

Birmingham City University

Faculty of Health, Education and Life Sciences

School of Education

Post Compulsory Education & Training Strategic Leadership Committee Meeting

Minutes of the meeting of the PCET Partnership Committee held on 15th October 2014 in Room 106a Attwood Building.

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| Present: | Damian Brant (Chair) | Joseph Chamberlain College |
| | Karen McGrath | PGCE PCET Programme Director |
| | Tony Armstrong | PGCE PCET Personal Development Tutor (PDT) |
| | Phil Bate | PGCE PCET Personal Development Tutor (PDT) |
| | Jean Dyson | PGCE PCET Personal Development Tutor (PDT) |
| | Stuart Mitchell | PGCE PCET Personal Development Tutor (PDT) |
| | Simon Spencer | Deputy Head of School of Education |
| | Shirley Alabaster | South Staffordshire College |
| | Kerry Adam | Solihull College |
| | Richard Bourne | Joseph Chamberlain College/Newcastle College Group |
| | Rebecca Dobson | HMP Hewell |
| | Rob Delahay | Top Barn Outdoor Activity Centre |
| | Jane McCard | Solihull Sixth Form College |
| | Sandra Parsons | Birmingham Metropolitan College |

In attendance: Matthew Waterhouse

Committee members were invited to introduce themselves and give a short overview of their involvement within the partnership.

1 To receive Apologies for Absence

Lisa Brown, Kelly Davey-Nicklin, Pam Fricker, Mark Jenkins, Peter Lee.

2 To consider the Minutes and the matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 5th February 2014

The minutes were accepted as an accurate record.

The committee noted discussion points arising from the last meeting and previous minutes that required an action to follow. Please view 'Action Plan arising from the PGCE PCET Strategic Leadership Committee Meetings' for an update on progress. It was agreed that a target completion date of 10th June 2015 would be set for any outstanding actions.

3 To consider updates from Partner Colleges on placement activity

Top Barn Activity Centre

Rob Delahay, General Manager gave an overview of his organisation. It was reported that Top Barn Activity Centre was a partner of Newcastle Colleges Group (NCG) and would be assisting with the delivery of sport, public services and outdoor education programmes for partner Further Education Institutions. The Centre would act as a satellite campus for these institutions and allow them to use facilities that they would otherwise not have access to.

Birmingham Metropolitan College

It was reported that trainees on placement had settled in well and had been demonstrating many areas of good practice. It was stated that there had been increased involvement by trainees in CPD development.

Solihull College

It was reported that mentoring was going well and Birmingham City University has provided good support to the College when trainees had encountered difficulties.

Solihull Sixth Form College

It was reported that Jane McCard, Mentor Representative had half termly meetings with Mentors who were supporting BCU trainees. Mentors had commented that they were happy with how things were going no major concerns had been reported yet.

South Staffordshire College

It was stated that the trainee was working closely with the Mentor in a small department.

Joseph Chamberlain College

It was reported that BCU trainees had been attending the College's NQT programme. #

Damian Brant, Assistant Principal for Learning & Teaching had attended BCU in order to deliver a session supporting trainees with their interview expectations. It was reported that the session highlighted what trainees needed to know with regards to differences in the interview process between Sixth Form and Further Education Colleges. Joseph Chamberlain College's involvement in delivering such sessions at BCU was a good example of partnership working.

HMP Hewell

It was reported that this was the first year that more than one trainee had worked with their institution. The institution also had more than one mentor supporting trainees for the first time and therefore asked if Birmingham City University were able to provide further support with the mentoring process. Karen McGrath, Programme Director informed the Committee that for next academic year, there would be a formal process in place to decide whether a trainee was suitable for a placement in Prison Education. It was stated that the plan was for mentors from partner institutions to attend a day at BCU where they would make a decision on the trainees' suitability.

Halesowen College

It was reported that the college had a number of trainees on placement with them and their placements were going well. There were a number of positions that had become available at the college and BCU trainees had been encouraged to submit applications. It was discussed that Craig Tucker, Mentor Representative from Halesowen College could speak with Karen McGrath and arrange to attend Birmingham City University to deliver a session to trainees on the interview process at Halesowen College.

4 To consider the roles of the Personal Development Tutor

It was reported that the role of the Personal Development Tutor (PDT) was to support trainees during their time on the PGCE PCET course. Each member of the PCET Team were allocated a number of Personal Tutees and they were required to meet with these tutees at the beginning of the year for a profile meeting and tutorial sessions throughout the academic year. It was stated that in regard to placements, the PDT would act as a link between the trainee, their placement setting and BCU. The PDT would also attend the placement setting to conduct the 1st, 4th and 8th observations which were all joint observations.

Karen McGrath, Programme Director asked Partnership Institutions to begin to think about providing feedback to the University on their views and experiences of the 3 visits that the PDT makes to the setting. This feedback would be given at the end of the academic year.

It was stated that although the structure of the course would be changing for the 2015/16 academic year, there was at present no plans to alter the role of the PDT.

5 To consider Ofsted – *Better Inspections for all*

The Chair distributed a report detailing the outcomes of the Ofsted consultation on proposals for inspection reform in the Further Education Sector. It was discussed that this document highlighted that following the consultation, there were no significant changes from the proposals that had been

originally presented by Ofsted. It was reported that the Chair would arrange for this document and a related spreadsheet to be distributed to partner institutions following this meeting.

The Chair discussed data from the spreadsheet of inspections that had taken place under the new process. It was discussed that the overview suggested that harsher judgements had been made as the majority of Institutions that were in Requires Improvement before the Inspection were still in this category after their Inspections and few had improved on their previous grading.

It was reported that a judgement on 'personal development, behaviour and welfare' would be made as part of in the new inspection process.

It was stated that as part of in the new inspection process, Individual lesson observations would not be graded. It was discussed that this would make it more difficult for institutions to highlight specific areas and also to challenge the judgements that were made.

Karen McGrath, Programme Director distributed a letter to partners providing further details about the arrangements for Ofsted's inspections of ITE partnerships during the spring term 2015. Information of national workshops that would be taking place were also contained in this correspondence. A workshop would be taking place at Birmingham City University on Tuesday 24th March and partners were encouraged to contact Karen McGrath if they were interested in attending.

6 To consider how institutions will work with BCU to support NQTs

The importance of BCU knowing the employment destinations of recently qualified trainees was discussed in depth. It was stated that there needed to be a change in mind-set so trainees recognised the benefits of sharing their employment destinations with the University. It was reported that receiving support in their new role, ensuring a suitable induction process was given and development of professionalism/access to CPD were benefits to the trainee of sharing this information.

Simon Spencer, Deputy Head of School gave an overview of the two part inspection of ITT providers. It was reported that although the format of the inspection required BCU to have knowledge of their former trainees employment so that Ofsted could measure the effectiveness and quality of the training provided, BCU were extremely keen to develop a process of tracking past students in order to do this for its own benefit.

It was reported that there were challenges associated with tracking destinations of PGCE PCET trainees as trainees take up employment across the country and internationally. Many employment agencies conduct the recruitment process on behalf of individual school, college and academy employers so it is not always easy to see the exact employment destination for a trainee.

It was discussed that as partner institutions are invited to attend the Strategic Leadership Committee, this would be a good forum for partners to share their own strategies and experiences of supporting NQTs. Partners were asked to share their own ideas and processes and the following additional points were made:

It was reported that at Joseph Chamberlain College, NQTs meet with their mentors to discuss how they are getting on and if they have achieved their set targets. This takes into consideration each individual's starting point, areas for improvement and their attendance at CPD sessions.

It was discussed that Karen McGrath would be liaising with Richard Bourne in order to share ideas on how Joseph Chamberlain College support NQTs and how this can link in with the BCU process.

Experiences of supporting NQTs in the form of following Local Authority Guidelines, a reduced teaching commitment and undertaking a probationary process were also discussed.

Karen McGrath, Programme director noted that it would be useful for BCU to know if partner institutions are using the documentation on the NQTs sent in by BCU.

It was discussed that trainees were encouraged not to undertake paid employment during their placement as there was a tendency for these people to be treated as a full employee and not a trainee. There is a difference between an employee that has completed their training and a trainee still undertaking their training and will need support from their setting that reflects this. Employers' expectations of a trainee's performance may also be affected in this situation.

7 To consider an update on Mentor training, documentation, Mentor Newsletter and proposed Roadshows.

It was reported that this academic year, Birmingham City University were using new documentation as the number of standards that it was working with had been cut to 20. It was reported that Mentor training had been offered to all mentors supporting a trainee and that the majority of mentors had received this training although there were still a small number that had not received this. It was reported that despite the fact that not all mentors had been through the official mentor training process, all mentors had some knowledge of the new standards and documentation in use this year as the trainees' PDTs had discussed this with them at the first joint observations.

It was reported that from September 2016 onwards, BCU would be looking to develop a stronger network of mentors where prospective mentors were given the opportunity to be supported in their mentor development, even if they were not hosting a trainee at that time.

Stuart Mitchell, PCET Senior Tutor informed the committee that he had recently attended a meeting with colleagues from Primary and Secondary courses at BCU who had an involvement in Partnership for their respective courses. It was reported that at this meeting, colleagues shared best practice across the age phases and set about constructing a Partnership Development Plan. The following points arising from the Partnership Development Plan were discussed.

Online Mentor Training Programme

It was reported that all mentors working with Primary, Secondary and Post Compulsory trainees will be given the opportunity to undertake this online mentor training. This will have a focus on developing the role of the mentor and will not be age phase specific. At present, this training will be optional not compulsory. The training will take approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour to complete and a certificate will be produced automatically for mentors who complete and achieve a pass mark of 75% or above. Mentors will soon be receiving instructions on how to undertake this online training and once they had undertaken this training they will be encouraged to provide feedback on the usefulness of this training.

The following additional points were discussed in relation to mentor engagement within the PGCE PCET Course and the Partnership Development Plan:

Non-accredited training

This would include attendance at a range of PCET workshops held as roadshows across the partnership and generic workshops held at BCU offered to support the sharing of best practice and develop support networks.

Accredited qualifications

This would involve the completion of mentoring/coaching modules from the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL) course and offering credits towards PG Cert/PG Dip/MTL qualification. Discussions to be held on the possibility of off-setting the cost of modules against commitment to supporting mentor PCET trainees.

e-Newsletter

This could be produced by the University Marketing Department. The newsletter would have the same format across education courses and would include articles by mentors for mentors.

Shareville resources

An area in Shareville Campus could be developed for Mentors including a 15 minute video of lesson observation with interactive grading to support mentor development.

PCET Alumni

This would be a forum for maintaining close links with past trainees. This would allow them to inform BCU of their destination data and enable BCU to offer additional support and training, CPD to its alumni.

Partnership review

This would be similar to a document produced by the Secondary Partnership. This would take the form of a Mid-point review (health check) of placement, leading to additional support, early intervention and/or future training opportunities for the mentor.

8 To consider the Post Compulsory Education & Training Strategic Improvement Plan

Please view 'Post Compulsory Education & Training Strategic Improvement Plan' for an update on progress.

9 To consider developments in Shareville

The Committee were informed that there had been further developments in Shareville since the last meeting on 14th October 2014 and the following new areas and scenarios had been introduced:

Dance Studio – work done with Kidderminster College on scenarios on developing technique. Trainees would be visiting to film a session for Shareville.

Drama Studio – Continuing to develop this area and hotspots to support trainees in this subject specialism.

Sport Arena – Further developing hotspots in this area, the Course Team are aiming to get funding for trainees to receive payment for participation in videos, dialogue etc.

Outdoor Activity Centre – Plans to develop an area to sit behind the Students Union in Shareville Campus.

Human Resources – Plans to further develop the area focussing on employability.

Prison Education - A demonstration of the new Prison Education scenario based on safeguarding was provided to the Committee.

Karen McGrath, Programme Director reported that the PCET Team would be continuing to have dialogue with current trainees and mentors within partner institutions on areas they felt should be developed in Shareville. Mentors are experts in their own specific fields so BCU would welcome their input into developing scenarios and new areas to the Campus.

Stuart Mitchell, PGCE PCET Personal Development Tutor discussed the idea of Podcasts to support trainees and mentors and asked for the involvement of partner institutions with this initiative.

10 To consider recruitment and course developments

It was discussed that funding had been released by BCU to allow the PCET Partnership to provide payment to Mentors for their assistance with the interview process for prospective trainees. Partners were informed that these interviews generally take place each fortnight on a Wednesday. It was stated that the written tasks within the interview process had been developed to ensure that trainees accepted on the course were at the required Level 7.

PGCE PCET Full Time

It was stated that for the 2015/16 academic year, the PCET Course would be going through a revalidation process. There would be a new course structure involving pathways within the generic PCET Full Time course. These subject areas were proposed as follows: Arts, Media and

Performance; English, Literacy and ESOL; Science and Technology; Maths and Numeracy and Humanities and Social Sciences.

It was reported that this new structure had been popular with prospective trainees as there had been a high volume of applications already for the 2015/16 academic year.

The committee were informed that there would be the opportunity for 5 trainees enrolling on the course for 2015/16 to attend a placement in Germany in partnership with Universitat Duisburg-Essen. There is a plan for a reciprocal arrangement to take place in 2016/17.

PGCE PCET Part Time

The Committee were informed that there would be no official PGCE PCET Part Time route within the PCET course in the 2015/16 academic year as in the past this route had encountered difficulties with student retention and high numbers of interruptions of study. It was stated that this would enable the Course Team to focus on further developing the full time course. It was reported that although there would not be a part time provision, the opportunity for individuals currently in service to study on the PCET course would still be available.

Partnership Development for Teaching and Learning

The Chair stated that he would send a document entitled 'Teaching, learning and assessment in Further Education and skills – what works and why' to Matthew Waterhouse who would in turn distribute this document to mentor representatives by email.

Collaborative Partnership with Solihull College

It was reported that the proposed Top-Up course was soon to be validated by BCU. Shirley Alabaster, mentor representative from Solihull College stated that recruitment to this top up course had been affected by the lack of GCSE Maths and English qualifications of applicants. It was reported that many applicants had functional skills in these subjects so the option of equivalency was being looked into so the barrier to entry was removed.

11 To consider any other business

- i.) The Committee were informed of the Employability Skills day that would be taking place on 5th March 2015. It was reported that the emphasis of this day would be on giving the trainees the 'inside track' and providing a concrete focus on securing their first employment post. It was stated that Damian Brant, Assistant Principal for Learning & Teaching at Joseph Chamberlain College would be attending the day to deliver a session and he would ask BCU NQTs working at Joseph Chamberlain College if they were able to input to the session and attend. Partner colleges present at the meeting were asked to do the same with their BCU NQTs.
- ii.) Jean Dyson, PCET Tutor gave an update on the subject specific workshops that had taken place for PCET Art trainees and a visit to the Ikon Gallery focussing on updating subject knowledge.
- iii.) It was reported that a former Dance trainee from BCU PGCE PCET would be coming in to BCU to deliver a session on Entrepreneurism.
- iv.) The number of hours that PGCE PCET Full Time trainees are required to undertake whilst on the course was discussed. It was reported that the government stipulated that a minimum of 100 hours of teaching were required but BCU had stated a minimum of 150 hours on 3 days per week. It was further discussed that the trainees should have a focus on being the best they can and improving the quality of their teaching not just teaching the minimum hours required. Members discussed that no teacher can ever decide that they are the perfect teacher and do not require any more development so trainees should be looking to take on as much as they can rather than looking to finish their teaching after delivering the minimum hours.

- v.) A document produced by Sheffield Hallam University was shown to the Committee by Stuart Mitchell, PCET PDT. It was discussed that BCU would be developing a similar document to this which highlighted where trainees should be at certain points in the placement process and how mentors should be interacting with them. This would be useful for trainees and mentors as it could highlight what each person “could, should and must” be doing at intervals throughout the placement
- vi.) It was stated that for the 2015/16 academic year, there would be a set start date for trainees’ placement to begin. Karen McGrath, Programme Director stated that to accompany this formal procedure, she would be creating a pro-forma to be sent in to mentors within settings to encourage mentors to follow an appropriate induction process This will also suggest the range of activities trainees should be undertaking at particular points in the placement. It was discussed that ideas of what should be included in this induction checklist would be discussed as an agenda item at the next meeting.
- vii.) It was reported that it would be useful for Partner Institutions to discuss in more depths their expectations for trainees and ways in which they recruit to teaching posts. It was reported that there were a large number of recruitment techniques including teaching requirements, marking of past papers and differing interview techniques. Partner institutions were be asked to provide this information to Matthew Waterhouse to be collated and discussed further at the next meeting.
- viii.) It was reported that an Agenda item would be set for the next meeting on 10th June 2015 for BCU to share a review of the revised course for the 2015/16 academic year. It was stated that BCU were seeking input from Mentor Representatives on the content of the teaching programme for 2015/16. Partner institutions would be asked for their thoughts on the areas that should be covered. It was stated that BCU would send out the initial proposals for revalidation of the PGCE PCET course to Partner Institutions once they had been set.

12 To receive the date of future meetings of the PCET Partnership Committee

Wednesday 10th June 2015 at 10:00am