



UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH

Dear School ITE coordinators, School Mentors, Class teachers, University Mentors, Campus staff

December ITE Briefing

A very well represented Partnership workshop meeting was held Wednesday 2nd of December. University Mentors, campus based staff, school based tutors and school based ITE coordinators met to consider all aspects of our work and to agree next steps.

First and foremost, the partnership wanted to acknowledge and celebrate all the incredible work occurring in our schools. Colleagues are doing all they can to support children and students - I am incredibly proud of what we are achieving.

The partnership recognises that there are significant challenges in delivering a high quality ITE provision under the current COVID restrictions. **Y2 and Y3 students missed 4 weeks of placement respectively last year.** This gives rise to difficulties setting expectations, particularly for students in final placements who are being assessed towards QTS. A summary of the partnership discussion and suggested actions are below

Summary and Agreed Actions

Expectations for students

It is unrealistic to believe students will be operating at the same level as in previous years at the beginning of the placement. Support needs to be offered to ensure they make rapid progress. Strategies need to be in place to support and enhance, holistic development, particularly to support planning. Mentoring needs to be focused on development rather than on assessment.

Key message:

Stage 3 confers QTS; all parties need to work with students to ensure they have a deep and broad understanding of teaching at level 3.

Students also need to be reminded that working 'inside level 2' will constitute an award at this level. They do not have to achieve all the level 2 standards to be successful.

The partnership considered and agreed a set of statements to be shared with all stakeholders:

- 1. Assessment needs to be holistic and realistic:** We cannot 'assess' students with the same degree of 'quality assurance' as we have a variety of models in operation... We CAN only do our best - we are unlikely to directly see evidence for all the standards at a

particular level. Mentors need to use their professional judgement alongside all available evidence to make a 'rounded' assessment.

2. **A balance needs to be maintained between 'development' and 'assessment'**- mentors need to prioritise 'development' conversations. Some prompts have been devised to help steer online conversations.
3. **Rigorous and extensive moderation is vital** – ePad gives us the ability to engage in detailed and rigorous moderation exercises.
4. **Students need to be made aware of the challenges faced due to COVID and be realistic re their expectations and drive to achieve 'grades'** - Emphasis needs to be given to 'solidly and confidently achieving level 3'. Schools and Mentors need to emphasis and encourage a breadth of understanding at Level 3. Students need to be reminded that 'working inside level 2 would constitute an award of level 2
5. **In the event that a student is assessed as below level 3 at the end of placement the 'DFE trajectory' will be applied.** All stake holders will scrutinise evidence and ask the question; 'if the students had managed the full 26 weeks in placement, does the evidence suggest they would have been successful'? Borderline students will be offered further experience in school to ensure successful QTS.
6. **The final report needs to acknowledge what the student hasn't been able to do (due to COVID)** allowing enhanced targets to be set for their NQT year.

Mentoring and coaching prompts to help facilitate 'online mentoring'

The partnership suggested a set of open 'coaching' questions to facilitate and standardise online mentoring conversations and ensure reflective developmental conversations are taking place:

University Mentor to CT / SBT... 'What is the story of the target setting done with the student this week'?

University / School based mentor to student...'tell me the story of your week – how has this experience led you to meet your targets'?

University / Based mentor to student 'How has this conversation helped you to reflect on your practice, meet targets and help inform new targets'?

Thank you so much for all your energy and hard work. Have a fantastic Christmas and a restful New Year... Ready for whatever next term brings...?

Philip Medway

Associate Head (Primary ITE)

