

Communication to Partners: 11th September 2020

Dear Colleague,

As the university campus begins to reopen, we wanted to welcome you back to the new academic year. We recognise that many of you will have been working very hard over the summer to organise your own settings, but trust that you managed to get some respite.

Sincere Thanks

Thank you again for your continued support and feedback. This has helped us significantly in planning for the autumn term. As you are aware from our last communication we have restructured our placement expectations in order to complement the measures you may be putting in place at your setting.

We understand that there will need to be a great deal of flexibility in the coming year to ensure safe practice whilst maintaining the high quality of teacher education that has been our hallmark over the years through the excellent partnerships built up with you, our schools. We are working with our partnership to update guidance in relation to Covid-19 and to provide support to our settings in relation to placements and we will share this as soon as possible.

A Reminder of Changes to Placement Expectations

In addition to adjusting placements so that they begin after half term, we have also implemented alternative models such as non-assessed attachment days. We hope that this will establish slightly more flexibility. Working in partnership we have reimagined the school experience so that trainees can be a useful addition in addressing some of the potential gaps between the pupils who are returning to education in September. We recognise that having additional adults in the classroom would be of benefit to you and, as such, we can be flexible in the type of placement you can offer for trainees. This might include group work or online activities development for example.

We can also be flexible in the percentage of teaching time expected for trainees as well as relaxing expectations in terms of weekly observations and the completion of documentation. We hope that this will go some way in supporting you and ensuring more capacity and more flexibility in the classroom.

All trainees will have 'Preparation for Placement' embedded into their timetable at the beginning of the new academic year. This will focus on health and safety and understanding the new school environment, so that we can help to prepare them for the significantly changed procedures in our schools. We hope you will be reassured by this and if there is anything you would like us to include specifically please do let us know.

If you have already submitted your placement requests for this academic year we thank you sincerely. If you have not yet considered your requests you still have time and we

would be very grateful for your support. Please see attached Placement Calendar for specific dates and the link to the Partnership Hub here:

[LINK TO PARTNERSHIP HUB](#)

Username: URN111310

If you would like to discuss this further with your Professional Placement Tutor or Subject Lead please don't hesitate to contact them directly, or a member of our partnership team can put you in touch.

We realise it will be difficult for partner schools to balance the additional needs and demands in the immediate future and we really do appreciate that. However, during this time of rapid change, we will still need to educate a strong cohort of well qualified new teachers to continue to provide excellent, enthusiastic input for our pupils.

Keeping in Touch

We will continue to update you with developments at the university and ask that you do the same so that we can continue to ensure that our strategies complement those of your setting. Importantly we will continue to put the health and wellbeing of our staff, students and partners at the forefront of any decisions we make.

Stay safe and well and thank you for all you do in supporting the education of our children and the next generation of teachers.

Best wishes,

Louise Daley
Head of Professional Formation