

**Primary Initial Teacher Training  
Partnership based on**

**Roehampton University**

**Roehampton Lane  
London  
SW15 5PH**

**A short inspection report  
2005/06**

**Managing Inspector: Michael Chisnall HMI**

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## Introduction

Roehampton University works in partnership with around 500 schools to provide primary initial teacher training (ITT) courses. It offers a three-year BA (QTS) and a full-time PGCE for the 3-7 or 5-11 age ranges. There is also a part-time PGCE course for the 3-7 age range. All three of these programmes are taken with a subject specialism. At the time of the inspection there were about 860 trainees registered on the undergraduate programme, around 250 trainees on the PGCE full-time programme and 43 on the part-time programme.

## 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 1

The overall quality of training is at least good.

The provider will receive a short inspection in three years.

## **Key strengths**

- the strong coherence between different elements of the training programmes
- the high quality of training, which models primary practice very well and enthuses and motivates trainees
- the increasing intellectual and professional challenge for trainees as they progress through both programmes
- the effective management of the partnership
- the work of the primary consultative forum in widening the participation of schools in the partnership
- the high quality of the support provided for trainees
- the very good systems in place to monitor and evaluate strengths and weaknesses in provision for trainees.

## **Points for consideration**

- ensuring that the systems for monitoring the progress of trainees' Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks in relation to school experience are consistently implemented
- making better use of the data available on trainees' standards of teaching to inform subject and programme development.

## **The quality of training**

1. The provision is strong. Several aspects of training have been improved since the last inspection and there are now many very good areas. The revalidation of the undergraduate programme has been used thoughtfully and creatively to tighten the links between school experience, professional and subject studies and to be innovative in reflecting national initiatives and changes in educational practice. There is a high level of coherence and a consistency of content and approach between the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes; they are well structured, meet requirements and prepare the trainees well to meet the Standards.

2. The programmes successfully develop trainees' skills and understanding. Teaching and learning modules prepare trainees well for their school experience and help to develop their ability to reflect critically on their teaching. There is a good balance between university-based training, school experience and independent tasks which increase in challenge year-on-year. Key strands, including how to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who have English as an additional language, are prominent in professional and subject studies. The programmes ensure the trainees are well informed about current educational issues, such as those relating to the teaching of phonics or workforce reform. Subject studies place an early emphasis on developing the trainees' subject knowledge and there is good academic and personal support for those who find this hard.

3. Close attention is paid to the National Curriculum, Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage and the Primary National Strategy. The modules linking local visits with three foundation subjects are innovative, as are many of the directed assignments. A good feature is the logbook compiled by second year undergraduate trainees; it is an extremely useful compilation of key information about primary education. While the focus on the early years of schooling is strong, trainees are less well informed about Key Stage 3. However, a valuable element of training for postgraduates is the session in mathematics for primary and secondary trainees to discuss developmental links between Key Stages 2 and 3. Flexibility in the programmes means that selected trainees carry out some of their school experience in the National Gallery and in Cornwall, providing them with a different perspective on teaching.

4. A key strength is the good quality of both university and school-based training. All tutors know their roles and responsibilities well and take time and care to help the trainees develop as teachers. The enthusiasm and good subject and pedagogical knowledge of university tutors inspire and motivate the trainees, particularly in science and physical education. The focus on interactive training and use of school-related activities highlight effectively the links between theory and practice. The comprehensive module files, which are regularly updated, are an excellent teaching resource for trainers, especially those new to the role, and ensure a high level of consistency of content across the programmes. The involvement of tutors across various courses and programmes, as well as in link tutoring, adds

significantly to the quality of training, promoting overall coherence. Schools receive clear, detailed documentation on what trainees are to undertake during their placements but limited information on the content of the university-based courses. This prevents school-based tutors being able to tailor provision even more closely to the needs of individual trainees.

5. Trainees often receive thoughtful, practical comments on their teaching with valuable points for development. There are examples of outstanding feedback and coaching in the teaching of subjects although this is not universal. School-based tutors take their roles seriously, especially in judging the trainees' progress. They and university-based tutors regularly discuss with trainees the profile of professional development, the backbone of the systems to track the trainees' progress in meeting the standards. Trainees set their own targets to reflect their progress and provide evidence of these in course work, assignments, school placements and independent experiences. The introduction of a school experience log is a useful addition to the evidence base.

6. Many trainees produce work of a high academic and professional standard. Although the content of assignments is linked to the Standards, there are few references in the otherwise rigorous marking to indicate how well the identified Standards have been met. Nevertheless, by the end of the programmes, trainees gain a clear, accurate view of their professional development needs and how best to meet them as they start their teaching careers.

## **Management and quality assurance**

7. The management and quality assurance of the partnership meet requirements. The several strengths identified at the last inspection have been maintained and the areas for improvement addressed.

8. The selection processes are successful in recruiting trainees who make good progress and meet the Standards well. The information available to prospective trainees is of high quality; it is informative and demonstrates an inclusive approach to both teaching and recruitment. The process of selection is well organised so that trainees are able to demonstrate their teaching potential in a number of different ways, such as the group discussion on school aims for PGCE candidates. Good efforts are made to ensure that interviewers apply the selection criteria fairly and consistently.

9. The university is particularly successful in its aim of widening participation in teacher training. Through activities such as visiting local colleges and targeted advertising, a growing number of trainees are recruited via access routes. Targets for minority ethnic recruitment are largely met, and exceeded in the first year of the undergraduate programme. The progress of different trainee groups is monitored very carefully so that the university is very clear about the kinds of support needed to help all trainees make the most of their courses. Retention rates have improved

since the last inspection. Once accepted, all trainees receive helpful guidance about how to prepare for the course. While there is no individualised feedback on how best to ready themselves for study, the undergraduates are told of the outcomes of their English screening test at interview.

10. The arrangements for trainees to be checked against the CRB are very clear. However, until recently, arrangements for following up applications to the CRB and ensuring that trainees' checks were completed before the start of their school experience were not being implemented consistently. This has now been resolved satisfactorily for the very small number of trainees involved this year. Management systems are being put in place to ensure long term security on this issue and to inform schools of any late returns.

11. The partnership is very well managed and results in training programmes that are of at least good quality. There are a number of factors that contribute to this strong picture, not least of which is the clear leadership provided by programme conveners, subject leaders and the school partnership manager. Between them, they plan and present coherent training programmes and support school-based training well. Although the partnership consists of a large number of schools, spread over a wide area, there is a good degree of consistency in the quality of support given to trainees at whichever of the three levels of partnership is agreed.

12. A particular strength in the partnership is the knowledge that exists about the specialisms in individual schools. This is systematically recorded and used to give trainees the right placement for their needs or to identify where expertise may be tapped for contributing to central training. Communication across the partnership is good and all those involved are very clear about different roles and responsibilities. This communication is enhanced significantly through the consultative forum, which is an innovative strategy for widening participation in training, for briefing and for sharing ideas.

13. Another strong feature of the partnership is the quality of the training for school-based tutors. This is very thorough and offered at different levels, matching the needs of those involved. It leads to different roles in schools being discharged well. In addition, university tutors are inducted well and provide trainees with training that motivates and challenges them. Underpinning the partnership is high quality documentation that makes roles and responsibilities crystal clear and provides well-targeted guidance to tutors and trainees alike. The recently revised partnership handbook is particularly well received in schools.

14. Quality assurance is embedded well in subjects and programmes. There are good systems to monitor the outcomes of the university's policies on equality of opportunity and trainees are quite clear about how to raise any concerns in this area. Very good use is made of the various monitoring strategies, including careful analysis of benchmarking data, to identify strengths and areas for development across subjects and programmes. Through regular evaluations from trainees, tutors, schools and external examiners, subject leaders and programme conveners are left in no doubt as to where improvements are needed. These plans are much more

detailed than at the last inspection and very clearly describe what is to be improved and how progress will be evaluated. However, although there is much available evidence about the quality of trainees' teaching, not enough use is made of it to inform improvement planning.

15. The arrangements for moderating assessments are robust. The link tutor effectively moderates judgements on trainees' teaching, especially where schools offer placements at an independent or shared level of partnership. The best examples are where joint lesson observations are undertaken with school-based tutors. In addition, teacher-tutors play an important role in moderating assessments within individual schools. Set alongside secure systems for moderating assignments and for using external examiners to check the quality and accuracy of tutors' judgements, these processes ensure that the assessment of trainees' progress is monitored well.

16. In summary, Roehampton University provides its trainees with a strong training experience and is committed to seeking ways to improve this still further.