality of trainees is high and retention is good.

8. The quality of the leadership and management of the course is very good. The course director and his team of dedicated subject tutors are consistently well supported by an effective administrative team and a small number of committees. Teaching placements are managed very effectively.

9. Kingston University is one of the four higher education partners in SWELTEC and benefits from the consortium's very good organisation and management. Partners share about 150 partner schools across a wide region, follow common partnership arrangements and share a programme of mentor and professional tutor training. The quality of the SWELTEC handbook and other documentation and communications across the consortium are very good. The partnership agreement begins with a statement of values and goes on to outline clear procedures for the selection and de-selection of schools, the roles and responsibilities of those involved in training, and arrangements for quality assurance. SWELTEC's commitment to equality of opportunity is concisely stated in the partnership agreement, and the university has well-conceived policies on diversity, equality and disability. However, there are no detailed policies for the partnership as a whole nor procedures for monitoring and evaluating the impact of each partner's policies across the partnership.

10. In schools, mentors and professional co-ordinating tutors work hard to support trainees. Professional co-ordinating tutors fulfil their roles very effectively.

To counter poor attendance at mentor meetings, the partnership has charged professional co-ordinating tutors with the responsibility of training subject mentors and backed them up with very well-designed training materials. In addition, subject tutors produce high quality monthly newsletters for schools. The university is rigorous in ensuring that professional co-ordinating tutors understand and fulfil this role and this is an effective approach.

11. The university employs a number of effective processes to ensure the accuracy of the assessment of trainees and these are very clearly laid out in course documentation and understood by all concerned. Profiles completed by subject mentors at the end of each placement are moderated by subject tutors. All the accumulated evidence is then subjected to rigorous internal and external moderation. All partners in the assessment process complement each other well and the outcomes are scrutinised by the programme assessment board.

12. Systems for evaluating the quality of overall provision are robust and there is a strong culture of continuous improvement. Evidence from a variety of sources is analysed by subject tutors and managers, and all aspects of the provision are thoroughly monitored and evaluated. Data about the performance of the course relative to other providers and national averages are made available to subject tutors who compile useful benchmarking reports. However, these analyses are not used systematically to inform improvement planning.

13. The university has effectively addressed most of the issues raised at the last inspection. For example, to help ensure consistency across the partnership, two new, independent quality assurance advisers visit schools new to the partnership, those requesting additional support and those identified as giving cause for concern by trainees or visiting subject tutors. The reports on schools visited in 2005 are searching and of high quality.