# 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 10th June 2015 in Room 106a Attwood Building.

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| **Present:** | Damian Brant (Chair)  Kelly Davey-Nicklin  Jean Dyson  Karen McGrath  Stuart Mitchell  Simon Spencer  Kerry Adam  David Craik  Jacquie Hodges  Angela Taylor  Sandra Parsons | | Joseph Chamberlain College  PGCE PCET Personal Development Tutor (PDT)  PGCE PCET Personal Development Tutor (PDT)  Programme Director (PGCE PCET)  PGCE PCET Personal Development Tutor (PDT)  Deputy Head of School of Education  South Staffordshire College  Sandwell College  Walsall College  Walsall College  BMET College |
| **In attendance:** | Matthew Waterhouse |  | |
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## 1. To receive Apologies for Absence

Shirley Alabaster, Alison Bramham, Richard Bourne, Rob Delahay, Lorraine Mathers, Jane McCard, Craig Tucker, Tony Armstrong.

## 2. To consider the Minutes and **the matters arising from the minutes of the meeting** held on 10th June 2015.

A small numbers of amendments were made to the content of the minutes following clarification of terminology that was previously unclear. Following this, the minutes were accepted as an accurate record.

The document entitled ‘Action Plan arising from the PGCE PCET Strategic Leadership Committee Meetings’ gives the details of progress made in relation to matters arising. It was agreed that those that were completed actions would be removed from the Action Plan and only those outstanding actions would be carried forward into the 2015/16 academic year.

The following additional points were also discussed:

BCU would be holding a central event to capture NQT destinations of recently qualified trainees.

Joseph Chamberlain College (JCC) had employed 3 BCU NQTs this academic year. The idea of a visit from BCU staff to JCC during the JCC NQT Programme in order for trainees to evaluate their first year of teaching was also discussed.

The development of a CEDP document as a final review for trainees was raised, it was agreed that Kelly Davey-Nicklin would take the lead on this to ensure that the right questions were included and key areas were covered in this.

**3.** **To consider the PCET Strategic Improvement Plans: 2014/15 & 2015/16 with the PCET Key Priorities**.

The relevant documents were distributed to the Committee and discussed in detail. Detailed information relating to the Improvement Plan is recorded in the updated versions of this document.

Karen McGrath, Programme Director raised the following additional points and the impact it has had on the content and design of the improvement plan:

* The move to individual subject specific routes
* Issues arising from interruption of studies from career changers
* The usefulness of involving Partner Colleges in discussions surrounding the Improvement Plan.
* The closure of the Part Time Year 2 programme this academic year.
* The fact that the Strategic Leadership Committee were meeting mid way through the time where annual data monitoring was taking place and therefore, by the next meeting, more accurate and comprehensive data could be provided.
* The Improvement Plan is in place form BCU to hold themselves accountable to its partners and therefore, the Committee were charged with asking the questions in grey in the final column of the document so that as the HE Institution, BCU know what are priorities for partners in the sector. Evidence can then be provided at the meeting on the agreed outcomes.

In addition, the following points were discussed by members of the committee:

The new Ofsted two-part inspection process was discussed in detail. Damian Brant, Chair, also discussed the new process for inspections that included the frequency of inspections for good and outstanding providers, the areas to be inspected as individual subjects would no longer be inspected and the lack of transparency that is apparent due to the fact that individual lessons are no longer graded.

4. **To consider updates from Programme Leader and Partner Colleges on placement activity**

Before asking individual Partner Settings to provide an update, the Post Compulsory Education Team provided an update from the University on work taking place in partnership with Partner Settings. These included the following:

Subject specific workshops that had been and were continuing to be developed for Art and Music. Colleagues at Kidderminster College, Halesowen College and Top Barn Activity had also worked with Sport and Dance specialist Trainees. It was reported that all trainees on the course had access to a subject specific workshop and feedback received detailed that this had made the course more attractive to undertake.

Stuart Mitchell had been involved in sessions with partners relating to using the environment as a teaching and learning tool.

Karen McGrath, Programme Director is currently in discussions with Louise Toner and Sian Davies regarding improving recruitment to vocational subjects, this also included work with Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy, Industry Bodies and the Sector Skills Council. It is hoped that this will help to recognise parity in vocational and non vocational teaching and recognise the status of these teaching specialists.

Updates from Partner Colleges

Sandwell College

It was reported that the college had trainees in Psychology and Law this academic year.

It was stated that trainees were keen and switched on and had already fitted well into their respective departments. It was stated that new mentors were sharing best practice with experienced mentors which was having a positive impact on both groups. Trainees had been invited into Team meetings and had been involved in taking responsibility extracurricular activities and broader college life, this was agreed as an important value for trainees to possess.

It was reported that the college had seen parallels between the wording used in the trainees PDP files and the Sixth Form Colleges Association as both had been adopted from Teachers Standards.

South Staffordshire College

It was reported that the Performing Arts Part Time Year 2 trainee that was currently on placement was doing excellently. It was also reported that the College had lost a number of experienced staff and that there had been a realignment of staff in teacher roles and instructor/assessor roles and this had possibly affected the number of staff that were forthcoming in offering to mentor trainees.

A discussion then took place regarding ways to encourage new mentors to come forward as partners agreed that this was an issue that arises in their settings. It was discussed that the benefits of mentoring are only realised when an individual undertakes the process for themselves. It was discussed that BCU ‘Year in the life of a Mentor’ document, had impacted those that may be interested in becoming a mentor and it was agreed that new mentors had come on board as a result of viewing this document.

It was discussed that individuals need to be encouraged to see the mentoring process as a development opportunity and should be further encouraged by existing mentors to undertake training and offer to support trainees. It was decided as an action that the ‘Year in the life of a mentor’ document as well as the mentor checklist and year plan could be circulated to existing mentors to share with colleagues and encourage new mentors to come on board.

Walsall College

It was reported that the one trainee in Health and Social Care this academic year had been excellent, as had all dealings with BCU. DBS paperwork had been provided early so that the trainee could undertake an induction and begin at the college straight away.

Joseph Chamberlain College

It was discussed that the College had taken on more trainees this year than in previous years. It was discussed that the College had been assessed for the CPD Mark recommendation which will look at the ways that the College develop their trainees and Newly/Recently Qualified Teachers. Damian Brant confirmed that he would circulate the report to the Committee upon receipt of this report.

**5. To consider the External Examiner Report**

Karen McGrath summarised the findings of the External Examiners Report for the Committee. Following the delivery of this, it was discussed that the report was impressive and reflected the hard work of the PCET Team and the colleagues and partners that they had worked in collaboration with.

**6. To consider an update on Mentor Briefings**

It was discussed that Stuart Mitchell had already visited 2 partner settings and was happy to do this for more partners. It was discussed that the Mentor Newsletter and an invitation to the Mentor Briefings delivered at BCU was soon to be distributed to all mentors. It was discussed that Stuart Mitchell had facilitated some effective discussions with groups during these sessions and had made mentors familiar with the specific placement documents and important changes and developments.

It was reported that several staff who were not mentoring trainees this year had been attending the sessions with a view to potentially becoming a mentor for 2016/17. This was raised as a positive and should be encouraged as a way of building confidence to support trainees in the future as mixing with current mentors who understand the role and its benefits.

Positive feedback was provided regarding the Online Mentor Training package that is offered by BCU. The format and set up of this package was commended by the Chair who had undertaken this himself. Stuart Mitchell encouraged mentors present to speak with their institution’s Mentors and request that they go through this package to ensure that all mentors supporting BCU trainees have received this training by the next committee meeting on 3rd February 2016.

**7. To consider the new inspection framework: Personal development, behaviour and welfare aspect**

The new inspection framework was discussed by the Committee and in particular it was raised that the language used in the framework had now changed from indicators to descriptors. It was stated that the key priorities had altered and that British Values was no longer as important as previously considered but work readiness was now a high priority.

**8 To consider the standardisation/moderation of observations**

It was discussed that the first observation that would take place would be a joint observation and that peer observations would also be incorporated into the process. The importance of the language used in observations was highlighted as it helps trainees to put into context what is required.

It was stated that trainees were encouraged to set up their first observation as soon as possible and record targets early as this gives them something to work towards during their time on the course and specifically during their placement.

It was reported that at the next PCET Team Meeting, the Team would work on tools for standardisation across the Team that could also be used across the partnership in settings. It was stated that these tools would be underpinned by the current standards. Karen McGrath reported that her role as an external examiner also assists with bringing in knowledge of standardisation and moderation.

The standardisation activity on Shareville was discussed and the Chair highlighted that in his view, there was still a need for further resources in this area. It was stated that the Chair and Stuart Mitchell would work together to develop resources to be used across the Partnership.

It was discussed that common difficulties that arise include how a mentor can know what a grade 1 trainee looks like and what characteristics are demonstrated and how this differs to a grade 2 trainee. Mentors also found it difficult to understand that a trainee obtaining a grade 1 during their training is not the same as a newly qualified teacher that has been graded as a 1. It was stated that JCC would share their own grading descriptors to assist colleagues across the Partnership with this understanding.

Further difficulties relating to standardisation experienced by mentors present were raised as follows:

* Judgements should be based on evidence and not effort or intention
* Mentors may withhold grade 1 judgements if they have not been judged as a grade 1 themselves
* The perceived dip between judgements as a trainee and as an NQT need to be looked at carefully as trainees are not being judged in the same context.

**9. To consider the Pen Portraits**

It was reported that Joseph Chamberlain College found the document to be an excellent tool to identify the strengths and areas to work on during training.

It was stated that although it would be beneficial for these documents to arrive in settings earlier next year, it was important that the trainees are completing these after their meeting with their PDT.

It was discussed that the use of the Pen Portrait was a clear example of collaboration between settings and Birmingham City University.

**10. To consider developments in Shareville**

Upcoming developments including a dance studio and a sports arena were discussed. The plan to introduce a staff office where conversations surrounding the standards could sit was also presented.

It was discussed that it was an action for mentors to provide their own examples and experience of best practice when meeting the standards that could be built upon and used in the Shareville area and other tools used by BCU. It was stated that the Partnership has a wealth of experience in mentors across partner institutions that needs to be utilized.

**11. To consider recruitment and course developments**

11.1 PGCE: PCET full-time

It was stated that the current number of trainees enrolled was at 72 with 5 trainees unplaced.

Further discussions around competition for placements and the impact of curriculum changes on placement offers took place.

Karen McGrath asked the committee for their thoughts on a paired placement, mirroring the first placement model of the BCU PGCE Secondary Programme. It was discussed that this model assisted with transition into teaching and managing workload. It was discussed that the benefits on a paired placement would depend on the curriculum area and this would be most suited to trainees undertaking training for vocational courses.

11.2 PGCE: PCET part-time

It was stated that there were no new trainees on to this route however there were a small number of Year 2 trainees to complete during the 2015/16 academic year.

11.3 Partnership Development for teaching and learning

It was reported that a potential collaboration with Gloucestershire College was to take place and further information on this would be provided when possible.

11.4 Collaborative Partnership with Solihull College

No information provided.

## 12. To consider any other business; agenda items for Partner colleges

It was suggested that David Hassall, Data Manager within the Faculty of Health, Education & Life Sciences would be invited to the next meeting on 3rd February 2016 in order to demonstrate the University’s TAD (Trainee Assessment Data) document for the Committee.

## 13. To receive the date of future meetings of the PCET Strategic Leadership Committee

Wednesday 3rd February 2016 at 10am

Wednesday 7th June 2016 at 10am