

PCET Partners

Issue No.8 | February 2017

Welcome to Issue #8

As we near the last few months of the academic calendar we are happy to present the latest edition of the **PCET Partners** newsletter.


Firstly, we are pleased to announce our **PCET Mentor Conference** later in the year available to all partners and presented for free to enhance both the partnership as a whole and your own CPD in the mentoring role.

Furthermore, we will be revisiting our **PCET Priorities** to discuss how these might be developed within placement, in preparation for future employment.

We are also encouraged to report that the **UCU** project **Further Education - Transforming Lives and Communities**, reported upon in our last issue (Special Edition – Issue 7) has since received support from the leader of the Labour Party, Jeremy Corbyn. More to follow.

As always we are interested in your ideas and suggestions, contributions and questions, so please do contact the partnership team via Stuart Mitchell (stuart.mitchell@bcu.ac.uk) if you have anything to ask or suggest as the year continues.

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BCU PCET Mentor Conference

→→→→Save the Date←←←←

We recently sent out “Save the Date” flyers advertising the **BCU PCET Mentor Conference** taking place on the morning of **Friday 26th May**. If you did not receive this flyer, then please do ensure you have now noted this date in your diary. More details are due to follow in the near future.

Including details on our Keynote Speaker Bob Harrison who will be joining us for the event.



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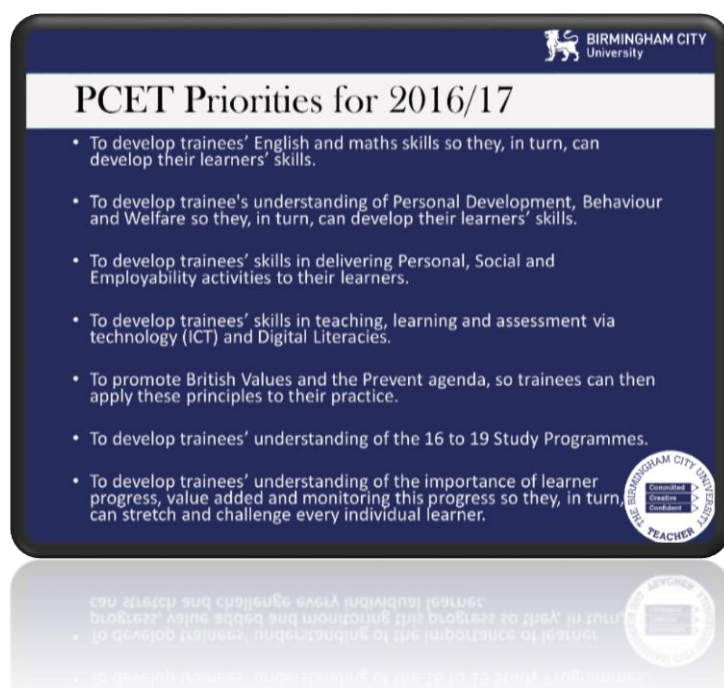
PCET Priorities and experience in placement - a message from Karen McGrath

First of all, many thanks for supporting our trainees.

Each year I set some PCET priorities for trainee development. These are drawn from the **Common Inspection Framework**, discussions with members on the **PCET Strategic Leadership Partnership Committee**, and new initiatives for the sector. Whilst we address these in the taught sessions and during individual meetings with trainees, we are sure you will be able to contribute as our trainees develop their knowledge and understanding in respect of the priorities listed below. This will help them to be better prepared for interviews and, ultimately, employment.

This year our priorities will focus on improving trainees' abilities in regard to:

- developing English and maths skills so they, in turn, can develop their learners' skills;
- an understanding of Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare, so they, in turn, can develop their learners' skills;
- delivering Personal, Social and Employability activities to their learners;
- teaching, learning and assessment via technology (ICT) and Digital Literacies;
- promoting British Values and the Prevent agenda, so trainees can then apply these principles to their practice;
- understanding of the 16 to 19 Study Programmes;
- understanding of the importance of learner progress, value added and monitoring this progress so they, in turn, can stretch and challenge every individual learner.



In addition it is becoming an expectation that our trainees, once employed in the sector, can deliver careers advice to their learners. Whilst this is, in part, related to their subject specialist knowledge, it is also about their understanding of issues such as UCAS applications and opportunities for progression for their learners.

It would be useful for you to discuss these topics with your trainees in placement and if you were interested in presenting a session on any of these topics with the larger PCET group please do get in touch with the team.

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Birmingham City University Partnerships Initial Mentor Training

As ever, we continue to promote our online training package for new, existing and prospective Mentors.

This support is presented as an online learning package for you to access at your own convenience, with each section containing support materials and activities designed to help you understand or consolidate what it is to be a Mentor. Moreover, this package is free to use.

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.

To access the online training package click on the link below, or type the address in to your browser:

<http://goo.gl/T473TI>

Once you have registered with the website you can use the enrolment key below to access the training package: **BCU_Mentor_14**



Your progress ?

Welcome to the **Initial Mentor Training Page**

for teachers and trainers acting as mentors within Birmingham City University Partnerships



BIRMINGHAM
University

Instructions: Read and work through each section carefully, one at a time. Use to make sure only the section you are working on is open. There are certain ac... must be completed in order to unlock your certificate.

Open all ● Close all ●

One - Introduction ●

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 think about your own professional development. Alternatively, scan the QR code to the right for immediate access.



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Course Modules in Practice:

Full-time trainees are currently working through two modules that involve direct interaction with colleagues, and in developing a better understanding of their students.

Here we present a brief overview of the modules to explain how you will be able to help your mentees, at the same as supporting your own students.

Practice Based Enquiry

Through planning and enacting a research project, trainees will question current thinking and practices within their subject specialism and further develop their abilities to take responsibility for researching, determining and achieving individual professional development.

This takes the form of a mini project where trainees have been asked to question their colleagues and peers on their chosen topic.

For the purpose of this research no students will be interacted with, as we recognise that the process of action research is an ongoing activity of improvement that forms everyday professional practice. Therefore all interaction will take place between mentor and mentee, colleagues or peers on the PCET course.

All research proposals must gain **ethical approval** from the University prior to starting, furthermore, all trainees wishing to engage in research within placement must also gain '**Permission of Access**' from an authorised member of staff.

Permission of access from your organisation might come from the Principle, Vice-Principle, a member of SMT, Head of Department or member of the Quality Team. It would be useful for the trainee to be aware of who this is within their placement and therefore if you were able to help them in this process we would be very grateful.



Analysis of Inclusive Learning Practice & Design

Within this module, trainees are asked to design inclusive resources for their students, providing support for all learners within the classroom environment.

Part of this module allows trainees to complete learner profiles from their practice, and it is at this stage that your assistance would be of great help. Your own students will also benefit from any support offered in this module.

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Transforming Lives & Communities

Jeremy Corbyn, the leader of the Labour Party, has spoken about his support for the current campaign to fund and expand further education provision and increase the number of FE teachers. Drawing on evidence from the Transforming Lives and Communities project that we signposted in our last issue, he talks about how education sits at the heart of the party's vision for bringing about change in this country.

Regardless of party politics it is always good to hear politicians discuss our sector, and even better to hear it discussed in positive terms.

In order to find out more about, and contribute yourself to, the project copy the link below...

<http://transforminglives.web.ucu.org.uk/>

To hear what Jeremy Corbin has to say about the importance of FE click below (or access the UCU YouTube channel).

<http://transforminglives.web.ucu.org.uk/2017/01/31/the-labour-party-leader-talks-about-the-importance-of-fe/>



As mentioned in the last edition this project is co-authored by Birmingham City University's own Reader in Education Dr Rob Smith in collaboration with Dr Vicky Duckworth.

Subject Specialist Activities

On Thursday 16th February we hosted our third series of subject specific activities based both in and out of the University campus.

Trainees were given opportunity to specialise in Art, English, Maths, Social Sciences, Humanities and Science/Technology, mixing with fellow trainees to focus purely on their subject specific development.

These sessions allow us to develop subject specific knowledge and skills within the group, often gaining support and guidance from members of our partnership colleges, schools and academies.

Trainees are then able to translate what they have learnt within the specialist activities in to the classroom environment.

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Subject Specialist Activities (cont.)

Sessions have included specialist dance technique lessons, visits to art galleries, museums and Birmingham Central Library and several theory and practical based activities, covering a range of topics.

An example of the activities from the subject specialist series was a visit by members of both the Social Science and the Humanities subject groups to the Bullring Shopping Centre (shown below and to the right), where they investigated the use of authentic locations to draw together abstract concepts often discussed within the classroom setting but difficult to visualise without being outside.

They also engaged in discovering ways in which to use the ideas and frameworks of Adventurous Learning (Beames & Brown, 2016), designing activities and resources that allow learners to develop deeper comprehension and application of key theories, concepts and practices outside of the classroom setting.



Contribute to the Partnership

We are focused on developing a support network for our partner organisations and if you wish to contribute to this process by writing a short article or by offering ideas for best practice in meeting the needs of your trainee, then please contact the PCET Partnerships team via Stuart Mitchell (stuart.mitchell@bcu.ac.uk).



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PCET Partners is produced by the PCET Partnerships team at Birmingham City University.

Please send any feedback, suggestions or contributions to:

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