WHAT DO I DO IF WE HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT MY TRAINEE’S PROGRESS

Working with trainees who are causing concern

There may be occasions in school when the performance of a trainee is such that additional action is required beyond the normal systems of support and assessment. In such cases, mentors and/or tutors are required to set in motion the Cause for Concern (CfC) process. The CfC Process should be initiated in cases of:

Lack of Progress towards the Teachers’ Standards
SWELTEC Section 2 – the 8 Standards
A trainee is considered to be failing, or is judged to be in danger of failing, to meet the required criteria for the particular phase of the course and therefore may be in danger of not meeting the Standards by the end of their training. Such cases may be resolvable if action is taken early enough.

Inappropriate Personal and Professional conduct
SWELTEC Section 1 Personal and Professional Conduct
For example: punctuality, dress, lack of self-critical awareness, inability or unwillingness to accept professional criticism, difficult relationships with staff, and so on. Such cases should be resolvable if action is taken early enough.

Professional misconduct
SWELTEC Section 1 Personal and Professional Conduct
The trainee is considered to be behaving in a way which is professionally unacceptable. This may result in a shortened CfC process.

The purpose of initiating a CfC process is to make certain that the trainee is aware of the concerns at the earliest possible stage in order that appropriate support and an action plan can be agreed in partnership with the trainee and Mentor, and if appropriate with the PCM and Tutor.

The advent of new Standards and Ofsted framework now makes it imperative that the trainee and all involved in their training need to be made aware of any trainee not making sufficient progress to ensure that they will at least meet the SWELTEC C3 criteria by the end of their training.

It is recognised that teaching skills have to be learnt and some trainees who make a slow start can become very effective teachers given the time to develop their skills and confidence. It is far better to begin the CfC process which is then resolved than to wait for a week or so hoping for an improvement which does not materialise. In such cases it may be too late to make an effective intervention.

From September 2013 the SWELTEC previous single CfC process has been replaced with a three stage process. This was introduced at the 2013 PCM conference and received overwhelming support.

Stage 1: CfC Mentor Action
The mentor raises any concerns that they or other teacher colleagues have about the trainee’s progress at the weekly mentor meeting, where it is discussed and appropriate targets and actions agreed. These are monitored and reviewed at the next weekly mentor meeting. This is recorded on the Weekly Training Sheet and by so doing the PCM and SM are informed. The PCM or ST may wish to communicate with the SM or Trainee at this stage. Many issues should be resolvable within a week but some e.g. aspects of subject knowledge or classroom practice may take longer to show significant process BUT there should be some progress over the week.
Stage 2: CfC Mentor Action Plus
If there has been no or insufficient progress on the targets identified in stage 1 (or a more serious/consistent problem arises) then the mentor moves the process onto Mentor Action Plus. The concerns are raised and discussed with the PCM and Subject Tutor and possible targets and actions are agreed. This is then discussed with the trainee at the Weekly Training Meeting and targets and agreed actions are noted on the Weekly Training Sheet. As above there should be noticeable progress demonstrated over the week though some targets may take longer to achieve.

Stage 3: CfC At Risk
If there has been no or insufficient progress in meeting the targets then the process moves to “At Risk” when the SM, PCM and ST meet with the trainee to make them aware that they are at risk of failing the course and that significant rapid and demonstrable progress has to be shown against the targets set. The CfC at risk form must be issued and signed by all at this time. If no or insufficient progress is made then the placement may be terminated and each HEI’s programme termination or suspension process will come into place.

As Stage 3 is the most serious part of the process it should only be started when there is enough time for the trainee to demonstrate sufficient progress.

If a CfC process has been initiated it must be recorded on the Profile and it's outcome noted. It is important that if a Trainee has been the subject of a CfC that has been successfully resolved that they begin the next step of their training as a “fresh start”.

Possible actions which may be appropriate include:
1. ensuring the trainee receives consistent guidance about action to be taken - weaker trainees often have difficulty in choosing the best approaches from a number of options suggested
2. ensuring the teaching load is appropriate for the current situation
3. ensuring classes being taught are appropriate for the current situation
4. arranging for the trainee to work alongside an experienced teacher in a support role - for example, leading specific sessions of the lesson in order to allow them to work to their strengths and hence develop successful practice
5. arranged for the trainee to work with a teacher to provide support for specific pupils who will benefit from additional support or extension activities
6. providing extra support in developing the trainee’s subject knowledge
7. arranging for additional, focused observation perhaps outside as well as inside the department in order to develop the trainee’s understanding of good teaching in practice
8. setting clear and unambiguous short-term achievable targets

Who should instigate the Cause for Concern process?
The subject mentor, university tutor or a senior member of school staff may all start the process.

What is the process?
The instigator should start filling in the Cause for Concern form, having formally notified the trainee that the process has been started (see following page)

A copy of the Cause for Concern form can be found below and on the SWELTEC website at [www.sweltec.ac.uk](http://www.sweltec.ac.uk)
The CfC At Risk Process

A. Following a period of time in which issues have been raised but not resolved, the mentor, tutor or a senior member of school staff instigate the Cause for Concern at Risk process. The trainee is informed to ensure clear awareness of the concern.

B. Consultation phase between PCM, Mentor Tutor and Trainee before completion of first section of form including Nature of Concern & Evidence for Concern

C. Mentors/tutor/PCM and trainee agree action, enter details on form and sign relevant sections.

D. Instigator sends copy of form to mentor/tutor/PCM trainee places copy in their file

E. Mentor supports student in meeting agreed action and notes progress made on form

F. At date set for completion of agreed action, mentor/student/tutor/PCM review progress and complete form. Mentor ensures copies are sent to relevant personal.

G. Quality Assurance Check. If a quality assurance issue arises from the above process mentor / tutor / PCM completes section G

Evidence from: lesson observations, trainee file, trainee professionalism, and so on.

Action points identified with reasonable time scale for resolving issues

Review of agreed action points as central focus for the weekly training meeting
## Cause for Concern At Risk Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Trainee</th>
<th>Name of Mentor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of School</td>
<td>Name of PCM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>Name of University Tutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form initiated by</td>
<td>Role</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Nature of and evidence for concern

(continue overleaf if necessary)

### Agreed action

By when

(continue overleaf if necessary)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature of mentor</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Signature of Professional Co-ordinating Mentor</td>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature of University tutor</td>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I understand that if these targets are not effectively addressed, my placement may be in jeopardy and / or I may fail to meet QTS Standards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature of trainee</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</thead>
</table>

### Monitoring of progress on agreed action

Dates

(continue overleaf if necessary)

### Conclusion of process

(continue overleaf if necessary)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Assurance Check</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Are there any broader issues that affect quality assurance?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Has the matter been referred to an appropriate Board / Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Copies of form to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trainee</th>
<th>PCM</th>
<th>Mentor</th>
<th>Tutor</th>
<th>File Copy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Passing and Failing the Course

It is important that everyone involved in the partnership is aware that the final decision as to whether any trainee passes the course is taken by the examination board of the relevant university and is based on an overview of all the evidence relevant to the trainee’s programme.

Failing Trainees

Although we hope that these cases will be relatively rare, they are the ones which cause school-based mentors the most concern and where clear guidelines for action are needed.

It is important that everyone involved in the Partnership recognises that all trainees have rights under the regulations of the university at which they are registered. In any case where there is a possibility of failure it is crucial that correct procedures are followed.