

University of Exeter

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

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Inspection dates	1–5 February 2010
Lead inspector	Philip Mann HMI

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Reference no. 080190

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Introduction

1. This inspection was carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectors supported by a team of specialist inspectors in accordance with the Framework for the Inspection of Initial Teacher Education (2008–11).
2. The inspection draws upon evidence from all aspects of the provision to make judgements against all parts of the inspection evaluation schedule in the framework. Inspectors focused on the overall effectiveness of the training in supporting high-quality outcomes for trainees and the capacity of the partnership to bring about further improvements. A summary of the grades awarded is included at the end of this report.

Key to inspection grades

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

Explanation of terms used in this report

Attainment is defined as the standard reached by a trainee at the end of their training.

Progress is judged in terms of how well a trainee has developed professionally from their starting point to the standard reached at the time of the inspection or at a suitable review point.

Achievement is judged in terms of the progress made and the standard reached by a trainee at the time of the inspection or at a recent assessment review point.

The provider

3. The University of Exeter works in partnership with around 250 schools to provide initial teacher education (ITE) leading to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) in both primary and secondary phases. The partnership covers the counties of Cornwall, Devon, Somerset and Dorset.
4. The 'Exeter Model of Initial Teacher Education' underpins all work in the university/school partnership and is designed to enable trainees to meet the Standards for QTS. Trainees are encouraged to develop a critical understanding of the diversity of learners and the complexities of the education process, including different social and organisational structures of education. The Exeter Model has an explicit theoretical framework that underpins teacher education and training. It uses individual training tools (agendas) to develop skills of critical analysis and reflection about specific aspects of classroom practice and about trainees' own specialist subject. It also incorporates two levels of supervision for trainees in schools: a 'principal school/subject tutor' (PST), whose main role is to develop classroom teaching skills and who works alongside an experienced

'mentor' whose role is to develop trainees' reflective and critical skills. School staff are supported by university visit tutors (UVTs), who are all specialists in the wider context of education.

A commentary on the provision

5. The following are particular features of the provider and its initial teacher training programmes:
 - highly effective recruitment, selection and induction procedures which identify well-qualified and enthusiastic trainees with the potential and the commitment to become outstanding teachers
 - application of the university's model of initial teacher education by school-based trainers which ensures excellent coherence and consistency across the partnership
 - the ability of trainees to improve their own performance in aspects of teaching methodology, which enables them to become extremely reflective teachers
 - the very experienced university staff who demonstrate high levels of expertise.
6. The following recommendations should be considered to improve the quality of the outcomes for trainees:
 - implement monitoring procedures to ensure that school placements provide all trainees with contrasting school experiences for the age ranges that they teach
 - seek ways in which to include fully, in the secondary training programmes, the different ways that schools manage students' entitlement to personal, social, and health education, tutoring and mentoring.

Provision in the primary phase

Context

7. The University of Exeter works in partnership with approximately 130 schools across the south-west of England to provide primary ITE courses. It offers a one-year PGCE with QTS in the 3–7 and 5–11 age ranges. Specialisms are offered in English, humanities, mathematics, music, science, modern foreign languages and the Early Years Foundation Stage. At the time of the inspection there were 188 trainees.

Key strengths

8. The key strengths are:
 - the rapid and sustained progress made by trainees to achieve high-quality outcomes as a result of:
 - the high-quality Exeter model of training
 - trainees' development of excellent reflective skills
 - the recruitment of trainees with the intellectual capacity to apply the model very effectively
 - excellent application of the model of training by school-based trainers which ensures coherence and consistency across the partnership
 - the demonstration by leaders across the partnership of a rigorous drive for further improvement
 - the very effective use of accurate self-evaluation and review to inform planning for improvement and the monitoring of its implementation.

Recommendations

9. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment, the provider/partnership should:
 - implement monitoring procedures to ensure that school placements provide all trainees with contrasting school experiences for the age ranges that they teach.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 1

10. The overall effectiveness of the provider in securing high-quality outcomes for trainees in the primary phase is outstanding. Course leaders continues to build on the significant strengths in provision identified at the previous inspection. Comprehensive training procedures are clearly understood by all those engaged in both university and school-based training and this ensures a very high degree of consistency in training.
11. The proportion of trainees with a higher degree selected for the course is above the sector average. The recruitment of trainees from minority ethnic backgrounds is lower than the sector average. A wide range of strategies are used effectively to retain these trainees on the course. The proportion of men on the primary course is higher than average as a result of very effective recruitment strategies. Excellent use of detailed initial needs analysis ensures that the vast majority of trainees continue to improve throughout the course. Pre-course tasks are imaginative and focus on current whole-school issues such as the promotion of community cohesion and phonics development.
12. Overall attainment at the end of the course is outstanding. Well-qualified trainees make good or better progress to achieve the Standards for QTS. All trainees are professional in their approach to the course and demonstrate a very clear commitment to the training programme. The depth and breadth of trainees' reflection about their own practice is impressive. They possess a mature approach to self-study, effectively following up 'agendas' they set for themselves, so improving their own performance in aspects of teaching methodology.
13. Trainees demonstrate very positive relationships with pupils and an ability to manage class behaviour effectively. This is because trainees are very competent in the use of visual aids and resources such as interactive whiteboards to illustrate key teaching points and to engage and support pupils in their learning. The excellent application of the university's own teaching model and procedures by all trainees ensures that lesson planning is extremely thorough. Furthermore, this high-quality planning includes a good range of well-chosen tasks that cater for a range of abilities.
14. The trainees' excellent achievement is a direct result of very high-quality and coherent training across the partnership. Well-chosen pre-course tasks and specialist input at the university fully complement the high-quality training provision in schools. Assignments are very closely linked to classroom practice, marked thoroughly and support fully the trainees' understanding of areas such as provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. University tutors are experts in their field and ensure that course content is relevant and fully up to date. Both school-based and visiting tutors from the university provide trainees with very relevant, accurate and helpful feedback on their teaching. Carefully tailored individual tuition further enhances the development of trainees' subject knowledge. Trainees have full access to a comprehensive range of resources to support them in their development. These

include very good library facilities and access to an extensive collection of online training materials.

15. Accurate assessment starts at the point of selection. Procedures for the ongoing assessment of trainees' progress are very secure and provide a precise record of achievement. Roles and responsibilities of all those involved are very clearly understood. Individual trainees respond very well to the excellent support and guidance provided by their individual PSTs. School-based mentors fulfil an effective moderation role in the oversight of trainee progress and completion of placement reports. Trainees' strengths and areas for development are clearly identified to provide a firm foundation for further improvement during the course. The process of assessment plays a key role in the development of the trainees' understanding of teaching methodology.
16. The maintenance of excellent levels of consistency is a key strength of the partnership. All key stakeholders are full of praise for the excellent lines of communication and the prompt and efficient manner in which university staff resolve any problems. Detailed documentation provides clear guidance to schools and the induction of tutors and mentors new to the partnership is excellent. Regular meetings based on geographical areas within the region ensure that all school-based trainers are kept fully up to date with course development and changes to procedures. UVTs monitor the quality of school-based training thoroughly. They provide support and guidance to PSTs new to the training programme as and when required. However, sometimes, school placements allocated do not always fully complement each other to provide all trainees with a contrasting training school.
17. The promotion of equality of opportunity and valuing of diversity is outstanding. Excellent provision is made for trainees from minority groups to ensure that they succeed and university staff work tirelessly to ensure that they are fully supported during the course. Furthermore, international students are provided with personalised support at the beginning of their training period. As a result, the retention of trainees from minority groups and those with a disability is excellent. Trainees are fully aware of the equal opportunity policy, know about diversity issues and how to deal with harassment and discrimination in schools. Specific input through the professional studies course and subject modules ensures that trainees demonstrate heightened levels of awareness about issues related to race and religion. The development of the trainees' knowledge and understanding of teaching pupils who speak English as an additional language is a particular strength within the training.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality

Grade: 1

18. Leaders and managers across the partnership are consistent in their drive to seek improvements in the overall quality of provision. Such ambition is firmly rooted in accurate self-review, evaluation and high-quality planning for further improvement. High-quality outcomes have been sustained and continue to improve as a result. Capacity to improve further is excellent.
19. The quality of self-evaluation is outstanding and findings accurately reflect the judgements of the inspection. Key stakeholders are thoroughly engaged in the process. The course programme is continually evaluated to ensure content fully reflects the needs of trainees in primary schools. Internal moderators and external examiners are very clear about their roles and responsibilities. Their findings are used with diligence by course leaders to improve trainees' outcomes. School mentors play a vital role in moderating the assessment of trainees, undertaking their roles and responsibilities with a high degree of professionalism. However, the monitoring of provision by course leaders to ensure that school placements provide good breadth of experience for all trainees is less robust.
20. Leaders and managers at all levels are dynamic in anticipating and responding to change. Decisions made are firmly grounded in excellent subject knowledge and a thorough understanding of educational theory and best practice. Programme leaders are proactive in course improvement to ensure that current national initiatives such as the promotion of community cohesion, safeguarding, and the forthcoming changes to the National Curriculum are fully catered for in training. Course leaders have been particularly creative in developing very focused support for minority ethnic trainees. Initial teacher education coordinators in schools demonstrate a thorough knowledge and understanding of the university's procedures. Consequently, management of the school-based training programme is excellent because it is applied consistently across the partnership.
21. Improvement planning is excellent and linked very closely to accurate self-evaluation and review. Responsibilities for programme improvement are very effectively delegated to all staff with leadership responsibilities to facilitate even greater levels of coherence between subject tuition and the professional studies programme. Course leaders are tireless in finding aspects of provision that can be improved further. Action planning is very detailed and extremely thorough. Targets for course improvement are very specific and tightly linked to resource requirements. Objective success criteria ensure that improvement can be fully assessed. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection and as a result there is clear evidence of the positive impact of action planning on the outcomes for trainees in this phase.

Provision in the secondary phase

Context

22. The University of Exeter offers initial teacher education (ITE) leading to qualified teacher status (QTS) and the award of a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) in the following secondary subjects: art, citizenship with humanities, dance, design and technology, English with drama, English with media, geography, history, information and communication technology, mathematics, modern foreign languages, physical education, religious education, and science. Modern foreign languages and citizenship with humanities are offered for the 11–16 age range, other subjects are offered for the 11–18 age range. At the time of the inspection there were 418 trainees on secondary programmes.
23. The partnership includes around 120 secondary schools across the south-west of England. This includes middle schools, some 11–16 schools and others with 11–18 provision. The range of schools includes comprehensive, grammar and independent schools. Some trainees gain their post-16 experience at colleges of further education.

Key strengths

24. The key strengths are:
- the rapid and sustained progress made by trainees to achieve high-quality outcomes as a result of the:
 - high-quality Exeter model of training
 - trainees' development of excellent reflective skills
 - the recruitment of trainees with the intellectual capacity to apply the model very effectively
 - excellent application of the model of training by school-based trainers which ensures coherence and consistency across the partnership
 - the demonstration by leaders across the partnership of a rigorous drive for further improvement
 - the very effective use of accurate self-evaluation and review to inform planning for improvement and the monitoring of its implementation.

Recommendations

- In order to improve the quality of provision for trainees the provider should:
 - provide all trainees with the appropriate breadth of experience for the age ranges that they teach

- include fully in the training programmes the different ways that schools manage students' entitlement to personal, social and health education, tutoring and mentoring.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 1

25. The overall effectiveness of the provider in securing high-quality outcomes for trainees is outstanding.
26. The course recruits a high proportion of trainees with higher degrees, who have the intellectual capacity to take advantage of the model of training at Exeter, resulting in outstanding outcomes. Recruitment and retention, particularly of shortage subjects, are above the sector average. In spite of substantial efforts, including, for example, using a newly qualified teacher who completed the course last year as an advocate, the recruitment of minority ethnic trainees has not risen in recent years, although the proportion is representative of the local population. However, once minority ethnic trainees are on the course, the excellent support provided, including help with personal and language issues, results in a very high retention rate.
27. After selection, trainees carry out an initial needs analysis, which is revisited regularly throughout the course, and frequently updated as skills develop. Many complete a further range of activities to enhance their subject knowledge. The tasks completed during two weeks of pre-course school visits are imaginative and focused on current whole-school issues, for example community cohesion, raising awareness of the range of cultural diversity among pupils and the new diplomas.
28. The majority of trainees make outstanding progress because of the strong focus on learning and developing reflective skills. The first term of university-based training provides an exceptional grounding in broad educational issues as well as extending subject knowledge through peer development and course options. Structured peer teaching develops teaching skills and encourages reflection. The cohesion between learning at the university and the school-based training that follows is strong. Once in school placements, the excellent application of the model of training by school-based trainers ensures coherence and consistency across the partnership. The very great majority of trainees make rapid progress as a result of high-quality coaching and accurate feedback from principal subject tutors in school. Trainees are encouraged to observe teachers modelling good practice which they can then apply to their own teaching. Each weekly meeting with the PST reviews the trainee's progress and sets new targets closely linked to the Standards, allowing trainees to focus tightly on applying theory to practice. This process also ensures that progress is constantly monitored. The Exeter Model separates assessment from coaching with several phases of moderation to ensure accuracy of judgements. The assessment system allows a stepped and developmental approach, with some trainees meeting the Standards early and thus able to complete enrichment and extension activities before the end of the course. Assignments are closely linked to classroom practice and are well supported by school-based training, for example an in-depth study of special educational needs during the spring term.

29. Trainees demonstrate commitment to the course and are very well organised. They show exceptional depth and breadth of reflection on their own developing practice. Even in the first few weeks of school-based training, their lesson planning shows clear learning objectives with some evidence of differentiation to meet students' needs. Trainees already demonstrate a sound understanding of the need for pace in learning and a variety of activities to engage students. Good behaviour management skills help trainees develop positive relationships with students. Trainees have a thorough understanding of issues linked to the Every Child Matters agenda, including safeguarding procedures. Trainees' awareness of national developments related to individual subjects and broader educational issues is up to date and well understood. Trainees demonstrate competent use of information and communication technology, including interactive whiteboards, to support both teaching and learning.
30. Partnership schools understand the provider's high expectations and they make an outstanding contribution to trainees' development as teachers. They are aware of the current priorities, for example developing trainees' awareness of promoting cultural diversity and their understanding of the needs of students who have English as an additional language, and make every effort to provide appropriate experiences. Excellent communication systems, which are both prompt and efficient, ensure that there is consistency of practice and tight management of administration. Regular meetings based on geographical areas within the region ensure that all school-based trainers are kept fully up to date with course development and changes to procedures. Trainers' roles and responsibilities are understood and made clear in the course handbook.
31. Flexible use of resources ensures that the needs of individual trainees and school-based trainers are met very effectively. When allocating placements the university is sensitive to the needs of individual students who may have family responsibilities or have to travel long distances and also, for example, allows trainees to observe professional studies lectures online, and not attend in person. A high-quality library and access to materials online supported by paper copies support trainees well. Extra school visits by UVTs are used to support schools new to the partnership and trainees who are having difficulty.
32. High-quality training promotes equality of opportunity and values diversity with clear evidence of a positive impact on trainees' outcomes. Trainees are fully aware of the equal opportunity policy, know about diversity issues and how to deal with harassment and discrimination in schools. Retention rates are excellent, particularly for minority ethnic trainees who are provided with personalised and sensitive support throughout their training. Although opportunities within the partnership for teaching in schools with wide cultural diversity among students are limited, trainees' awareness of how teaching might need to be adapted in different contexts is good. Trainees have a good understanding of how to tackle barriers to learning that may arise through students having poor literacy skills or speaking English as an additional language. The lesson planning format used provides the opportunities to identify equality of opportunity for minority groups.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality Grade: 1

33. Leaders and managers across the partnership demonstrate outstanding capacity for further improvements because high-quality outcomes are being sustained and further improved. Review and self-evaluation are comprehensive, accurate and in line with inspection judgements. Leaders are very proactive in anticipating and driving forward change. Improvement planning is of very high quality and focused on national and local priorities as well as feedback from stakeholders.
34. At both programme and subject level detailed annual reviews and a thorough engagement of all key stakeholders contribute to self-evaluation, which is based on very detailed analysis of data over time. The course content is regularly adapted to fully reflect the needs of trainees in schools. Continual monitoring, particularly by UVTs, confirms the quality of school-based training and ensures that whenever weaker practice is evident an intervention programme is put in place. Quality assurance for provision is not as robust as for training. A very small minority of trainees on 11–18 QTS courses are placed in two 11–16 schools and the systems for providing consistently good quality opportunities for these trainees to complete post-16 teaching are not monitored thoroughly enough. In addition, arrangements for access to pastoral experience for trainees is variable and does not consistently take into account the very wide range of systems in schools for tutoring, mentoring and teaching personal, social and health education. School mentors play a vital role in moderating the assessment of trainees, undertaking their roles and responsibilities with a high degree of professionalism. External and internal moderators and examiners are very clear about their roles and responsibilities and make an effective contribution to course evaluation.
35. Leadership across the partnership is dynamic and firmly grounded in excellent subject knowledge and a thorough understanding of educational theory and best practice. Programme leaders are innovative in recognising a need to continue further development of the programmes to cater for changes posed by current national initiatives such as the promotion of community cohesion, safeguarding and diplomas. Management of the school-based training programme by initial teacher education coordinators in schools is excellent. It is based on a thorough knowledge and understanding of the university's procedures and application of their model for training and consistently applied across the partnership. New courses have been developed in response to need for this year. The innovative support provided for minority ethnic trainees demonstrates exceptional awareness of the needs of these trainees.
36. Course leaders are tireless in their approach to identifying aspects of their work that can be improved further. Planning is driven by excellent self-evaluation and review. Responsibilities for programme improvement are very effectively

delegated to leaders at all levels with an appropriate balance between developing consistency and giving autonomy. This is providing greater levels of coherence between subject tuition and the professional studies. Improvement planning is extremely thorough and fully linked to resources. Objective success criteria ensure that improvement can be carefully measured. There is clear evidence of the positive impact of improvement planning on the outcomes for trainees.

Summary of inspection grades¹

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding; grade 2 is good; grade 3 is satisfactory; grade 4 is inadequate.

Overall effectiveness

		Primary	Secondary
How effective is the provision in securing high quality outcomes for trainees?		1	1
Trainees' attainment	How well do trainees attain?	1	1
Factors contributing to trainees' attainment	To what extent do recruitment / selection arrangements support high quality outcomes?	1	1
	To what extent does the training and assessment ensure that all trainees progress to fulfil their potential given their ability and starting points?	1	1
	To what extent are available resources used effectively and efficiently?	1	1
The quality of the provision	To what extent is the provision across the partnership of consistently high quality?	1	1
Promoting equalities and diversity	To what extent does the provision promote equality of opportunity, value diversity and eliminate harassment and unlawful discrimination?	1	1

Capacity to improve further and/or sustain high quality

		Primary	Secondary
To what extent do the leadership and management at all levels have the capacity to secure further improvements and/or to sustain high quality outcomes?		1	1
How effectively does the management at all levels assess performance in order to improve or sustain high quality?		1	1
How well does the leadership at all levels anticipate change, and prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives?		1	1
How effectively does the provider plan and take action for improvement?		1	1

¹ The criteria for making these graded judgements are in the Grade criteria for the inspection of ITE 2008-11; Ofsted July 2008; Reference no: 080128.

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