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Introduction to Partnership

We welcome our partner colleges, schools, training organisations and prison education partners to our Post Graduate Certificate of Education: Post-Compulsory Education and Training (PGCE PCET) courses, which train both in-service and pre-service teachers and lecturers.

In addition, we have a collaborative partnership with Solihull College who deliver the PGCE PCET and a Diploma in Education and Training (DET) course.

All of the information in this Partners’ Handbook is relevant to all Mentors supporting Trainees; irrespective of whether they are a pre-service or in-service trainee.

We know that Mentors play a crucial role in supporting the Trainees whilst on placement. This is in terms of supporting their development as teachers and also in the Trainees’ understanding and appreciation of the wider role of teaching, including assessment activities and ongoing course development and quality processes. This understanding has led to the development of this handbook which outlines the activities that Professional Development Tutors (PDTs), Mentors and Trainees will engage in as part of the partnership, and in the training and professional development of in-service and pre-service teachers in the post-compulsory sector. Our intention is that this information will enable all our partners to have a holistic understanding of the course and a more specific knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder.

Birmingham City University (BCU) works with partner organisations to provide placements that deliver a supportive, developmental framework with progressively more challenging learning opportunities. In the Faculty, we develop Trainees’ thinking and understanding of the nature of a college, school, prison or training organisation within the community, including the associated institution and developmental issues, which any large organisation must encounter. Trainees are introduced to the concept of profiling their own achievements, setting targets for their future development, and planning ways to ensure that they meet, and achieve, the requirements of the Professional Standards and those as set out in the Minimum Core for literacy, language and numeracy for the PCET sector.

Partnership Responsibilities

We would like to draw your attention to the Partnership Agreement document which identifies the responsibilities of BCU and the partnership institution in supporting PCET Trainees on placement (see Appendix 1). This agreement is normally signed by the Head of Service or a senior manager acting on their behalf. We need to have an up to date agreement in place before Trainees can start their placement activities.

We welcome the involvement of partnership colleges, schools, training organisations and prisons in the continuous cycle of development and improvement and encourage feedback, formally and informally. In addition to annual placement evaluations and an invitation to lead Mentors and managers to be part of the Strategic Leadership Committee you are welcome to contact any member of the PCET team should you require further information. Please see contact details on page 3.
Roles and Responsibilities during Teaching Practice

These will vary according to the placement, but the following general guidelines should be useful.

Duties of the trainee in placement

At Birmingham City University our aim is to develop highly skilled teachers who are:

Committed to:
- Being outstanding teachers
- Creating a vibrant learning environment in which all learners will thrive
- Addressing the needs of all learners and their communities
- Taking responsibility for their own professional development and learning
- Developing excellent subject and pedagogical knowledge

Creative in:
- Engaging, inspiring and motivating all learners
- Informing learning and teaching through research and evidence
- Overcoming disadvantage and barriers to learning
- Reflecting on the impact of their professional practice

Confident to:
- Act as leaders of learning
- Respond flexibly and proactively to change
- Communicate effectively with all partners in learning
- Accept responsibility and be accountable for their professional actions and decisions.

Trainees are not expected to be fully competent teachers until towards the end of their training and they need to experience the agonies and triumphs of learning to teach, preparing and planning, organising work, evaluating and assessing in a supportive and challenging teaching environment. The course has been designed so that, from the beginning of their training, Trainees will be developing their skills in lesson planning, the setting of aims, objectives and outcomes, learning theories and techniques, and so on. This experience will develop throughout the course and aims to develop a degree of expertise in our trainees across the broad skills base required of teacher in post-compulsory or lifelong learning sector.

A summary of our expectations of Trainees includes:

Trainees are expected to attend all taught sessions in the faculty/college and carefully read all the information they are given to prepare themselves for their placement.

Trainees must attend timetabled tutorials in the faculty/college and prepare for these.

Following the initial meeting with their Professional Development Tutor (PDT), trainees should work towards meeting their agreed targets and accumulate appropriate evidence.

Trainees should file their evidence towards achieving the Professional and Minimum Core Standards, which can be found in the PDP documentation and Skills Audit, in a loose-leaf binder and systematically accumulate evidence from a range of sources towards the achievement of the Professional Standards.

Trainees should ask Mentors and Professional Development Tutors (PDTs) to sign the evidence in their portfolio on a regular basis, and are responsible for ensuring that their portfolio follows university/college requirements, is kept up-to-date and is available for scrutiny by their Professional Development Tutors (PDTs) and Mentors at all times.
Trainees should act upon advice given and targets set by PDTs, Mentors and tutors and must follow guidelines for the professional behaviour expected by colleges, schools, prisons or training organisations.

They should:
- Arrive at their placement in plenty of time, and not just as the bell goes/class begins. Good attendance and punctuality facilitate a calm and well-focused start and help establish the right working environment;
- be well organised and plan ahead;
- act in a professional manner in all areas of the school, college, organisation, or prison;
- be particularly mindful of the need for confidentiality, using tact and diplomacy at all times;
- seek and act upon advice. Trainees are not expected to know everything but are expected to ask for guidance;
- be flexible;
- dress appropriately, observing and following dress codes;
- become familiar with the organisation’s routines, procedures and policies, such as those regarding Safeguarding and Health & Safety;
- be able to negotiate appropriate learning opportunities for themselves;
- keep up-to-date with their subject(s) knowledge, ensuring that they are competent in the delivery of required information for their learners;
- be responsible for their dealings with students/pupils, including the passing on of information to the appropriate party and being accountable for their actions;
- work well in a variety of teams, contribute and take their turn;
- attend all appropriate meetings (pastoral, subject, staff, parents and/or employers as appropriate);
- communicate clearly and appropriately with students, peers and colleagues;
- maintain a sense of humour and proportion;
- develop healthy and appropriate working relationships with students/pupils and staff;
- learn to defuse difficult situations, by maintaining a wide view of all situations and avoiding confrontation.

Trainees are responsible for ensuring that their portfolio follows university/college requirements, is kept up-to-date, and is available for scrutiny by Professional Development Tutors (PDTs) and Mentors at all times.

Trainees should ask Mentors and Professional Development Tutors (PDTs) to sign the evidence in their portfolio on a regular basis.

Trainees should act upon advice given and targets set by PDTs, Mentors and tutors.
The Role of the Professional Development Tutor (PDT)

Each Trainee is allocated to a university/college-based Professional Development Tutor (PDT) who is responsible for monitoring the Trainee’s progress and providing support and guidance to the Trainee throughout the course. PDTs may be allocated in alignment, where possible, with the Trainee’s curriculum specialism and/or the geographical location of the placement.

The relationship between Trainees and their PDT involves holding termly tutorials and three profile meetings, over the duration of the course. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss the Trainee’s progress in working towards: the achievement of the Professional Standards; development of Minimum Core Standards; course assignments; progression in placement. These meetings are documented on the relevant paperwork, which all Trainees are provided with. PDTs will draw on information gathered during these meetings in the writing of the trainee’s reference.

PDTs will:

- Following an initial teaching subject audit and needs analysis, which is found in the Skills Audit document, agree and monitor targets and action points for the Trainee;

- During termly tutorials and using the Tutorial Record Forms, agree and monitor targets and action points to help the Trainee achieve the relevant Professional and Minimum Core Standards;

- Liaise with Mentors to ensure that appropriate support has been/is being provided in relation to the ongoing development of mentoring skills and awareness of BCU expectations and procedures;

- Assist in the discussion held between Trainee and Mentor the opportunities for the Trainee to teach across a range of levels and on a variety of courses, where possible.

- Work with each placement organisation and respective Mentor to maintain the quality of provision and the effectiveness of support for Trainees;

- Liaise with Mentors and support them in their supervision and assessment of Trainees;

- Observe two lessons taught by the Trainee in a joint observation with their Mentor (staged at the beginning and end of the course/placement) and participate in the feedback discussion that follows;

- Liaise with Mentors in raising and resolving Cause for Concern issues;

- Where resolution of issues are not possible, PDTs are responsible for collating evidence to put forward to a ‘Breakdown of Placement’ panel, including evidence supplied by the Mentor;

- Recommend and assist in the organisation of visits by moderators and external examiners;

- Compile a reference for Trainees towards the end of their course;

- Monitor attendance and identify Trainees who need to be withdrawn.
The Role of the Mentor

The mentor will typically be based in the workplace or placement venue of the Trainee and will be qualified as a teacher within their own context. It is intended that the mentor will support and assess the trainee during their teaching placement.

Mentoring requirements relating to the Department for Education (DfE) or assessment of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) do not apply on this course.

However guidelines, as set out by the sector, stipulate that:

The Mentor will normally be expected to:

- Attend a Mentor Briefing session and undertake Mentor Training (see below for further details);
- Be observed teaching so Trainees can learn from experienced professionals;
- Meet the Trainee regularly, give support and guidance regarding curriculum issues, planning and target setting;
- Provide advice on teaching and learning in their field and related matters and encourage reflective thinking and self-analysis;
- Carry out up to eight teaching observations, two of which will normally be observed jointly with the Trainee’s PDT;
- Give oral and written feedback to the Trainee on the outcome of the observation, using the Professional and Minimum Core Standards, as set out on the Personal Development Planning Pack (PDP);
- Record this feedback using the university’s observation feedback forms;
- Complete the three reviews for each trainee at set points in the course;
- Alert the Trainee’s PDT as and when any causes for concern occur;
- Where necessary, provide supporting evidence to go forward to a ‘Breakdown of Placement’ panel where concerns regarding the Trainees behaviour in placement are unable to be resolved.

Mentor Training:

This training is provided for free and is presented as an online learning package for you to access at your own convenience, whether this be in one sitting, or over a short period of time (e.g. 20 minutes a day for one week).

Each section contains support materials and activities designed to help you understand what it is to be a Mentor. This package may be described as 'entry level' and will take between one and two hours to complete, including the short test at the end of the course. Once completed (with a score of 75% or above being gained) a certificate is released to acknowledge your completion of the course.

The course itself is about the dispositions, attitudes and skills required of mentors. It will encourage you to reflect on what it is to be a mentor in a general sense, what knowledge, skills and attitudes mentors need and how your context relates to that.

We hope this training will encourage you not only to work with mentees and share your knowledge and experience with the next generation, but also help you to think about your own professional development and where you might develop further.

Mentor Briefings:

Initial Mentor briefings are offered on a variety of dates, days and times to accommodate the needs of the Mentors. Once registered as a Mentor supporting a trainee, you will be contacted and invited to take part in briefing. It is expected that all Mentors will attend a briefing session in order to be appropriately equipped to fulfil the role. Where institutions support a large number of Trainees, a briefing session will be offered on-site.
This briefing will provide you with information relating to the specific paperwork, interaction with standards, monitoring and feedback expected of the Mentor role, and allow you opportunity to ask questions of the University team, and discuss issues/share ideas with fellow mentors.

Regular updates are provided for existing Mentors and a number of university-based CPD activities will also be offered to Mentors who wish to develop their knowledge and skills further. There are also opportunities for Mentors to undertake further professional development as part of studies at Masters Level.

Professional Relationship
Following the guidance given above, it is expected that Trainees and their Mentors will enjoy the benefits of a full and professional working relationship. This is considered to be very much part of the Trainees’ development and progress as a teacher. It may be that, on occasion, Mentors need to provide support and guidance in aspects of personal and professional conduct and this should be done with sensitivity. Trainees should, likewise, regard this as part of their training and be ready to listen and act upon such guidance. The need for careful and appropriate communication is vital through the Mentor/Trainee relationship.

We would anticipate that, should any issues arise, Mentors and Trainees will discuss them appropriately, seeking to resolve the matter as quickly as possible. Should it be necessary, there are two policies that the University has in place that may be used in specific circumstances. These are the Breakdown of Placement and the Fitness for Practice policies and procedures. We would hope that they will only be used as a last resort.

Professional Standards
Whether you are an experienced mentor or just starting out in your mentoring career, guidance is always available to you in supporting both the trainee teacher under your supervision and your own professional development.

As a subject specialist in your own area we do not presume to tell you how the trainee should be shaped towards becoming an outstanding teacher in their subject area. We are, however, governed by a set of professional standards that all trainees need to meet in order to complete their course, and to illustrate that the required skills, knowledge and attitudes pertaining to teaching in lifelong learning have been demonstrated.

In order to help you better understand what is expected of the trainee across the 20 professional standards we have provided you with a series of documents, available online at the PCET Partnership website.

These include specific guidance on how each standard might be achieved, and include: -

- Initial Guidance for users of the Education and Training Foundation Professional Standards;
- Formative Feedback Guidance created by BCU.

While further information might be garnered from the following documents:

- Key Topic Briefings (e.g. role of tutor; role of mentor and a year in the life of a mentor);
- PCET Partners’ Newsletter (containing good practice ideas from mentors within the partnership)

The information and guidance offered within the above documents is in addition to the mentor briefing sessions and online training offered by the PCET Partnership team. If you require any further advice or guidance. Please do not hesitate to contact your trainee’s PDT or a member of the PCET course.

Although your guidance and understanding of the professional standards will be useful at all times to the trainees, it will be of greatest impact in their preparation for, carrying out of and reflection upon observed lessons. Information regarding lesson observations can be found on page 11.
Partnership Arrangements
The Faculty of Health, Education and Life Sciences at Birmingham City University is keen to establish partnerships with education and training providers across the West Midlands. The Partnership arrangements are formalised by the completion of the Partnership Agreement (see Appendix 1 on pages 26 for an example of the agreement).

Partnership Management
The Partnership is overseen by the Strategic Leadership Committee. This committee is chaired by a colleague from a partner college, along with other representatives from across the partnership, works closely with the Programme Director. Termly committee meetings are also open to colleagues from all partner institutions and the academic staff at the University.

Course Management
Each course in the Faculty has a Staff and Student Committee, which is responsible to the Faculty Board, and ultimately to Senate. The purpose of this is to ensure that courses meet their aims and objectives, through systematic monitoring and evaluation. Programme Directors (who are responsible to the Head of School and the Executive Dean for course quality) chair the Staff and Student Committee. There are named student representatives on each committee and all staff teaching on the course should attend. The exchange of views and ideas is vital for course development so participation is welcomed. If School, College, and Organisation-based Mentors wish to raise any general issue relating to the course or teaching practice are experience, they should contact the Post-Compulsory Programme Director.

Quality Control and Assurance Procedures
The courses are subject to a range of quality processes, which are related to each other and intended to complement the external measures operated by professional bodies such as the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) and OFSTED.

The internal processes are the:

Course approval process, managed by the Executive Dean of the Faculty on behalf of Senate;

External Examiner system;

Annual monitoring process, in which an annual report written by the Programme Director, including information about evaluations, changes to the course, statistics on applications and completion rates, is reviewed within the Faculty and a report on the outcomes is submitted to Senate;

Academic audit which is managed by the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic) and administered by the Quality Assurance and Audit section of the Academic Registry on behalf of Senate and the Board of Governors;

Student Satisfaction Survey, a central University system of gathering feedback on student’s perceptions of their educational experience. The Executive Dean has to provide a management response to the outcomes of the survey, which is followed up by the Vice-Chancellor and the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic).

All of the processes are in place to review Trainees’ Teaching Practice Experience.

Monitoring the Partnership
The Faculty’s Post-Compulsory Programme Director and Professional Development Tutors visit organisations as part of their role to monitor the security and appropriateness of placements. The Post-Compulsory Programme Director collects feedback about placements from Mentors, Trainees, and Professional Development Tutors on a regular basis to ensure that each placement runs smoothly, and takes action if necessary. Feedback is used to contribute to the Programme Annual Review. This report and minutes from the Strategic Leadership Committee are available on the Partnership website:

http://www.bcu.ac.uk/elsl/school-of-education/partnerships-collaborations/pcet-partnerships
Observations of Trainees

Trainees are expected to be observed formally on at least 8 occasions. For full time PCET trainees the requirement is that seven lessons are observed by the Mentor, with two of these observed jointly with their PDT. All observations must be followed by written feedback, using the relevant observation feedback forms.

An additional observation (usually number 6, around March) can be observed by the trainee’s critical friend and in some cases (where appropriate) might be recorded. For this observation trainees provide evidence of their own feedback discussion with their critical friend and does not require grading against the professional standards. For trainees in an offender learning setting alternative arrangements may apply.

For part time trainees the same arrangements apply, however these should be carried out over the course of a two year period as opposed to one, with 4 formal observations being carried out each year.

Trainees are asked to select 6 professional standards that they feel are appropriate to both the observed session and their own professional development. These might be generated by previous feedback from tutors, mentors, peers or students, or after reading a journal article or attending a session at university. Likewise they may be suggested from your own knowledge, knowing that the session that has been planned would be, from your experience, an excellent opportunity to develop and illustrate professional growth.

There are some standards that are easy to fit in to almost every session (such as those related to assessment – PS17 & PS18), while others take a little longer to plan, develop and observe. You will find that different specialist areas cater towards certain standards more frequently, and are easier to demonstrate in a classroom environment as compared to others. This simply means that your input in to the development of your mentee’s professional progression is key.

Professional Development Tutors act as moderators for teaching practice, with this process being monitored by the Strategic Leadership Committee and internal verification. In a case of disagreement between a Mentor and the Professional Development Tutor in the assessment of a trainee, another tutor who has had no dealings with the trainee moderates the assessment. The University, as the institution awarding the qualification, makes the final decision on the outcome of the teaching practice placement.

Documents, including feedback templates and additional guidance, are available in electronic form on the Post-Compulsory Partnership website:

http://www.bcu.ac.uk/ells/school-of-education/partnerships-collaborations/pcet-partnerships

Assessment and Moderation of Teaching Practice Experience

The Trainee’s Practice of Teaching is assessed by the production of portfolios of evidence, which will outline work and progress on the placement.

Trainees will need to ensure their PDP is available to review during observations, Mentor Tutorials and PDT meetings.

External Moderation of Teaching Practice Experience

External Examiners will visit a sample of Trainees to observe their teaching and to moderate standards across the partnership.

The sample will normally include Trainees at risk of failing the placement. The External Examiners also see a range of achievements, in the process of ensuring that the quality of the course is comparable to that of other, similar courses in other institutions, and that the course is meeting its aims.

Trainees have been asked to let their Programme Director know if there is anything that will disrupt
the organisational timetable and their teaching during these weeks. If a Trainee is to be visited, they and the host organisation, will receive ample warning. External Examiners will expect to have access to the Trainee’s portfolio. They will observe the Trainee teaching and discuss this teaching with the Trainee as well as meeting the Mentor.

**Tutorials**

During placements, the progress made by Trainees towards the achievement of Professional and Minimum Core Standards needs to be reviewed on a regular basis. Trainees consider the achievement of Standards to be an on-going, cumulative process and they are required to present evidence, recorded in the appropriate portfolio, to module tutors on a regular basis for verification. Some Trainees will need to be actively encouraged to do this, particularly in the early stages of the course. They will continue to need guidance as to the range and quality of evidence required in order to fully meet the requirements of each Standard.

In addition to offering guidance and feedback around the formal observed sessions, we ask that you arrange to meet as often as possible with your trainee to discuss a range of issues surrounding their planning, development, assessment, targets as the course progresses. To this end we have provided an ‘additional tutorial form’ template for the trainee to record your discussions and use as evidence within their PDP. This provides further opportunities for the professional standards to be addressed. As highlighted previously, some standards are more difficult to observe in practice as compared to others. This tutorial offers one avenue towards the trainee gaining further evidence for such standards as PS19 & PS20.

The use of the ‘additional tutorial form’ is not compulsory, and should only be used if it is deemed to be a suitable way of recording your meetings. We do not expect this type of tutorial to take place every week, nor for them to always be a formal event. Through discussion with your trainee we would like you to create an effective environment for both of you that allows for open and developmental discussion throughout the course.

**Assignments**

Throughout their course, Trainees are required to submit coursework assignments. These have been designed to reflect aspects of their developing understanding of colleges, prisons, training organisations, and/or schools and of teaching in their specialist subject. Details of these assignments can be found in the relevant Course Guide, issued to Trainees at the start of their course.
Cause for Concern

If a Trainee’s teaching is giving cause for concern, it is vital that they are, at all times, informed of this. Professional Development Tutors and Mentors should keep records of any written guidance they have given. In the case of any dispute, the partnership must be able to demonstrate that the Trainee was aware of any concerns and that these were clearly documented. It is also vital that the Post-Compulsory Programme Director is alerted at an early stage if Professional Development Tutors and Mentors are concerned about a Trainee’s progress so that they can arrange to visit the placement.

If the Programme Director, PDT and mentor are in agreement that a Trainee’s progress is not sufficient to anticipate a successful outcome, the Programme Director will write formally to the Trainee outlining the areas in which improvement is needed in order to pass the teaching practice. The aim is for the Trainee to receive this with sufficient time to take corrective action. “Cause for concern” letters are sent out as soon as is practicable. Sometimes a Trainee may appear to make satisfactory progress early on but may encounter difficulties later, and if this happens Mentors should alert the Programme Director so that a formal letter can be sent. If there is any doubt at all about a trainee’s ability to complete the placement satisfactorily, it is essential that they receive formal notification of this, and we urge Mentors to err on the side of caution by letting us know as early as possible of any concerns.

If the Trainee is failing teaching practice due to concerns regarding a ‘Breakdown of Placement’ or ‘Fitness for Practice’, please refer to the guidelines as stated in the policies below:
Breakdown of Placements Policy and Procedure

1 Introduction

The policy is intended to be used in cases where a placement arrangement has broken down or is in danger of breaking down. The Faculty needs to ensure that there are transparent and consistent procedures for dealing with a placement which has ended before the allocated timescale. The intention of the policy is to ensure parity of treatment for students whose placements are ended for reasons other than academic failure and where there is not an immediate concern about the Trainees’ personal or professional ability to enter the teaching profession.

For the purposes of this policy, written communication from participants can take the form of email correspondence and documentation.

2 When the Policy should be used

2.1 The Policy should be followed when it appears likely that a placement might be terminated, or has already terminated, for example:

- A placement where the head teacher, or a senior member of staff in the placement organisation, has asked in writing for the Trainee to be removed from the placement, but where the Trainee’s professional or personal suitability for the profession does not seem to be in question. This will include circumstances in which internal events in the placement organisation have led to a situation in which the provider no longer feels able to support the Trainee.

- A placement where the Programme Director, after consultation with the Faculty tutor responsible for liaising with the placement organisation and Programme Director, judges that the placement situation is such that the Trainee can no longer be appropriately supported and has suspended the placement, pending the decision of the Breakdown of Placements Panel.

No practice may be terminated by Faculty staff except in the above situations or under the procedures outlined in the University’s Fitness for Practice procedure.

2.2 The Policy should not be used in the following circumstances.

- The illness or personal circumstances of the student. A Trainee who fails to complete a practice through illness or other personal circumstances, will be awarded a fail grade for the placement, but will be entitled to submit a claim to the Representations Committee on the grounds that the failure to complete the practice was due to exceptional extenuating circumstances.

- A trainee withdrawing from a placement without the support of the Programme Director. A student who decides to withdraw from a placement will be awarded a fail grade for the placement. If the student wishes to claim that his/her withdrawal was due to any failure on the part of the Faculty or the placement provider, s/he may invoke the Student Complaints Procedure or may make a representation against the decision of the examination board on the grounds of material error.

- Where there are concerns about the student’s professional suitability to enter the teaching profession. Such cases should be referred to the Faculty Practice Panel.

3 Procedure to be followed where a practice is in danger of breaking down

3.1 Informal Stage

- The Faculty should have in place mechanisms for ensuring that the Director of Work-based Learning or Placement
Manager are notified promptly by link tutors of any situation in a placement which might lead to an early termination of a placement and that, where appropriate, the placement provider and the student are given the opportunity and support to rectify the problems before the formal stage of the Policy is invoked.

- If concerns about the placement situation persist the case should be referred to a Faculty Breakdown of Placements Panel under 3.2 below.

- Where the placement situation is sufficiently serious, the case can be referred directly to the formal stage of the Policy (3.2 below).

3.2 Formal stage – Breakdown of Placements Panel

- Where a Placement Manager has been notified of concerns about a placement situation either by a Faculty tutor or a member of staff from a practice provider which are considered to be sufficiently serious for formal action, the Placement Manager should inform the Executive Dean of the Faculty or a nominee appointed by the Executive Dean and should submit a written report of the circumstances surrounding the breakdown.

- If the Executive Dean (or nominee) deems it necessary, the Director of Faculty Administration will establish a Breakdown of Placements Panel to consider the student’s case and to decide appropriate action. Within three working days of the decision to refer a case to a Breakdown of Placements Panel the student concerned should be informed in writing of this decision. The Panel should be set up within 15 working days of the notification to the Executive Dean (or nominee).

Suspension of the student from the placement pending a Breakdown of Placements Panel

- If the student is on placement, he or she should be suspended from the placement pending the outcome of the hearing but may be allowed to attend the University for Academic Classes and any academic assessments.

3.2.1 Membership of the Panel shall comprise to the Panel

- The Executive Dean or nominee (Chair)
- One member of academic staff from the Faculty who has experience of placements but who is unconnected with the student or the programme
- A member of the Faculty management team

3.2.2 Secretary to the Panel

The Director of Faculty Administration or nominee will act as Secretary to the Panel. The Secretary is not a member of the Panel.

3.2.3 Conduct of the Panel

Notice of the meeting

A student whose case has been referred to a Breakdown of Placements Panel may choose to attend the panel in person or to submit a written report.

Agenda papers sent to the student should identify all those who will be present at the meeting, including any witnesses.

All participants (the Trainee, Panel members, and representatives of the Faculty/placement provider) should receive the same papers.

The format of the meeting

In some cases, and with the consent of the student, the Chair of the Panel may decide to conduct the meeting by means of electronic circulation of the
documentation involved, followed by discussion via email amongst all the participants.

The normal format of the meeting should be as follows:

- private meeting of the Panel;
- the student and any witnesses, if they are attending, should then be admitted to the meeting;
- the Director of Work-based Learning and Course Director should present the evidence surrounding the breakdown of placement. This may be presented in the form of written reports only, at the discretion of the Chair of the Panel;
- the student, if present, should then respond to the evidence and have the opportunity to ask questions of witnesses, via the Chair of the Panel;
- the student should have an opportunity to make a closing statement;
- the student and witnesses should then withdraw from the meeting;
- private meeting of the Panel to reach a decision;
- the decision of the Panel may be communicated orally to the student, if appropriate.

**Attendance by the student**
The student has the right to be present to hear all of the evidence presented.

**Student’s right to representation**
The student has the right to be accompanied by a friend or representative who may speak on behalf of the student. The student must notify the Director of Faculty Administration of the name and status of any such attendees in advance of the meeting.

**Absence of the student**
The meeting may proceed in the absence of the student when:

- the student has indicated in writing a wish not to attend and understands that a decision will nevertheless be made.
- the student fails to attend without valid reason on more than one occasion.

**Witnesses**
The Chair and the student may ask for witnesses to be invited. The student should notify the Director of Faculty Administration in advance of the meeting of the name and status of witnesses to be invited.

**Evidence**
Evidence should generally be in writing, although oral evidence is acceptable. Evidence may be anonymised at the discretion of the Chair of the Panel. The student, however, must have the opportunity to hear all the evidence considered by the Panel and be given a chance to respond fully.

**Decision**
The Panel need not be unanimous in its decision, but should base its decision on the majority view. Where there is not a majority view, the Chair will have the casting vote.

**Referral to the Fitness for Practice Procedure**
If, at any time during the hearing it becomes apparent that the alleged behaviour of the student may be sufficiently serious to call into question the suitability of the student to enter the teaching profession, the Chair of the Panel should suspend the hearing and ask for the case to be referred for consideration under the Fitness for Practice Procedure.
3.3 Outcomes

The Breakdown of Placements Panel may decide one of the following outcomes:

i) One or more circumstances associated with the placement are such that the student has been disadvantaged.

In this case a recommendation should be made to the examination board that the student should be permitted to undertake another placement of equivalent length, or in exceptional cases, to continue the placement with another provider. If the placement was the student’s first attempt, then the placement which is subsequently organised will also be regarded as a first attempt. If the placement was the student’s final attempt, then the placement which is subsequently organised will also be regarded as a final attempt.

ii) Evidence has been produced to indicate that the student’s behaviour and/or performance on the placement is such as to disadvantage the education and/or well-being of the students, or to otherwise disrupt the smooth running of the institution.

In this eventuality the case should be referred immediately to the Faculty Practice Panel.

iii) The placement is broken down or is likely to break down as a result of a situation in which, in the opinion of the Panel, neither the student nor the provider is culpable.

A recommendation should be made to the examination board that the student should be permitted to undertake another placement of equivalent length, or in exceptional cases, to continue the placement with another provider. If the placement was the student’s first attempt, then the placement which is subsequently organised will also be regarded as a first attempt. If the placement was the student’s final attempt, then the placement which is subsequently organised will also be regarded as a final attempt.

iv) The placement is broken down or is likely to break down as a result of a situation in which, in the opinion of the Panel, the student is culpable, but has not behaved in such a way as to call into question his or her suitability to enter the teaching profession.

A recommendation should be made to the examination board that the student should be awarded a fail grade for the placement.

3.4 Record of the meeting

The Secretary shall produce a formal record of the meeting.

The formal report of the meeting should include:

- the nature of the circumstances leading to the breakdown of placement;
- the evidence considered and the weight given to it;
- the Panel’s decision;
- the reasons for the decision.

3.5 Notification of the Panel’s decision to the student

The student should be notified in writing of the Panel’s decision within five working days of the conclusion of the meeting. Where appropriate, the student should be notified of their right of appeal.

3.6 Notification of the Panel’s decision to the Examination Board

The Secretary will notify the Chair of the relevant examination board of the Panel’s decision.
Fitness for Practice Policy and Procedure

1 Introduction
The academic progress of Trainees/Students is governed by the University’s standard assessment regulations; however some programmes prepare students for entry to professions for which academic criteria are not sufficient to ensure suitability for practice. For these programmes the University must also be confident that Trainees are fit to practise their chosen career. The following policy, therefore, applies to programmes where there are compulsory integral periods of professional placement (for example, nursing, radiography, speech therapy, midwifery, teaching and social work) and for which there are behavioural and health requirements to ensure suitability to practise the profession.

2 When the Policy should be used
2.1 The Policy should be followed when there are concerns at any time about a Trainee’s/ Students personal/professional suitability to remain on their programme, for example, when a Trainee:

- has physical or mental health problems which may put themselves or others at risk;
- demonstrates unprofessional behaviour;
- has committed an offence under the University’s Student Disciplinary Procedure which raises doubts about professional suitability.

This list is not exhaustive and other behaviour may raise concerns about a student’s fitness for practice.

2.2 Failure of a placement where there are concerns about behaviour and/or professionalism
Examination Boards should ensure that Trainees are not failed on academic grounds alone where there are concerns about fitness for practice. Therefore, the Policy should be used when:

- a Trainee is failing or has failed a placement and there are reservations about allowing a further opportunity for professional rather than academic reasons;
- a Trainee has failed a placement more than once (which would normally lead to withdrawal by the Examination Board on academic grounds) and there are also reservations about the student’s suitability to follow any professional programme covered by this Policy (see paragraph 1 above).

2.3 Failure of a placement where there are no concerns about behaviour and/or professionalism
Failure in such cases should be handled by the relevant Examination Board under the assessment regulations for the programme concerned.

2.4 Relationship to the University’s Student Disciplinary Procedure
The University’s Student Disciplinary Procedure covers general matters of misconduct. The scope of the Fitness for Practice Policy is wider, relating to behaviour or ill health which is thought to put at risk the welfare of others or the student him/herself but may not be covered by the Student Disciplinary Procedure.

If a student is found to have committed a disciplinary offence under the Student Disciplinary Procedure his or her case may be referred to the Faculty Practice Panel if it is considered necessary.

If, at any time, it is considered that the alleged behaviour is sufficiently serious to warrant the permanent exclusion of the student from the University, the case must be referred for consideration under the Student Disciplinary Procedure (see also paragraphs 3.2 and 3.2.3 below). This is because the Student Disciplinary Procedure stipulates that, where it is possible a student may be permanently
excluded from the University, the hearing must be conducted by a member of the Directorate and the student must be informed of the possibility of exclusion before the hearing commences (see paragraph 3.2 of the Student Disciplinary Procedure).

Procedure for claiming exceptional extenuating circumstances

Where a Trainee has failed a placement and there are no concerns about behaviour or professionalism, the University’s normal procedures will apply (ie Trainees/students may make a claim of extenuation to the Representations Committee and, if successful, are allowed a further opportunity to undertake the placement).

Trainees may raise extenuating circumstances at a Faculty Practice Panel. They must normally produce documented and independent proof of these circumstances.

2.5 Student/Trainee Complaints Procedure

Faculties should have in place mechanisms for dealing with placement breakdown or student complaints about a placement provider. Students should be given written information about the procedure before they undertake their first placement.

3 Procedure to be followed where there are concerns about a student’s fitness for practice

3.1 Informal Stage

Faculties should have in place mechanisms for ensuring that Trainees are notified in writing of concerns about their fitness for practice and that, where appropriate, they are given the opportunity and support to rectify the problems before the formal stage of the Policy is invoked.

If concerns about a Trainee’s/student’s alleged behaviour and/or professionalism persist the case should be referred to a Faculty Practice Panel.

Where the alleged behaviour is sufficiently serious, the case can be referred directly to the formal stage of the Policy (3.2 below).

3.2 Formal stage – Faculty Practice Panel

Where a programme director has been notified of concerns about a Trainee’s fitness for practice either by a member of University staff or a member of staff from a practice provider which are considered to be sufficiently serious for formal action the programme director should inform the Dean of the Faculty or a nominee appointed by the Dean.

If the Dean (or nominee) deems it necessary, the Faculty Registrar will establish a Faculty Practice Panel to consider the student’s case and to decide appropriate action. Within three working days of the decision to refer a case to a Faculty Practice Panel the student concerned should be informed in writing of this decision. The Panel should be set up within 20 working days of the programme director’s notification to the Dean (or nominee).

If the Dean or nominee judges that the alleged behaviour may be sufficiently serious to warrant the student’s exclusion from the University, the Academic Registrar should be consulted immediately. The Academic Registrar will decide whether the matter should be heard under the Student Disciplinary Procedure or by a Faculty Practice Panel (see paragraph 2.4 above).
Suspension of the student from the placement pending the Faculty Practice Panel Hearing.

If the Trainee is on placement, he or she should be suspended from the placement pending the outcome of the Faculty Practice Panel hearing but may be allowed to attend the University for Academic Classes and any academic assessments.

3.2.1 Membership of the Panel shall comprise

- The Dean or nominee (Chair)
- One member of academic staff who has experience of placements from another Faculty or from the Faculty but unconnected with the student or the programme
- An external practitioner from the profession concerned who is unconnected with the student or with the placement provider

The Union of Students will also be given the opportunity to nominate a Sabbatical Officer to serve as an additional member.

3.2.2 Secretary to the Panel

The Faculty Registrar or nominee will act as Secretary to the Panel. The Secretary is not a member of the Panel.

3.2.3 Conduct of the Panel

**Notice of the meeting**

A Trainee/student whose case has been referred to a Faculty Practice Panel should be given at least seven working days’ notice of the date of the meeting.

Documentation for the Faculty Practice Panel, including any submission by the student, must be circulated to the panel at least three days before the meeting, unless, exceptionally, the Chair agrees that additional material may be submitted late by, or on behalf of, the student.

Agenda papers sent to the student should identify all those who will be present at the meeting, including any witnesses.

All participants (the Trainee, Panel members, representatives of the Faculty/placement provider) should receive the same papers.

**The format of the meeting**

The normal format of the meeting should be as follows:

- private meeting of the Panel;
- the Trainee, programme director and witnesses should then be admitted to the meeting;
- the programme director should present the evidence about the Trainee’s behaviour;
- the witnesses should be asked to leave and be re-admitted in turn to give their evidence;
- the Trainee should have the opportunity to respond to each witness’s evidence and to ask questions of the witness, via the Chair of the Panel;
- the witness should then leave the meeting (see below);
- the Trainee should have an opportunity to make a closing statement;
- the student and programme director should then withdraw from the meeting;
- private meeting of the Panel to reach a decision.
**Attendance by the student**
The Trainee has the right to be present to hear all of the evidence presented.

**Student’s right to representation**
The Trainee/student has the right to be accompanied by a friend or representative who may speak on behalf of the student. The student must notify the Faculty Registrar of the name and status of any such attendee in advance of the meeting.

**Absence of the trainee**
The meeting should only proceed in the absence of the student when:

- the Trainee/student has indicated in writing a wish not to attend and understands that a decision will nevertheless be made;

- the Trainee/student fails to attend without valid reason on more than one occasion.

**Witnesses**
The Chair and the student may ask for witnesses to be invited. The Trainee/student should notify the Faculty Registrar in advance of the meeting of the name and status of witnesses to be invited.

Witnesses will be asked to leave the meeting after giving their evidence but should be asked to remain available in case the Panel needs to call them back into the meeting.

**Evidence**
Evidence should generally be in writing, although oral evidence is acceptable. Evidence may be anonymised at the discretion of the Chair of the Panel. The Trainee/student, however, must have the opportunity to hear all the evidence considered by the Panel and be given a chance to respond fully.

**Burden of proof**
The Panel must reach a reasonable decision based on all of the facts available at the time.

**Decision**
The Panel need not be unanimous in its decision, but should base its decision on the majority view. Where there is not a majority view, the Chair will have the casting vote.

**Referral to the Student Disciplinary Procedure**
If, at any time during the hearing it becomes apparent that the alleged behaviour may be sufficiently serious to warrant the permanent exclusion of the student from the University, the Chair of the Faculty Practice Panel should suspend the hearing and ask for the case to be referred for consideration under the Student Disciplinary Procedure (see paragraph 2.4 above). The student must be advised in writing of the reason for the suspension of the process.

3.3 **Outcomes**
The Faculty Practice Panel may decide one of the following outcomes:

- no further action;
- an extended period of placement at the same provider;
- a new placement at the same or a different provider;
- interruption of studies while receiving appropriate therapy/counselling/medical treatment. In such cases, students should be asked to provide evidence of suitability to resume study and professional practice before being re-admitted to their programme (a student may be referred to an appropriate Occupational Health adviser for this purpose). This evidence
should be submitted to the Faculty Registrar;

- that the Trainee/student be excluded from the programme. This would normally mean that the student will not be eligible for admission to other professional programmes covered by this Policy (see paragraph 1 above). The Panel’s report should specify where such an exclusion is to apply.

This list is not exhaustive and the Panel may agree other outcomes as appropriate.

**Exclusion from a Programme**

When a Fitness for Practice Panel has decided to exclude a Trainee from a programme the next meeting of the Examination Board following the Panel meeting should formally withdraw the student from the programme and recommend that the student be given the highest award for which he or she is eligible and/or be given a transcript of academic credits achieved on the programme. Where possible, a student who has been excluded from a programme should be offered a place on an alternative programme which does not lead to a professional qualification or accreditation likely to fall under the scope of this policy (see paragraph 1 above).

**Failure to find a further placement**

The Course Handbook for a programme which includes placements should make it clear that the University cannot guarantee to provide further placements, but will use its best endeavours to do so. Where, after all reasonable attempts have been made, it proves impossible to provide a further placement, the Trainee should be offered a place on an alternative programme which does not lead to professional qualification or accreditation likely to fall under the scope of this policy (see paragraph 1 above). Where this is not possible the Examination Board should recommend that the student be given the highest award for which he or she is eligible and/or be given a transcript of academic credits achieved.

3.4 **Record of the meeting**

The Secretary shall produce a formal record of the meeting.

The formal report of the meeting should include

- the nature of concerns about the student’s fitness for practice;
- the evidence considered and the weight given to it;
- the Panel’s decision;
- the reasons for the decision.

3.5 **Notification of the Committee’s decision to the Trainee/student**

The Trainee should be notified in writing of the Committee’s decision within three working days of the conclusion of the meeting. Where appropriate, the student should be notified of their right of appeal.

3.6 **Notification of the Panel’s decision to the Examination Board**

The Secretary will notify the Chair of the relevant Examination Board of the Panel’s decision.

3.7 **The Appeal Procedure**

The Appeal Procedure will be as laid down in Section 7 of the Student Disciplinary Procedure.
Equal Opportunities: Policies and Codes of Practice

Information for Trainees, college/school/training organisation/prison Mentors and University tutors

Many of the professional standards require that Trainees demonstrate their understanding of equality of opportunity, in various aspects of their teaching.

Professional values and attributes

- Develop your own judgement of what works and does not work in your teaching and training
- Reflect on what works best in your teaching and learning to meet the diverse needs of learners
- Evaluate and challenge your practice, values and beliefs
- Inspire, motivate and raise aspirations of learners through your enthusiasm and knowledge
- Be creative and innovative in selecting and adapting strategies to help learners to learn
- Value and promote social and cultural diversity, equality of opportunity and inclusion
- Build positive and collaborative relationships with colleagues and learners
- Plan and deliver effective learning programmes for diverse groups or individuals in a safe and inclusive environment

Colleges, Schools, Training Organisations and Prisons will have their own equal opportunities policies and Trainees should be supplied with copies/details of these as part of their general introduction to organisations in which they are placed. Trainees must ensure that all aspects of their work in these organisations conform to the requirements of current legislation and to organisational policies and procedures. In addition, Trainees are students of the University and must conform to Birmingham City University’s equal opportunities policy statement. You can read the full text at: http://www.bcu.ac.uk/_media/docs/Equal-opportunities-statement-Jan%202012.pdf

Complaints regarding Equal Opportunities

The Post-Compulsory partnership agreement between the Faculty and colleges, schools, training organisations and prisons includes an undertaking that the organisation will:

- Ensure that Trainees work in a context which provides examples of good practice in respect of equality of opportunity and the avoidance of discrimination

However, despite the existence of policies in the University and in organisations, and the importance accorded to them, there may be occasions when staff and Trainees feel that these policies are being contravened. The University has a formal Student Complaints Procedure, details of which are given in the Course Guide that each Trainee receives. Organisations may have their own procedures, and Trainees should ask for details of these.

Equal Opportunities Policy
Guidance on action

If Mentors are concerned about any aspect of a Trainee’s work in relation to equal opportunities and race equality policies and procedures, they should in the first instance bring this to the attention of a university tutor or the Programme Director so that a decision can be taken about how to proceed. In some instances it may be necessary to invoke the University’s Fitness for Practice Policy and Procedure, which can be found at: https://icity.bcu.ac.uk/student-services/Complaints-and-Appeals/Fitness-for-Practise. Similarly, any concerns that a university tutor may have about a Trainee’s work in their placement should be communicated to the Mentors, and appropriate action discussed.

There may be occasions when a Trainee feels that s/he has encountered breaches of equal opportunities, either in the university or during placements, directly or by observation. Trainees may be uncertain how to respond since these are controversial and delicate areas and they may feel that action would affect their relationships in the university or the placement, and possibly the relationships between the placement institution and the University. However, there are statutory requirements and policies regarding equal opportunities and race relations that will support Trainees.

The partnership is committed to promoting equal opportunities. If any Trainee feels that their choice of teaching strategies and materials are being restricted or criticised in a manner which contravenes the university’s policies or that they are not being supported in action they take in response to such contravention, they should inform their Mentor, university tutor, Professional Development Tutor or the Programme Director as soon as possible. Provided that they have acted professionally, in line with the above policies, the Faculty will act on their behalf in the most appropriate manner.

Breaches of Equal Opportunities by pupils and students

Offensive actions, such as racist or sexist comments, by pupils/Trainee, Trainee to fellow trainee or to organisational staff, are a challenge to a new trainee’s authority and to organisational and University Equal Opportunities policies. Trainees should intervene and clearly state their disapproval, in the context of these policies. The intention may not have been consciously racist or sexist, especially where comments are made by younger children, or the offender may have been looking for an over-reaction! However, offensive behaviour needs to be addressed professionally. Trainees should always discuss with Mentors the best way to proceed, and should ensure that Mentors and University staff are made aware of any such incidents.

Complaints about Equal Opportunities from pupils, students or parents

Again, any such complaints should not be dealt with by a Trainee in isolation; they should always be discussed with Mentors in the first instance so that appropriate action can be taken.

Breaches of Equal Opportunities by college, school, organisation, prison or university staff

There may be instances where a Trainee believes that he or she has been the victim of discrimination and sometimes a Trainee may feel that he or she has observed instances of breaches of equal opportunities policies. Examples might include comments made by organisational or University staff to or about other Trainees or organisational or university staff; instances of harassment; inappropriate use of language; or issues relating to the curriculum. There are a number of possible courses of action, and choosing which to take is likely to depend on the circumstances. If possible, the Trainee should discuss the incident with the person concerned in the first instance, and this may lead to a successful resolution. Other possible courses of action would be to seek the advice of the Programme Director or a union representative. In some instances the trainee may feel that they have no choice but to make a formal complaint.

Equal opportunities policies cover a wide range of areas, and the purpose of this paper is not to
attempt to cover them in any detail. Trainees need to develop their understanding through reading, discussion, and reference to policies and codes of conduct. However, there is one area that may cause particular anxiety, and this is discussed below.

**Sexual orientation**

The Faculty undertakes to support gay and lesbian Trainees and staff if they suffer discrimination in the faculty or in partnership organisations. Their position may be particularly vulnerable as a result of prejudices and misconceptions. If a Trainee feels that they need additional advice or guidance before going in to a placement organisation, they should talk in confidence to a tutor or to the Programme Director. Trainees, teachers and tutors have a duty to act for the welfare of their pupils/students by protecting them from bullying and victimisation from others who may taunt them because they are believed to be lesbian or gay.

The aim of all equal opportunities and race equality policies in schools, colleges and other educational establishments is a relatively simple one, although effective implementation is far from straightforward. The purpose of this document is to assist the partnership in establishing an environment in which a positive approach to equal opportunities enhances teaching and learning.
Appendix 1

Partnership Agreement between Birmingham City University and its Post-Compulsory Partnership Institutions

The Faculty of Health, Education and Life Sciences at Birmingham City University, and «Institution» agree to form a partnership in the training of the University’s post-compulsory trainee teachers according to the following conditions.

The Faculty of Health, Education, and Life Sciences of Birmingham City University undertakes to:

- Recruit Trainees with curriculum backgrounds and appropriate qualifications relevant to Post-compulsory teaching;
- Ensure that the training course prepares Trainees for post-compulsory teaching placements;
- Support Trainees in all matters relating to their individual needs as registered students of the University, e.g. in respect of welfare, accommodation, services etc.;
- Provide induction, training and support for Mentors in partner placement institutions;
- Provide clear assessment and support documentation for Trainees and Mentors;
- Support Mentors in the assessment and moderation of each Trainee’s teaching through shared observation;
- Ensure quality assurance procedures are communicated and implemented and that any issues raised are addressed;
- Ensure that Trainees, as students of the University, are at all points in their training treated in accordance with the University’s policies on equal opportunities and race relations;
- Pay partners an appropriate sum per trainee teacher to resource the additional work involved in supporting training;

The partnership institution will undertake to:

- Provide placement opportunities of no less than 150 hours teaching for an agreed number of pre-service Trainees;
- Identify a range of curriculum areas in and levels at which Trainees can teach;
- Provide Trainees with an induction to the institution and the curriculum area;
- Ensure that Trainees have access to accommodation and resources (including ICT) which is appropriate for the support and delivery of their teaching;
- Identify an appropriate mentor for each trainee who has a specialism in a relevant curriculum area;
- Monitor and manage the work of Mentors;
- Provide Mentors with sufficient time to fulfil their responsibilities to Trainees which include:
  - Observation of teaching
  - Feedback to Trainees
  - Regular target setting and review meetings
  - Report writing
  - Attendance at mentor training sessions and review meetings.

Signed

Date

Executive Dean,
Faculty of Health, Education and Life Sciences

Signed

Date

Head of Institution,
Partnership Institution

(Please complete and return to:
Matthew Waterhouse - PCET Partnership Administrator in the enclosed envelope)
Appendix 2

Mentors’ Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: Do you provide any training to help me better understand the mentor role?
A: Yes, there is an array of support on offer to you as a mentor for the PCET course. These include:

Mentor Briefing
All mentors are asked to complete an initial mentor briefing session. There are a number of sessions at the beginning of the year and this will usually take place at the City North campus of the University in Perry Barr, Birmingham. We can also, however, provide an alternative online briefing session or an in-house briefing session at your organisation, where a number of mentors are present. As soon as we have your details we will invite you to choose the most convenient option for all parties.

Online Mentor Training
In addition to the briefing session, we also offer an initial online mentor training course, which is free to take and offers access to support materials and activities designed to help you understand or consolidate what it is to be a Mentor. This is available at [http://goo.gl/T473TI](http://goo.gl/T473TI) with an enrolment key of BCU_Mentor_14

The training may be described as 'entry level' and will take around one hour to complete (in short stages if you wish), including a test at the end. Once completed (with a score of 75% or above) a certificate is released to acknowledge your completion of the training package.

The course itself is about the dispositions, attitudes and skills required of mentors. It will encourage you to reflect on what it is to be a mentor in a general sense, what knowledge, skills and attitudes mentors need and how your context relates to that.

If you are interested in completing this training package please get in touch with the PCET Partnership Team.

Masters’ level qualifications
In order to advance your skills and knowledge even further you may also wish to consider completing a Master’s Level module in mentoring.

There are many options available to you and opportunity to turn the role of mentoring in to a full Masters qualification. If you are interested in this please contact Stuart Mitchell on 0121 202 8550 or email stuart.mitchell@bcu.ac.uk

Information sheets
A number of short information sheets (including this document) have been produced to complement the Partnership Handbook, covering a range of useful topics. These cover issues such as what we expect as the University from our trainees in placement; the role of the PDT; guidance on the Professional Standards, and many more topics.

These are available to you on the PCET Partnerships Moodle page at [http://www.bcu.ac.uk/education/partnerships-and-collaborations/pcet-partnerships](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/education/partnerships-and-collaborations/pcet-partnerships)

Q: When do the trainee teachers carry out their teaching practice?
A: Full-time trainees usually start teaching practice in October or as soon as possible in their first term, and will be available until the end of May the following year. They are available for teaching practice on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays throughout the academic year. They attend taught sessions at the University on Mondays and Thursdays.

Part-time trainees complete their course over two years and attend taught sessions at the University once a week. They usually start teaching practice by January of their first year. They are available for teaching practice at all other times by negotiation; because they are part-time they will spend approximately 1-2 days a week on teaching practice.

Q: How many hours teaching practice do trainees need to complete?
A: All trainees are required to complete a minimum of 150 hours. Typically full-time trainees teach an average 8-10 hours a week, although this may vary; perhaps 3-6 hours in the early weeks rising to 8-12 hours later on. However we understand that this will vary and that the trainee needs to be responsive and flexible depending on availability of hours and your own circumstances.
Part-time trainees will complete 75 hours in each year, typically teaching 3-6 hours a week.

**Q: How many observations does the mentor carry out?**
**A:** The trainee will be observed at least eight times across the course, seven of these will involve you as their mentor. The first and the last will usually be a joint observation, carried out in conjunction with the trainee’s University Professional Development Tutor (PDT). For **full-time** trainees the first joint observation will usually take place in December or January and the last of the eight observations should be completed by the end of May. For **part-time** trainees the observations are spread across the two years, with four being completed in the first year and four in the second year.

In all cases observations should ideally be spread out across the placement, allowing the trainee time in between observations for reflection, evaluation and further development.

**Q: Apart from the observations, what other paperwork will I be expected to complete?**

There are three ‘term reviews’ (1st term, 2nd term and end of placement) that need to be completed in discussion with the trainee. We will also ask you to complete a short evaluation at the end of the placement. All of this will be explained in the mentor briefing session. For part-time trainees this paperwork is spread over the two years.

**Q: Where can I get copies of forms, handbooks and other information?**

**A:** The trainee will usually provide the necessary paperwork, however you can view and download copies of the paperwork and other documents from the PCET partnership website: [http://www.bcu.ac.uk/education/partnerships-and-collaborations/pcet-partnerships](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/education/partnerships-and-collaborations/pcet-partnerships)

If there is anything specific that you are looking for, or if you are unable to locate the form required please do not hesitate to contact the partnership at pcet.partnerships@bcu.ac.uk

**Q: What counts as teaching hours?**

**A:** Any teaching and learning activity for which the trainee teacher has the opportunity to plan, deliver and then evaluate counts as ‘teaching hours’. This might include a range of opportunities including:

- Whole-class teaching
- Team Teaching (where the planning has been carried out by the trainee)
- 1:1 sessions
- Workshops, revision & portfolio building sessions
- You might also include team meetings, visits and open day events, providing that the trainee is taking an active part in the process.

Trainees will keep a log of their hours and will ask you to sign it to confirm their teaching activity. Wherever possible trainees should be provided with opportunities to teach as broad a range of teaching contexts, levels and age ranges as possible.

**Q: How soon should we let trainee teachers start teaching?**

**A:** We hope that there will be time for a short induction allowing trainees to get to know your organisation, staff and students. They may be involved in observations and general assistance in the first week or two. Hopefully fairly soon after this your confidence in the trainee will be sufficient so that you will be able to start to hand over some of your classes and teaching hours. The table overleaf offers a suggested timeframe for teaching practice across the year.
This is a suggested timetable to design and supervise a suitable teaching experience for the trainee, fitting the environment in which you deliver.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>October/November:</th>
<th>Suggested minimum contact hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Induction</td>
<td><strong>10 hours</strong> (1-2 hours per week)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainly observing and supporting staff, working towards teaching episodes, such as starter activities and plenaries.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>November/December:</th>
<th>Suggested minimum contact hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Begin taking individual responsibility for small groups, start teaching whole lessons supported by another teacher’s scheme of work.</td>
<td><strong>35 hours</strong> (4-5 hours per week)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>December/January/February</th>
<th>Suggested minimum contact hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparing and planning for teaching linked to a SOW. Teach at least one group (unit/class) exclusively.</td>
<td><strong>56 hours</strong> (7 hours per week)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>March/April/ May:</th>
<th>Suggested minimum contact hours</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All trainees should, by now, be building towards teaching 9-12 hours independently; some or most without mentor present where possible.</td>
<td><strong>100 hours</strong> (9-12 hours per week)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q: Can I leave a trainee alone with a group of students?
A: Yes. Trainees may require closer supervision at the beginning of their placement, however once they are ‘up and running’ and have earned your trust we hope that apart from observations and any other checks you might need to make that you can soon start to let trainees get on with their teaching, independently where possible. Initially you might be at the back of the class, but soon you might prefer to be in a room nearby, but be on-hand if needed. Being left in charge will help the trainees to learn more rapidly and effectively. Of course trainees should know who to contact and what to do in the event of any problems or an emergency. We understand that this may depend on your own organisation’s policy and your own level of confidence in the trainee. On some occasions where there may be a cause for concern a trainee may need greater monitoring or supervision.

Q: Does the trainee teacher possess DBS paperwork?
A: All of our pre-service trainee teachers have a DBS check carried out. They cannot fully enrol on our course unless they have been deemed to be fit to practice. Most of our trainees will be in this position, however if the trainee is employed by you at any stage (e.g. in-service trainees) then the onus will be on you as the employer to ensure that your policy is followed and that any DBS check is up to date. As part of any induction we ask that organisations make trainees familiar with any essential safeguarding (and related) policies.

Q: Do I get paid for being a mentor?
A: We do not pay individual mentors for acting as a mentor, however we do pay your organisation £500 for each full-time placement (one year) or part-time placement (over two years). This is paid at the end of the placement, subject to the completion of all associated teaching practice hours, observations and paperwork. We would always encourage organisations to use this money to ensure that the mentoring role is properly resourced and recognised so that the mentor has sufficient time to complete this important role effectively. As detailed above, taking on a mentoring role can help you in developing new skills, and even offers links to gaining further qualifications. Speak to our team for further details on the Master’s level qualifications available.

Q: Should trainees get involved in activities other than teaching?
A: Yes, it is important that trainees receive a full experience of the role of the teacher and that they understand as much as possible about your organisation’s systems and procedures. Trainees benefit from being involved in a range of non-teaching activities including any appropriate team meetings, course development activities, staff training, open-day events and student
assessments. In many cases they might not be able to claim these activities towards their teaching hours (unless they are actively involved), however it will provide valuable evidence towards completing certain professional standards and offer invaluable experiences to enhance their future employability.

Q: Can I count my mentor training towards my annual CPD?
A: Yes we strongly encourage it! In addition you might even consider reflecting on your role as a mentor and consider the impact it has had on your own teaching practice. By doing this you could easily claim many more hours of CPD than just those associated with the training process.

Q: Who should I contact if I need help, have a problem or need any more information?
A: The first point of call will be the trainees’ Professional Development Tutor (PDT), followed by the Programme Director, Karen McGrath (karen.mcgrath@bcu.ac.uk). For general mentoring information you might also contact the PCET Partnerships administrator, Matt Waterhouse (matthew.waterhouse@bcu.ac.uk).

Q: I have colleagues who would like to offer teaching placements and act as mentors, what should they do?
A: We are always keen to develop new links, partnerships and placements so please ask them to contact the PCET Programme Director, Karen McGrath (karen.mcgrath@bcu.ac.uk).

Q: I cannot see the answer to my question in this document, what should I do?
A: Please contact the Partnership Administrator Matt Waterhouse (matthew.waterhouse@bcu.ac.uk) and he will direct your enquiry accordingly.

PCET Main Contacts
Karen McGrath, Programme Director
karen.mcgrath@bcu.ac.uk Tel. 0121 331 7341

Matthew Waterhouse, Partnership Administrator:
matthew.waterhouse@bcu.ac.uk Tel. 0121 331 5240

Stuart Mitchell, Mentor Briefing, Initial Mentor Training and additional qualifications
stuart.mitchell@bcu.ac.uk Tel. 0121 202 8550

PCET Partnership Team:
pcet.partnerships@bcu.ac.uk

Your Trainee’s PDT: (enter contact details below)