

PCET Partners

Issue No.5 | March 2016

Welcome to Issue #5

This is the fourth newsletter of the academic year, and we are happy to report that many exciting and supportive activities have been, and will be, taking place since our last edition.

Again, a good many trainees will be well on their way to developing good practice in to outstanding and evidence of this has been shown in reports from across the partnership with interest growing in offering future roles to current trainees.

We are now at the point of the second term review and would ask that you have completed the review document and handed this back to your mentee. This will then be discussed in their PDT 2 meeting over the coming fortnight.

In this edition you will see examples of how partner organisations are helping our students in preparation for their next steps in the sector and how global opportunities are being developed, offering great prospects for our trainees.

Along with this is an invitation to join us at the University to discuss the future of Further Education with key voices of the sector – see the article to the right for further details.

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Reimagining Further Education Conference

On 29th June 2016, Birmingham City University's **Centre for the Study of Practice and Culture in Education (CSPACE)** will host a one-day conference entitled 'Reimagining Further Education' at its City Centre Campus (Curzon Building), located in the centre of Birmingham.

The conference will bring together practitioners, researchers and key figures in the field of Further Education and will cover a range of themes from apprenticeships and work-based learning to accountability and governance in FE.

In keeping with the event's title, '**Reimagining Further Education**', the conference format is designed to maximise opportunities for collaboration and interaction amongst all those present.

(further details on page 4)

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 at pcet.partnerships@bcu.ac.uk

Please do consider contributing to the development of this community, and sharing your experience with the BCU Partnership.

Alternatively, if you have a good idea for topics to deliver to our students, whether it be employability or core/subject specific skills please do get in touch.

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Employability Guidance From Our Partners

In the last few weeks we have been visited by a number of specialist tutors to deliver some of our subject specific activities. This is a wonderful way that our partners are able to participate in the delivery of the course and support our trainees.



On Friday, 12th February **Joseph Chamberlain College** held a Learning Fair and offered 15 places for our trainees to attend.

The learning fair provided an opportunity for curriculum and support staff to share ideas, strategies and practice they had found particularly successful in maximising learners' potential.

Session facilitators showed how they delivered a particular topic or skill in a way that has worked for them and their students. Although the sessions were not aimed at offering solutions for everyone, they did provide opportunities and ideas that everyone could consider within their own practice.

Our trainees benefitted greatly from this kind offer made by **Damian Brant** and JCC.

Further to this, Damian visited the City North campus, on Monday 29th February, to deliver a session to all of our trainees on the preparation and expectations required for the application and interview process.

Having delivered a similar session to our trainees last year, we are aware that the impact of this information is incredibly useful in setting the right mood and expectation for trainees going forward in their future career.

Visit from Oldbury Academy

On Monday 14th March we had the pleasure of being visited by **Martyn Jones**, Deputy Head Master of **Oldbury Academy**, and his colleague **Dean Brittle**, Head of House, to speak with our trainees about the reality of teaching as a career.

Martyn offered an inspirational story of his own path through the ranks of the teaching system and gave individual trainees some great advice on the flexibility and aptitude required to work within the sector.



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Trainees Take To Twitter

On 11th February PCET trainees took to Twitter in order to join **Sarah Simons** - TES FE columnist and #UKFEChat host – in a dedicated Twitter chat evening discussing inclusive learning to support their latest PCET module, arranged by Module Leader **Kelly Davey-Nicklin**.

From a selection of questions devised by our trainees, a list of 5 were set to be discussed as part of the UKFEChat event.

UKFEChat has a huge following throughout the UK and worldwide so this opportunity allowed us opportunity to promote our course and develop the ideas of our learners at the same time. The 'Storify' record of the UKFEChat that took place is found by accessing the link at the bottom of the page.

There were some excellent contributions from our learners and many participants commented on how good the questions were from our trainees. There were 700 tweets in total which we think may be a record for UKFEChat!



Links to Vietnam

BCU have been successful in their bid to the British Council in Vietnam to build a partnership with a university in Ho Chi Minh City, based on improving employability outcomes through student-centred approaches to learning.

Through collaboration facilitated by the project between **Birmingham City University** and **Nguyen Tat Thanh University** (Vietnam), the **Post-Compulsory team** will be involved in working together to develop a range of innovative models of student-centred vocational pedagogy and approaches to student peer and self-assessment and review that promote the acquisition of graduate attributes for employability.

In addition we will be enabling our own staff and partners to develop their skills as mentors and coaches, to provide effective support to students in placement or practice settings.

Furthermore, we will be embedding approaches to curriculum design and planning that ensure learning outcomes help to structure student development effectively.

This is a very exciting project for the University and it is hoped to offer opportunities to future trainees and partners on a range of development areas.

PCET team member, **Stuart Mitchell**, will be the Micro-Project Leader for one of the overall project strands - **Teaching, mentoring and coaching for employability**.

(further details to follow)

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Developing links with Germany

As reported in our first edition from June of last year, five trainees spent a few months on placement in Essen, Germany. The success of this partnership has enabled us to extend our links with other universities across the country.

As a result we look forward to welcoming Maren Alex on April 9th from the University of Wuppertal. Maren will spend time on placement at Halesowen College.

Further to this, PCET Programme Leader **Karen McGrath** and Teach First Programme Leader **Davinder Dosanjh** are presenting in April at the International Comenius Week at the University of Education Pädagogische Hochschule Schwäbisch Gmünd. Two PCET trainees will be joining in with the activities across the week as well, which include activities such as “Rhythm and Music in an intercultural context” and a visit to the “Staatsgalerie” Museum of Contemporary Art.

Three trainees will then take up placements in May in Gmünd. It is hoped that this experience will continue to grow as our relationship with partners across Europe develops.



Reimagining FE Conference Programme (cont.)

Instead of the conventional ‘stand and deliver’ format of many conferences, 'Reimagining Further Education' will be organised as group conversations framed and facilitated by a discussant and chair for each of the 6 thematic strands included.

By exploring positive, imaginative and creative ways forward that enhance agency, workforce development and the professional ethos of all FE practitioners, this conference aims to put the ‘confer’ back into conference!

There will be a natural link between morning and afternoon sessions, with the focus in the morning being on the ‘where we are now’ and the current issues facing the sector. The afternoon focus will be on the ‘where do we want to be’ and the pre-conditions that would facilitate this. We are therefore recommending that delegates choose their preferred strand and remain in this strand throughout the day.

Tickets are available at a cost of £50, which includes entry to the full programme, a conference pack, lunch and refreshments. Spaces are limited so tickets will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. We anticipate this is likely to be a popular event so you are advised to book early to avoid missing out on a place.

Book tickets through the Eventbrite link below:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/reimagining-further-education-conference-tickets-21208624567>

or contact Alison.Nicholls@bcu.ac.uk for further details.

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Birmingham City University Partnerships Initial Mentor Training

As the course continues, so to do we continue to promote our online training package for new, existing and prospective Mentors. We would like to take this opportunity once again to remind/introduce you to this extra level of support offered by Birmingham City University.

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**



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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Target Setting for Progression

Further to the guidance and suggestions we offered in previous editions, we would like to take advantage of some of the great examples 'from the field'. That is to say we have seen really clear examples of mentor and trainee working together to produce very effective results.

The example we will use in this case offers a clear development from directed targets set by a mentor, and progress identified following the trainees next observation. Objectives for the trainee are presented here in blue, with commentary from the mentor, in orange, identifying how effectively the trainee has achieved each target.

Identify the role and intentions for your supporting adults within your lesson planning. (PS6) One TA was moved at the start of the lesson so you were unable to follow the lesson plan in terms of adult support but you showed clear direction to the remaining adult throughout the lesson who was used effectively.

Consider stretch and challenge opportunities for all learners and groups of learners. (PS5) You differentiated by outcome for the main activities and provided targeted differentiation for some lower ability students. Planning takes into account the variety of needs and abilities of the students within the group.

Wording of learning objectives – ensure they are focused on learning. (PS18) Learning objectives were clearly organised and differentiated to the expected learning outcomes for each level of ability within the group.

Ensure that task instructions are clear for all learners by considering different ways of presenting and delivering instructions. TAs will also then be able to focus on enhancing learning rather than reiterating instructions. (PS5, PS14) Most instructions were clearly delivered, some activities would have benefited from written instructions displayed to support more visual learners and to prompt the less able.

Notice how the mentor has linked each target to one or more of the Professional Standards and reported back with information on what was improved within the following session.

This allows the trainee to link their development with specific standards, and offers positive feedback to promote confidence and encouragement to continue following guidance given by their mentor.

This illustrates an effective mentor/trainee relationship, where the experienced teacher guides through effective target setting and the trainee responds successfully in following the advice given.

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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:

pcet.partnerships@bcu.ac.uk