

Consultation on proposed changes to allow initial teacher training (ITT) in Pupil Referral Units (PRUs). The Education (School Teachers' Qualifications) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2003

Analysis of responses from the consultation document

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Introduction

An on-line consultation was available between 30 March and 25 May 2012 in order to obtain views on proposed amendments to allow initial teacher training (ITT) in Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) from interested parties, including allowing trainee teachers to carry out practical teaching experience for the purpose of an ITT course and trainees on an employment-based teacher training scheme to be employed to teach in this setting from September 2012.

The consultation also requested feedback on initiatives to encourage PRUs and Alternative Provision (AP) Academies to become teaching schools.

Overview

There were 33 responses to the consultation. The majority of responses agreed with the proposals and felt that the changes will give trainees the opportunity to gain significant practical experience and develop a wider range of behavioural management skills. Concerns were raised about how ITT placements might place unreasonable additional pressure on trainees and about PRUs' capacity to support trainees. Concerns were also raised about the detrimental effect this may have on other staff and pupils in PRUs.

The proposed changes:

- 1)** That the school teachers' qualifications regulations should be amended to allow:
 - a)** Practical teaching experience for the purposes of a course of ITT to take place in PRUs
 - b)** Work-based training for the purposes of an employment-based teacher training scheme to take place in PRUs.

- 2)** That PRUs and AP Academies should be encouraged to apply to become teaching schools.

The Responses Type and Number of Responses

33 responses were received to the consultation of which 76% of responses were received on-line and 24% received via email.

Throughout the report percentages are expressed as a measure of those answering each question not as a measure of all respondents.

The organisational breakdown of respondents is as follows:

Category	Responses	Across Consultation
HeadTeacher/teacher:	12	37%
Other:	6	18%
PRU:	5	15%
Union:	5	15%
Local Authority:	4	12%
Teacher Training Provider:	1	3%
Total:	33	100%

The annexe lists all respondents to the consultation, excluding those who expressed a wish for confidentiality.

We would like to thank all those who took the time to respond.

Analysis

When considering the information below the reader should bear in mind that most respondents who agreed with a particular question/proposal did not then go on to make a comment.

Consultees were asked to respond to the following questions:

1a. Do you agree with the proposal to allow practical teaching experience for the purposes of a course of ITT, to take place in PRUs?

There were 33 responses to this question the majority of which agreed with the proposal and more than half of the respondents commented on the proposal.

Options	Responses	
Agree:	25	76%
Disagree:	7	21%
Not sure:	1	3%

There was clear agreement to the proposal to allow practical teaching experience for the purposes of a course of ITT, to take place in PRUs. Many respondents felt that equipping trainee teachers with a wider range of behavioural management skills was essential and that the changes would broaden the opportunities for trainees to work with a wider group of vulnerable pupils. In particular, this would help those with a particular interest in pursuing a career in either special education/alternative education or in different types of educational settings.

A number of respondents, who work in PRUs, said they lost excellent staff because they were unable to complete their training within PRUs. In some cases, these staff had established excellent behaviour management techniques and rapport with some of the most troubled and disadvantaged students. In some cases not being able to carry out ITT in PRUs has put off some potential teachers who would prefer to specialise in alternative provision and do not want to work in mainstream setting.

Many respondents felt that trainees would also need to have substantial training experience in other settings such as mainstream schools and that trainees should only be placed in PRUs where there is already good practice, with support from well trained practitioners working as mentors. Mentors would need to be good role models who could offer high quality supervision. It was also felt that tutors and moderators will need additional training to understand the complexities of working in PRUs and that only those trainees who show the potential to be outstanding should be offered PRU placements.

Some respondents felt that vulnerable pupils in PRUs should be taught by experienced teachers. There were also concerns that ITT placements in PRUs may place unreasonable, additional pressure on trainees, staff and pupils and that PRUs might not have the capacity to support trainees during placements particularly as some will have limited curricular and subject expertise.

1b. Do you agree with the proposal to allow work-based training for the purposes of an employment-based teacher training scheme to take place in PRUs?

There were 33 responses to this question the majority of which agreed with the proposal and more than half of the respondents commented on the proposal.

Options	Responses	
Agree:	26	79%
Disagree:	6	18%
Not sure:	1	3%

There was clear agreement to allow work-based training for the purposes of an employment-based teacher training scheme to take place in PRUs. Respondents again felt that trainees should have the opportunity to experience PRU work-based training in order to give them greater understanding of working with a wider range of students and develop their behaviour management skills.

Some respondents thought that the proposal will help to retain many high quality and skilled support staff that are currently lost to teacher training in mainstream schools and that allowing in-house training would improve recruiting and retaining of the right staff. It was also felt that it would help to raise the profile of PRUs within the teaching community.

Conversely, others felt that it would be hard to retain trainees in PRUs as many would be unprepared for the range of extreme and complex difficulties that many pupils in PRUs have.

The point was made that there may be a shortage of PRU placements and that longer term employment-based training in PRUs should be offered to those trainees wanting to specialise in alternative provision.

It was also suggested that before implementation, clear criteria for accreditation, pilot moderation and support will be required. It was felt that the SEN model may be a useful model to follow – using good practice that has been identified by Ofsted. Also, consideration needs to be given to the future employability of these trainees if they move into mainstream schools.

2 How can we encourage PRUs and AP Academies to apply to become teaching schools?

There were 26 responses to this question with many useful comments on how we can encourage PRUs and AP Academies to apply to become teaching schools.

Some felt that there is a need to develop key leaders, good contacts with strong local/national partnerships including mainstream schools and that encouragement is needed from local authorities by providing support and training.

It was also felt that supplying additional funding and resources will be important as well as highlighting the expertise that exists in PRUs; such as knowledge of the Personal, Social, Emotional and Behavioural curriculum and effective management of behaviour, with clear guidelines and communications needed, including regular support from those experienced in delivering ITT.

Some respondents had concerns that the responsibilities of teaching schools will lead to additional workload within PRUs or schools involved, but in particular on the teaching schools. Concerns were also raised about the quality of support, training and development that trainees would be able to access.

Department's comments

Allowing ITT to take place in PRUs will help to address the current situation whereby PRUs are disadvantaged in relation to the training, recruitment and retention of staff who wish to qualify as teachers. This will also allow trainees from mainstream schools to benefit from the excellent training that the best PRUs can offer.

The Regulatory changes will allow PRUs to offer school-centred ITT programmes which are designed and delivered by groups of schools and colleges and to bid for places on the School Direct programme. This will allow PRUs to recruit trainees and train them in partnership with accredited providers of ITT.

Next Steps

As the vast majority of respondents supported the proposals, the Department for Education will proceed with the proposals to allow ITT in PRUs, including allowing trainee teachers to carry out practical teaching experience for the purpose of an ITT course and trainees on an employment-based teacher training scheme to be employed to teach in this setting.

This will require changes to the Education (School Teachers' Qualifications) (England) Regulations 2003, which will come into force on the 1 September 2012; subject to the Parliamentary process.

The *Governor's Guide to the law*, which is available on the Department's website, will be updated in September 2012 to reflect these changes.

List of Respondents to the consultation

Adept Education Association
Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL)
Barking and Dagenham Tuition Centre
Beachcroft School
Bradford District PRU
Carshalton High School for Girls
Campbell, S (PRU)
Chatsmore Catholic High School
Clark, A (PRU)
Danesgate Community, City of York Council
Delapre Learning Centre
Dudley School
Durstun, B
Hampshire County Council
Hardy, K (PRU)
Hospital Education Service Outreach Team
Kulas, S (PRU)
Links ESC (Herts)
National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT)
National Association of School Based Teacher Trainers (NASBTT)
National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT)
National Union of Teachers (NUT)
Orchard Centre (PRU)
School Support Services Ltd
Springwell Community School (Barnsley)
St Mary's Centre (PRU)
The Communication Trust
Tinker, E