



Education and Learning Service

Highland Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers

**LNCT Agreement no.22
(revised June 2024)**

Student Teacher Placements Policy

Student Teacher Placements Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The importance of good quality student teacher placements is widely recognised as an essential part in developing the skills of new teachers. Courses of initial teacher education depend on this element of the learning process to enable students to reach the [Standard for Provisional Registration](#) (SPR) (General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) 2021). These quality learning experiences can only take place with effective collaboration between Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), local authorities, students and schools.
- 1.2 The teaching unions fully recognise that it is incumbent on teachers in post to participate actively in the education and learning of the next generation of teachers, and that this responsibility is implicitly recognised within the SNCT Handbook Section 2.8 (g) '*maintain and develop knowledge and skills and contribute to the professional development of colleagues including probationary and student teachers*'.
- 1.3 The implementation of local authority Student Placement Co-ordinators (SPC) has given local authorities a much more focussed role in the student placement process. This, in turn, requires clearly defined roles and responsibilities for HEIs, local authorities, students and schools.
- 1.4 The purpose of this policy is to summarise the key responsibilities of HEIs, the local authority, students and schools.

2. Higher Education Institution responsibilities

HEIs will:

1. Through a partnership approach, ensure a rigorous selection process is in place.
2. Ensure Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) procedures are in place for all students prior to placement.
3. Provide the SPC and schools with accurate information about placement dates and placement requirements.
4. Provide the SPC and schools with access to Programme Handbooks and suitable summaries of the requirements for each placement.
5. Facilitate liaison between HEI tutors and school mentors, via pre-placement meetings where possible.
6. Specify stages required for each primary placement.
7. Provide schools with the names of students due to visit or start a placement, ideally at least 10 days prior to the relevant date, although exceptional circumstances may lead to shorter notification.
8. Provide SPCs with as much notice as possible of additional / amended placement requests.

9. Prepare student teachers appropriately for school placements:
 - a. Primary student teachers will have a working knowledge of pedagogy and the curriculum level for placement.
 - b. Secondary student teachers will have a working knowledge of pedagogy, Curriculum for Excellence levels and Scottish Qualifications Authority subject guidelines for the placement.
10. Introduce students to [GTCS Student Teacher Code](#) and [Code of Professionalism and Conduct](#).
11. Request a variety and balance of placement experiences.
12. Co-ordinate the professional learning and deployment of tutors, including local authority associate tutors, who conduct placement visits.
13. Liaise in the first instance with the designated member of school staff who has responsibility for the progress of individual students during school experience placements, and engage with the school at an early stage where there are concerns from the school regarding a student placement.
14. Where there are identified placement difficulties, the HEI will liaise timeously with the senior manager of the school.
15. With the agreement of the student teacher share student support information that is relevant to the placement experience from any existing Personal Learning Support Plan (PLSP). With the agreement of the student teacher, other support issues or requirements (outwith an existing PLSP) should also be shared.

3. Local Authority Responsibilities

The Local Authority will:

1. Ensure that all teachers are fully aware of the local authority's commitment in supporting student teacher placements.
2. Identify an officer with responsibility for co-ordination of student placements – the SPC. This person would then be responsible for the following actions:
 - a. Meet and liaise with colleagues from HEIs and other local authorities in order to ensure a suitable and manageable allocation of student teachers amongst all partner local authorities.
 - b. Co-ordinate the gathering of information from schools regarding student placement capacity and suitability of placements.
 - c. Co-ordinate requests from all HEIs requesting student placements in Highland schools.
 - d. Allocate students to Highland schools on an equitable basis, based primarily on school roll but also considering other relevant factors.
 - e. Act as a conduit of information flow between HEIs and schools with regard to initial placement offers, changes to placement offers, additional placement requests, etc.
 - f. Ensure that teachers are supported by offering relevant professional learning e.g. coaching and mentoring on an annual basis.
 - g. Evaluate the student teacher placement.
 - h. Keep under review the funding from SEED for the post of SPC.

- i. Be mindful of individual school circumstances that require 'opt out' facility for placements.
- j. Consider and offer advice and guidance where the school is supporting a student teacher with a PLSP or other additional requirements.

4. Student Responsibilities

Students will:

1. Be familiar with GTCS Student Teacher Code and Code of Professionalism and Conduct
2. Work with the allocated mentor and guidance within the Placement Handbook to identify suitable learning and development during the placement.
3. Be familiar with relevant school policies and procedures, including all child protection/safeguarding and health and safety processes.
4. Attend meetings with the allocated mentor and work with the mentor on identified areas for learning and development.
5. Act on feedback from identified areas for learning and development.

5. School Responsibilities

Schools will:

1. Undertake to host student placements, reflecting the professional expectation that primary schools and secondary departments will offer student placements each year, throughout the school year.
2. Liaise with the SPC with regard to the number of placements available each session and particular circumstances which may affect placements requiring to 'opt out'.
3. Ensure teaching staff are aware of placement requirements as identified in the suitable summary provided by HEIs. The designated member of school staff should be familiar with and have access to the HEI Placement Handbooks.
4. Provide appropriate induction to the school for the student teacher.
5. Provide adequate/meaningful time for consultation between teachers, students and tutors i.e. as part of the working time agreement.
6. Ensure that the student teacher has access to all relevant school resources and experience a variety of teaching methods.
7. Be welcoming and open to student teachers' ideas where they make a positive contribution to learning and teaching.
8. Ensure that the student teacher is aware of, and works within, key school policies such as positive relationships and curriculum.
9. Provide regular formative feedback to the student teacher on professional performance, including planning, preparation and assessment.
10. Complete reports on student teacher for HEIs within the relevant timescales.
11. Liaise at an early stage with HEI staff when there are concerns regarding a student teacher, particularly where a student is at risk of failing a placement. See **Appendix for agreed process to identify and support schools to raise issues with the student in the first instance and then HEI if necessary.**
12. Work in partnership with HEIs about the student placement.

6. School Staff Responsibilities

1. The role of the designated senior manager is to ensure that school staff and student teachers are supported throughout the placement and to liaise with both local authority and HEI. This will include where it has been noted that the student teacher is having difficulties.
2. The senior manager hosting the placement should ensure the engagement with a whole school induction and discuss the general life and work of the school with the student teacher. The senior manager should also ensure that adequate time is made available to allow members of staff involved with student teachers to carry out tasks associated with a student placement including time for the end of placement report to be completed in collaboration between senior manager and staff member.
3. The role of the member of staff with responsibility for the department, or class with whom the student teacher has been placed is to mentor the student while on placement, to offer advice, accurate and timely feedback and guidance which may involve observations across the school. The mentor will liaise with the designated senior manager regarding evaluation throughout the placement, including, at an early stage, where there appear to be concerns regarding the student teacher.
4. Where there are perceived difficulties school staff will follow the protocol – see Appendix and liaise fully with the HEI.

Signed on behalf of The Highland Council		Signed on behalf of the Teachers' Side	
Name	Fiona Grant	Name	Alistair Bell
Designation	Joint Secretary LNCT	Designation	Joint Secretary LNCT
Date	5 June 2024	Date	5 June 2024

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Process for Evaluating Progress of Student Teacher on School Placements

This chart has been created to help student teachers and school mentors to review regularly on progress alongside the weekly meetings. Any concerns raised by student or school should be directed towards the university directly and without delay.

