What do you see as the subject area’s main achievements in its provision across learning, teaching and research supervision over the review period? Are there any initiatives and/or areas of good practice that you would like particularly to draw to the attention of the Review Panel?

The University of Exeter is recognised as one of the top initial teacher training providers, as reflected in our position of third out of 73 HE providers in the Good Teacher Training Guide (GTTG) (2009). It is a large provider, with a TDA quota of 179 primary trainees and 418 secondary trainees in 2009-10. In addition it attracts some 15-20 international students per year. Exeter is a research-intensive Graduate School of Education. In 2008-9, more research income in grants was secured by staff with a large PGCE commitment than by the rest of the school. This indicates the success of the school’s strategy to develop research capacity in ITE. The understanding and insight gained through research is integral to the PGCE programmes.

The main achievements of our ITE provision are the outstanding training provided across the partnership (of university and school-led training) and the resulting high attainment of our trainees. This in turn leads to high rates of employment for our trainees. Evidence can be found in:

- our external examiners’ reports
- our annual Comparative Data Report
- the NQT Survey Report
- TDA Benchmarking Profiles
- OFSTED inspection reports

Our Comparative Data Report uses TDA and internal data to compare our performance in recruitment, completion, retention and employment for 2005-09 against the sector average and against Cambridge (an aspirational benchmark choice) and Plymouth (our regional comparator). This indicates that in 2007-08, 90% of our Primary trainees and 91% of our Secondary trainees were awarded QTS, compared to a sector average of 89% and 85% respectively. We consistently perform better than Plymouth though not always as well as Cambridge (who have fewer trainees in shortage subjects).

What is distinctive about the subject provision at Exeter in comparison with other HE providers? How well placed do you consider the subject area to be in the national context as regards student recruitment, curriculum development, learning and teaching initiatives? What contacts does the subject area maintain with its peers elsewhere in these areas?
Our PGCE programmes are distinctive in a number of ways:

**Primary provision**
The PGCE Primary programme is studied over 38 weeks, of which 18 are based in school. The programme is delivered through five module blocks: Curriculum Studies 1 and Curriculum Studies 2 (which cover all primary subjects as defined by the Rose Review 2008), the Professional Studies module, the School-based work module, and the Specialist modules. All students take the Curriculum Studies, Professional Studies, and School-based work modules, and select one from the Specialist modules. Specialisms are offered in English, Humanities, Mathematics, Music, Science, Modern Languages and Early Years. The primary specialisms, unique to Exeter, mean that a third of our primary PGCE quota is being trained in shortage subject areas. From 2010 we shall add Art as a new specialism. Trainees are recruited to their specialist subjects and trained to be curriculum leaders, thus ensuring that they have good subject knowledge for this task.

**Secondary provision**
The PGCE Secondary programme is studied over 36 weeks, of which 24 are based in school. The programme is delivered through three module blocks. All students take the Professional Studies and School-Based Work modules, and select one of the Main Subject modules: Art, Citizenship with Humanities, Dance, Design and Technology, English with Drama, English with Media, Geography, History, ICT, Mathematics, French, German, Spanish, Mandarin, MFL with Primary Specialism, Physical Education, PE with Primary Specialism, Religious Education, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Science with Psychology. Students undertake a limited period of school-based work during the Autumn term, and an extended period of school-based work during the Spring and Summer terms. Our secondary provision is distinctive in that we offer a wide range of subjects, including many shortage subjects, which is unusual for a research-intensive university.

**Student Recruitment**
In Primary, the high number of applicants allows us to be selective, recruiting students with good qualifications, relevant knowledge, understanding and prior experience. As recruitment is via the specialisms, the specialist tutor oversees the selection and interview procedure. The GTTG puts us in first place out of all HEI providers of primary ITE for our intake of high quality trainees (2i or above) with 87% in this category compared to a sector average of 63%. This almost certainly represents an even greater achievement than it appears, as our Primary PGCE recruits to Science, Maths and Music specialisms where it is harder to recruit high-calibre trainees.

In Secondary, all non-shortage subjects aim to recruit candidates with 2i degrees or above. Shortage subject tutors will consider those with 2is or above and will look at other relevant qualifications and experience. The GTTG puts us in fifth place nationally for high quality entrants, with 71% at 2i or above compared to a sector average of 57%. This is a considerable achievement as our quota is twice as large as the other providers in the top five with many more shortage subject places.

**Support for BME trainees**
Whilst we attract few ethnic minority trainees (reflecting the demography of the South West) we have an excellent retention rate for those we do recruit. This is in part due to our nationally recognized support service for our BME trainees who receive advice and support from our dedicated Race Equality Resource Officer throughout their training and into the first year of their teaching.

**Curriculum (teaching, learning and development)**
The most recent NQT survey (2006-07) shows Exeter trainees consistently rating the quality of their training significantly more positively than the national average. In each of the three global quality judgements, overall quality of training, overall quality of assessment and feedback and overall quality of
support and guidance, the percentage of former Exeter trainees rating their training as ‘very good’ or ‘good’ was higher than the sector average (90% c.f 86%; 87% c.f 78% and 85% c.f 79% respectively). This endorses our belief that our subject tutors have a high level of expertise, many with national and international reputations in their field.

Notable features of the Primary programme include a humanities week, an arts week and a specialist week where trainees take part in activities focussed on their specific specialism (eg science trainees spend time in non-traditional settings such as the Eden Project and humanities trainees undertake a European field trip). The revised Professional Studies programme is research-led and at M level. Courses are regularly updated in line with new research and government initiatives: eg the revision of the Curriculum Subject modules to reflect the Rose Review and the Williams report.

Within Secondary, each main subject module addresses subject specific issues, pedagogy and requirements for teaching. Course leaders have the autonomy to teach the subject modules in the way that is most appropriate for both the subject and the trainee group, within an agreed programme structure. Standards are high, with all tutors expected to deliver a course which is innovative and distinctive. The programme is constantly reviewed to be at the forefront of new initiatives. Thus in 08-09 D&T trainees were given level 2 Diploma experience and this is to be extended this year to ICT trainees.

There is a system of tracking progress and individualised provision from recruitment to completion. This is done through an Initial Needs Analysis, Directed Tasks, Action Plans, Weekly Development Meetings (on placement), Reflections on Achievement and Progress and Formative Reports.

**The Exeter Model**

Underpinning our training is a distinctive model: the Exeter Model of Teacher Education. This is designed to enable students to meet the Professional Standards for Teachers: Qualified Teacher Status (TDA, 2007). Students are encouraged to develop an understanding of the diversity of learners and the complexities of the education process, including different social and organisational structures of education. The Exeter Model uses individual training tools (agendas) to develop skills of critical analysis and reflection about specific aspects of classroom practice. Our provision is also unusual in that it incorporates two levels of supervision for trainees in schools: a ‘principal school/subject tutor’, 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.

**Partnership with schools**

As a large provider training over 600 students in a predominantly rural region, we recruit schools across a wide geographical area, from East Dorset to West Cornwall. We work with some 270 schools, ranging from two-teacher rural primary schools to large city secondary schools, including National Challenge schools. Whilst we recruit internationally, we are a major provider of teacher education for those living in the South West. In order to accommodate this geographical spread of partner schools we have developed distinctive training systems, by, for example, running mentor training sessions in regional clusters. Representatives from partner schools are active in our Teacher Partnership Committee and Teacher Panels. School staff are supported by University Visiting Tutors (UVTs), all specialists in the wider context of education and with relevant subject or phase expertise. The UVT is responsible for monitoring trainee progress through their school placements.

**Assessment and examining**

We have rigorous systems in place for assessment, examining and moderation for both PGCE programmes. Academic assignments are assessed using university M level criteria and a sample is double marked and cross-moderated across subjects. A team of External Examiners, one for each subject, plus a Chief External Examiner for the each programme, visit in July to observe students in
school, to moderate the consistency of judgements made across the programme, and to ensure that academic assignments are marked appropriately.

**Internationalisation**
In line with the University’s strategy, the PGCE programmes have focussed on internationalising the curriculum, with in-service sessions on diversity. PE trainees act as ‘language buddies’ for overseas Masters students, there is a very popular student exchange with the State University of New York, and we regularly host educators from overseas.

**Links/contacts with other ITE providers**
We maintain regular contact with other providers at a local and national level and are part of a SW consortium looking at the QTS standards in relation to the new OFSTED framework. We have chaired the regional Partnership Development Schools (PDS) TDA initiative throughout its 3 year contract and are actively engaged in forming a regional ‘Beyond Partnership’ group to respond to the TDA and to maintain the positive links with other providers that PDS encouraged. Many tutors are external examiners for other providers. All tutors attend subject conferences and many attend international education conferences to report on their research.

**Summary of features which make our provision distinctive:**
- Research led teaching, from tutors who are national leaders in their field
- Recruitment to specialisms on the primary PGCE, preparing future subject leaders
- Wide range of subjects offered at secondary level, including shortage subjects
- Innovative practice on both programmes, reflecting local and national priorities
- Explicit theoretical framework underpinning the Exeter Model of ITE
- Excellent partnership provision, supported by teacher panels
- High calibre of trainees on entry (2i or above)
- Employment rates above the national average
- High standards achieved in assignments, assessed at M level
- Both programmes supported by research-led Professional Studies Programmes
- Specific support provided for BME trainees

**How does the subject, where appropriate, relate to its parent School in the context of procedures, management and quality enhancement? How has the subject responded to the University agenda for enhancement as contained in the latter’s education strategy?**

Our systems of module and programme review ensure that improvement planning identifies priorities and sets measurable targets. Every module leader provides an *Annual Module Evaluation and Review* based on the trainees’ evaluations, school based work evaluations, the external examiner’s report and other data. Action points are set for the coming academic year. Programme Directors prepare an *Annual Programme Evaluation and Review* with action plans. These feed directly into the Self Evaluation Document for OFSTED and are reviewed in the following year, when new targets are set. These iterative management systems enable us to track action taken and monitor effectiveness. The *Annual Module Evaluations* and *Annual Programme Evaluations* are then scrutinised at the Annual PGCE Programme Review Meeting and then by the Graduate School’s Teaching and Learning Committee.

The Head of Initial Teacher Education is a member of the School’s Executive Management Group, where decisions around strategic direction and resource allocation are made. The ITE programmes have responded to the University’s education strategy by:

- Improving the recruitment and retention of highly talented students:
- Continuous review of our admissions criteria (e.g. review of the use of equivalence tests to ensure improved entry level qualifications)
- Continuous monitoring of student progress with an effective cause for concern process

Maintaining top quality programmes informed by research
- For 2009/10 the Primary PGCE Professional Studies Module will be at M level, and taught by research active staff
- The introduction of the Teacher Education Research Fellow (TERF) scheme ensures the maintenance of research active teachers for Secondary

Encouraging students to develop as active learners
- the staff on the PGCE programmes are increasingly making use of virtual learning tools to enrich the student’s learning experience
- PGCE students take responsibility for their own learning through the use of Action Plans, Reflections on Achievement and Progress, with many expected to achieve the QTS standards early and move into enrichment

Ensuring that administrative systems and educational structures are efficient, effective and transparent
- the School undertook a review of its admissions processes and centralised the School-based admissions function, including detailed reporting
- the Partnership Office is developing a placements database which will streamline the work with Partnership schools

Equipping staff with appropriate training and support
- whole school staff development sessions focussing on internationalisation
- PGCE review and development sessions extending this focus in 09-10 to look at the teaching of EAL and personalised learning

Producing an educational environment that emphasises health and social wellbeing, consideration to others, tolerance and social diversity
- dedicated BME advisor and policies on race equality
- effective tutor support for all trainees

What are the principal challenges currently facing the subject area? Are there any implications in these challenges for academic standards, quality and enhancement?

**Current priorities and challenges:**

A particular challenge for providers in the South West is the low BME population. This makes recruitment of BME trainees difficult and provides limited experience for trainees in schools. We intend to work closely in 09-10 with our marketing officer and Race Equality Resources Officer to look at ways of attracting more BME applicants to our programmes, linking with the focus on internationalisation.

The NQT survey (07-08) indicates that our trainees feel less well prepared to teach children with English as an Additional Language than trainees from other providers. This will be a focus of our training this year, with the provision of resources and in-service training.

A national priority is the recruitment of more men into primary education. In 08-09 we held an information session for men interested in primary and appointed two male mentors from local primary schools to support male trainees. This will be developed in 09-10 with more sessions and support.

A final challenge for PGCE programmes is the recruitment of new staff who are both experienced in teaching their subject in schools and excellent researchers at an international level. This has been addressed to some extent through the TERF programme, but remains problematic.
How are teaching and research supervision staff encouraged in their personal and collective development towards the maintenance and improvement of the student learning experience? Is such encouragement underpinned by a structured School staff development plan? What assistance could be offered through other University units?

The quality of teaching is monitored at whole school level through a system of peer review of teaching. Identified needs are supported through professional development provision on an individual basis. All tutors are given a personal budget to support professional development activities, such as attendance at subject/research conferences, subject training courses and subject related resources. New University tutors are supported with an induction programme, including, for example, shadowing experienced staff on school visits. New TERFs have their own support network and teaching mentors.

In order to free tutors to focus on teaching and research the School has appointed high level administrative staff to provide programme support. The ITE administrator and Partnership Director are both key members of the ITE management team.

Are there any other issues that you would like to discuss with the Review Panel?