**Division of Psychology, Sociology & Education**

**School Experience Programme**

**Placement Handbook1**

**For Students and Staff**

A picture containing text, logo, symbol, emblem of Queen Margaret University.


**Semesters 1 and 2**

**2023-2024**



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.

Please read in conjunction with <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/media/o4gjmqsp/final-generic-student-handbook-2022-23.pdf>

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**PLACEMENT REPORT FORMS – Can be downloaded from:**

<https://www.qmu.ac.uk/current-students/practice-based-learning/initial-teacher-education/postgraduate-school-experience-placements/>

These include:

1. Weekly Evaluation Review - for Use by Student and SBE
2. Informal Lesson Observation Form - for use by Class Teachers
3. Formal Formative Joint Observation Form - for use by lead SBE/Mentor Teacher
4. Mid-way Review Form - for use by Student and lead SBE/ Mentor
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# **1. Introduction**

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

This Handbook provides an overview of partnership and placement arrangements for the QMU ITE programmes and the processes and support mechanisms involved in placement provision. The Handbook is intended for ITE students, host schools and the supporting teachers (SBEs) and University-Based Educators (UBEs). 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. It allows students the opportunity to gain experience of practice-based teaching and learning within a classroom setting. Both the host School and the University have a joint responsibility in ensuring that students are given appropriate opportunities to gain the required knowledge and understanding, skills and abilities expected of a student teacher for the appropriate stage of their professional development within the school context and their ITE University Programme.

School Experience enables the acquisition of new knowledge and skills as well as the application, consolidation and reflection on learning gained within the University environment. School and University-based Educators, working in collaboration, therefore have a crucial part to play in supporting students’ progress to meet the General Teaching Council, Scotland (GTCS) Standard for Provisional Registration (SPR). The success of School Experience is highly dependent on a clear and supportive interchange between ITE students, university, the local authority and schools. All Placement forms are in Appendices for Information Only. Please download copies for use from:

<https://www.qmu.ac.uk/current-students/practice-based-learning/initial-teacher-education/postgraduate-school-experience-placements/>

## 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 new Education programmes.

From 2020-2021 QMU’s partnership with these authorities has 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 the titles of those involved in supporting PGDE HE students:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **PGDE Programme Leader**  Dr Linda Craig  [Lcraig1@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:Lcraig1@qmu.ac.uk) | The academic staff member, who oversees the PGDE Secondary Programme and the school experience elements. |
| **University Based Educator (UBE)**  **(University Lecturer)**  Eluned Michael  [EMichael@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:EMichael@qmu.ac.uk)  Katie Thomas  [Kthomas1@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:Kthomas1@qmu.ac.uk)  Alice Munro  [Amunro1@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:Amunro1@qmu.ac.uk)  Claire Cooper  *Add in Email.*  Stephen Scholes  SScholes@qmu.ac.uk | An academic staff member who acts and will support students and liaise with, and visit the school, during a school experience placement. |
| **QMU Placement & Partnership**  **Officer**  Wendy Kolossy  [ITEplacements@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:ITEplacements@qmu.ac.uk) | 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. |
| **Student Regent/Coordinator** | The member of senior management who is responsible for overseeing student placements within the school. They will meet with students and work with the Department Head and/or Curriculum Leader/school mentor (school-based educator) to support the student throughout placement. |
| **School-Based Educator (SBE) (Teacher**  **Mentor)** | The lead teacher facilitating a student’s learning whilst they are on Placement. The School-Based Educator (SBE or School  Mentor) is jointly responsible with the UBE for the assessed outcome of the Placement and who acts as a professional guide and mentor to students. |
| **Student or Student-Teacher** | The enrolled student on the PGDE HE programme |

Students will be supported, observed and assessed in practice by a designated School-Based Educator (Mentor teacher) on each of their placement settings. These are experienced practitioners who are fully registered teachers with the GTCS. The School Based Educator (SBE) will work with students to identify the student’s strengths and development areas relating to the GTCS SPR. They will facilitate the student’s learning in the classroom context.

The GTCS Standard for Provisional Registration (SPR) and the Student Teacher Code provide direction for programme-related practice experience. Working together with, and being guided by, the School Based-Educator, it is expected that students will take account of these outcomes and will consider ways in which they can meet the requirements of the SPR. By the end of the first School Placement, 6 out of 8 of the SPR Criteria on the Final Report Form should be achieved, but all eight criteria must be achieved by the end of the Second School Placement.

## The Standards for Registration: Mandatory Requirements for Registration with the General Teaching Council for Scotland

*“The Standard for Provisional Registration is the benchmark of competence required of all student teachers at the end of Initial Teacher Education who are seeking provisional registration with the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTC Scotland). This Professional Standard outlines what is required to become a teacher in Scotland.”*   
[(GTCS, 2021)](https://www.gtcs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/student-teacher-code.pdf)

It is **the new SPR 2021** 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 – [IN2Teaching2](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.

## Staff Contact Details

**Name & Address of Institution**  Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh  
Queen Margaret University Drive  
Musselburgh  
East Lothian, EH21 6UU

**Telephone**  +44 (0) 131 474 0000

**Fax**  +44 (0) 131 474 0001

To contact a member of staff by phone please use the direct dial number, then follow the voice automated instructions. Email communication is preferred.

For enquiries regarding placement arrangements please contact: Wendy Kolossy, QMU Partnership and Placement Officer ITEPlacements@qmu.ac.uk

For general Programme enquiries please contact:

Dr Linda Craig, PGDE Programme Leader LCraig1@qmu.ac.uk

# **Organisation of School Experience - Administration, Processes & 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. The system will then run rounds of automated matching and both Universities and Local Authorities will also have the facility to manually match students to schools. Once matches are approved by Universities and Local Authorities schools will be notified via email of the students they should expect to receive throughout the school year. Normally,

* Round one will match placements which start before November
* Round two will match placements which start before February
* Round three will match placements which start after May

## Allocation of School Placements

Students will complete a placement application 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.

*Please also note that students can be placed in any one of the 32 local authorities.*

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. Placements are allocated based on a student’s term time address and mode of transport. 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 using the student e-mail account.

Students are reminded that all staff should be treated respectfully and enquiries about placements should be professional. Students are reminded that any unprofessional conduct may be reviewed under the University's fitness to practice process.

## 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 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 PGDE 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. 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 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 they should 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 Placement 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 Placement & Partnership Officer. 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 Partnership and Placement Officer (e.g., medical certificate) before any such request can be considered. Evidence that is subsequently proven to be false is brought to the attention of the Programme Leader. 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 Educator/Mentors, 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. Requests for exceptional absence will be considered on an individual basis in consultation and agreement with the School and the Programme Leader.***

### Absence from Placement

Students are expected to comply with the attendance and reporting sickness policies of the school and must familiarize 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’s Curriculum Leader or the Mentor to report any sickness or absence.

Every student is required to inform [ITEplacements@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:ITEplacements@qmu.ac.uk) should they be unable to attend their placement. Students should also inform their UBE and Programme Leader. Students should:

* Contact the placement school before 8.30am and email the Placement & Partnership Officer at the email address above
* Complete an absence self-certificate via the student portal
* If absent for more than one day students should contact both the placement school and the Placement & Partnership Officer on each day of absence
* If absent for more than 5 working days students must submit a medical certificate to ITEplacements@qmu.ac.uk
* When students return to school they should advise the Partnership and Placement Officer, via ITEplacements@qmu.ac.uk
* Any days missed due to absence must be made up at the end of the placement if the school is in agreement or by undertaking an additional placement.

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

In the event that students have an authorised or unexpected absence from Placement which lasts for more than 24 hours we ask that the School-Based Educator informs the University’s Partnership and Placement Officer - [ITEplacements@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:ITEplacements@qmu.ac.uk)

Attendance must be monitored throughout the placement and all absences from placement must be recorded by School-Based Educator (School Mentor).

### 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 practice, 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. See QMU’s Fitness to practice policy.

### Student Withdrawal/ Removal from School Placement

If a student chooses to withdraw from a Placement without prior discussion with the School-Based Educator (School mentor), and without the 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 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 the PGDE Programme Leader, UBE and Personal Academic Tutor immediately if any such event occurs.

## Complaints Handling Procedure

The University has implemented a Complaints Handling Procedure (QMU 2014a) which can be found here: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/media/gxddu0eh/complaints-handling_part-5_complaints-guide-for-students.pdf>

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)

# **3. Preparing Students for School Experience**

University sessions will prepare students for placement. See PGDE Programme handbook for details.

## Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG)

As students will be doing regulated work with pupils, and protected adults 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 placement 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). A copy of the insurance policy certificate must be retained for inspection. 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. If in doubt students should ask their University or School-Based Educator. As a guide:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Smart Casual Do’s**    jacket or blazer cardigan or jumper  trousers  long sleeved shirt (tie is optional),  blouse  closed shoes, flat shoes, pumps  mid-length dress or skirt  jewellery and accessories | **Smart Casual Please Avoid:**    jeans  denim jacket  shorts  flip flops  sandals  high stilettos  caps  sports wear  logos and slogans on tops |

A student whose personal appearance is deemed to be inappropriate by the School-Based Educator, Regent 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.

## 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 which includes the Student Teacher Code <https://www.gtcs.org.uk/student-teachers/student-teacher-code> and 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. 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”. Pupils may be referred to by initials.

School-Based Educators play an important role in the assessment process and should demonstrate professional and caring attitudes when assessing a student teacher’s lesson plans or performance. It is important to recognise that students are in a learning situation. Formative feedback should enable the student to feel secure in being able to reflect on any mistakes, errors or misjudgments and be seen as essential towards supporting a student’s professional development. School-Based Educators, however, should report any serious health and safety breaches or security or confidentiality issues to the University as a matter of priority.

# **4. Assessment of School Experience**

School Experience is assessed at regular intervals through:

* Weekly Evaluation (Weekly Reviews)
* Ongoing informal observation and feedback (class teachers)
* Formal Formative Observation by SBE
* Mid-way Review (UBE and Student)
* Joint Formative Observation (University and School staff)
* Summative Placement Report (School staff in consultation with University)

## Weekly Evaluation Reviews

The weekly evaluation review is a tool for regular dialogue between the Student and Mentor to keep the student focused on self-evaluation and achievement of the SPR. SPR targets should be agreed and reviewed on a weekly basis. Once completed by the student and agreed by the SBE the Review form is uploaded to the Pebblepad Portfolio via the Pebblepocket App. See Appendix 1.

## Informal Observations and Feedback

Formative assessment of learning during the Placement should be regular and ongoing in a way that develops the student’s self-confidence. This may be undertaken by class teachers. Supportive feedback should also be provided on lesson planning, or by direct observation of teaching followed by discussion. It is useful for the student to be supported in identifying next steps for professional learning and where possible this be provided in writing in the form of next steps by the observing teacher. A form for use by teachers is attached at Appendix 2.

## Formal Formative Observations

Formal Formative observations should use the Pre-Midway Review Formative lesson observation form (Appendix Three) and follow the guidance provided. This should be undertaken by the lead SBE (student mentor) to inform progress at the Mid-Way Review stage. Following the lesson, the observer should share supportive feedback on the lesson with the student and share a copy of the observation form for the student to add to their Pebble-pad PDP.

There will also be **one visit** by a University-based Educator to undertake a **shared observation** of the student’s classroom practice, within the last 3 weeks of the placement following the Mid-Way Review. The University staff member will complete this Formative Report and the grades awarded will be agreed between the University and the School. In accord with National GTCS and SCDE Guidance of April 2021 the following factors will inform the Assessment process during an observation visit:

1. observation of a lesson;
2. scrutiny of the school experience file;
3. professional dialogue with the in-school supporter and;
4. professional learning conversation with the student teacher.

Together these will form a holistic assessment of the student’s progress and grades of either Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory progress will be awarded in accord with the appropriate stage in their ITE Programme.

## Mid-way Review

The Mid-Way Review is a formalised formative Review taking place halfway through each placement. The SBE should undertake a formal formative observation of teaching prior to the Midway Review discussion. This should highlight key areas of strength and further development areas across the SPR. These should be agreed between the student and the SBE and addressed in the second half of the placement. The student is responsible for completing the form and once it is signed by both parties the student will upload the Form to the University Dropbox. See Appendix 4

## End of Placement Report

The final Placement report form (Appendix Six) should be completed by the School-Based Educator (School mentor) at least one day before the end of the school experience. Final grades must be agreed between the School-Based Educator (School mentor) and University based Educator before the Report is shared with, and signed by, the student. It should be in line with the Report from the Joint Observation lesson. In making a judgement, it is important to bear in mind the extent to which the Placement has allowed the opportunity for the student to demonstrate the criterion being considered, and what can be realistically expected from students in relation to their stage of the programme. There is Guidance for completing the report available at Appendix 7.

On the rare occasion where a particular criterion is not applicable to the practice setting, or where the student has not been assessed on a particular criterion, then N/A should be recorded. The School-based Educator should document the reason(s) for lack of opportunity in the comments section.

## Progression

In **Placement 1b students need to achieve 6 out of 8 satisfactory SPR grades**. By the end of **Placement 2, they must achieve 8 out of 8 satisfactory grades**.

If a student’s progress is not satisfactory it should be noted and discussed in the Weekly Evaluation. If the student does not make Satisfactory progress with SPR targets, then this should be recorded in the Mid-way review and an action plan drawn up and sent to the University Based Educator. If the issues require more immediate action, or are not resolved following the Mid-way Review, then a Cause for Concern form needs to be completed and forwarded to the University. The University Based-Educator will support the student in drawing up an Action Plan to help them overcome their targets. The final stage of this process if targets are not met, is a referral to the Placement Management Group.

If a student does not achieve the required number of satisfactory grades this could lead to a retrieval placement in late August/early September, as agreed by the Board of Examiners. In this case to be eligible to graduate and progress into practice it would first be necessary to successfully complete any retrieval placement(s).

### Professional Progress

If a student’s progress is deemed unsatisfactory during the Second Placement, or for some reason the student is unable to complete the placement, then the University-Based Educator will arrange a meeting where both reflect on the issues and agree a plan of action with the school on how best to support the student to progress. Where satisfactory progress is made the student will continue on the programme with further advice, support and monitoring. If unsatisfactory progress is made, however, this may result in one of the following recommendations:

* + - A referral to a a ‘Fitness to Study’ panel
    - carrying out an extended or retrieval placement in another school
    - termination of the ITE programme.

In the event of the last recommendation, the QMU Board of Examiners may decide that such PGDE students may leave the programme with a Certificate of Professional Education. Whilst students can appeal against a decision, the only grounds for appeal which may be considered are as outlined in the University Academic Appeals Procedure see <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies-and-procedures/academic-appeals-regulations/>

There can be no appeal against the professional judgement of the assessors.

*\*PGDE students usually undertake retrieval placements in August/September and enter the Teacher Induction Scheme the following year.*

# **5. 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 sourcing another placement through the student placement system. For PGDE students all retrieval placements will take place in the next academic year.

# **6. Contact and Support Mechanisms**

## Student Contact and Support

Support from the Programme team 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 Educator (School mentors) throughout each school experience placement responding to initial requests for advice and support.

Support is offered face-face, via email, telephone, or virtually on 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 (University Tutor) and a further visit if a Cause for Concern is raised. All communications and follow-up actions agreed with the School-Based Educator and students are documented and copies of completed reports and action plans are retained and the Programme Leader are kept informed of any issues.

## 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. Students may also choose to discuss problems of a personal nature with their School- Based Educator, Teacher Regent or to contact their Personal Academic Tutor.

Where an incident occurs outside of normal working hours, and where there is an urgent need to contact the University, please telephone: (0131)-474-0000. When prompted ask for Reception.

## Student Counselling Service

Students experiencing any personal difficulties while on placement are encouraged to use the University Student Counselling 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.

University Student Counselling Service: [counselling@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:counselling@qmu.ac.uk)

# **7. Roles and Responsibilities**

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:

* Make contact with the School prior to placement to arrange a pre-visit introduction and pass on any relevant documents if necessary.
* Ensure all necessary Risk Assessments are in place.
* Ensure that they have applied for and gained an enhanced PVG clearance certificate and make the date and number of the certificate available to the placement if requested and carry this on their person at all times when in a placement setting.
* 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/University.
* Attend all pre-placement briefings and/or participate in all mandatory preparatory activities as required by the School/University.
* 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:

* Observe the Student Teacher Code <https://www.gtcs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/student-teacher-code.pdf> and the Teacher’s Code https://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-standards/professional-standards-for-teachers/ (COPAC) at all times.
* Deliver all Lesson Plans to Support Teachers two days in advance.
* Be punctual at all times and dress appropriately for the placement setting and the work involved.
* Make available all school-based learning related documentation.
* Maintain DPD Pebble-pad with regular evidence of progress using the Weekly Evaluation, Placement Holders and the ‘My SPR Focus’ section to evidence good teaching and learning. For example, class resources, lesson plans, reflections on learning etc.
* Undertake the specified teaching responsibilities and reflect on progress and development needs as required.
* Support each year group class teacher with the on-going work of the class and learn from observation of the teacher’s interactions and their feedback on teaching and learning.
* Support on-line teaching and learning where necessary. Participate in learning observations and professional learning conversations
* Work collaboratively with all relevant staff and peers, in School and University.
* Participate in school continuing professional development activities and in-service activities when appropriate.
* Contact the UBE at the earliest opportunity if any significant matters arise during the placement, including any areas of concern relating to welfare, personal safety, or well-being.
* Contact your UBE if the circumstances of your placement changes, disallowing you the opportunity to complete certain tasks.
* At all times, follow the procedures of the placement setting, and QMU regarding absence and sickness reporting.
* 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 final evaluation of your performance displaying openness to, respect and acknowledgement of other people’s ideas. Reflect on the school experience enabling personal and professional development.
* Abide by all placement policies regarding Safeguarding and other mandatory policies such as Child Protection.
* Act in accordance with guidance provided by the University in respect of professionalism and codes of conduct.

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

* Have completed all necessary Placement tasks for that Placement
* Added lesson plans, evaluations, Weekly Reviews and resources to Pebble-pad
* Have submitted Mid-Way Review, formative and summative Reports to the Drop Boxes on the Hub.

### School Responsibilities:

* A commitment from the Teacher Regent and Departmental staff to provide placement opportunities that facilitates students’ progression towards meeting the GTCS Standards for Provisional Registration.
* Ensure student teachers have an awareness of and comply with placement policies in relation to Equality and Diversity, and Child Protection relating to the latest legal requirements. Where these are not applicable university policies would be invoked.
* Ensure student teachers are fully briefed on health and safety procedures,
* fulfil legal duties with regard to Health and Safety policies and have procedures in place which are made available to student teachers.
* 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.
* 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.
* Ensure 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 Provisional Registration both formatively and summatively with the University-based educator.
* Complete observations and give written and verbal feedback to the student.
* 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 this Handbook.
* Ensure that school experience meets the needs of the student teacher and provides opportunities for progression.

## School Based Educators – Regent and School Mentor

The Teacher Regent and School-Based Educator/Mentors play a key role in the professional development of student teachers. School-Based Educator/Mentors are experienced teachers who are responsible for the assessed outcome on placements.

### Prior to the placement starting or as soon as is possible thereafter:

* Attend the appropriate School-Based Educator/Mentors briefing. These will be offered on Microsoft Teams or similar platform by the UBE.
* Utilise information from the PGDE Student regarding any specific needs for example because of a declared disability or specific cultural background in order to provide the relevant support during placement.
* Prepare an induction for the Student’s first day in the School.

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

* Discuss and carry out an induction with the student, including: health and safety and risk-assessment procedures.
* Providing copies of key policies such as Behaviour Management, Child Protection etc.
* Tour of school and location of relevant resources in HE Department and others such as
* Support for Learning, Guidance 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/Mentor’s contact number(s) and e-mail address.
* Collaborate with the student to plan a programme of experience which takes in to account wider school opportunities.
* Schedule formal observations with the student including dates and times for the formative and final reports with the student.
* Maintain contact with the UBE regarding student progress, shared observation and the Final Placement Report grades.
* Monitor student attendance throughout the placement
* Inform the University Partnership & Placement Officer immediately if the student has an authorised or unexpected absence from placement which lasts for more than 48 hours
* Inform the University Tutor 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 that courses 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
* 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 standard disclosure or PVG 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 or Cause for Concern procedures should a student teacher behave inappropriately or fail to make expected progress during placement.

### University-Based Educator Responsibilities

The University-Based Educator is a University Lecturer or Tutor who acts as a first point of contact for an identified group of students, and School-Based Educator/Mentors during the school experience placement.

Key responsibilities:

* Arrange a suitable date and time with the School Based Educator to meet on Microsoft Teams to share Placement Expectations.
* Arrange a suitable time with SBE on Microsoft Teams to discuss the student’s progress.
* Arrange a suitable date and time for Joint Observation of the Student.
* Offering support throughout the placement, responding to initial requests for advice and support from School-Based Educator/Mentors and the student
* Monitor the student’s progress through the Weekly Reviews, Lesson Plans and other evidence posted in PDP Pebble-pad.
* Negotiating an appropriate plan of action, and subsequent contact with the School-Based Educator (School Mentor) and student if there is a Cause for Concern pertaining to the quality of their performance, well-being, and/or professional behaviour
* Maintain a record of the nature and time of all contacts with the student, School- Based Educator/Mentors, and the school
* Monitoring the student’s Digital Professional Development Portfolio
* Alert the PGDE Programme Leader and Placement & Partnership Officer to any concerns arising about a student’s well-being, professional behaviour, or performance during a school experience.

### School and School-Based Educator (School Mentor) Contact Mechanisms and Support

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

### School Experience Briefings and Mentor Training

School experience briefings will be held prior to each placement via Teams enabling School-Based Educators to gain an overview of the placement, expectations and paperwork; ask any questions and have opportunities to meet with students. Briefing information will also be available on the information support website. It is envisaged that in the longer term post-Covid, QMU will offer a range of opportunities for School-Based Educator to engage in professional development to support students in schools, ranging from twilights to single training days hosted both in QMU and at agreed educational settings in partnership local authorities. It is anticipated that other professional development opportunities will be available through the wider Edinburgh Early Phase Partnership.

### School Experience Information Support Website

A school experience information support website is available for organisations hosting school experience and School-Based Educator/Mentors. The website has been designed to help make the role of School-Based Educator/Mentors easier by providing links to electronic versions of all the handbooks and forms that can be individually downloaded to support School-Based Educator/Mentors during school experience. The ITE school based learning support Home Page will be found at: https://www.qmu.ac.uk/current-students/practice-based-learning/ click on ‘All other programmes’, Initial Teacher Education, Post Graduate School Experience Placements.

### Individual Support

A student’s UBE is available to answer any queries during school experience. Additional support and guidance is always available on request to School-Based Educator/Mentors. Meetings (e.g. face-face on Teams, or by phone call) can be arranged at the request of the School-Based Educator/Mentor. Where an incident occurs outside of normal working hours and where there is an urgent need to contact the University, please telephone: (0131)-474-0000. When prompted ask for reception. Or contact the PGDE Programme Leader Dr Linda Craig [lcraig1@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:lcraig1@qmu.ac.uk)

# **8. Appendices and Placement Report Forms**

Placement Forms are now downloadable as single documents from Queen Margaret University’s Practice-Based Learning Website Page:

<https://www.qmu.ac.uk/current-students/practice-based-learning/initial-teacher-education/postgraduate-school-experience-placements/>