



QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST

SCHOOL OF
SOCIAL SCIENCES,
EDUCATION AND
SOCIAL WORK

PGCE Partnership Handbook 2025-2026

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Dear Principal, Teacher Tutor and Head of Department,

Thank you for agreeing to work in partnership with Queen's University, in order to educate and inspire our future teachers and leaders. Collaborative partnerships, such as this one, are a core aspect of the Initial Teacher Education programme within Queen's University and your participation is greatly valued by both the staff and students within Queen's University.

The information in this handbook is designed to give details of the course, of our procedures and to provide you with reference documentation on all aspects of the course.

We look forward to working with you in this partnership and are always interested in your views on our provision. We would be grateful to receive any feedback in reference to the course, to allow us to develop our partnerships further.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'H Khamanra', is written over a horizontal line.

Dr Hazel Khamanra
PGCE Placements Module Convenor

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Part 1

The PGCE Course and the School – University Partnership

Introduction

This handbook is designed for principals, teacher tutors and heads of department who work with students on the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) from the School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work (SSESW) at Queen's University Belfast (QUB).

This course annually prepares students to teach a variety of subjects in post-primary schools and Further Education institutes. Students are currently recruited for the following subject areas:

- English
- Mathematics
- Computing, Digital Skills and Creative Enterprise
- Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics)
- Modern Languages
- Religious Education
- Social Science (Health and Social Care, Politics, Sociology)
- Irish Medium Education (in a chosen subject from the list above)

We in Queen's University regard the active interest, involvement, and co-operation of schools to be of essential importance in enhancing and enriching the training process for each student teacher.

Aims of the PGCE Course

The Post-graduate Certificate of Education course at Queen's is a 36-week course, 24 of which are spent in schools. The PGCE should be regarded as an integrated course with the periods spent in the School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work and in schools supporting, complementing and informing each other.

The aim of the PGCE at Queen's is to produce, in partnership with our colleagues in schools and colleges, top-class teachers for both national and international education systems.

The objectives which seek to achieve this aim include:

- to develop in students the competences relevant to this initial teacher education phase in the GTCNI's 'Teaching: The Reflective Profession, Incorporating the Northern Ireland Teacher Competences' (GTCNI 2007);
- to prepare the students to teach the Northern Ireland Curriculum and to consolidate in them a subject knowledge base appropriate to the demands of the 11-18 age and ability range;
- to give students the opportunity to develop skills and knowledge essential for effective classroom practice;
- to enable students to become familiar with the wide range of demands placed upon the post-primary teacher - academic and pastoral.
- to develop in students' powers of critical self-evaluation and reflection.

Course Content

Each element of the course has been carefully developed to address specific training objectives and to provide a varied complement of teaching techniques and reflection. Together they make up an integrated PGCE course leading to a recognised professional qualification. There are three modules which are assessed separately. These modules are: 'Educational and Professional Studies'; 'Subject Studies'; and 'School Placement.' The first two, which comprise the university-based elements of the course, are assessed at master's level and the third, the placement module, is assessed at honours level. To pass the PGCE students must pass each module.

The part of course which is taught at the School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work comprises the two master's level modules 'Educational and Professional Studies' and 'Subject Studies' and should be viewed as complementary to the work done in schools.

The objectives of each element of the course are outlined below.

a) Induction

During the first week of the course all students attend an induction programme which includes an introduction to the teaching profession, introduction to the Northern Ireland Curriculum and a session with the teaching unions.

b) Primary School Experience

The placement in primary schools is organized by students themselves. During this placement students are asked to take part in observation and teaching activities. It provides an opportunity to:

- reflect upon your personal experience and perceptions of schooling.
- gain experience of school placement as a fundamental component of your professional development and in particular, to familiarise you with behaviours that are appropriate for school placement;
- observe and interact with teachers and pupils in a classroom setting.
- focus on the nature of teaching and the activities that it involves.
- focus on pupil learning and how this relates to a variety of teaching behaviours.
- develop your knowledge of teaching and learning processes at Key Stages 1 and 2; and
- reflect on the significance of these for continuity and progression to Key Stage 3.

c) Subject Studies Sessions

The Subject Studies sessions form the core of the training given and as such are multi-faceted in the objectives, they set out to achieve. Each subject studies discipline has its own requirements, in terms of the special knowledge and skill-based competences which need to be addressed, but the general progression, from Semester 1 to Semester 2, is outlined below:

Semester 1

The subject studies sessions in Semester 1 set out to ensure, *inter alia*, that students have:

in relation to Curriculum and Assessment

- a broad knowledge of the content and structure of the curriculum area, with more in-depth treatment of those aspects likely to be encountered during the first period of school experience;
- a broad knowledge of the assessment requirements of the curricular area with particular emphasis on the aspects likely to meet on the first period of school experience;
- a broad knowledge of the contribution of one curricular area to the curriculum as a whole, to the cross-curricular themes and to literacy, numeracy and ICT;

in relation to Classroom Management

- examined discipline strategies and general sources of conflict and strategies for its resolution;
- established a preliminary set of classroom rules (subject to refinement in relation to your school placement context) to guide pupil behaviour;
- developed routines for controlling entry to the classroom, for introducing and establishing the purpose of a lesson, for concluding a lesson and for controlling exit from the classroom;

in relation to Teaching Delivery

- studied and practised strategies for introducing pupils to new knowledge and skills and for effective questioning and other forms of assessment;
- examined issues and implications related to pupils' age ranges and abilities; including the pacing and sequencing of presentations, the language register used and the
- appropriateness and clarity of the objectives;
- practised the planning of lessons and the preparation of any necessary resources or apparatus;
- practised the use of blackboards and whiteboards, interactive white boards, video, data projectors and other common presentational devices as appropriate.

Semester 2

The subject studies sessions in Semester 2 seek to consolidate and extend the work of Semester 1 partly by enabling students to reflect thoroughly on all aspects of the first period of school experience and by:

in relation to Curriculum and Assessment

- a thorough coverage of the curriculum area including post- 16 (e.g. A-level) aspects;
- a thorough knowledge and understanding of the contribution of one curricular area to the curriculum as a whole and to the cross-curricular themes;
- a thorough appraisal of all assessment requirements and techniques including coursework supervision and oral assessment as appropriate.

in relation to Classroom Management

- a thorough appraisal of the dynamics of classroom management and the factors that most influence the achievement of a harmonious, purposeful learning environment;

in relation to Teaching Delivery

- a thorough consolidation of the principles of good practice in preparation, organisation, presentation and feedback;
- practice in the use of learning approaches (e.g. project research, discussion, role play, games etc.) that motivate pupils and encourage active participation and autonomy.

While many of these competence areas can be validly assessed only in the classroom, the sessions in both terms will offer opportunities to monitor students' developing competence.

d) Educational and Professional Studies

The Educational and Professional Studies module focuses on educational theory, its application in the classroom and a range of 'professional' issues. It is delivered through general lectures followed by small collaborative inquiry groups and workshops which are organised into four themes:

- Curriculum, Learning and Assessment
- Pastoral care and Classroom Management
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- The Teacher as a Professional and Reflective Practitioner

In addition to the contributions detailed above, there are other lectures, workshops, field and school-based activities which combine to enable students to:

- develop their knowledge and understanding of wider educational issues and practices;
- analyse and reflect on aspects of school organisation encountered during school experience;
- consider issues related to teaching as a career (e.g. appointment procedures and career development, membership of professional associations, child protection issues);
- understand how the curriculum is designed and assessed;
- understand how schools interact with and serve society

In addition to staff from the SSESW, inputs are given to students by practising teachers, principals, EA officials and inspectors.

Quality Assurance

The maintenance of quality assurance in every aspect of the course is crucial to success. If a student gives cause for concern in school placements, staff should contact the supervisor in the first instance or the QUB visiting tutor. Matters of a more general nature relating to the school experience of the course in general should be directed to the Director of Initial Teacher Education.

In addition to the annual review processes in place, the quality of the course is subject to periodic review in line with the university's policies. In all these ways the PGCE staff, the director of Initial Teacher Education and the head of school can gather evidence on the quality of the course which can then inform the development of the course for the future. The course is also subject to periodic review by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI).

The School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work

Introduction

The University has a long history of involvement in teacher education, beginning with the establishment of the then Department of Education in 1914. In 2016 The School of Education and the School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work merged to form the present School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work.

The School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work organises its activities around teaching, learning and research. Research is an integral part of the School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work. The School is home to a number of internationally recognised research centres. Details of the research happening in SSESW can be found on our website.

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For all inquiries relating to PGCE Placement Administration please contact:

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Placement Supervisors

Each student will be assigned to one or more subject specialists who will be the person(s) responsible for supervising and assessing the student during the placement. These members of staff have a responsibility to act as the first point of contact between the school and the university. Each supervisor will visit the student at least twice during the 11-week placement. The first visit of the school experience placement 1 will normally be made towards the beginning of the placement and will be announced, all other visits will be unannounced. At the end of each visit, the supervisor will spend some time discussing progress in the GTCNI competence with the student and will email the student, the teacher tutor and the Head of Department a copy of the Assessment Point report (Appendix 2). On these visits every effort will be made to discuss the student's progress with the head of department and/or the teacher tutor. If it is not possible for some reason to speak to staff in the schools, supervisors will contact either the head of department or the teacher tutor to discuss the progress of the student. Where a student is giving grave cause for concern, you are asked to contact the supervisor as soon as possible. Alternatively, the Director of Initial Teacher Education should be contacted.

External Examiners

External examiners have two main functions: first to act as moderators, ensuring that the assessment system is fair and is fairly operated and secondly, as consultants, they should ensure comparability of standards.

External examiners will visit a sample of students towards the end of school experience placement 2. Students to be seen by the examiners will be selected by supervisors. All students at risk of failing must be seen; other students will be selected at random.

Partnership

The Department of Education for Northern Ireland has formalized the relationships which exists between schools and Higher Education Institutions and the roles and responsibilities of those in the partnership are set out in the Teacher Education Handbook.

Partnerships with schools is a key component to the PGCE programme at Queen's. Schools and Higher Education Institutions have complementary roles in initial teacher education. Within the university we are proud of the partnerships we have in place with many schools throughout Northern Ireland and are confident that our students are getting the best possible experience and guidance as they begin their placements.

Characteristics of effective partnerships

Partnerships are effective when:

- The school and HEI actively recognise that ITE is a shared responsibility;
- Schools are involved in (i) the planning of the course, (ii) setting objectives for school experience, and (iii) selecting students for the course;
- Roles of the partners are clearly defined, well understood, and implemented;
- The University Tutor, Teacher Tutor and class teacher(s) have received advice in skills such as classroom observation, the development of classroom competences, and how to recognise progression in the acquisition of competences;
- The school undertakes regular, sustained classroom observation of the student teacher's teaching, and gives the student feedback and guidance;
- Procedures are in place (and are working in practice) to ensure that effective communication takes place involving the HEI, the school and the student teacher;
- The programme of ITE is carefully coordinated, and all aspects are complementary;
- School experience focuses on those competences best developed in school;
- There are procedures (known to and agreed by all) for dealing with difficulties;
- Assessment includes the regular monitoring, by the University Tutor and the school, of the development of the student teacher's teaching competences; and
- All the arrangements are supported by robust quality assurance procedures.

(Taken from The Teacher Education Partnership Handbook (2024 Edition), pages 12-13, published by the Department of Education)

Available at: <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/Teacher%20Ed%20-%20Teacher%20Education%20Partnership%20Handbook%20%282024%20Edition%29%20FINAL%20PDF%20%28English%20Version%29.PDF>

Developing Key Skills

Introduction

It should be recognised that the course of initial teacher education (ITE) is only the first phase of the three-phased model. It is clear, therefore, that student teachers at this stage in their development will only be beginning to come to terms with the basics of teaching their subject and that it will take time for them to appreciate fully some of the wider school issues.

This section is produced for schools in order to give teacher tutors, heads of department and specific co-ordinators (literacy, numeracy, ICT, class management, SEN, pastoral care, for example) some idea of the experience of the four main areas students should have gained during their time at Queen's, in order to assist them to provide relevant additional experiences to students during school experience.

Literacy

Literacy is an important aspect of the PGCE course since much learning is mediated through language and for that reason all teachers have some responsibility for the language use of their pupils. The NI School Improvement Programme has focused attention on raising literacy levels across the curriculum. There are therefore two aspects to literacy, first that students themselves attain high levels of accuracy in their own use of language and secondly, that they can identify areas of specific difficulty pupils may experience within their subject.

As part of the students' initial training, they are provided with the opportunity to enhance their personal expertise in language use and to consider how pupils can be helped to be more proficient users of the spoken and written discourse appropriate to specific subject areas.

During school experience, it would be recommended that students be given opportunities to do some of the following, as appropriate:

- Read and examine the school/ departmental policy on literacy;
- Talk to the literacy co-ordinator;
- Work with pupils who have literacy difficulties in their subject;
- Attend departmental meetings or in-service events;
- Observe classes in other subjects where the focus is on literacy.

In addition, they are asked to consider aspects of literacy in their planning of lessons and to include strategies for dealing with specific learning difficulties experienced by individual pupils. They should also be aware of the system in the school for referring pupils with more serious difficulties and the support mechanisms available.

Numeracy

During school experience, it would be particularly useful if students were able to do the following:

- have access to the school policy on numeracy;
- talk to the numeracy co-ordinator;
- observe mathematics lessons which focus on basic numeracy difficulties;
- observe other subjects such as geography or science where the focus is on numeracy problems;
- talk to SEN co-ordinator;
- attend departmental meetings or in-service courses which focus on numeracy.

In addition, students are instructed to note aspects of their lesson planning where numeracy problems may arise for some pupils and to have some basic strategy for dealing with the difficulties. They should also be aware of procedures for referring pupils who have problems they are unable to deal with.

ICT

Students are made aware of the levels of ICT proficiency required by newly qualified teachers for personal, subject and teaching/administration. They are also encouraged to develop their online pedagogies in keeping with best practice and therefore students should be seeking to increase their knowledge and use of ICT resources in their planning and teaching including the use of virtual learning environments.

In the school setting we would encourage students to gain experience of the following:

- talking to the ICT co-ordinator;
- observing lessons in ICT;
- producing teaching resources using ICT;
- embedding ICT into schemes of work and lesson plans;
- using the school's VLE and online resources;
- participating in any courses on ICT development.

The students should highlight areas in all their lesson plans where ICT can be used to enhance learning.

Classroom Management

Class management is fundamental to good teaching. Most of the competences in the Teacher Education Handbook related to some aspect of class management. Students are made aware at the beginning of the course that class management is not synonymous with discipline but that it encompasses all aspects of teaching, from the preparation and planning phase to the evaluation of the lesson.

Students have a seminar/workshop in behaviour management at which students are made aware of the more challenging aspects of class management. They are given the opportunity to consider case studies and through discussion and group interaction, they are encouraged to develop strategies for dealing with behaviour which is not conducive to learning.

During the school placement, students would welcome feedback from staff in terms of their lesson planning, organisation of the classroom, resources, teaching strategies, discipline strategies, and rapport with pupils and general behaviour in the classroom. In addition, it would be helpful if they could be given access to the following:

- School discipline policy;
- The pastoral care co-coordinator/year heads;
- Classes where experienced teachers deal with behavioural difficulties;
- A range of classes of varying abilities and levels.

In summary, they should be encouraged to develop all aspects of the competence document in preparation for the next phase of their education as beginning teachers.

While on teaching placement students are also asked to focus particularly on general aspects of the school, such as literacy and numeracy across the curriculum, special needs and pastoral care, as indicators of good practice. They are encouraged to involve themselves in the general life of the school and to familiarise themselves with whole-school issues and procedures.

Part 2

Queen's University PGCE Students in Your School

School Experience

The main aspect of the PGCE with which schools are involved is in the periods of school experience. These are seen as the major element of the course. The next section sets out in detail what we would like our students to experience and what we expect of them while on school placement.

The course is centred around two main periods of secondary-level school experience making up approximately 23 weeks in all. Each student shall complete their school experience placements in two different secondary-level schools.

The two periods of the school experience (SE) blocks are:

SE1 11/12 weeks: November - January

SE2 11/12 weeks: March - May

Requests for both placements will normally be sent to schools in May/June of the previous year. We are grateful when schools can offer places to students in any of the subject areas.

Guidelines on PGCE School Placement

In practical terms schools have asked for guidance on four main issues:

- the timetable;
- observation of students in class;
- monitoring students and providing feedback;
- the final school report.

The timetable

Students are required to teach for between **8 and 12 hours** a week. The optimum timetable will cover a range of pupil ages and abilities. The University recognises the good reasons why schools and colleges are sometimes reluctant to offer examination year classes to students. We would suggest, however, that opportunities to offer revision classes or other limited inputs to examination classes' work (e.g. specific topics, team teaching, etc.) would be beneficial for the students. These need not be on the same regular basis as the main timetabled classes.

Observation of students in class

Students expect to be observed quite often, perhaps every class, for the first part of their placement. Once they are settled, the members of staff looking after them will usually then begin to give them more time on their own - perhaps watching over them at a distance (e.g. from a storeroom). A crucial aspect of the process at all stages in the placement is feedback. Students will wish to have their observers' views on their performance, advice on how to improve it and hints and tips for particular situations. This 'critical friend' aspect of the placement is of the most important dimension of a student's development. The best process is open and supportive - with the students joining in discussion of their own progress, with their university tutors and the teachers. If a student is experiencing difficulty, please contact the university tutors as soon as possible.

The university tutors will offer additional support and will work with the student and the teachers concerned to try to rectify the situation.

Monitoring students and providing feedback

A number of people are likely to have some role in a student's development. Students will probably work with three or more teachers' classes and each of these teachers can offer a major contribution to the student's development. In addition, the head of the department(s) in which the student is teaching (some students may teach in more than one) will wish to oversee the student's teaching contribution to their department, whether the student has one of their classes or not. The school's teacher tutor may also want to observe the student in order to inform their assessment of the student's performance.

The school reports

These placement reports allow schools to report on the student and take into account the whole placement. Reports are normally written by the principal or vice-principal, the teacher-tutor or head of department. Some schools will provide multiple reports from all of the teachers whose classes the student has taken.

In addition to the end of placement report there is also a short interim school report to complete and return before Christmas for the first placement, and before Easter for the second. The main purpose of this report is to provide a means to the schools to flag up concerns, particularly serious ones, which arise after the supervisor's first visit. If such concerns are flagged, then the supervisor will visit the student again very soon after receiving it. The University tutors will also seek verbal reports at all stages in the placement from as many school or college colleagues as possible. Ideally, the University would wish all such discussions to be carried on, for at least part of the time, with the student present. The written and verbal reports are the mainstay of the student's assessment and are combined with all the other sources (lesson observation reports by the University tutors, University-based work relating to competence development, lesson planning etc.) to enable the final and formal assessment to be undertaken by the University tutor.

The questions contained in these reports can be viewed in Appendix 3 and 4.

Activities during School Experience Periods

While the opportunity to practise teaching their specialist subjects to a suitable selection of classes is of the utmost importance during school experience, it is expected that schools will provide other valuable opportunities in order to give students an overview of school life in general. We would request that students might be given the opportunities to do the following activities, as appropriate:

During school placement students will spend the first week observing and getting to know the school. Students should have the opportunity to complete the following within the first 2 weeks of placement:

- observe experienced teachers taking a variety of classes in your subject;
- observe experienced teachers taking a variety of classes in other subject areas;
- follow a particular class for a day;
- work with individuals or small groups or pupils;
- take part in team teaching with a more experienced teacher.

During placement students should take part in the following activities:

- observe and participate appropriately in the pastoral and guidance areas of school activity by working with a form class for the duration of the placement;
- join in extra-curricular activities and become involved in school events. This may be in the form of clubs, societies or whole school events etc.

During placement students may also be given the opportunity, where appropriate, to take part in the following activities:

- discuss details of planning with experienced colleagues;
- be observed teaching and receive feedback from experienced staff;
- receive guidance on the setting, marking and recording of pupils' progress in classwork, homework and tests;
- talk with co-ordinators of whole school issues such as Literacy, Numeracy, ICT and Special Needs
- become familiar with assessment procedures required under the Northern Ireland Curriculum (including marking and supervising);
- evaluate and develop the use of (new) technology in your teaching;
- accompany pupils on educational visits and field trips (with staff members);
- attend, by invitation, appropriate meetings and staff development activities, perhaps as an observer.

This list contains only some of the activities they might be involved in. We stress to students that they would be prepared to become part of the schools in which they are placed and to become as fully integrated as possible.

School Experience Code

This code has been designed to ensure that students conduct themselves in a professional manner in schools. Staff in schools should expect students to conform to the following:

Working under the authority of the principal

On the first morning of their placement, students are asked to report to the principal of the school at the time advised. From then on, the normal school hours should be adhered to strictly. Students are under the authority of the principal in the same way as other members of the school staff.

Students must remain in school for the whole of the working day. Leave of absence, or permission to arrive late or leave early, must be obtained beforehand from the principal and the university supervisor. Unexpected absences (e.g. through illness) should be communicated both to the school principal and to the University. For the award of a Pass, a student must have attended at least 110 days of placement or equivalent acceptable to the university and to have reached an appropriate level of competence. Students may miss up to ten days of placement through illness: five days can be self-certified; medical evidence (e.g., doctor's fit note) is normally required for six to ten days. Any further time missed, for whatever reason, must be made up before the award of PGCE.

Conforming with the school's customs and practices

Students should conform as far as possible with the customs and practices of the school as a whole (e.g. in relation to classroom/school duties, assembly, games etc.) and should ensure that they dress in professional fashion, observing the conventions of dress and personal appearance which are appropriate for teachers within the school. Writing and speaking skills are also expected to be appropriate for an educational professional.

Timetables

The principal, teacher tutor or head of department will arrange the timetable for teaching and observation. Normally, students should have an opportunity to observe the classes they are going to take for 2-3 days before they begin teaching. They should be teaching between 8 and 12 hours per week and should, with the permission of the teachers involved, continue to observe some classes throughout the practice period. Students might profitably spend some time observing lessons in subjects other than those which they are teaching.

Students are required to upload a copy of their timetable onto their School Experience One Note File no later than Friday of the first week of the practice. The timetables should note the correct time, the class name or number, the room and the name of the regular class teacher. Students are also asked to indicate periods of school closure or events that will affect the normal running of the timetabled classes.

Observation of classroom teaching

We would encourage staff in schools to sit in on lessons, especially at the beginning of the practice. It may be useful to use the report form from the SSESW to provide written feedback to students. They are told to retain all copies of notes from staff in school in their files.

School Experience One Note File

The school experience One Note file is an extremely important document and it must be made available to supervisors, visiting examiners and heads of department throughout the placements. It must contain the following items in the order shown:

- a copy of the timetable on the QUB template;
- lesson plans for each lesson taught, uploaded in good time before the lesson;
- evidence of reflection/evaluation on lessons as stipulated by the Subject Module Convenor;
- signed copies of lesson observation notes from your visiting PGCE Tutor;
- copies of any written reports on your lessons from teachers in the school;
- details of lessons observed and the broader aspects of school life in which you have been engaged;
- plans for teaching classes over a period of time (e.g. a scheme of learning covering a topic or a series of related teaching points).

Borrowed resources

Students are informed that they must return all books, keys and equipment borrowed from placement schools before the end of the practice period.

A word of caution

It is emphasized to students that corporal punishment is legally prohibited and that any physical contact with pupils must be avoided. They are told that any accident to a pupil, even if it appears to be minor, should be reported without delay to the class teacher or head of department.

Lesson Planning

Lesson planning is a vital part of teaching and students are given guidance on producing lesson plans by their subject specialist tutors, but it is necessary that the essential elements are contained in all lesson plans. These should contain the following:

- details of the class, date and focus of the lesson;
- aims and objectives of the lesson, usually expressed in terms of what the pupils are expected to accomplish or understand as a result of the lesson;
- details of resources including equipment, illustrations, textbooks, handouts etc. needed to support the lesson;
- details of each phase of the proposed lesson, broadly structured as an introductory phase (setting the purpose of the lesson), a development phase (the main body of the lesson) and a concluding phase (consolidating the lesson). These sections will often identify the main teaching and learning points, key questions, examples to be used, pupil activities, anticipated problems, contingency strategies, homework to be given and so on;
- self-evaluation of teaching performance and the extent of achievement of the objectives set. This section should be a brief, but frank appraisal of how the lesson went and would usefully include plans to consolidate or improve practice on the next occasion.

It would be particularly helpful if staff in schools could check the contents of the file and provide advice and guidance as to how students might improve their lesson planning.

Coursework

Students will be required to complete certain elements of school focused work relating to their school experience. Any materials or information which students acquire from school in order to complete assignments are used solely for that purpose. They are not allowed to refer to schools' individual members of staff by name.

Assessment of Competence during PGCE School Placement

School placements are designed to enable student teachers to develop teaching competence under the supervision of experienced teachers. The assessment of competence progress is based on the published competence framework (see the PGCE Course Handbook or Teaching: The Reflective Profession GTCNI) and draws on several sources:

- written classroom observation reports from the University supervisors
- written end-of-placement reports from schools (See appendix
- discussions between students, supervising teachers, teacher tutors and University supervisors; and
- assessment of placement files (lesson plans, diary of classes taught and observed, lesson evaluations etc.).

It is the intention of the SSESW, unless circumstances dictate otherwise, that every student should be observed by a University supervisor within four weeks of beginning a placement. There will normally be two visits although prevailing circumstances may give rise to instances where more than two are necessary. The latter case may arise if the school or the University judges a student to need additional support through extra visits.

Students are expected to demonstrate progressive development across all areas of the competence framework throughout their school placements. Understandably, the early stages of the first placement will differ significantly from the later stages of the second placement, as students gain experience and confidence. University supervisors are familiar with the typical nervousness and inexperience that students may show at the beginning of each placement.

Each placement includes two formal assessment points, and students must meet the expected level of competence by the second assessment point to pass that placement. Please see Placement Assessment Flowchart for procedural clarity, Appendix 5.

If a student continues to struggle in acquiring the necessary levels of competence, the Director of Initial Teacher Education, in collaboration with the student's subject studies tutor and supervisor, and in discussion with the placement school will invite the student to consider whether a teaching career is appropriate for them.

Students who have failed the module may be offered the opportunity to undertake an extended period of school placement in the autumn.

School Report

The feedback we receive from schools is a crucial element in the final assessment of the student's performance. Blank copies of this report can be found in the appendices. Please feel free to print or digitally copy as required. We would ask you either to pass the completed report to the visiting supervisor during the final visit or to send it to the Initial Teacher Education Secretary at the SSESW during the second last week of the school experience.

FAQ's

How many classes are the student expected to teach?

Students are expected to have a reduced timetable. They will be expected to teach between 8 to 12 hours a week and to have a variety of class types, including exam classes where possible.

Where can I find the school report and interim report forms?

The interim and final report are completed online. The interim report is due in before Christmas for the first placement and before Easter second placement. This initial report aims to flag up any issues. The final report is to be sent in towards the end of the placement. This report is used by the university tutors when deciding on a grade for the student.

What do I do if a student is having a problem?

If a student is having a problem or is finding it difficult to meet the standards expected the first step is to notify the university tutor. Extra support and guidance will be provided to the student from both the school (in terms of teaching support and tutor support) and the university (in terms of support services).

The university tutor may also decide to undertake an additional visit to ensure the student is meeting the requirements of the course. Both the school and the student will be kept informed if problems occur.

What happens if a student fails a visit?

The student's overall grade is made up of all the evidence provided whilst on placement. This includes reports from the four university visits as well as school reports. If a student fails one of the visits, they will normally be given action points to improve on and an additional visit. If they fail an entire placement, they may be given the opportunity to repeat a placement block. If a student is consistently not meeting the requirements of the course, they may be asked to think about teaching as a viable career choice.

What should I do during a University Tutor visit?

When the university tutor arrives at the school they will talk briefly with the student and observe the student teaching. After they have observed the lesson, they will encourage self-reflection before giving oral feedback to the student. At some stage during the visit the university tutor will discuss the students' progress with the classroom teacher, the head of department or someone else who has been working closely with the student. During the observation you do not have to remain in the room with the university tutor.

Appendix 1: Useful Links

Contact: sseswpgceplacements@qub.ac.uk

Appendix 2: Assessment Point Report Pro-Forma

Student:

School:

Class:

Date:

A. PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND PRACTICE Competence No. (1)

- Demonstrates commitment to core values of the profession
- Develops and maintains effective working relationships with pupils
- Develops and maintains effective working relationships with colleagues

B. PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING (2-13)

- Knows and understands the requirements of the NI curriculum
- Knows and understands how pupils develop and how they learn/factors that hinder learning
- Communicates effectively with pupils and colleagues
- Knows and understands the significant features of pupils' cultures, languages and faiths and any implications for learning

C. PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND APPLICATION**PLANNING AND LEADING (14-18)**

- Sets appropriate learning intentions taking account of the demands of the NI curriculum
- Prepares clear, organized and appropriate plans for teaching
- Plans challenging and stimulating, yet accessible, learning experiences
- Plans for the deployment of other adults to support learning

TEACHING AND LEARNING (19-23)

- Maintains a safe, interactive and challenging learning environment
- Establishes clear rules and expectations for pupils' behaviour, attempts to pre-empt inappropriate behaviour and deals effectively with inappropriate behaviour
- Uses a variety of teaching skills (explaining, questioning, demonstrating, modelling, etc.) effectively
- Uses a variety of teaching strategies (e.g. Whole class or group teaching, use of e-learning) as appropriate
- Uses resources that motivate and support pupils' learning
- Establishes a positive classroom ethos: captures and maintains pupils' attention and involvement
- Identifies and responds to pupils' differences (special educational needs, pupils who are not learning in their first language)
- Manages time and space effectively
- Collaborates with colleagues and contributes to the life of the school

ASSESSMENT (24-27)

- Monitors pupils' progress through observation, marking, targeted questioning and discussion
- Provides immediate feedback to reinforce learning, challenges pupils' understanding and promotes progression
- Marks against the planned learning intentions and success criteria and notes strengths and areas for development
- Helps pupils reflect on and improve their learning
- Uses a range of assessment strategies to evaluate pupils' learning and uses the outcomes of assessment to make teaching and learning more effective
- Records pupils' progress against relevant benchmarks
- Assists with the reporting of pupils' progress to parents or carers

Summary comment, including student's priorities for development of competences

Signatures -

Tutor:

Student:

Student comment:

Based on lesson planning and evaluations (OneNote), available reports from school-based teaching staff and the observed lesson, your current performance on EDU6000 is:

Pass (Plus)	
Pass	
Pass (Borderline)	
Fail	

All marks are provisional until approved by the PGCE Board of Examiners in mid-June.

Overall grading of EDU6000, based on lesson planning and evaluations (OneNote), available reports from school-based teaching staff and the observed lesson.

Pass (Plus)	The student teacher demonstrates exceptional performance, as appropriate to stage of academic year, in relation to the ITE phase exemplars of the GTCNI competences. Planning, teaching, evaluations of teaching and available reports from partner school are all exemplary.
Pass	The student teacher demonstrates a clear understanding, as appropriate to stage of academic year, of their role as a developing professional and their commitment to the phase exemplars of the GTCNI competences. Planning, teaching, evaluations of teaching and available reports from partner school are of a high order. Progress is in line with reasonable expectations; the student teacher should aim to maintain and enhance their professional practice.
Pass (Borderline)	The student teacher's performance is not yet as developed expected as appropriate to stage of academic year, in relation to the ITE phase exemplars of the GTCNI competences. Whilst performance is of a pass standard, there are some concerning deficiencies in lesson planning and/or teaching and/or evaluations of teaching and/or available reports from the partner school. The student teacher should be provided with a clear reason / clear reasons as to why they are deemed Pass (Borderline). The student teacher should redress the issue(s) and aim to enhance their professional practice.
Fail	The student teacher's performance is giving cause for concern, as appropriate to stage of academic year, in relation to the ITE phase exemplars of the GTCNI competences. The student teacher should be provided with a clear reason / clear reasons as to why they are deemed Fail. The student teacher should redress the issue(s) and aim to enhance their professional practice. The subject pathway Module Convenor should be informed and should arrange for reassessment to take place within ten working days. Where a student teacher fails a reassessment, the student teacher will be invited to a Student Progress Meeting with the Deputy Director of Initial Teacher Education.

Appendix 3 - Interim Report Questions

The following questions are included in the Microsoft Form Interim Report.

1. Your name
2. Your email address
3. School name
4. Position relating to student
5. Student name
6. Main Methods' Subject
7. Number of days absent during this school placement experience to date.
8. Please comment briefly on the student's progress, and professionalism, to date. (Optional)
9. Do you have any cause for concern in relation to the student's progress/professionalism/well-being?
(If so, we will contact you to discuss further.)

Appendix 4 - Final Report Questions

The following questions are included in the Microsoft Form Interim Report.

Section 1 – Placement Information

1. School Name
2. Student's Name
3. Main Methods' Subject
4. Name of teacher (HOD and/or Teacher Tutor) completing this form.
5. Email Address

Section 2 – Understanding the Curriculum

6. Awareness of pupils' learning – Yes/No
7. Comments

Section 3 – Subject Knowledge and Application

8. Lesson Preparation: Satisfactory? Yes/No
9. Comments
10. Appropriate Subject Knowledge: Satisfactory? Yes/No
11. Comments

Section 4 – Teaching Strategies

12. Establishing a Positive Learning Environment: Satisfactory? Yes/No
13. Comments
14. Interaction with pupils: Satisfactory? Yes/No
15. Comments
16. Classroom Management and Discipline: Satisfactory? Yes/No
17. Comments
18. Uses a variety of Teaching Skills: Satisfactory? Yes/No
19. Comments
20. Ensuring progression across lessons: Satisfactory? Yes/No
21. Comments
22. Ability to manage time and space effectively: Satisfactory? Yes/No
23. Comments

Section 5 – Assessment and Recording

24. Regular Assessment of Pupils: Satisfactory? Yes/No
25. Comments
26. Offers constructive feedback to pupils: Satisfactory? Yes/No
27. Comments
28. Uses assessment information to plan for the future: Satisfactory? Yes/No
29. Comments

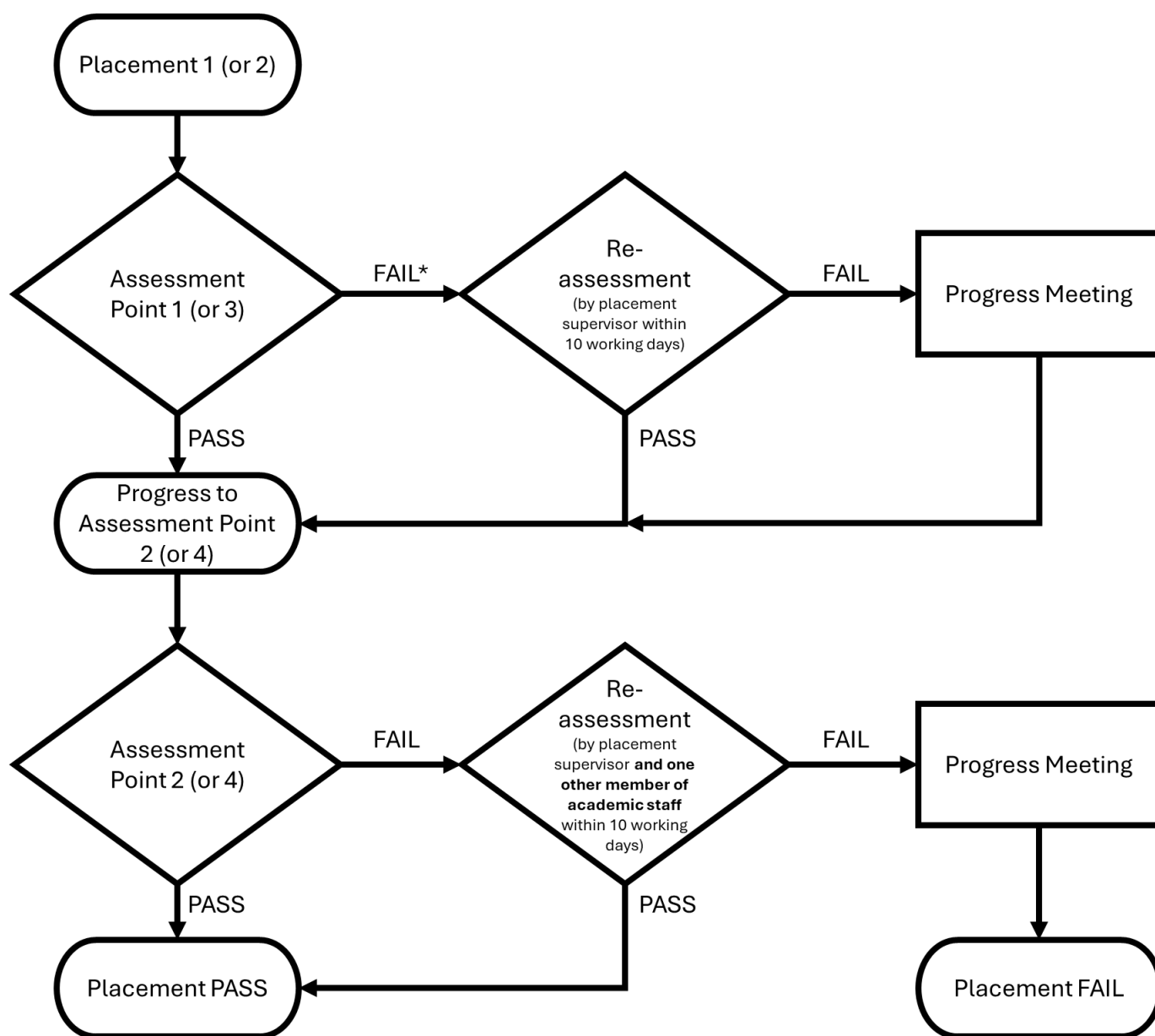
Section 6: Further Professional Development

30. Ability to evaluate and reflect on lessons: Satisfactory? Yes/No
31. Comments
32. Integrated into department: Satisfactory? Yes/No
33. Comments
34. Demonstrates appropriate professional conduct: Satisfactory? Yes/No
35. Comments
36. Involvement in school life: Satisfactory? Yes/No
37. Comments

Overall summary

38. Overall, is the student's progress giving 'cause for concern'? Yes/No
39. General observations
40. Comments

Appendix 5 – Placement Module Assessment Flowchart



*Where a school requests an additional visit following the award of a FAIL for AP1 or AP3, this can be facilitated with the agreement of the Programme Director.

A fail following AP2 or AP4 will require the student to resit the full placement at the next available opportunity, though prevailing conditions may mean AP points are completed in different schools. Students will receive a return of marks on Canvas regarding their placement award in early February (SE1) and early June (SE2).

It should be noted that all marks are provisional until approved by PGCE Board of Examiners in early June.