

University of Oxford

Initial Teacher Education inspection report

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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 Oxford Internship Scheme works in partnership with 27 schools to provide secondary initial teacher training courses. It offers a full-time postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) in English, geography, history, mathematics, modern foreign languages, religious education and science (biology, chemistry and physics). All courses provide training to teach across the 11 to 18 age range. At the time of the inspection there were 188 trainees on the course.
4. The Oxford Internship Scheme has been running for 25 years and is a very well established partnership. The large majority of schools in the partnership are in Oxfordshire. The school also has a longstanding relationship with one school in Northamptonshire. Three additional schools outside of Oxfordshire joined the partnership when the religious education course was introduced in 2007, although all now offer additional placements in other subjects. The partnership with schools also involves extensive professional development for teachers,

including those on higher degree programmes, and wide-ranging research activity.

Provision in the secondary phase

Key strengths

5. The key strengths are:
 - the Oxford internship model of training and the rigour of the continuous research-led course development
 - the extremely high expectations set and achieved for all aspects of the course
 - the recruitment of trainees with the personal qualities, intellectual capacity and aptitude for teaching that enable them to make rapid progress throughout the course
 - the quality of university-based training that enables trainees to develop deep theoretical understanding and use this to develop their practical teaching
 - the partnership with schools and the highly effective integration of the different elements of the course to secure trainees' progress
 - the quality of the monitoring of each trainee's professional development and the matching of training to individual needs
 - the exceptionally high quality of the personal support for trainees
 - the responsibility taken by trainees for their own professional development and the extremely secure foundations which are established for their long-term professional development.

Recommendation

6. In order to improve trainees' progress and attainment further, the provider should:
 - work with school-based curriculum mentors to develop and apply a wider range of training strategies matched to trainees' developmental targets.

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 1

7. The university recruits highly capable trainees and the overwhelming majority make outstanding progress to achieve at very high levels by the end of the course. Trainees' attainment overall is outstanding and has been sustained at this high level over many years. Attainment is also outstanding in each of the subjects. The partnership's assessment of trainees' progress and attainment is extremely thorough and accurate. Almost all trainees successfully complete the course; all cases of non-completion are thoroughly investigated and there are no implications for selection, training or the support provided for trainees. The very large majority of trainees secure teaching posts, many within the partnership, or in other Oxfordshire, schools. They often secure rapid

promotion and go on to have successful careers. This reflects the internship scheme's strong emphasis on laying secure foundations for trainees' long-term professional development.

8. The trainees have many strengths, evident even at the time of the inspection at about the mid-point in the course; their commitment to teaching, and to teaching in maintained schools, is impressive. They already have clear views about different ways of teaching their subjects and can support these with well-considered explanations of why particular approaches are effective, demonstrating good understanding of theoretical underpinnings. Their personal qualities, including their intellectual capacity, analytical skills and ability to reflect critically on their professional development, are exceptional. They are extremely well informed about their progress and they are encouraged, and able, to take responsibility for their own professional development.
9. In reviewing their teaching, trainees are able to evaluate students' learning and progress and analyse how well their teaching supports them. They plan careful steps in learning to secure students' progress. They are fully aware that how they teach has a direct impact on students' behaviour; they work hard to promote good behaviour as well as developing skills in managing behaviour. They can identify the literacy and numeracy levels of the work they plan and have ideas for how to develop students' skills where low levels could be a barrier to learning. Most trainees have a good understanding of the breadth and complexity of special educational needs and/or disabilities; they also know where to find help with teaching these students and the questions to ask. Trainees' experience of working with students learning English as an additional language is mixed, but all have an understanding of the issues related to teaching these students in their subject. The weakest area of trainees' current understanding is how to teach students from a diverse range of ethnic, religious, cultural and other backgrounds. There is limited diversity across the partnership; many schools believe that it is the role of the university to deal with this and some opportunities to develop trainees' understanding are missed.
10. Extremely high quality recruitment and selection procedures identify each applicant's potential and aptitude for teaching, particularly through the interrogation of their experience in school prior to the interview. The university is also careful to ensure that trainees have the intellectual capacity required to be successful on the course. The information gathered during selection, together with information from tutors and schools during the joint university/school weeks, is used to provide a well-rounded and detailed assessment of each trainee at the first assessment reference point in early December. This provides precise and challenging targets for the trainees' future development and an extremely useful benchmark to evaluate future progress. Trainees fully understand their personal targets and can explain in detail how they will, or have been, addressed to secure their progress.
11. Almost all trainees were at least meeting expectations at the time of the inspection, with many exceeding them. The expectations are set at a very high level so this demonstrates outstanding progress at this stage in the course. The

high quality of all elements of the course contributes to this progress. For the few trainees who did not meet expectations, the reasons are analysed carefully and very well focused support is put in place; almost all catch up very quickly.

12. Trainees receive good quality feedback on their teaching and other aspects of their work in school from school-based curriculum mentors and professional tutors. University tutors make frequent visits to trainees in school and the feedback they provide is of exceptionally high quality and highly significant in ensuring trainees' rapid progress. The university curriculum tutor, school-based curriculum mentor, university general tutor and school-based professional tutor model, and extremely effective communications between all, ensure excellent coherence between the elements of the course. In schools, trainees are supported well in making the necessary links between these elements. 'Shared understandings' of good teaching permeate the partnership. The support for trainees' professional and personal development is exceptional. When, for any reason, a trainee is not making the expected progress, this is detected very quickly and interventions are swift and effective. University tutors quickly detect when a trainee is experiencing some personal difficulty, or struggling with the workload, and deal with this effectively and sensitively.
13. Trainees' progress is monitored very carefully through a series of well-placed assessment reference points. The expectations at each of these stages are clear and challenging. They are finely-tuned to set individual, as well as overall, expectations. However, schools do not always realise that sometimes trainees can be moved more rapidly and some 'reference-point expectations' can be achieved earlier. Trainees' progress is supported well by the course structure; the timing of university weeks and the sequence of school placements. Trainees and school-based trainers are consistent in their praise for the high quality of university tutors, subject programmes and the professional development programme. University-based training is very successful in establishing a secure theoretical understanding that trainees can relate to practical teaching and which serves them extremely well in their future professional development.
14. The partnership with schools, and schools' commitment to the internship scheme, are extremely strong and often go beyond just working with trainees. The university values the partnership schools highly and they are closely involved in all aspects of the course. Regular mentor and professional tutor meetings are exceptionally well attended. Subject meetings provide opportunities to discuss teaching and learning, as well as the routines concerned with working with trainees; these discussions are highly valued by mentors. At this stage in the course, the range of strategies used by mentors to help trainees make progress with particular aspects of their teaching tends to be largely 'observe and feedback'. Mentors do not always use or apply a wider range of training strategies to help trainees meet their targets such as: collaborative teaching, focused observations and the use of 'what if' scenarios. There is extensive good practice in the partnership to be built upon.

The capacity for further improvement and/or sustaining high quality

Grade: 1

15. All of the outcomes for trainees have been sustained at a very high level for many years. The university and the partnership have outstanding capacity to sustain this high quality. The excellent quality of the training and the strengths of the partnership have been sustained; all of the strengths identified in the last inspection report are still clearly evident. The one recommendation in the previous report has received intensive consideration and exceptional progress has been made so that this is now a strength. There are many other examples of how the university constantly strives to develop and improve the quality of experiences for trainees.
16. The cycle of self-evaluation, improvement planning and the full implementation of actions across the partnership is exemplary for the whole course, and for each curriculum area and the professional development programme. Self-evaluation is supported extremely well by the analysis of extensive data with a focus on the outcomes for trainees, including the progress they make, and makes excellent use of detailed information about the whole cohort, each subject cohort and each trainee. The university has very high expectations for the outcomes for trainees which are well understood across the partnership. There is constant fine tuning of the training through comprehensive and rigorous analysis of the frequent evaluations by trainees and all school-based mentors and tutors. This is enhanced well by frequent visits to schools by university tutors and by the well-attended meetings for school-based mentors and professional tutors. University tutors constantly monitor the effectiveness of the course through discussions with trainees and feedback during university-based training sessions. The views of the many former trainees in partnership schools are also used well in course reviews.
17. The close involvement of the partnership in all aspects of course review and development is most impressive. When an issue arises from ongoing review or self-evaluation, it is discussed with curriculum mentors and professional tutors as well as by all university tutors. Highly effective use is made of small well-focused working groups, comprising school-based trainers as well as university tutors. Sharply focused research leads to clear plans for action that are often thoroughly piloted before being applied across the partnership. Monitoring is rigorous and focused on improving experiences for trainees. As an example of this, the university's response to the one recommendation in the previous inspection report provides a model for others to follow.
18. Review and self-evaluation clearly identify priorities for development, both across the whole course and at subject level. These priorities are very sharp, arise clearly from the detailed analysis and are focused on sustaining or improving the outcomes for trainees. The actions taken are precise and entirely appropriate. School-based trainers are absolutely clear about their role in any course developments or in securing any improvement required. The training for

school-based mentors and professional tutors is matched well to individual needs and circumstances and is of exceptionally high quality.

19. University curriculum tutors are involved in research that enables them to be constantly challenging, as well as supporting, schools in thinking about ways of teaching and learning. Much of this research is firmly rooted in classroom practice and many partnership schools are directly involved. Trainees benefit enormously as this informs their curriculum work. Trainees show excellent depth of understanding when discussing current issues in their subjects and in teaching more widely. The quality and relevance of the research often mean that the university is leading, rather than responding, to change. The university instigated some time ago, as the internship scheme has been in place for 25 years, a thorough review of the scheme and initial teacher education to establish longer-term plans for the future of the internship model. This demonstrates extremely clearly the depth of thinking and the involvement of the partnership in future planning. The innovative thinking already emerging indicates the strength of the capacity of the university and partnership to sustain extremely high quality provision.

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

How effective is the provision in securing high quality outcomes for trainees?		1
Trainees' attainment	How well do trainees attain?	1
Factors contributing to trainees' attainment	To what extent do recruitment / selection arrangements support high quality outcomes?	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
	To what extent are available resources used effectively and efficiently?	1
The quality of the provision	To what extent is the provision across the partnership of consistently high quality?	1
Promoting equalities and diversity	To what extent does the provision promote equality of opportunity, value diversity and eliminate harassment and unlawful discrimination?	1

Capacity to improve further and/or sustain high quality

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
How effectively does the management at all levels assess performance in order to improve or sustain high quality?		1
How well does the leadership at all levels anticipate change, and prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives?		1
How effectively does the provider plan and take action for improvement?		1

¹ The criteria for making these graded judgements are in the *Grade criteria for the inspection of ITE 2008-11*; Ofsted November 2009; Reference no: 080128.

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