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A secondary initial teacher training
short inspection report
2007/08

Managing inspector
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Introduction

The University of Hull works in partnership with 70 schools to provide secondary initial teacher training (ITT) courses. It offers training in business studies, English, geography, history, mathematics, modern foreign languages, religious education and science. At the time of the inspection there were 112 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 ITE Inspection Framework.

Key strengths

- the strong stable partnership with schools
- the support to meet the individual needs of trainees
- the good quality tutors who deliver subject methods courses
- very effective selection procedures which result in the recruitment of good quality trainees in all subjects
- the partnership's responsiveness to trainee and partnership views on issues in the training which need improvement
- the good use of internal and external data as part of the quality assurance procedures and to inform developments.

Point for action

- improving the training of the foundation in professional studies course, particularly the university seminars.

Points for consideration

- clarifying the guidance given to trainees on the range of evidence that they present to support their self assessment in the Standards
- focusing development plans more sharply on improving the training and on the outcomes for trainees
- ensuring that all trainees receive a good level of support from partnership tutors
- improving the consistency of the formative comments provided in assessing trainees' assignments in foundation in professional studies.

The quality of training

1. The course meets the Requirements and is well planned to ensure that all trainees are given the opportunity to meet the Standards. The components of the foundation in professional studies and subject method courses combine well and are extended effectively in carefully planned school provision to provide a relevant and coherent programme of study.
2. The foundation in professional studies course is designed carefully to develop generic teaching skills and professional knowledge. Its recently revised content is relevant and reflects the *Every Child Matters* agenda and the current focus on personalised learning, including assessment for learning.
3. Subject method courses are well planned to provide trainees with opportunities to develop their teaching skills and extend their subject knowledge. They are generally up-to-date and new developments are included promptly, for example, the demands of the new Key Stage 3 programmes and new advanced level specifications are already in place. Courses are well resourced, although some suggested reference material is not up-to-date. Trainees have good access to modern technology to aid teaching.
4. The quality of the training is at least good. Subject courses are delivered by a team of enthusiastic method tutors who make good use of expertise drawn from outside the university to enhance provision. Tutors teach lively and interactive sessions and model good teaching practice. However, in the foundation in professional studies course, the quality of the training and seminars is more variable. In schools, coordinators and mentors provide quality support and guidance while encouraging trainees to self evaluate and reflect. Mentors are well informed and value the training provided by the subject tutors to support them in their role.
5. There is an exceptionally strong commitment to meeting the individual needs of trainees. At the start of the course gaps in subject knowledge are identified and trainees are supported well in addressing these, for example, by the development of detailed resource files in geography. Trainees who face difficulties during the course receive rapid and effective support from tutors who know them well. In some schools the partnership tutor provides an additional level of support. The good marking of method assignments provides detailed feedback and formative advice to individuals on how to improve. In English the level of detail in this marking is exceptional. However, in foundation in professional studies assignments, the quality of the formative comments is not sufficiently consistent.
6. There is regular and accurate assessment of trainees' practical teaching and effective use of the Standards is made in the process. In the best of these observations, particularly those completed by method tutors, the analysis is very detailed and provides clear and helpful guidance for further development. The discussions between mentors and trainees and the regular formal progress reviews provide a clear framework for monitoring and assessing trainees' progress. In the

best examples there is very detailed recording of the Standards achieved and a clear focus on the next stage of development. There is insufficient clarity on the range of evidence that trainees are expected to present to support their self assessment of progress.

Management and quality assurance

7. Selection procedures are very effective and result in the recruitment of good quality trainees. Improved systems to ensure a consistent approach to Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks and to the use of equivalency tests in mathematics and English have been introduced. Targets for recruitment are met in most subjects and efforts are being made to meet targets where there was a shortfall in 2007. Efforts are also being made to raise the number of trainees from ethnic minority groups through, for example, targeted publicity.

8. School partnership staff are fully involved in the selection process. A good feature in a few subjects is that trainees visit subject departments enabling mentors to observe applicants in a school context. The selection process includes a very good range of relevant and subject focussed activities.

9. Forms completed during the selection process include sufficient information to support the selection or rejection of applicants. Pre-course subject guidance is good and frequently letters to trainees are personalised in places, for instance, reflecting prior experience. Reasons for withdrawals from the course are carefully investigated. Action is to be taken to reduce the withdrawals which occur during trainees' first school experience. The pass rates in previous years have been good and a high proportion of trainees gain employment in schools.

10. The management of the course is effective and, overall, supports good quality training and outcomes. The partnership council and the standing committee, membership of which includes both university and school representatives, are effective in both making management decisions and supporting developments in the course. A staff student liaison committee enables trainees to be involved in influencing the course provision by eliciting regular feedback of trainee views.

11. The new programme director is effectively leading developments in the course. In most subjects, training is well led by methods tutors and suitable arrangements have been put in place to cover staffing disruptions in religious education and business studies. The provider has responded well to issues identified in the previous inspection report. A start has also been made in improving the foundation in professional studies course.

12. There is strong stable partnership with schools. The clear selection and de-selection criteria for schools being included in the partnership are rigorously applied. There is good involvement of school co-ordinators and mentors in the university training.

13. A comprehensive partnership memorandum of understanding document clearly details entitlements and roles and responsibilities. In schools, co-ordinators and mentors carry out their training roles effectively. Good documentation and effective communications, including a partnership newsletter, support them. There is regular training for both new and experienced mentors which includes a good balance of briefing and training in relevant topics. Attendance at mentor training is good overall and there are arrangements in place to ensure that mentors who do not attend are kept up-to-date.

14. There are effective procedures in place to moderate the assessment of trainees' written work. There is a detailed system for the moderation of the assessment of trainees against the Standards. Joint observations, when completed, are a useful further element in the moderation of judgements.

15. There are detailed procedures to ensure that the university equal opportunities and race equality policies are followed. Staff and trainees are kept up-to-date with relevant issues in race relations and equal opportunities. Trainees are made aware of the opportunities they have to obtain support and/or to report any issues that do not meet the university policy requirements.

16. Detailed analysis of both internal and external data is used effectively as part of the quality assurance procedures and to inform developments. Training and Development Agency for Schools data and internal data, for example, the year on year improvement in the quality of achievement in teaching by trainees as they achieve Qualified Teacher Status, is carefully analysed.

17. There are comprehensive systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of training. Method tutors, as part of their visits to trainees, monitor the quality of training in schools. Trainees are given regular opportunities to evaluate both school-based and university-based training. Additionally, a partner satisfaction survey has recently been introduced. Mentors and school co-ordinators have opportunities to provide informal feedback on the effectiveness of training during mentor training sessions and co-ordinator meetings.

18. The annual monitoring of programme report begins with a review of the progress made on the previous year's action plan and is based on a detailed analysis of all available evaluation data including external examiner reports. The report identifies strengths in the provision as well as providing a secure basis for the following year's action plan. Subject development plans, based on the outcomes of course evaluations, are written to a common format. Few of these, however, form a good basis to drive up the quality of training and to improve the outcomes for trainees.