Mapping the East of England
Museums, Galleries, Archives
and Libraries in Initial Teacher Training

A report for MLA East of England
Executive summary
July 2006

Nikki Gamble
Write Away Consultancy
Contact: nhamble@aol.com
Tel: 01376 324099
Full Contents

Executive Summary

1 Project origin, aims and objectives
   1.1 Context
   1.2 Aims

2. Project programme
   2.1. Methods

3. Project findings
   3.1 Existing links between museums and ITT
      3.1.1 Evidence from ITT
      3.1.2 Evidence from museums
      3.1.3 Evidence from the trainees
   3.2 Evaluation of links between museums and ITT
      3.2.1 Evidence from ITT
      3.2.2 Evidence from museums
      3.2.2 Evidence from trainees
   3.3 Future links
      3.3.1 Evidence from ITT
      3.3.2 Evidence from museums
      3.3.3 Evidence from trainees

4. Examples of current activity

5. Conclusions and recommendations

If you would like full copy of the report please contact

Jenny Duke
Regional Learning Officer
T: 01284 731741
E: jenny.duke@mlaeastofengland.org.uk

MLA East of England
110 Northgate Street
Bury St. Edmunds
Suffolk
IP33 1HP
Executive Summary

The Brief
The aims of the project were to:

- Describe existing links between ITT providers and museums and archives in the region
- Make some evaluation of impact of current links on trainee teacher professional development
- Make recommendations for future links

Existing Links between Museums/Archives and ITT (HEIs)
This survey found that links exist between museums/archives and all HEIs in the region. For example,

- DeMontfort/Cecil Higgins/Bedfordshire SLS
- UEA/English Heritage, Sainsbury Centre/Norfolk SLS
- Anglia Ruskin/Essex Record Office, Chelmsford & Essex Regiment Museum
- Cambridge Faculty of Ed/ Fitzwilliam/Kettle’s Yard/Museum of East Anglian Life
- Hertfordshire/ Hertfordshire SLS

However, these links are idiosyncratic being based on relationships between individual tutors and museum educators rather than being embedded at an institutional level.

Examples of current activity in Museums and libraries
A broad range of activity currently takes place:

- Working with objects and artefacts
  - Developing thinking skills - observational skills, recording skills, deductive skills, hypothesising skills
- Taught sessions in the museum
  - Set sessions
  - Negotiated and tailor-made sessions
- Learning about organising and planning museum visits
- Loan boxes for trainees on placements
- Outreach sessions in the training institution
- Research in the museum
- Developing resources for use in the museums
- Trainees researching, organising and running sessions to support core curriculum areas
- Evaluating the museum as a place of learning through independent visits
- Learning to use online archives
- Web resources
- Planned summer school activity
- Students observing and helping with pupil sessions in the galleries
- Students helping with collaborative projects developed between the faculty and the museum
- Publications given to institution library

Issues emerging from the mapping exercise
Museums, archives are keen to engage with teacher training. This includes local and independent museums as well as the hub museums.

Although diverse activity can be identified taking place across the region, involvement of museums, libraries, galleries in ITT doesn’t reach its potential in most HEIs. Where museums and libraries services are involved in ITT, they
frequently report dissatisfaction with what they are able to achieve in the time allocation. Residual attitudes that partnership with the cultural sector is an unnecessary luxury still persist. A typical view expressed by respondents in ITT is that the inclusion of museums, libraries and cultural activity would mean replacing existing content rather than adding value to existing provision. Though there are exceptions, generally museums are still seen as sites for curriculum specific activity, predominantly art and history.

The range of activity is broad but the key to successful practice is a respectful and established partnership where it is acknowledged that there are benefits to both parties. Where partnerships are more established the pedagogy is more clearly articulated.

Trainees’ responses clearly indicated that the value placed on museum education and more widely on out of school learning is directly linked to the opportunities they had for embedded practice. Those with no, or minimal, input could not see the relevance of museums and galleries to teacher training. Conversely, those with substantial experience, especially where pedagogies are explicitly taught, were able to clearly articulate a rationale for the input from the cultural sector.

HEIs may get more involved if a local rather than regional approach to building partnerships is adopted. A positive way forward is to focus on the Excellence And Enjoyment agenda and to map activity on to the current, revised teaching standards. This provides the scope for involvement that extends beyond the ‘add-on’ approach.

Specific issues raised by respondents:
- More involvement at the planning stage
- Visits need to be followed up with work in school
- More focus on museum skills rather than subjects
- More sustained and embedded involvement
- Including some of this activity in trainees assessed work
- Importance of rapport with partners
- More involvement in planning and running modules
- More guidance on how museums can be used in schools
- Visits seen as an integral part of the course not an extra
- Importance of faculty/school wide approach

Models for Future Provision
There are several models of existing practice in the region that could be used for advocacy e.g.
- Faculty of Education, Cambridge/ University of East Anglian Life – creation of resources in the museum
- DeMontfort University/ Bedfordshire SLS - cultural diversity
- UEA/ English Heritage – inspirational spaces

Additionally a partnership model could be developed to allow for deeper work with ITT providers rather than to concentrate efforts on development of activities. This could be achieved through establishing a joint research activity with students as researchers.
Main Recommendations

Development of a regional partnership model and strategy.

The establishment of sustainable partnerships is the most important key to success. As trainees are the main beneficiaries, partnership should be centred on the ITT provider. Development of local rather than networks are likely to be more manageable and effective. Establishing partnership is challenging given the increased work loads in HEIs A mechanism for brokering and sustaining partnerships is needed and MLA is the agency best placed to take on this role. It is recommended that a joint research project with MLA East and one or two HEIs be developed.

The greatest impact, in terms of the number of trainees involved, will be achieved by working initially with HEIs rather than SCITT or other routes. HEIs are likely to present the greatest challenge with regard to establishing partnership and embedding practice across the school or faculty, however with the right model and negotiation this an achievable aspiration.

There are strong existing partnerships in the region which have a clear sense of purpose and direction. MLAs efforts may best be focused on establishing partnerships with HEIs that have had some involvement but would benefit from support in order to move towards more embedded practice.

There are several significant, medium sized museums in the region that currently work with teachers and have expressed an interest in becoming involved in ITT, but are uncertain how to take this work forward. Partnership networks could support these museums and help them become more involved.

There is insufficient capacity within different services to provide for all trainees unless a multi-agency approach is adopted. Local networks/working groups might include representatives from cultural and arts sectors. The possible constituency of these groups would include:

- HEI/Provider
- Trainee representatives
- Museum
- Archives
- Arts (Local Authority arts officer)
- Literature Development (Literature Development officer)
- Partner school
- Heritage agencies (English Heritage, National Trust)

Due to constraints of secondary curriculum it may be best in the first instance to focus efforts on primary courses. There is more scope in undergraduate courses but postgraduate courses could also be involved. It is desirable to establish links with primary course leaders in identified institutions. Currently primary course leaders may or may not know about the involvement of the cultural sector in subject specific areas of the course.

For partnerships to work there has to be a common purpose/goal. A research oriented model could appeal to HEIs.

The mapping exercise shows that greatest impact occurs when trainees have opportunities to work with pupils – Examples include

- DeMontfort and Bedfordshire SLSL, Literature Matters
- Faculty of Education, East Anglian Life
Priority should be given to activity that involves trainees and pupils working together. A research focus involving trainees working with pupils in schools could enable this to happen.

A further recommendation is to consider providers as focal point for training in partner schools. An HEI focused conference showcasing the research carried out be students as well as advocacy for other cultural sector activity could be used to build a community of learners/researchers centred on the HEI.

Plan a regional showcasing event for providers/trainees to bring together work carried out by local working groups and the hub in order to develop a regional focus for activity.

Pairing of institutions for evaluation (e.g. DeMontfort and Cambridge, Literature Matters evaluation) is a successful way of disseminating good practice and extending involvement, and for encouraging reflection. This could be extended to a joint museums/HEI research model.

Capacity and confidence building in museums and libraries is needed if work in ITT is to move forward.

- Include effective practice from the regions
- Look outside the region to extend practices
- Workshops run by providers – based on existing courses