**Division of Psychology, Sociology & Education**

**Queen Margaret University**

**School Experience Programme Handbook[[1]](#footnote-2)1**

**BA (Hons) Education Studies Primary**

**For Students, School Based Educators and University Based Educators**



**Table of Contents**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |
| **No.** | **Title** | **Page** |
| 1. | Introduction | 3 |
| 1.1 | Aims | 3 |
| 1.2 | Partnership between Local Authorities, Schools and University | 4 |
| 1.3 | The Standards for Registration: Mandatory Requirements for Registration with the GTCS | 5 |
| 1.4 | Pebblepad - Professional Development Portfolio (PDP) | 6 |
| 1.5 | QMU Placement Team Contact Details | 6 |
| 1.6 | Email Etiquette | 6 |
| 1.7 | Your E-Mail Inbox | 6 |
| 2. | Reflective Practice and Situated Learning | 7 |
| 3. | School Experience Placement | 7 |
| 3.1 | During each placement, students will be expected to: | 7 |
| 3.2 | Pebblepad - Professional Development Portfolio (PDP) | 8 |
| 4. | Organisation of School Experience – Administration, Processes & Procedures | 8 |
| 4.1 | The Student Placement System (SPS) | 8 |
| 4.2 | Allocation of School Placements | 8 |
| 4.3 | Religious and/or Cultural Observances | 9 |
| 4.4 | Catholic Teachers’ Certificate | 10 |
| 4.5 | Students with Disabilities | 10 |
| 4.6 | Changes to Placement School | 10 |
| 4.7 | Travel and Accommodation | 11 |
| 4.8 | Attendance | 11 |
| 4.9 | Absence from Placement | 12 |
| 4.10 | Fitness to Practise, Health-related and/or Personal Issues | 12 |
| 4.11 | Acceptable use of Social Media, ICT & Other Mobile Devices | 13 |
| 4.12 | Student Withdrawal/ Removal from School Placement | 15 |
| 4.13 | Complaints Handling Procedure | 15 |
| 5. | Preparing Students for School Experience | 15 |
| 5.1 | Hub | 15 |
| 5.2 | Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG) | 16 |
| 5.3 | Insurance Cover for Motor Vehicle Use | 16 |
| 5.4 | Dress Code | 16 |
| 5.5 | Preparation Seminars and Workshops | 17 |
| 5.6 | Confidentiality Issues | 17 |
| 6. | Assessment of School Experience – Processes and Paperwork | 17 |
| 6.1 | Professional Working Relationships | 18 |
| 6.2 | Assessment of School Experience | 18 |
| 6.3 | Mid-Way Review (Formative) | 19 |
| 6.4 | Completing the Mid-Review and/or Cause for Concern Form | 19 |
| 6.5 | Supporting Students at Risk of an Unsatisfactory Placement | 20 |
| 6.6 | Discontinuation of School Experience | 21 |
| 6.7 | Completing the Final Report Form (Summative) | 22 |
| 6.8 | Successful Completion of ITE Placements | 22 |
| 6.9 | Deferring a School Placement | 22 |
| 6.0 | Scheduling of a Deferred or Retrieval Placement | 23 |
| 6.11 | Student Evaluation of School Experience | 23 |
| 6.12 | Submission of Assessment Paperwork | 23 |
| 6.13 | Appeals Procedure | 23 |
| 7. | Contact and Support Mechanisms | 23 |
| 7.1 | Student Contact and Support | 23 |
| 7.2 | School and School Based Educator Contact Mechanisms and Support | 24 |
| 8. | Roles and Responsibilities during School Experience | 25 |
| 8.1 | Student Teacher Responsibilities | 25 |
| 8.2 | School Responsibilities | 27 |
| 8.3 | School Based Educator Responsibilities | 27 |
| 8.4 | The University’s Responsibilities | 28 |
| 8.5 | University Based Educator Responsibilities | 28 |

**1. Introduction**

Welcome to the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) at Queen Margaret University (QMU) School Experience Placement Handbook.

This handbook provides an overview of partnership and placement arrangements for the QMU ITE programmes, the processes and support mechanisms involved in placement provision. The Handbook is intended for ITE students, schools hosting placements and University Based Educators. Programme and placement information in the handbook includes:

* Partnership between schools and university
* An overview of ITE programmes & placements
* Organisation of School Experience processes & procedures
* Preparing students for School Experience
* Assessment processes and paperwork
* Contact and support mechanisms
* Roles and responsibilities during School Experience

School Experience is a compulsory part of the ITE learning process giving students the opportunity to carry out a journey of personal and professional development within an educational setting. It is a series of placements in which students are educated/mentored/supported for a stipulated period of time, and where professional competence as a teacher is assessed.

School Experience enables the acquisition of new knowledge and skills as well as the application, consolidation and reflection on learning gained in the university environment. School and University Based Educators, working in collaboration, have a crucial part to play in supporting their progress to meet the required General Teaching Council, Scotland (GTCS) Standard for Provisional Registration (SPR) by the end of their programme. The success of School Experience is highly dependent on a clear and supportive interchange between ITE students, university, local authorities and schools.

###### There are three central themes that permeate school experience placements

###### 1) Relationships

###### 2) Reflection

###### 3) Research - The 3 R’s.

## 1.1 Aims

The school experience placements will provide opportunities and support students to:

* + 1. *Apply* theory and evidence in original and creative ways to support inclusive learning in the practice setting and develop original and creative responses to problems and issues
    2. *Manage* complex issues and make informed judgements in situations in the absence of complete or consistent data/information
    3. *Design, develop, implement and evaluate* strategies and programmes or a series of opportunities which support all pupils to optimally participate in the curriculum and school life using a range of specialised skills, techniques, practices and/or materials that are at the forefront of, or informed by forefront developments
    4. *Demonstrate and facilitate* collaboration, discussion and debate within the group of learners to extend the individual’s and groups’ perspective. This will include exploration of the views of pupils, teachers and parents/carers and require demonstration of the facilitation of respectful exchange with less verbal / nonverbal participants
    5. *Communicate* effectively and collaboratively in various media to a range of audiences (e.g. peers, tutors, research community, pupils, parents/carers, allied professionals)
    6. *Engage in critical reflection* to develop skills of self and peer appraisal and enable insights and application to practice
    7. *Demonstrate* originality, creativity, independence, autonomy and accountability in relation to personal and professional practice and development.

Throughout the course, university inputs and school experience placements are designed progressively around the SPR which outlines what is required of all new teachers, thus providing strands for students to evaluate their developing abilities. Each school experience has a unique set of learning outcomes, which articulate with prior and future university studies and previous school experience. Learning outcomes increase in complexity as students progress through the programme because **each placement provides the building block** for future ones.

## 1.2 Partnership between Local Authorities, Schools and University

QMU has established partnerships with the following local authorities: Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian, West Lothian, Scottish Borders and Fife. Educational representatives from these authorities have been closely involved in the design and development of the Education programmes. From 2020-2021 QMU’s partnership with these authorities formed part of the wider Edinburgh Early Phase Partnership along with Napier University and Moray House. Whilst each university will retain its distinctive programme partnership elements, the wider partnership will enable all stakeholders to meet regularly to discuss school experience and partnership related developments including the sharing of good practice with local authority partners.

Here are some of the people involved in supporting students directly and indirectly:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Associate Head of Division** | Ensures consistency across ITE programmes and represents placement matters externally on bodies that discuss national level placement policy. |
| **Programme Leader** | Leads on the overall placement provision in BA (Hons) Education Studies (Primary) programme. |
| **Year Tutor** | Leads a particular year in the BA (Hons) Education Studies (Primary) programme including being the module coordinator for the placement-focused module and the subsequent school experience. |
| **University Based Educator (UBE)** | An academic member of staff who acts as a contact person for a group of students, and school experience Educators throughout a school experience placement. |
| **Placement & Partnership Officer** | The administrator who co-ordinates all the administrative and operational aspects of school experience across specific schools, providing the Student Placement System with information about placements, communicating to students and schools and overseeing the general day to day issues arising from school experience. |
| **School Based Educator (SBE)** | The person facilitating students’ learning whilst they are on placement. The School Based Educator is a class teacher jointly responsible for the assessed outcome on placement and who acts as a professional guide and mentor to students. |
| **Student** | The enrolled student on the ITE programme. |
| **Pupil/s** | Young people in schools (Learners). |

Students will be supported, observed and assessed in practice by a designated School Based Educator (a teacher/mentor) on each of their placement settings. These are GTCS registered teachers. The School Based Educator will work with students to identify current strengths and aspects of their practice which can be built on and enhanced. They will facilitate their learning in practice. To support this process, from the start of the programme, the student and the School Based Educator will discuss and agree on the expectations and learning for the placement.

**1.3 The** **GTCS Standards for Provisional Registration (SPR)**

Can be found: <https://www.gtcs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/standard-for-provisional-registration.pdf>

**Student Teacher Code** (<http://www.gtcs.org.uk/web/FILES/teacher-regulation/student-teacher-code-0412.pdf>) provide direction for programme-related practice experience.

It is **the SPR** that applies to students at this stage and is at the core of their learning and progress. Full details of the SPR can be found on the **GTCS website** https://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-standards/professional-standards-for-teachers/

In addition, the GTCS have a dedicated site for students: **IN2Teaching** ([http://www.in2teaching.org.uk](http://www.in2teaching.org.uk/)) with added support and advice specifically tailored to support students through the provisional registration process and their probationary service, whether it is via the Teacher Induction Scheme or the Flexible Route. There will be input from the GTCS throughout the year.

Based on the Standards, students are required to use a series of self-evaluative tools to keep a record of their teaching experience and key moments of learning that have been meaningful, detailing what went well and what can be improved. As part of this learning students ought to think about why these experiences are relevant to students as future teachers (see Weekly Evaluation Form).

## 1.4 Pebblepad. Professional Development Portfolio (PDP)

As part of their school experience and professional development, students will compile a Professional Development Portfolio (PDP) during placements using proformas developed by the programme team. The use of the portfolios gives students opportunities to evidence and reflect on their learning in relation to the SPR when on school experience. Students are encouraged to reflect on their practice in relation to particular strands and identify the professional actions needed to make satisfactory progress against the relevant Standard. This process prepares students for using portfolios to evidence their continuing professional development informing their completion of the Teacher Education Profile in preparation for the Induction year <https://www.gtcs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/becoming-a-teacher-english.pdf>

## 1.5 QMU Placement Team Contact Details

**Name & Address of Institution**

Queen Margaret University, Queen Margaret University Drive, Musselburgh, East Lothian, EH21 6UU. [ITEPlacements@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:ITEPlacements@qmu.ac.uk)

## 1.6 Email Etiquette

Students ought to be judicious in the emails they send. Academic staff receive a very high volume of mail and may be unable to respond to their email if it requests information that can be found elsewhere. Check Education Studies Primary Module areas on the Hub, and the handbooks, to see if the information is available elsewhere first.

Staff will endeavour to respond to emails within 3 working days (i.e. not including weekends, public holidays and annual leave).

Please ensure that you use your QMU email account for any correspondence relating to your programme of study. When sending emails to academic and support staff within QMU it is good practice to adopt a professional tone and to be clear about the issue being addressed. This tone of course reflects the professional etiquette expected of teachers and is in line with the [SPR on Professional Values](file:///G:\SCH%20-%20Initial%20Teacher%20Education\Programmes\Primary\Placements\Placement%20Forms\standard-for-provisional-registration.pdf) and the [Student Teacher Code.](https://www.gtcs.org.uk/web/FILES/teacher-regulation/student-teacher-code-0412.pdf)

## 1.7 Your E-Mail Inbox

Students must get into the habit of clearing out their email inbox regularly. The inbox has limited capacity and if students do not regularly delete emails, especially those with large attachments, emails sent to students will not reach their inbox and students may miss important information. Alternatively, Outlook has an Archive function (which can be found in “Mailbox Clean-up” under the “File” tab), which allows students to hold on to their old emails in a separate folder. Please ask in the Learning Resource Centre (LRC) for help with this option.

*More details on staff roles and responsibilities can be found in Section 8.*

**2. Reflective Practice and Situated Learning**

Learning is a lifelong process experienced through connections that are embodied through diverse learning situations. Through cognitive, practical and emotional experiences, transformation occurs through stages, resulting in a continually changing or more experienced person (Jarvis 2009[[2]](#footnote-3); Illeris 2014[[3]](#footnote-4)).

Central to this strategy is the need for students to engage in learning experiences, a readiness to listen and explore, preparedness to be open to experiences and a resolve to keep going. This requires an effective learning environment based on intellectual and communicative space to learn, with shared values of honesty, trust, authenticity, respect and reciprocity. The environment should generate a culture of engagement and criticality where students can creatively explore and question theories, practices and different sources of knowledge in an atmosphere of high challenge and high support.

As part of this process students will find themselves reflecting on their learning and development as a student teacher, and as part of a team, while on school experience placement (also known as a *situated learning experience*). Think about what supports and strengthens their situated learning experience.

Students will be supported to challenge their thinking, values and beliefs; through the posing of complex activities and questions and develop resilient and sustainable approaches to their learning and practice in response to these.

Critical to this process is the use of diverse knowledge, scholarly inquiry processes and evidence-informed materials to engage and enliven the processes of learning. As a learner on this programme of study students have a responsibility:

* As a representative of the teaching profession and the University
* Towards the organisation providing practice experience, and its pupils and employees for managing their learning and professional relationships.

The engagement in life-long learning and co-creation of communities of learners and practice is integral to this process.

Further study will increase breadth and depth, nurturing and connecting both research and enquiry-based approaches to professional practice. As part of this process the situated/practice-based (the school experience) element of the programme is key to their learning.

**3. School Experience Placement**

## During each placement, students will be expected to:

* + - Complete the **Health & Safety Induction checklist** by the end of week 1
    - Read and summarise the School or Local Authority’s **Child Protection Policy** by the end of week 1
    - Through focused observation develop understanding of building relationships with children and young adults and the **pedagogy that informs practice** in education establishments
    - Identify the use of educational principles and practice i.e., **active learning**
    - Reflect on the role of the teacher
    - Recognise the importance of working in **partnership with parents**
    - Identify the roles of professionals working in **integrated children’s services**
    - Establish and maintain a Professional Development Portfolio which should be available to the class teachers at any point during the placement (see Section 3.2 below)
    - Reflect on the **transition processes** from nursery to primary to secondary school, where appropriate
    - Gain understanding of how young people learn and consider inclusive approaches to integrated learning
    - Gain more understanding of how teachers plan for **inclusive practice** making use of individual lesson plans. Some lessons may stand alone, but with time, students will learn to create lessons as part of a sequence.
    - Observe how teachers plan, implement, assess and evaluate teaching and learning daily.

As early as possible in the placement, students should become familiar with significant policies, namely Health and Safety and the Child Protection policy and GIRFEC. https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/

## Professional Development Portfolio (PDP)

Please note that lesson plans, timetable, blogs, paperwork, feedback, evidence and reports can all be placed in your Professional Development Portfolio (PDP) as evidence of your professional development.

**4. Organisation of School Experience, Administration, Processes and Procedures**

## The Student Placement System (SPS)

Placements are organised as part of a national on-line system known as the Student Placement System (SPS), which is based on matching requests from universities to offers of placements from individual schools via their Local Authority. The system is managed by the GTCS.

The SPS operates to a strict, nationally agreed timeline and meeting the required deadlines is essential. Once schools have submitted their offers in line with the SPS timeline, Local Authorities will confirm offers. Universities are required to upload course details and student data for placements due to take place within the forthcoming academic year. Schools will be notified via email of the students they should expect to receive throughout the school year. This is normally 4 weeks before the placement is due to take place.

## Allocation of School Placements

Students will complete a pre-placement form and the information they provide will be uploaded to the SPS. **Under no circumstances should students attempt to organise their own placement directly with a school.**

While we try to bear in mind any preference a student might have, there are other considerations, which may well take precedence when placing students. In particular, the centralised procedures for placing students, the induction programmes for newly qualified teachers and the recent increases in the numbers of student teachers across Scotland have placed pressure on school capacity. **Students may be required to travel to a placement in an outlying area** and should be prepared to travel up to 90 minutes each way. The placements will be made based on a student’s **term time address and mode of transport. Students are required to indicate if their term time address is their home address or an address close to QMU.** The Placement & Partnership Officer will have the final decision on which school students will attend. Placement enquiries should be sent to [ITEplacements@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:ITEplacement@qmu.ac.uk) using their student e-mail account.

## Religious and/or Cultural Observances

A student’s identity, such as their religious/ cultural practices, can have a significant impact on teaching, learning and assessment in practice. However, it is a statutory requirement that the university and placement providers address these through establishing relevant policies and guidance which address diversity and inclusion.

These policies include a commitment to:

* Promoting equal opportunity and diversity during employment
* Ensuring all employees are treated fairly and valued equally
* Valuing religious and cultural needs and practices and meeting these where possible.

Students may have particular religious or cultural needs in terms of requests which may appear to “conflict” with existing working requirements in the practice setting. Such issues may include:

* Health and safety issues relating to dress code
* Request for flexible working related to religious/belief-related festivals
* Adjustments for prayer time, and space.

Whilst it may not always be possible to accommodate every student’s religious or cultural observance, every effort will be made to find a mutually agreeable solution**. Our guiding principles:**

* Normally, students will be allocated placements according to their term time address and can expect to travel up to 90 minutes to and from a placement, unless there is some exceptional reason, which would impact adversely on the student or placement.
* In these exceptional circumstances, negotiation between the student, the university, and school is essential.
* Established policies that apply to employed staff also apply to students accepted on placement. It is vital that discussion takes place on the religious and cultural needs of the student and how they will be valued and/or met whilst on placement.
* Agreements between the student and placement provider may occur prior to, or at the outset of any placement as part of the induction process. These should be reviewed and discussed with the student at the midway point of the placement.

## Catholic Teachers’ Certificate

Students who are eligible and wish to obtain the Catholic Teachers’ Certificate must complete the online CREDL (Certificate in Religious Education through Distance Learning) programme. This Certificate is recognised by the Bishops of Scotland as a preliminary qualification in generalist Catholic religious education for those who wish to teach religious education in Catholic primary or secondary schools. For eligible ITE students who wish to complete this programme, further information can be found at:

<http://www.gla.ac.uk/postgraduate/taught/religiouseducationbydistancelearning/>

## Students with Disabilities

QMU is committed to equality of opportunity and believes in a culture of diversity and inclusion.

<https://www.qmu.ac.uk/study-here/student-services/disability-service/>

Disabled students should experience the same broad range of practice settings to enable them to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes for each placement. At QMU, the term ‘disabled’ relates to the impact of an illness, impairment, developmental disorder or specific learning difficulty on the specific tasks associated with university level study.

The QMU disability service develops an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) following a disability needs assessment. The ILP details the reasonable adjustments and supports recommended by the disability service. The ILP is developed and expected to be implementing in all on campus and online teaching and assessment. The ILP can be shared with the placement provider with the student’s consent and can be used to inform the placement but it does not have to be implemented by the placement provider. When a student is on placement the placement provider is responsible for any reasonable adjustment and the placement providers policies and guidance needs to be followed.

The Disability Service works with a broad range of students including those with long term medical conditions (such as MS, epilepsy, diabetes, chronic fatigue etc), mental health difficulties, sensory impairments, physical impairments, those on the autism spectrum and those with specific learning difficulties (such as dyslexia).

Disabled students are actively encouraged to meet with the Disability Adviser (DA) to discuss their Individual Learning Plan (ILP). Disability Advisers email the ILP to the university’s Academic Disabled Students Coordinator (ADSC) as this is an opportunity for dialogue between them to check if there is a recommendation which may need to be amended. In some circumstances, though not often, the DA may ask the ADSC to share the ILP with relevant academics. The student can of course choose to share their ILP for any reasonable adjustments and assessment arrangements to be made, which may be necessary to enable them to meet the learning outcomes of each school experience.

QMU acknowledges that not all information about a student’s disability or health may be relevant to placement providers and that normally, information would be provided with student’s agreement.

Reasonable adjustments during school experience are dependent on students disclosing a disability or health condition, or at least, sharing information about their needs with the placement provider.

Students should keep their Personal Academic Tutor, or Programme Leader, University and School Based Educators, Disability Service and their ADSC informed of any changes to their health status. It is essential that students discuss any concerns they may have with staff as early as possible. **If students require further information or advice, please feel free to contact the Disability Service for a confidential chat.**

## Changes to Placement School

Placement allocations are non-negotiable. Students do not have the right to exchange allocated placements with their peers. Normally, the programme teams do not enter into third party communications about allocated placements. The responsibility lies with the student to raise reasonable and relevant concerns directly with the relevant Year Tutor. The following are **not** considered valid reasons to request a change in placement:

* Personal preference - allocated placements are deemed relevant and will offer appropriate learning experiences.
* Financial hardship - students should consider the cost of school experience as being a necessary and integral part of the programme and plan for this in advance.

Students may only request a change in placement allocation for extenuating circumstances not identified on the school experience information form, e.g. changes to health or well-being requiring reasonable adjustments. Relevant supporting evidence must be provided to the Placement & Partnership Officer (e.g. medical certificate) before any such request can be considered. Requesting a change of school placement allocation does not guarantee that it can be made.

## Travel and Accommodation

There is no direct provision by QMU for the cost of accommodation or travel expenses whilst on placement. Students should consider the cost of school experience as being a necessary and integral element of the programme and plan for this in advance.

The University Student Finance Service administers two discretionary funds provided by the Scottish Government. These are the Childcare Fund which is aimed at students who incur childcare costs whilst studying and the Hardship Fund when students find themselves facing exceptional financial problems. An application form is completed and submitted with supporting evidence which is then considered at a confidential monthly meeting of the Hardship Committee. It is useful to make an appointment to see the Student Finance Adviser before submitting an application. Student Finance Adviser Contact [studentfunding@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:studentfunding@qmu.ac.uk)

## Attendance

Students are expected to arrive at their placement school well before the start of the school day to ensure lessons are well prepared and resourced before pupils arrive. They should also expect to stay on after the end of the school day to tidy up, mark pupils’ work, put up displays, attend any staff or planning meetings, plan and prepare lessons or activities for the next day or help with after school clubs. As a guide, student teachers are expected to arrive at school between 8.00-8.30am and leave 4.30-5pm.

If difficulties arise with placement hours, School Based Educators, and the student are actively encouraged to draw this to the attention of the school and university so that a mutually acceptable plan of action can be developed.

The University is aware that many students now find it essential to find work whilst studying. However, employment outside of the programme must not adversely affect student’s work during school experience. Students are expected to mirror their working patterns to those in operation at the school. They must recognise that flexibility on the part of the school is not to be expected.

Similarly, all requests for pre-arranged absence from placement must be discussed with the University. Planned absences from school experience placement may be approved by the University in exceptional circumstances only.

###### IMPORTANT: Students do not have the right to negotiate holidays, or other leaves of absence during a placement directly with the School Based Educator.

## Absence from Placement

Students are expected to comply with the attendance and reporting sickness policies of the University and must familiarise themselves with these policies within the first week of placement. If absence is before the start of a placement the student must contact the School Based Educator and Placement & Partnership Officer to report any sickness or absence. Every student is required to inform the school and the University should they be unable to attend their placement on any given day. Students should:

* Contact the placement school, the Placement & Partnership Officer at [ITEPplacements@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:ITEPplacements@qmu.ac.uk) and report all absences via the Student Portal in the usual way
* If absent for more than one day, students should contact both the placement school and the [ITEPplacements@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:ITEPplacements@qmu.ac.uk) on each day of absence
* If absent for more than 5 working days students must submit a medical certificate to the Student Portal and to [ITEplacements@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:ITEplacement@qmu.ac.uk)
* When students return to school they should advise the Partnership and Placement Officer, again, via [ITEplacements@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:ITEplacement@qmu.ac.uk)
* Any days missed due to absence must be made up at the end of the placement if the schools is in agreement or by undertaking an additional placement. This is to be arranged by the Placement & Partnership Officer, the SBE and the UBE. Student’s should **not** arrange this themselves
* Appointments, i.e. dentist, doctor, driving test etc should all be rescheduled out with of placement time, where possible.

###### IMPORTANT: Failure by students to inform the School Based Educator, and the University that they are not attending placement will be regarded as unprofessional behaviour.

A School Based Educator should only report unauthorised absences, but these should be notified to the University’s Placement & Partnership Officer - [ITEplacements@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:ITEplacement@qmu.ac.uk) as soon as practicable, and certainly within 48 hours.

Attendance must be monitored throughout the placement and all absences from placement must be recorded by School Based Educators.

## Fitness to Practise, Health-related and/or Personal Issues

At QMU we must ensure that all students maintain proper teaching standards whilst on placement. This is about safeguarding that our students are fit to practise so that public trust and confidence in teachers is maintained and the learning of our children and young people is protected.

If the University becomes aware of an issue regarding a student’s health or behaviour which may have an adverse effect on the student and or school experience, a Fitness to Practise (FtP) Panel may be convened by the University. The Fitness to Practise (FtP) Panel has the delegated authority to impose a range of sanctions including requiring a student to suspend study or withdraw from the programme. If the outcomes of the FtP Panel prevent a student from starting or continuing with a school placement these will be discussed within the team and a recommendation made regarding their progress on the professional programme. See QMU’s Fitness to Practise policy: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies-and-procedures/fitness-to-practise-ite/>

##### 4.10.1 Prior to School Experience: Guiding Principles

* Any student experiencing ill health and/or personal issues prior to a placement should make an appointment to meet with either the Personal Academic Tutor (PAT), and/or the University Based Educator.
* A course of action will be agreed in order that appropriate measures and /or reasonable adjustments are in place for the duration of the placement. This may involve the Programme Leader, Disability Advisor, Student Counsellor and the school as required.
* Following a discussion with the student, the Programme Leader may recommend the student consults a medical practitioner in order to obtain a medical assessment on whether the student is able to commence the placement. A supporting medical certificate must be obtained by the student and forwarded to the Programme Leader.
* If the student is unable to commence a placement, it will be deferred, and the student will undertake another placement once she/he is in sound health, subject to confirmation of fitness to practise by a medical practitioner.

##### 4.10.2 During School Experience: Guiding Principles

* Students developing a health issue during school experience that significantly impacts on their performance, safety of self or others are advised to discuss their situation with the School Based Educator, and their University Based Educator as soon as possible.
* Following discussions with all relevant parties the student may be advised to consult a medical practitioner to obtain a supporting medical certificate providing confirmation of their current health status and forward this to the University.
* This may result in the placement being terminated with the student commencing another placement when she/he is of sound health, subject to confirmation of fitness to practise by a medical practitioner.

## Acceptable use of Social Media, ICT & Other Mobile Devices

##### Using Social Media

The University acknowledges that social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Linked-in, Blogging, YouTube, Pinterest, Instagram) is a significant part of people’s lives and is a positive way to keep in touch and share information.

Student teachers could be putting their registration at risk if posting inappropriate comments about pupils, parents, teachers, schools, others employed by the school, as well as other students or posting any material that could be considered explicit. COPAC and the GTCS produced statements/briefings on the use of social media. These can be found at:

[http://www.gtcs.org.uk/web/FILES/teacher-regulation/professional-guidance-ecomms-social-](http://www.gtcs.org.uk/web/FILES/teacher-regulation/professional-guidance-ecomms-social-media.pdf) [media.pdf](http://www.gtcs.org.uk/web/FILES/teacher-regulation/professional-guidance-ecomms-social-media.pdf)

As a student-teacher, be cautious about the information posted on-line. Students should remember that:

* The law around defamation and harassment, and confidentiality applies at all times
* Anything posted on-line to a social networking site is in the public domain, even with the strictest privacy settings
* The more personal lives are exposed through social networking sites, the more likely it is this could have a negative impact
* What may be considered as “letting off steam” about a situation at placement could potentially be seen by another person as unprofessional behaviour.

The following points are offered to students as guidance:

* Make use of appropriate etiquette when posting materials to social networking sites
* Act responsibly at all times upholding the reputation of the profession, and QMU
* Protect their own privacy, think through the kinds of information students want to share and with whom, and adjust their privacy settings
* Observe placement providers’ bullying, harassment and dignity policies when posting on-line (including e-mail, and text messaging) with colleagues, and peers
* Do not post information to social networking sites that may lead to the identification of service users
* Do not make disparaging remarks about the placement, service users, or employees on a social networking site (even when anonymised these are likely to be inappropriate).

##### Using official ICT Facilities, and Mobile Devices

Educational settings offering school experience have policies regarding the use of mobile devices (e.g. smart phone, iPad, Android tablet, lap top computer, digital pen, memory stick) stating where and in what circumstances such devices are permitted or prohibited.

It is important therefore that when students go out on placement that they make it a priority to familiarise themselves with the local regulations. This will give students a better understanding of what is permitted and what is not.

Any ICT/official mobile devices offered to students during placements are provided for use in learning and/or pursuit of their studies. Students should keep usernames and passwords private at all times. Students must not abuse ICT facilities for any other purpose, e.g. use of social networking sites or for recreational internet use. Students should be aware that organisations hosting placements may have auditing systems in place that can identify who is looking at what, and where, and when this activity took place.

Service user confidentiality, privacy, and dignity must be maintained at all times. Students should **never** use their own mobile devices or QMU ICT to create or send official school records (including photographs, videos, audio recording).

##### Keeping Safe

As an ITE student their studies may involve internet searches relating to young people. This may generate unwanted links to objectionable websites. Students are advised to use wherever possible, specific education related search engines.

Even if students are careful they may accidentally access internet sites they did not mean to. This might happen because they clicked on a misleading link, clicked on a link by accident, or because a site has been ‘hijacked’. Students may also find that they get bombarded by unsolicited and explicit ‘pop-up’ advertising. If any of these things happen whilst a student is on placement, they should:

* Take a note of the URL (web address) of the site and the time it was accessed
* Tell someone immediately
* If possible, show them what happened
* Record the details of the site accessed, before logging off the computer)
* Tell their School Based Educators as soon as possible
* Tell local ICT staff (any alerts regarding inappropriate internet use will go to them first)
* Contact their Personal Academic Tutor at the University to advise them of what has happened.

There may be an investigation into their on-line activities, but if the accident was legitimate and these steps are followed, it will be resolved quickly.

The University does not discourage students from using such services. However, students should be aware the University will take seriously any occasions where these services are used inappropriately. If occasions arise of what might be read to be on-line harassment, or materials deemed to contravene professional conduct these will be dealt with in the same way as other such instances.

## Student Withdrawal/ Removal from School Placement

If a student chooses to withdraw from a placement without prior discussion with the School Based Educator, and approval of the University, normally, the student is deemed to have failed the placement module. However, if extenuating circumstances occur which preclude prior discussion (such as serious illness, or a sudden family bereavement) then a course of action will be mutually agreed.

There may be rare occasions when the school and/or School Based Educators(s) feels it appropriate to remove a student from the placement area immediately, and they have the authority to do so. While, on these rare occasions, the placement school will report the matter at its earliest convenience to the University, the student is also required to inform their University Based Educator and Personal Academic Tutor immediately any such event occurs.

## Complaints Handling Procedure

The University has implemented a Complaints Handling Procedure (QMU 2014a) which can be found here [complaints at QMU](https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies-and-procedures/complaints-procedure/).

Any queries about the complaints procedure or any complaints written on the Complaints Form may be e-mailed to [complaints@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:complaints@qmu.ac.uk)

**5. Preparing Students for School Experience**

Approaches to assist students to prepare for placements are blended to allow flexibility of delivery and to accommodate for different learning styles. These include online learning, lectures and interactive workshops on self-evaluation activities, directed reading, and e-learning. Key aspects to support the preparation process are described in more detail below.

## Hub

All of the School Experience modules are supported by a designated Initial Teacher Education Area in the University’s virtual learning environment – The Hub. Through these medium students are given clear time frames and deadlines for completion of preparatory tasks, and activities associated with school experience.

The Hub School Experience Area houses a bank of useful placement learning resources and materials for students. Resources include web links, handbooks, assessment forms, templates for reflection and reading materials.

The Hub provides a forum for group support, and communication throughout each of the school experience. Students participate in on-line discussions facilitated by their University-Based Educators at designated points throughout each placement. Guidance on how to prepare for and participate in these on-line discussions is given in preparatory sessions held at the University. Activities are designed to promote a community of learners and facilitate the development of students’ self-assessment skills, fostering attitudes which value continuing professional development. University Based Educators encourage active knowledge sharing amongst the cohort through the use of peer- generated feedback.

## Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG)

As students will be doing regulated work with pupils during school experience, they must apply to register with the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG). It is the responsibility of each student to fill in the detailed application form, provide the necessary documentation and to pay for this to be carried out prior to the first school experience. The University ensures that all PVG membership applications are appropriately checked and countersigned and that the whole process has been completed satisfactorily prior to the commencement of placement.

Some placements providers require additional checks before accepting students on placements and make this known to the University when making placement offers. Further information on the PVG Scheme is available at: <https://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/disclosureinformation/pvgscheme.htm>

###### IMPORTANT: Failure to have PVG Certificate in place will result in the deferral of a school placement.

## Insurance Cover for Motor Vehicle Use

Students using their own motor vehicle during school experience will be expected to obtain confirmation from their insurers that adequate cost cover is in place for all costs and claims and no liability is placed on the University and/or placement provider. **This is usually business cover**. The vehicle must be in a roadworthy condition with valid road tax and MOT (if applicable). Under no circumstance should students carry pupils, parents, teachers, or others employed by the school in their own vehicle.

## Dress Code

Dress code on placement ought to be *smart casual*. The main thing to remember when dressing up for smart casual is trying to look smart but not overly formal, and make sure that their clothes are neat and clean; shoes are freshly polished. If in doubt, ask their University or School Based Educator. As a guide:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Smart Casual Do’s**  jacket or blazer  cardigan or jumper  trousers (dark preferable)  long sleeved shirt (tie is optional)  blouse  closed shoes, flat shoes, pumps  mid-length dress or skirt | **Smart Casual Do Not’s**   * jeans * denim jacket * shorts * flip flops or sandals or stilettos * caps * sports wear * logos and slogans on the top |

A student whose personal appearance is deemed to be inappropriate by the School Based Educator or Head teacher may be asked to leave the educational setting and reported absent until they return dressed appropriately. Placement hours may be deducted for this absence.

## Preparation Seminars and Workshops

The University will prepare students for school experience covering topics such as:

* Child protection
* Review of the learning outcomes and specific tasks for each placement, and exploration of how these will facilitate the integration of theory and practice
* Professional conduct during school experience
* Reviewing SPR for each placement
* Preparation for, and review of self- evaluation on placements
* Developing, and using a Professional Development Portfolio.

## Confidentiality Issues

Ensuring confidentiality is not just good practice; it is a right owed to all individuals and is central to the maintenance of trust between schools, teaching staff, parents and pupils. They have the legitimate expectation that students will respect their privacy and act appropriately.

Students are expected to adhere to and comply with guidance provided by the regulatory body GTCS COPAC: https://www.gtcs.org.uk/fitness-to-teach/code-of-professionalism-and-conduct/

Any written work completed by students during placement must also be stored as a confidential record. Students are expected to maintain boundaries of confidentiality outside placement both in discussions, presentations and written course work for the University. At all times, the identity of anyone connected with the school experience placement must be protected, and permission for the use of sensitive material must follow the policies and guidelines of the placement school.

###### It is important that students do not specifically name staff, or work placement areas on any documents, or in assignments submitted to the University. Students are advised to describe placements in general terms for example, “planning team”, “additional support service”. Students may be given initials.

School Based Educators are an important part of the assessment process and should demonstrate good practice when assessing their written work prepared for placement. It is important to recognise that students are in a learning situation, formative feedback is an essential part of supporting students to comply with good practice. School Based Educators will report actual, and possible student breaches of security or confidentiality to the University as a matter of priority.

QMU has a s[trong commitment both to social justice and on valuing the individual](https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/purpose-and-values/). We want to encourage you, in your professional journey, to be who you are as a teacher. This includes developing your confidence to bring your unique identity to the classroom, regardless of your age, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identity. If you would value a chat about the support QMU can provide for you to be who you are in the classroom, as you get ready for placement, or if you encounter any negative reaction from school staff or students in regard to your identity whilst on placement, please speak with Simon Hoult, [SHoult@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:SHoult@qmu.ac.uk).

**6. Assessment of School Experience, Processes and Paperwork**

## Professional Working Relationships

##### University Based Educator (UBE)

When on placement students will be allocated a UBE who will be the university point of contact if students have any questions or concerns about their placement.

The UBE will also visit the student on certain placements\* to carry out observations with the SBE.

Any general enquiries about placements can be directed to [ITEplacements@qmu.ac.uk.](mailto:ITEplacements@qmu.ac.uk.)

**\*Please note that no placement visit will take place during the 1st school placement, which is a 4 week placement in semester 1 of 2nd year.**

##### School Based Educators

Students should work closely with their School Based Educators during school experience. It is important to remember that School Based Educators’ first responsibilities are to pupils in their class and that in addition to facilitating their learning they have many additional responsibilities to deal with on a day-to-day basis. Giving consideration and thought to School Based Educators’ responsibilities should enable the establishment of an effective working relationship. Students are advised to put the safety and well-being of pupils before personal concerns. School Based Educators will collaborate with students to identify how the University learning outcomes for each placement will be achieved and help students to determine a clear pathway for achieving these through discussion and negotiation (e.g. Practice Learning Plan & Agreement).

In addition to ongoing informal observation and discussion from the School Based Educator, normally, students will receive a regular formal observation and feedback based on an agreed focus. A School Based Educator will make one joint observation, usually in the latter half of the placement.

**School Based Educators assess a student’s performance on placement using the Standard for Provisional Registration (SPR) and will also discuss their Professional Digital Portfolio throughout placements.**

Students ought to have realistic expectations about their performance during school experience and acknowledge that School Based Educators are responsible for the assessed outcome.

## Assessment of School Experience

School Based Educators, University Based Educators and students have access to paper and electronic copies of the SPR statements and relevant school experience documentation necessary for formative and summative assessment of school experience. These can be used throughout the placement as a basis for discussion to help students with self-reflection on their own performance. The purpose of formative assessment process is to:

* To generate feedback for students about their teaching
* To identify strengths and weaknesses in their professional practice and modify learning accordingly
* To provide a basis for professional dialogue and discussion in relation to their practice
* To provide a documented record of their level of competence in relation to achieving the SPR by the end of their programme.

###### Specific details on assessment tasks and activities can be found in the placement thumbnails (summary) and students should take note of these.

Formative assessment of learning on school experience may be by direct observation of teaching, informal and formal discussion, written evidence, feedback from School Based and University Based Educators and other suitably qualified professionals working within the placement setting, as well as their own self- evaluation.

## Mid Way Review (Formative)

The Mid Way Review takes the form of a discussion between students and the School Based Educator halfway through each placement, highlighting areas of progress across the specific SPR and University learning outcomes for each School Experience. It guides the professional actions to be taken by the School Based Educator, and the student during the remainder of the placement. Areas requiring further development and priorities to be addressed in the second half of the placement should be highlighted, agreed and documented in an action plan on the Mid Way Review form.

The purpose of the professional dialogue between students and School Based Educators is to identify strengths and areas of development in relation to the SPR giving them the opportunity to modify and/or further develop specific aspects of their practice before completing the placement.

It is expected that students will prepare for the Mid Way Review by completing the “student’s comments” section. This self-assessment process contributes towards the development of their professional judgement by encouraging students to reflect on their practice and identify evidence of meeting any further professional action goals identified in their Portfolio.

Mid Way Review comments must be signed and dated by both School Based Educators and students before being submitted to the university.

## Completing the Mid Way Review and/or Cause for Concern Form

###### The following list of points is intended to assist School Based Educators in the compilation of the above.

Feedback should be:

* **Individualised and relevant***,* demonstrating attention to the particular development needs of the student
* **Goal-directed,** providing assistance and increased understanding of what is expected or required, with a focus on the needs of pupils and relationship to the learning goals of the student
* On the Mid Way Review and/or cause for concern forms it is helpful to **summarise the**

**key points** in the form of a development/action plan

* **Behaviour-focused**, rather than personality focused. Feedback that refers to what the student does, allows scope for change
* **Respectful,** demonstrating mindfulness of acceptable boundaries, respecting confidentiality and using language that is non-judgmental
* **Balanced**, comment on strengths and what the student did well with areas of further development
* **Written feedback** should be constructive and structured so that students are clear about specific aspects of their practice requiring further development
* **Collaborative***,* inviting student involvement and agreement in identifying strengths and areas of development, in seeking solutions, reaching conclusions and formulating plans for future action, facilitating self-evaluation
* **Change focused (non-evaluative**), exploring specific strategies to maintain strengths and support areas of development and facilitating a problem-solving approach that highlights the consequences both positive and negative of particular behaviours or actions
* **Encourage improvement** with practical and specific suggestions and evidence required from the student to demonstrate further achievement
* **Factual (not generalised**), providing evidence-based examples based on observed practice that highlight actual strengths and weaknesses of modifiable behaviours that have been observed
* **Aligned** to the SPR.

An exemplar with guidance will be placed on the SPS system for schools to download.

## Supporting Students at Risk of an Unsatisfactory Placement

Whilst being relatively rare, an unsatisfactory outcome of school experience does happen and can be a very stressful situation for all concerned. These guidelines are aimed at reducing some of the stresses and ensuring that a fair process is in place to help support the student, and the School Based Educator.

One of the key aspects in managing this is early detection – the sooner a student’s performance can be identified as **a cause for concern** then the more opportunity available to the student to attempt to redeem the situation (see Cause for Concern forms).

The student needs to be informed whether their progression on school experience is a cause for concern as soon as this has been identified.

* The word unsatisfactory and/or cause for concern at this stage must be clearly used in this discussion
* All attributes/knowledge gaps where the student is not satisfactory must be clearly indicated to the student and examples must be given by the School Based Educator and related to the SPR
* School Based Educators must complete a cause for concern notification form and the Mid Way Review should also list the areas causing concern which can be found here: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/current-students/practice-based-learning/initial-teacher-education/>

The School Based Educator must contact the University Based Educator at QMU. A discussion will then ensue to decide the most appropriate form of action to ensure support for both student, and the School Based Educator.

Whilst each situation will vary and requires to be handled appropriately, there are key aspects as how to best work forward. Honesty is paramount and requires both School Based Educator and student to be open within the learning relationship. Clarity is important, make sure the student is very clear about areas of concern and they might best address these. This will involve an action plan setting weekly goals/targets for the rest of the placement so that the student has an agreed plan to move things forward. The University Based Educator should support in this process and receive a copy of the agreed actions taken. In some cases, this might trigger an additional visit by the University Based Educator. A copy of this report will be held in the student‘s school experience placement file at the University. **Guiding principles:**

* Inform the student as soon as possible if their practice is a cause for concern
* Inform QMU as soon as possible if their performance is causing concern – preferably no later than the mid-term review
* Encourage the student to talk with their University Based Educator at the earliest opportunity
* Ensure that the student receives honest, non-judgmental feedback which focuses on the key areas causing concern
* Document these discussions have taken place on the weekly reflection record. Both School Based Educator and student should sign this
* Set weekly goals/targets with the student for the remainder of the placement – making these realistic and achievable. Both School Based Educator and student should sign this
* Schedule weekly feedback sessions indicating progress on the set goals/targets and document discussions on the weekly reflection record
* Encourage the student to use reflection as much as possible to allow them to assess their own practice – giving some focus to where things go well as well as those where practice has not been so good
* Keep in touch with the student‘s University Based Educator to feedback on progress

If the student has not been able to retrieve their practice by the final evaluation then ensure that all verbal, and written comments are in line with the SPR so that the student is left with a clear picture of where their practice did not meet expected levels.

All relevant documented evidence will then feed into a grading meeting with the University Based Educator at the end of the placement at QMU, where a decision will be made regarding the final grade for submission to the Board of Examiners. Ultimately, the Board of Examiners will determine whether the student may progress or whether they may be offered a retrieval placement.

## 6.6 Discontinuation of School Experience

It is important that all involved in this decision be as objective as possible, are clear about the relevant evidence that they have, follow the relevant procedures, seek advice and record decisions and outcomes.

A placement may be terminated for the following reasons.

##### 6.6.1 Reasons related to the student

* Professional misconduct
* Issues related to competency and/or fitness to practise
* Health and safety issues and mandatory programme requirements
* Personal issues

##### 6.6.2 Reasons related to the School-Based Educator

* School Based Educator’s competency, and/or concerns regarding their conduct
* Personal issues

##### 6.6.3 Reasons related to the school

* Staffing shortages

If a placement is terminated, [ITEPlacements@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:ITEPlacements@qmu.ac.uk), the University Based Educator and Programme Leader must be notified at the earliest opportunity, so that an appropriate action plan can be developed.

##### 6.6.4 Possible actions might be

* Issue is resolved. Placement continues with extra support from the school, and the University
* Another School Based Educator is able to facilitate the placement for the student in a different class
* The terminated placement is rescheduled

In the instance of a satisfactory standard being unachievable, resulting in an unsatisfactory placement, a fail mark may ultimately be presented to the Board of Examiners for the placement module; at which pint a decision will be taken as to whether a retrieval placement may be offered to the student. All outcomes from Boards of Examiners, regarding progression or potential retrieval are made available to students via the QMU Student Portal: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/study-here/learning-facilities/it-services/qmu-portal/>

## Completing the Final Report Form (Summative)

The Final Report Form should be completed by the School Based Educator at least one day before the end of the school experience and discussed with the student. This provides the student with the opportunity to review the report with the School Based Educator before signing it.

School Based Educators must refer to the SPR benchmark statements when completing the Final Report Form. In making a judgement, it is important to bear in mind the extent to which the placement has given the opportunity to demonstrate the criterion being considered, and what can be realistically expected from students in relation to their stage of the programme.

We ask that School Based Educator to document the reason(s) for lack of opportunity in the “School Based Educator’s comments” section. By the end of the final school experience students need to achieve a satisfactory grade across all elements of the SPR.

## Successful Completion of ITE Placements



For successful completion, as per GTCS regulations, students ought to achieve **8 out of 8 satisfactory grades based on the Standards for Provisional Registration\*** on each the school experience placement. Failure to do so will depend on the number of unsatisfactory results and could lead to a retrieval placement in late August/early September, as agreed by the Board of Examiners. To be eligible to graduate and progress into practice it will first be necessary to successfully complete any retrieval placement(s).

\*Please note for year 2 placements only students are expected to achieve satisfactory grades in 6 out of 8 Standards for Provisional Registration.

## Deferring a School Placement

Students who are unable for legitimate reasons to undertake the placement at the allotted time or who withdraw from a placement due to ill health and/or personal issues will have a placement arranged at a deferred time. This will count as a first attempt.

## Scheduling of a Deferred or Retrieval Placement

Deferred or retrieval placements are dependent on the University sourcing another placement through the Student Placement System (SPS). Students should be aware that it may not be possible for a retrieval placement to take place until the next academic year, in August, when schools re-open (which may impact the student’s ability to progress to the next year of study).

## Student Evaluation of School Experience

At the conclusion of each placement, students complete a school experience evaluation: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/media/tqpn0buj/student-teacher-weekly-self-evaluation.pdf> offering constructive feedback to the school, School Based Educator, and to the University, to enable ongoing enhancement of the placement experience. A general summary of the results will be fed back to all schools involved via our Local Authority colleagues.

## Submission of Assessment Paperwork

Students are responsible for ensuring they receive a copy of their final school experience report and that the school submits an electronic version of the completed Final Report to the University. A submission date for the Final Report will be communicated to students, which ordinarily must be submitted no later than three working days of completion of placement.

Students must ensure they make copies of completed paperwork for their own records.

At the conclusion of each placement, students reflect on their practice against the SPR and as a result of their Final Report setting targets for the next school experience or for the completion of their GTCS induction profile at the end of the final placement.

## Appeals Procedure

A student wishing to appeal against a decision made by the Board of Examiners about the outcome of a school experience placement may do so by following the procedures, and practices set out in the Academic Appeals Regulations (QMU, 2014a). Information available at: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies-and-procedures/academic-appeals-regulations/>

**7. Contact and Support Mechanisms**

## 7.1 Student Contact and Support

Support from the programme teams is provided in different ways throughout school experience, reflecting current demands for sustainable practices including face to face meetings as well as the use of digital technologies.

University Based Educators act as the first point of contact for an identified group of students and School Based Educators throughout each school experience placement responding to initial requests for advice and support from School Based Educators and their students, normally within 24 hours.

Support is offered face-face, via email or MS Teams. If a student’s performance is causing concern on any school experience at the request of the School Based Educator and/or student, a visit can be arranged. A student will normally receive one visit per placement from the University Based Educator and a further visit if a cause for concern is raised. All communications and follow-up actions agreed with School Based Educators and students are documented and copies of completed reports and action plans are retained in their file and the relevant Year Tutor and Programme Leader are kept informed of any issues.

##### 7.1.1 Problems on Placement

If a student is experiencing difficulties on school experience or needs to discuss any aspect of the placement with a member of academic staff, they are advised to contact their University Based Educator initially. Students may choose to discuss problems of a personal nature with their School Based Educator, or to contact their Personal Academic Tutor (PAT).

However, if an incident occurs outside of normal working hours, where there is an urgent need to contact the University, please telephone: (0131)-474-0000. When prompted, ask for School Office or the Placements team.

##### 7.1.2 Student Wellbeing Service

Students experiencing any personal difficulties during their studies are encouraged to make use of the Wellbeing Service. This service is confidential, and sessions can be arranged to suit his/her timetable. All students are welcome to use the service, which can also provide information on other sources of help that may be more appropriate. The website also provides signposting to various other information and support services. https://www.qmu.ac.uk/study-here/student-services/wellbeing-service/

##### 

##### 7.1.3 School Experience Reflection Seminars

School experience placement debriefing workshops, facilitated by the University Based Educators are held at the concluding phase of each placement providing an opportunity to discuss with peers and reflect on their school experience in line with the SPR, enabling them to individually identify strengths and areas of development.

## 7.2 School and School Based Educator Contact Mechanisms and Support

A variety of systems and mechanisms are currently in operation to ensure that support for placement providers and School Based Educators is monitored and continuously reviewed thereby contributing towards enhancement of the experience for all involved.

##### 7.2.1 School Experience Information Support Website

A school experience information support website is available for organisations hosting school experience and School Based Educators. The website has been designed to help make the role of School Based Educators easier by providing links to useful websites related to practice- based learning, along with electronic versions of all the handbooks and forms that School-Based Educators need for school experience. The ITE school-based learning support Home Page will be found at: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/current-students/practice-based-learning/>

##### 7.2.2 School Experience Briefings and Mentor Training

School experience briefings will be held prior to each placement enabling School-Based Educators to gain an overview of the placement, expectations and paperwork; and ask any questions. Briefing information will also be available on the information support website: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/current-students/practice-based-learning/>

##### 7.2.3 Individual Support

A student’s University Based Educator is available to answer any queries during school experience. Additional support and guidance are available to School Based Educators who are working with marginal students and very able students. Meetings (e.g., face-face or video conferencing) can be arranged at the request of the School Based Educator. The University Based Educator acts as the first point of contact throughout a student’s school experience responding to requests for information, or advice, normally within 24 hours (University Based Educator’s working days) Where an incident occurs outside of normal working hours, where there is an urgent need to contact the University, please telephone: (0131)-474-0000. When prompted ask for reception.

**8. Roles and Responsibilities during School Experience**

The QMU partnership with schools is built on values of trust and mutual respect which is the basis of our community of professional learning. An effective working partnership depends on *shared accountability, responsibilities, tasks and a mutual understanding*.

The main aim of these shared responsibilities is to make available appropriate information, resources, staff and experiences to foster student teachers’ attainment of the GTCS Standards for Provisional Registration (SPR).

## Student Teacher Responsibilities

Students at all times must take seriously their responsibilities within school experience. Failure to do so will adversely affect their placement experiences and learning and could lead to the termination of the school placement.

##### Prior to placement it is expected that the student will:

* Ensure that they have a PVG Scheme Membership for working with Children which is linked to Queen Margaret University.
* Make contact with the School no earlier than 2 weeks before placement begins to arrange a pre-visit if practical, and pass on relevant documents if necessary
* Have adequate arrangements in place to support travel and attendance for

school experience

* Monitor their student e-mail accounts and respond promptly to any enquiries from their School/Division
* Attend all pre-placement briefings and/or participate in all mandatory preparatory activities as required by the School/Division
* Read all documentation provided by the university for school experience including assessment requirements, procedures, and regulations
* Read all pre-placement information provided, or recommended by schools
* Revise relevant taught information, and skills in preparation for school experience.

##### At the start of the placement and throughout placement students must:

* Complete Health & Safety checklist and abide by the school policy on Health & Safety
* Observe the Student Teacher Code https://mygtcs.gtcs.org.uk/web/FILES/teacher-regulation/student-teacher-code-0412.pdf and Code of Professionalism and Conduct <https://www.gtcs.org.uk/fitness-to-teach/code-of-professionalism-and-conduct/> (COPAC) at all times
* Be punctual at all times and dress appropriately for the placement setting and the work involved
* Plan a programme of experience with the School Based Educator which takes into

account placement opportunities

* Make available all school-based learning related documentation for their university and School Based Educators at any time
* Ensure all documentation is up to date and presented in an organised and easy to follow fashion
* Undertake the specified teaching responsibility and reflect on their progress as a teacher
* Organise and maintain the Professional Digital Portfolio as per the university requirements specified in the School Experience Placement Handbook
* Support the teacher with the on-going work of the class and learn from observation of the teacher’s interactions with the class
* Negotiate with the class teacher the timing and content of lessons and share lesson planning at least a day in advance with the class teacher
* Work with the class teacher to complete the Mid Way Review to identify strengths, development needs and progress
* Participate in learning observations and professional discussions
* Communicate closely with all relevant staff and peers, in advance of the dates of learning observations and professional discussions
* Participate in school continuing professional development activities and in-service programme as and when appropriate
* Reflect the status of a team member and respectfully engage with other members of staff at the placement setting as appropriate
* Contact their University Based Educator at the earliest opportunity if any significant matters arise during the placement, including any areas of concern relating to their own welfare and personal safety, or well-being
* Contact the university if circumstances of their placement changes such as changes in opportunities to complete tasks, to the School Based Educator
* At all times, follow the procedures of the placement setting, and QMU regarding absence and sickness
* Be fully prepared for teaching and contribute to the feedback process in a critically reflective and professional manner
* Contribute towards and actively participate in the midway review, and final evaluation of their performance displaying openness to, respect and acknowledgement of other people’s ideas reflect on the school experience enabling personal and professional development. Complete selected items of evidence to add to their Professional Development Portfolio
* Abide by the placement policy on Safeguarding and other mandatory policies
* Act in accordance with guidance provided by the university in respect of professionalism and avoidance of situations making them vulnerable to allegations.
* **Turn in signed copies of the school experience Mid Way Review to the designated dropbox in the HUB on the specified submission date.**

##### At the end of the placement students must:

###### Turn in signed copies of the school experience of the Final Assessment Form to the designated dropbox in the HUB on the specified submission date.

## School Responsibilities

* A commitment from the Head Teacher and staff to provide a programme in placement which facilitates progression towards meeting the GTCS Standards for Registration
* Ensure student teachers have an awareness of and comply with placement policies in relation to Equality and Diversity, which relate to latest legal requirements. Where these are not applicable university policies would be invoked
* Ensure that student teachers are treated in accordance with Equal Opportunities Policies based on the most recent legal requirements. Where these are not applicable University policies would be invoked
* Fulfil its legal duties with regard to Health and Safety policies and have procedures in place which are made available to student teachers
* Forward to the university a copy of any accident or incident report in relation to a student teacher
* Ensure that student teachers will be treated with due care, consideration and respect as befits a beginning professional
* Allowing student teachers to gather evidence from their professional activities within the placement, which they will keep confidential and report anonymously within assignments prepared for University assessment. Such evidence must be within the normal expectations for professional use by teachers working within placement settings
* Ensuring that student teachers are supported and mentored by a suitably qualified teacher
* Provide the student teacher with a variety of teaching and learning experiences and wider opportunities appropriate to their stage of professional development
* Assess each student teacher’s progress towards the GTCS Standards for Registration both formatively and summatively
* Complete observations and give written and verbal feedback
* Alert both the student teacher and university at the earliest opportunity of any cause for concern with regards to progress or professional conduct
* Complete written reports as stated in the appropriate handbook
* Ensure that school experience meets the needs of the student teacher and provides opportunities for progression.

## School-Based Educator Responsibilities

School Based Educators play a key role in the professional development of student teachers. School Based Educators are experienced teachers who are responsible for the assessed outcome on placements.

##### Prior to the placement starting:

* + - Attend the appropriate School Based Educators briefing where possible
    - Review the student teacher sections of the University’s school experience Support web site for additional information and support
    - Utilise information from the ITE Student Advance Information for School Based Educators form to anticipate the varied learning requirements of students, for example because of a declared disability or specific cultural background
    - Prepare an induction for the student’s first day.

##### At the start of and throughout the placement:

* Meet and carry out an induction with the student, including:
  + Location of appropriate literature such as policies, books etc
  + Tour of school and location of relevant resources etc
  + Emergency procedures and policies in the event of fire, etc
  + Contact details in the event of an emergency and reporting sickness absence
* Ensure student has School Based Educator’s contact number(s)
* Collaborate with the student to plan a programme of experience which takes into account placement opportunities
* Schedule formal observations with the student including dates and times for the interim and final reports with the student
* Complete and sign the midway and final reports (It is the student’s responsibility to hand this into the University)

Monitor student attendance throughout the placement

* Inform the University Partnership & Placement Officer immediately if the student has an unauthorised or unexpected absence from placement which lasts for more than 48 hours
* Inform the University Based Educator as soon as possible if any concerns arise regarding the student’s wellbeing, professionalism and/or quality of performance overall.

## The University’s Responsibilities

* Ensuring the course meet the requirements of academic validation and accreditation and comply with latest GTCS regulations
* Co-ordinating all aspects of course administration including advertising, admissions, placements, documentation, maintenance of student records, partnership committees, assessment boards, issuing course awards
* Providing a structured and varied programme which facilitates progression towards meeting the standards for provisional registration and probation
* Sharing accountability for the quality of ITE through quality assurance procedures including provision of external examiners

Ensure student teachers have knowledge of and apply policies in relation to equal opportunities, inclusion policies and safeguarding

* Ensure that student teachers are made aware of University Equality and Diversity Policies and Procedures
* Ensure that the University provides a structure for reporting any non-compliance during school placements
* Ensure that student teachers have applied for and gained membership of the PVG scheme for the length of the course
* Provide guidance for student teachers with regard to Child Protection/safeguarding and appropriate teacher behaviour
* Provide for the student teacher a code of responsibility regarding professional behaviour
* Invoke its disciplinary, Fitness to Practise or Cause for Concern procedures should a student teacher behave inappropriately during placement.

## University Based Educator Responsibilities

The University Based Educator is a teacher educator from the university who acts as a first point of contact for an identified group of students, and School Based Educators during the school experience placement.

##### Key responsibilities:

* Arrange a suitable date and time with the School Based Educator and the student to visit the school to assess the student’s teaching, offer advice and support throughout the placement, to both teachers and students
* Negotiating an appropriate plan of action, and subsequent contact with the School Based Educator and student **if there is a cause for concern** pertaining to the quality of their performance, well-being, and/or professional behaviour
* Maintaining accurate records of the nature and time of all contacts with the student, School Based Educator, and school
* Monitoring a student’s work and submissions online
* Alerting the Year Tutor, and the Placement & Partnership Officer to any concerns arising about a student’s well-being, professional behaviour, or performance during a school experience.

1. 1 ***This Handbook is to support FAQs and is designed to be used on a need to know basis. There is no need to print or read the whole document.*** [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Jarvis, P. (Ed.). (2009). *The Routledge international handbook of lifelong learning*. Routledge. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Illeris, K. (2014). Transformative learning and identity. *Journal of Transformative Education*, *12*(2), 148-163. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)