**University of Exeter   
Supporting PGCE trainees on placement**

Preparing students for placements

Before students begin their placement, universities should:

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| **Checklist** | **What we do** |
| * Quality assure placements and placement providers in terms of their effect on mental health and wellbeing | The Exeter Model ensures that our curriculum includes support for mental health and wellbeing. The role of the reflective mentor is also designed to support this. We have a workload and wellbeing policy shared with schools. Our usual QA processes with UVT visits and evaluations enable us to identify if there are any issues with respect to support for mental health. Ongoing strong relationships with ITECs enable us to QA and provide additional support. |
| * Normalise conversations around student and employee wellbeing | Part of the course delivery and tutorials. |
| * Make sure placement setting and location are appropriate for each individual | Operate a priority placement setting to support trainees with caring or financial responsibility  Trainees complete a Placement Information process to let partnership know preferences and responsibilities  Trainees are encouraged to share lifts and arrange accommodation together, accommodation database provided  Partnership Discretionary Fund available to provide one off financial intervention |
| * Set expectations for students about what their placement will be like | Information in handbook  Exeter Model – phased approach and Mentoring roles for support  Tutors cover resilience and wellbeing in taught sessions and in tutorials. They send emails out to check on trainees in placement and offer tutorials on seminar days face to face, or online during placement. |
| * Embed wellbeing in pre-placement briefings, training, and resources | Trainees are provided with an information sheet on how to access disability and wellbeing support from the University on their first day. This is now in their IDP, and they are signposted to it in induction session. This information is also in the mentorzone for schools and trainees are reminded about this in the bulletins as placement starts. At the same time, they are also provided with an information sheet (signposted to it online) on how to access welfare and wellbeing support during their placements. These documents stay in their online portfolio all year).  There is a Mental Health Resources tile on ELE, accessed via the landing page for trainees (university VLE) which is available all year. This is signposted in their induction session and referred to in taught sessions. |
| * Arrange additional individualised support or adjustments that should be in place for students | Trainees are invited to disclose disabilities/health conditions at application, registration and throughout the course. Support offered by AccessAbility, and Wellbeing are highlighted in induction session.  Individual Learning Plans are available to trainees if they need physical disability, mental health or learning disability support during their academic studies. These are created after meetings with AccessAbility and then sent to module leaders and tutors.  All trainees have an Occupational Health assessment prior to the course starting and an OH report is received for those where adjustments are needed, or recommendations are made.  Trainees have four formative assessment points during the year (FRAPs) which enable individual support needs to be highlighted and provided. |
| * Set out clear routes of contact for placement students with pastoral- and employment-related issues | Trainees are provided with an information sheet on how to access disability and wellbeing support from the University on their first day (this stays in their online portfolio all year). At the same time they are also provided with an information sheet on how to access welfare and wellbeing support during their placements.  The University’s Welfare team and the Partnership Office work closely together to ensure that trainees seeking support are signposted appropriately given their placement needs and also the ITE fitness to teach requirements.  Every trainee is allocated a personal tutor at the beginning of the year. Part of their role is to provide pastoral support. The tutor has access to the student record system, SRS. If they are concerned for the trainee’s welfare, they can access a home or mobile number to phone to check on the trainee’s wellbeing.  Trainees are also provided with a University Visiting Tutor (this is often but not always the same person as the Personal Tutor). They visit the trainees once a term in their school settings and provide signposting and pastoral support as well as supporting trainees’ progress on the course.  Every placement school has an ITE Coordinator who acts as a central contact point between the University and school staff involved in training our trainees. |
| * Create peer support networks and communities | Each subject/pathway has a Staff Student Liaison (SSLC) rep who attends termly meetings and is able to raise issues on behalf of the trainees.  The structure of the course enables trainees to develop strong peer support relationships. |

Supporting students while on placement

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| **Checklist** | **What we do** |
| * Implement a clear check-in and support structure with a key university contact | Role and timings of UVT visit / Personal Tutor contacts |
| * Implement clear absence reporting processes for students and placement providers | The course has a clear absence reporting procedure which includes the ability for trainees to log their absence in their online portfolio, which both relevant university and school staff can access. This process is embedded during the autumn term, so trainees are aware of the procedures before going into their placement schools. |
| * Advertise hardship funding | This is advertised as part of our travel policy and on our teacher training website - <https://www.exeter.ac.uk/study/teachertraining/feesandfinance/>  Trainees are also given a ‘Help with Student Fees and Funding queries’ information sheet on day 1 which includes information on hardship funding. This information stays in their online portfolio all year |
| * Reaffirm students’ ability to access central university support services throughout their placement | Trainees submit two summative academic assignments during the year (both while on placement). Information on disability/mental health support is provided as a reminder prior to these submissions. Additionally, the extension request process often flags trainees who are struggling and the relevant personal tutor/UVT is involved so that appropriate signposting, advice and guidance can be given. |

Supporting students on different types of placements

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| **Checklist** | **What we do** |
| * Make sure students understand fitness to practise procedures | FtP procedures are detailed in the Programme Handbook. Trainees also receive taught input on Prevent, British Values, Professionalism and Teacher Wellbeing during the course |
| * Make sure that health and care placement supervisors have enough time to support placement students | Partnership Agreement / MoU  Role of UVT to QA placement  Partnership Relations Managers  Evaluations |
| * Use published data on quality of placements | Trainee evaluations  UVT evaluations  UVT visit reports  Role of Partnership Relations Manager  Ofsted reports |
| * Make sure that mentors have enough time and are trained to support students | Role of ITEC  PRM  Training programme for Mentors, QA of programme |

Supporting students returning to academic study

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| * **Checklist** | **What we do** |
| * Implement check-ins to ask students how they are settling back into university life | Campus-based trainees university input is front-loaded so they are at University for most of the autumn term and then attend two school placements during the spring and summer terms. They only return for 5 individual days during the spring and summer terms (Seminar days).  We should have ‘return to course’ pre-meetings with tutor to check in. |
| * Offer academic study skills refresher workshops | Academic study skills workshops are available during the autumn term. But additional support from the University’s Study Zone <https://www.exeter.ac.uk/students/studyzone/> is available all year, including while on placement |
| * Encourage placement students to keep in touch with one another | Seminar Days act as a way of trainees reconnecting regularly with each other during the year. |