

University of East Anglia

University of East Anglia
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A secondary initial teacher training
Short inspection report
2006/07

Managing inspector
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Introduction

The University of East Anglia works in partnership with 78 schools to provide secondary initial teacher training (ITT) courses for the 11-18 age group. It offers training in English, geography, history, mathematics, modern foreign languages, physical education, religious education, science and vocational education. At the time of the inspection there were 171 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: 1

The overall quality of training is at least good.

The provider will receive a short inspection in three years.

Key strengths

- Coherence between central and school based training and between professional development and subject training
- The very high quality of the subject training in schools and the university as a result of experienced and influential subject tutors
- Outstanding pastoral support for trainees and very good attention to meeting their individual needs
- Excellent leadership and highly effective collaborative management structure
- Exceptionally strong partnership, with all schools committed to providing an excellent environment in which to train teachers
- Continual improvement to the course in response to internal and external evaluations and national priorities

Points for consideration

- Strengthening training about the contribution of the wider workforce in schools
- Sharpening self evaluation by closer examination of trainee outcomes in relation to individual Standards and by making judgements on the quality of provision more explicit

The quality of training

1. The good quality of training identified at the last inspection has been maintained and, in many respects, further developed and improved. The well structured programme provides trainees with excellent opportunities to achieve the standards.
2. There is very good coherence between the university and school-based elements, and between the subject and professional development training. The content of the training is well designed to introduce trainees to the standards progressively. Subject training is up-to-date and very well informed by research, particularly by that of the university tutors who have a high level of expertise and often provide inspirational subject training for the trainees. Good practice in e-learning approaches is shared effectively across the different subjects.
3. New management arrangements at the university and the formation of school clusters have strengthened the professional development programme. The programme is comprehensive and reflects current developments, including those in: 14-19 education; cultural diversity and race equality; and the *Every Child Matters* agenda. There is, however, insufficient emphasis on the increasing contribution of the wider workforce in schools. Seminars provide an excellent forum for trainees to consider the application of these developments to their subjects although this is not always reinforced by subject mentors during school placements. Professional development training is significantly enhanced by the contributions of outside speakers, some of whom are national experts and many of whom are drawn from partnership schools. School-based professional development programmes are very well matched to that provided at the university and to trainees' individual needs.
4. Trainees are encouraged to read extensively. This, and the nature of the three written assignments, encourages them to engage in active school-based research and to reflect critically on wider issues in relation to their school practice. An online communication system provides the trainees and the school-based trainers with access to a wide range of materials and is a useful forum for sharing information and posting up-to-date news.
5. The commitment to meet the individual needs of trainees is a major strength of the programme. Trainers, both at the university and in schools, know the trainees well and monitor their progress carefully to ensure that each stage of the training is tailored to meet their evolving needs. Trainees are encouraged to exercise a high level of responsibility and are proactive in identifying their own training needs. School-based trainers provide very good support through regular teaching observations, weekly meetings and effective target setting. There are robust and effective arrangements to provide continuity and progression in training between the two placement schools. These include helpful summaries of trainees' achievements and a meeting of subject mentors prior to the second placement.

6. Pastoral support for the trainees is outstanding. All trainers are very committed, give willingly of their time and respond very promptly to any concerns the trainees have. As a result of this exceptional support and the high quality of the training they receive, trainees are highly motivated. Trainees seen during the inspection were, without exception, very positive about their experiences. Reflecting her enjoyment, one trainee commented that "I don't mind getting up in the morning – you don't know what's ahead of you". Others spoke of finding the course very challenging and expressed a great sense of achievement at the progress made during the year.

7. The very effective collaboration between all the trainers contributes to the accurate assessment of the quality of trainees' teaching and of their written assignments.

Management and quality assurance

8. The excellent management of the partnership and the effective quality assurance and improvement planning procedures ensure that the programme is regularly reviewed and adapted in response to the partnership's own evaluations and national priorities. As a result, training is of the highest standard and constantly improving in providing opportunities for trainees to meet the standards.

9. Competition for places is high and the selection procedures are well designed to identify strong trainees. The application process is administered and managed very efficiently. Interviews are consistently demanding across all subjects and frequently involve school-based trainers. During the inspection trainees commented that, following the demanding selection process, they felt they had 'earned their place' on the course. Administrative staff, who provide the first point of contact for prospective applicants, are very knowledgeable about the different routes into teaching and aware, because of the training they have received, of the importance of equal opportunities and race equality. The recruitment of trainees from minority ethnic groups is very good as is the systematic monitoring and analyses of the intake, particularly in terms of gender and ethnicity.

10. The course is extremely well led and managed by the programme leader who has been instrumental in bringing about the changes necessary to improve an already good course. She is very well supported by a highly effective collaborative management group that consists of all the university subject tutors, each of whom has a management responsibility beyond their subject role. This spread of responsibilities has strengthened the cohesion of the group and improved significantly the sharing of good practice and the consistency of all aspects of the training.

11. There is a genuine and exceptionally strong partnership based on mutual respect, excellent communication and highly effective collaboration between the university and the schools. All trainers have a very good understanding of their roles

and responsibilities and schools are committed to providing an excellent environment in which to train teachers. Inclusion and the development of policies for equal opportunities and race equality have been priorities of the partnership and care has been taken to secure the full involvement of partner schools in these developments. As a result, the university's expectations in these areas are very well understood by schools.

12. Subject mentor and link teacher meetings are very well attended, highly valued and result in very effective sharing of good practice and consistency across the partnership. One mentor, echoing the views of others, commented that "meetings are never dreary and are always informative, interesting and up-to-date". Involvement in the partnership, including, regular contact with university tutors and, in some cases, the opportunity to contribute to the university training programme, provides excellent professional development for school-based trainers.

13. Schools in the partnership are committed to ITT in general and the University of East Anglia's programme in particular. They have very high regard for trainees from the partnership, many of whom have been recruited to positions in partnership schools. Schools enthuse about the energy and new ideas trainees bring and the effect they have on sharpening practice in lesson planning and the use of information and communication technology. The quality of references produced for each trainee when they apply for teaching jobs is an example of excellent practice. Their detail and clarity provide schools with a very helpful and realistic picture of trainees' abilities and potential.

14. Systems and procedures and, in particular, the excellent communications in the partnership, the well-attended meetings of link teachers and subject mentors, and the composition of the Secondary Partnership Management Committee ensure that the university has accurate intelligence about local and national matters.

15. The university management team knows the strengths and weaknesses of the partnership very well and takes prompt and effective action in response to any concerns raised. Evidence used to evaluate the programme is drawn from a good range of sources including evaluations by the trainees, subject mentors, link teachers and subject tutors, the Training and Development Agency's national Newly Qualified Teacher survey and benchmarking against other providers. The self-evaluation carried out in advance of the inspection is broadly accurate although the focus on trainee outcomes in relation to individual Standards and judgements on the quality of provision are not always sharp or explicit enough. Actions included in the subject reviews and development plan are very well focused on further strengthening the provision. The partnership has made a number of significant changes since the last inspection, in some cases transforming areas previously identified as needing further attention into strengths.