

University of Greenwich



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A secondary initial teacher training
Short inspection report
2007/08

Managing inspector
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Introduction

The University of Greenwich works in partnership with 80 schools to provide secondary initial teacher training (ITT) courses. It offers training in mathematics, music, art and design, science, physical education, design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT). At the time of the inspection there were 164 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 training is at least good.

The next inspection of this provider will take place in accordance with the Initial Teacher Education Inspection Framework.

Key strengths

- the strong commitment to equality of opportunity and widening participation
- strong partnership arrangements
- the effective management of trainees' experience in partnership schools
- the very good support for schools and trainees by university tutors
- good leadership and management at department and programme level.

Points for action

- improving recruitment, particularly in design and technology
- making the process of review, evaluation and action planning more incisive.

Points for consideration

- ensuring the new music course builds on the good practice evident in other subjects
- linking the auditing and development of trainees' ICT skills and capability to subject-specific teaching.

The quality of training

1. The training programme is coherent and well designed to enable trainees to meet the Standards. A carefully planned, university-based general professional studies programme covers key areas such as lesson planning, assessment and behaviour management. There is good coverage of issues such as personalised learning and inclusion, and the implications of Every Child Matters feature prominently. Trainees attend formal lectures which are followed by opportunities for discussion and reflection in cross-subject groups and topics are further explored in subject sessions. In schools, initial teacher education coordinators organise comprehensive general professional studies programmes which build effectively on the ground covered at the university, linking theory to the policies and practice of partnership schools. Supporting documents supplied for schools by the university include very helpful lists of suggested topics for meetings between mentors and trainees. Mentors use these to plan school-based subject training, adding greatly to the overall coherence of the programme.
2. Subject courses are well structured, up to date and relevant and have been carefully adapted to take account of the new Standards. In design and technology and ICT, the demands of the different routes offered in these subjects are well met. Design and technology trainees on the undergraduate course, who thus far have been working towards the previous Standards, are being well guided through the transition; ICT trainees on the 11-16 and 14-19 routes work together on generic elements of the training but also have time to focus on the particular requirements of the two age groups.
3. Subject training at the university is well planned with a broad range of strategies to engage trainees' interest and enthusiasm. Trainees appreciate the ways in which tutors model good classroom practice and successfully blend subject theory and pedagogy. There have been some significant improvements in resources and facilities since previous inspections, particularly in design and technology where refurbished accommodation provides access to sophisticated modern equipment. For those subjects which have had inspections before, the quality of training has improved; the new music course, however, while it is bold and innovative in conception, is not yet of the same high quality as other subjects.
4. The overall quality of school-based training has also improved since the last inspection. Initial teacher education coordinators now play a more active role in managing the training and the contribution of mentors is increasingly effective. Music trainees benefit from the imaginative use of placements in alternative settings outside partnership schools, such as local authority music services or community outreach projects, and there is good use of placements in further education colleges for ICT trainees on the 14-19 route.
5. Pre-course guidance and tasks ensure that trainees are well-prepared for the training. Booster courses make a valuable contribution in a number of subjects, although restrictions on funding mean some design and technology and mathematics trainees, who would benefit from attending such courses, are not always able to find

places. Subject knowledge audits are completed at an early stage and regularly reviewed by tutors and trainees. This is particularly well managed in science, where there are regular checks on the progress that trainees have made in developing their expertise outside their subject specialism. In all subjects, the auditing and development of trainees' ICT skills and capability is less good, because it is mostly generic and insufficiently linked to subject teaching.

6. University tutors and school staff provide trainees with high levels of personal and professional support. Trainees regularly complete written reflections on their experience and progress which are shared with mentors. In addition these are e-mailed to university tutors with records and targets arising from weekly mentor meetings. Reflections are often of high quality. Good communications ensure that all those involved in training have a clear view of trainees' progress and are alerted to their emerging needs. Recently-introduced paired placements have been well received by trainees, who appreciate the opportunities to share experiences and provide mutual support. Paired placements are particularly effective in helping to build the confidence of some mathematics trainees from minority ethnic backgrounds. For those who need it, the university's student study centre provides good individual support for students in key areas such as literacy.

7. Trainees record all elements of their progress in a professional development portfolio. This file includes records of meetings, progress reviews and targets, as well as feedback from assignments and lesson observations. To encourage trainees to think about the cumulative effectiveness of their teaching when they consider evidence for their progress, the provider has helpfully grouped the new Standards together. The portfolio is used well by trainees and mentors and provides a comprehensive record of trainees' progress towards the Standards; trainees and trainers have a clear understanding of what is required and, at this early stage, the new approach is working well. Procedures for final assessment are rigorous and its moderation is thorough.

Management and quality assurance

8. Selection procedures are good with the consistency of practice much improved since last inspection. The university prospectus provides trainees with clear and accurate information and the interview process for all subjects now consists of common tasks as well as those appropriate for each subject. Placement schools are involved in the selection process in term time and procedures for ensuring successful candidates have the appropriate Criminal Records Bureau checks are thorough. There is good support for new trainees before enrolment with the setting of pre-course tasks based on an initial subject knowledge audit and assessment.

9. Initiatives to attract as broad as possible a range of applicants are a key element in the provider's continuing commitment to equality of opportunity and widening participation. The School of Education is proud of its success in recruiting trainees from minority ethnic groups, trainees with disabilities and trainees from

access courses or who seek the accreditation of their prior learning. Applications from black and minority ethnic trainees are carefully monitored and in comparison to the national picture there is relatively strong recruitment from this group in mathematics, science, ICT and art. The proportion of trainees aged over 35 is also high, and in some cases subject courses buck the national trend: science and design and technology, for example, recruit a high percentage of women. However, recruitment is well below target in some subjects, with design and technology recruiting fewer than half its target enrolment in 2007. Completion rates have improved significantly since the last inspection as the result of determined efforts to reduce withdrawals and increase academic support for the skills tests. Also, because the provider tries to respond to the needs of a diverse trainee group, some trainees are supported in completing the course late, thus missing the census date.

10. Leadership and management at department and programme level are good and over the past few years a systematic approach to planning and implementation has steadily improved practice across the department. A strong professional ethos among university tutors encourages them to develop their own ideas and take responsibility for the development of their trainees and contributes to the good quality of training. The effective induction of new subject tutors in mathematics and ICT is evident in the way these new tutors have quickly and effectively mastered their briefs and gained the confidence of trainees and schools.

11. Partnership arrangements are strong. The partnership agreement is a comprehensive, workmanlike document and the roles and responsibilities spelt out in it are clearly understood by all partners. Selection and de-selection criteria are clear and funding arrangements transparent. Systems and communications across the partnership work very well and schools speak highly of the provider's responsiveness and administrative efficiency. In schools, initial teacher education coordinators manage and monitor their mentors well and meet trainees regularly to review their progress. The quality of mentoring is good overall, with very few inconsistencies revealed during the inspection. Schools rate the quality of mentor training highly. The annual conference for initial teacher education coordinators is a particularly successful feature of the partnership.

12. The hours given to university tutors make it possible for them to respond flexibly to the needs of trainee or mentors as well as pay their regular visits. Subject tutors make three subject visits a year to each trainee but have an additional reserve of time to cover visits they make in their roles as professional tutors and for any additional support that might be needed in schools. This allocation is very well used and makes a significant contribution to the quality of mentoring and the trainees' experience.

13. The progress made since the last inspections, and the care taken to address issues raised in previous reports, indicate a commitment to continuous improvement. Department level action planning is clear and well-focused and the analysis of the outcomes of trainees' questionnaires, data from a range of sources and feedback from schools is thorough. However, at subject level the cycle of review, evaluation and action planning is insufficiently rigorous. Programme monitoring reports are very

variable in quality, tending to be descriptive rather than evaluative, and subject action plans are vague and imprecise. This is one area where consistency is not sufficiently emphasised over professional autonomy and where weaknesses may not be adequately challenged.