

Code of Practice for Student Placement in Schools

I. CONTEXT

Glasgow City Council is committed to supporting the development of children and young people with the highest possible quality of educational provision. Central to this is the quality of our staff and the importance for the city to employ teachers of the highest calibre to deliver quality in every classroom.

Initial teacher education is merely the first stage of a continuous process of career development. Initial teacher education sits within a planned early phase in career-long professional development where there are clear links to induction and the early years of employment.

Enhanced professionalism of teachers has promoted collegiate working to secure continuous improvement. There is both recognition of the importance of developmental support for students and an obligation for teachers to participate in student placements. All teachers should see themselves as teacher educators and, where possible, should participate actively in the education and training of the next generation of teachers. This responsibility is implicitly recognised within "A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century". Moreover, GTCS sets the standards required of Scotland's teachers that recognise the obligation on the profession to support new teachers in attaining these standards.

This agreement recognises that raised expectations of the quality and extent of provision for student teachers does increase demands on staff and schools. The agreement also recognises the challenges in time and resource implications inherent in the context of increasing expectations and workload. All arrangements will be with reference to SNCT conditions of service.

To ensure that all schools are able to participate fully in the early development of our future teachers, we continue to develop close partnership working between the Council, schools and the universities.

2. STUDENT PLACEMENTS

All schools and subject departments, or faculties, within secondary schools will participate in supporting placements for initial teacher education. Schools should accept responsibility for supporting the development of our future teachers.

There may be specific circumstances relating to an individual school or a department, or an individual teacher, which are such that a justifiable request might be made to the authority not to be included in a particular term or session. Such requests should be made in writing to the Student Placement Co-ordinator who will liaise with the deputy director on the overall position during the course of the session. The Code of Practice in section 3 has been agreed through the LNCT. Should there be particular difficulties relating to student placements then the LNCT will act as arbitrator.

The authority will monitor placements across schools to ensure there is a general consistency in the involvement of schools and that unacceptable burdens do not fall on particular schools or subject departments. The authority would consider enhancing the level of support to those schools or departments, which do take more than their fair share of student placements or where it is evident that a school department is supporting a "struggling" student.

The authority works closely with universities and GTCS regarding the number and location of placements. The authority will also work with the universities to ensure an equitable allocation of student placements across the authorities in the west of Scotland rather than placements made simply on the basis of convenience of location.

In line with the recommendations of *Teaching Scotland's Future* the authority will continue to work in partnership with the universities to evaluate and further develop the quality of student placement experiences.

The authority will work with the universities to support teachers to develop their role in supporting and mentoring students. The authority will continue to examine how best to develop and support the mentoring capacity in secondary schools and clusters of primary schools. In doing so, the authority will draw upon some of the excellent practice that is evident in schools within the city. The dissemination of good practice will be an important feature of a staff development strategy. The authority will provide additional support and advice required for struggling students.

3. STUDENT PLACEMENT - CODE OF PRACTICE

The Code of Practice for the placement of students in the city's schools has been revised by Glasgow City Council and has been agreed through the LNCT. This is a formal LNCT agreement, embracing the mutual aim of supporting staff and students in the process of initial teacher education.

Code of Practice

- It is the expectation that all schools, and in secondary schools, all departments and faculties, will participate in the scheme and make placements available to student teachers on a regular basis across all terms.
- Should a school or department believe that it is not in a position to participate during a particular session or in a specific term (for example where there have been lengthy absence of members of staff or where the school/department has been supporting a greater number of probationers and students than would normally be expected), it will be necessary to submit justification for exclusion of the school or department for that period, in the first instance to the Student Placement Co-ordinator for consideration by the authority. Should it prove necessary, then the LNCT will act in the capacity of arbitrator.

- School experience (whether on a block or serial basis) will be jointly planned between the school and university. The roles of respective staff should be mutually agreeable and clearly laid out, as defined in the university's guidelines on training.
- A key factor of school experience is to provide a practical context to illustrate and develop the skills, understanding and theoretical background being taught in the university.
- Emphasis in the host schools should be on, for example, class management and curriculum delivery skills - in particular lesson shape, instruction, questioning and explanation, co-operative learning and direct interactive teaching, narration and presentation. School staff should take on a role in developing the student teachers' skills.
- The school/establishment and the university should work together to structure school experience to reflect the stage of professional development of the student teacher.
- The School Placement Co-ordinator will provide a link with the universities on behalf of the authority. In addition it is expected that staff within the universities develop and maintain professional links with staff in schools.
- Schools should ensure clarity of responsibility of teachers, principal teachers and senior management with respect to student teacher placements. The head of the establishment should delegate a senior promoted member of staff to have an overview of the programme of training for students, within the agreed, job-sized remit.
- In the day-to-day management and implementation of the student teacher programme, the head of establishment or member of staff with the delegated responsibility for having an overview of the programme must delegate responsibilities to appropriate members of staff and give consideration to what resource is able to be given to support student teachers effectively.

- It is expected that students will receive a warm welcome and will be treated professionally by all school staff. It is good practice for educational establishments to provide a welcome/orientation pack. In secondary school, a departmental welcome pack may also be useful. Consideration should be given to holding a welcome meeting for student chaired by the head of establishment or delegated member of staff who has overall responsibility for the overview of student placements.
- All students should be valued equally, irrespective of their course of study, and schools should be prepared to accept students in their first year of training as readily as those in their final year.
- Opportunities should be exploited to use students' up to date knowledge to enhance school staff development and for students on placement in a school to discuss common issues with each other.
- Schools will apply the guidance provided by the universities to ensure consistent application of the General Teaching Council for Scotland's *Standard for Provisional Registration*.
- It is essential that accurate and timely feedback on performance be given, especially where there are weaknesses. Feedback should include full evidence and justification. It is recognised that teachers have an important role to play in the assessment of students on placement. The aim should be to improve consistency between university tutors and mentor teachers regarding evaluation of student progress. The professional view of the mentor teacher and school in relation to meeting the GTCS standard for provisional registration needs to be given due consideration.
- Students should have an agreed feedback time with mentor teachers to reflect on practice. The mentor teacher will offer advice based on observation and evaluation. The feedback will relate to the GTCS's *Standard for Provisional Registration*.
- Decisions on increasing the student's time with teaching groups and withdrawal of the presence of the mentor teacher should be based on the student's progress and effectiveness in the classroom. The decision should be agreed with the senior member of staff who has delegated responsibility for overseeing students and university staff.
- Schools should do their utmost to ensure that members of staff involved with student teachers attend pre-placement meetings. Mentor teachers need time, opportunities, support and resources in order to develop expertise and skills essential to the role; to have time for discussion of professional and educational matters; to have time for preliminary meetings prior to placement; to have time to meet university staff, as appropriate, during the student placement.
- University staff must inform the educational establishment of details of any areas of concern that they have about the student's progress, perhaps arising from previous placements, as this would influence decisions about length of time the student could be left unsupervised with groups or a class.
- A course requirement for the university will be that the student takes a class without the mentor teacher being physically present in the classroom. The teacher of the class or a nominated teacher must make arrangements to be available and in a nearby location known to the student as it is understood that this teacher retains overall responsibility for the class. The mentor teacher, in these circumstances, may undertake alternative duties but should not be routinely used for covering classes.
- In order to assist the process of improving the quality of future student placements students will be asked at the end of their placement to evaluate their placements and where improvements might be introduced.

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This Policy has been agreed by the Glasgow LNCT and approved by the Education Children and Families Policy Development Committee