

Trainee Suitability to Practice Policy and Procedures (CTTC 10)

Introduction

The Colchester Teacher Training Consortium (CTTC) acknowledges the importance of having an effective suitability to practice procedure to maintain the standard of performance expected of Trainees. When this level of performance is not met, the Course Director will use the appropriate route as outlined below.

The procedure is intended to cover all trainees (Tuition Fee, Salaried and Apprentice) and relates to the standards of performance achieved by a trainee in relation to the CTTC Curriculum (aligned to ITT CCF) to meet the Teachers' Standards (September 2012) for the duration of the course.

The procedure, following the initial cause for concern, should not be used to cover disciplinary matters which should be dealt with through the Disciplinary Procedure.

The interpretation of any matter relating to suitability to practice will be for the determination of the Personnel Committee. For Salaried and Apprentice Trainees, the employing Principal will also be involved.

Guiding Principles

The procedure is intended to provide a clear process for dealing with trainee capability issues in relation to the CTTC Curriculum (aligned to ITT CCF) to meet the Teachers' Standards.

The procedure is intended to support trainees so that they can achieve the standard of performance required to meet the expectations of the CTTC Curriculum (aligned to ITT CCF) and so achieve QTS.

The procedure is intended to provide guidance and support to placement schools.

The procedure is intended to prevent the performance of a Trainee having a negative impact on the quality of teaching and learning in their placement school.

In the first instance, every effort should be made, through the usual processes of support and guidance to which every Trainee is entitled e.g., mentoring, to support the trainee in making progress against the curriculum assessment criteria (aligned to ITT CCF) and ultimately QTS Standards.

A formal Initial or Additional Support Plan can be initiated at any stage during the course. This could be following an Assessment Point (AP) review, or by acting on concerns as they arise through the ongoing formative assessment procedures and not delayed until the next AP.

A copy of the Suitability to Practice Procedure should be made available to Trainees when they first join CTTC and reference copies should always be readily available.

Stages of the Procedure

The procedure should be followed, and no further stage commenced until all possibilities of progress within the timescale at a given stage have been exhausted.

Stage 1 - Cause for Concern Meeting and Initial Support Plan (ISP) (APPENDIX 1)

Where the usual processes of support and guidance have not resulted in an acceptable level of performance at any stage in the course a Consortium Director, Lead Mentor, Professional Tutor, Lead Subject Mentor or Assistant Lead Subject Mentor will schedule a meeting involving:

- The Consortium Director, PT, LSM or ALSM who raised the concern
- The Subject Mentor
- The Trainee

At the meeting the Trainee will be informed that there is a cause for concern.

The concerns and outcomes of the meeting including targets for the trainee and review date will be recorded on the appropriate form (*Initial Support Plan*) which should be copied to:

- Consortium Director/s
- Professional Tutor (Secondary) Lead Mentor (Primary)
- Lead Subject Mentor (Secondary)
- Subject Mentor
- Trainee
- **In the case of a Salaried or Apprentice Trainee only**, the Principal.

The set targets for improvement and actions **could** include:

- Observations of experienced teachers with a specific focus on those areas causing the Trainee difficulty.
- Reviewing the Trainee's timetable so that she/he no longer continues working in a class that has caused difficulties and/or reducing teaching timetable for a limited time.
- Working in a supportive role or alongside the class teacher.
- Leading specific sections of the lesson, which the Trainee feels are his/her strengths, and then build back up to whole class teaching.
- Additional subject/tutorial support.

All trainees on an ISP will be visited by a Consortium Director, Professional Tutor, Lead Mentor, Lead Subject Mentor or Assistant Lead Subject mentor at least three times (including the final visit) during the period of the ISP. The purpose of the visits will be to monitor the progress of the trainee and amend the support/guidance being provided as appropriate. The targets will be reviewed on a week-to-week basis for a period of **three working weeks** or until the end of the current placement or next assessment point (AP). The trainee will be informed of the times/dates of the visits in advance and suitable times/dates for the visits will be agreed in collaboration with the trainee.

During the ISP period, only the targets will be assessed, and all other assessment procedures will be paused.

If at the end of the ISP a review meeting will take place. If the targets have been achieved, the trainee will return to the normal assessment procedures.

If there is no or insufficient improvement at the end of **three weeks or at the next assessment point (AP)** they will move to Stage 2.

The ISP may be extended for a period of a further three weeks, rather than moving to Stage 2, in some circumstances. This may include:

- If the trainee has moved placement school following the initial ISP and it is felt that a further ISP would be more appropriate than an ASP.
- If the trainee has made progress towards their targets in the ISP but it is felt that they would benefit from a continue period of monitoring and support.
- If the trainee has been absent during the initial three weeks which has prevented weekly visits and reviews from taking place.

Following the three-week extension period, the review meeting must take place, even if it has not been possible to observe the trainee teach during this period due to trainee absence.

Stage 2 - Additional Support Plan (ASP) (APPENDIX 2)

If a trainee does not successfully meet the targets in an Initial Support Plan, or if an Initial Support Plan has previously been in place at any point in the duration of the course, an Additional Support Plan (ASP) will be implemented for a period of 4 working weeks.

If the 4 weeks go beyond the end date of the course, arrangements will need to be made to extend the duration of the course for the trainee.

If there is prolonged absence due to extenuating circumstances within the 4 weeks' duration of the ASP, an extension to the 4 weeks can be agreed by a Consortium Director. The ASP can be extended by a maximum of 4 working weeks, after which time the review meeting must take place, even if it has not been possible to observe the trainee teach during this period due to trainee absence.

The ASP will be implemented by a Consortium Director.

Following an observation of the trainee's practice, a meeting will be held with the minimum following members:

- Consortium Director
- Professional Tutor/Lead Mentor/ LSM/ ALSM or Subject Mentor
- Trainee

The concerns and outcomes of the meeting including targets for the trainee and review date will be recorded on the appropriate form (*Additional Support Plan*) which should be copied to:

- Trainee
- Subject Mentor
- Professional Tutor (Secondary), Lead Mentor (Primary)
- Lead Subject Mentor (Secondary)
- Principal
- Personnel Committee Notified at next meeting

All trainees on an ASP will be visited by a Consortium Director, Professional Tutor, Lead Mentor, Lead Subject Mentor or Assistant Lead Subject mentor at least four times (including the final visit) during the period of the ASP. The purpose of the visits will be to monitor the progress of the trainee and amend the support/guidance being provided as appropriate.

In the period of the ASP, the visits may take the form of an unannounced visit for the trainee (the school will be made aware of the time for the visit to ensure it is a suitable time for a visit to take place). The purpose of unannounced visits is to ensure that the trainee is consistently meeting their set targets in their practice and not just preparing for times they know they are being visited.

During the ASP period, only the targets will be assessed, and all other assessment procedures will be paused.

The final review after 4 weeks must involve a Consortium Director along with another Consortium Director or a Professional Tutor, Lead Subject Mentor, Assistant Lead Subject Mentor, Lead Mentor or Principal or a representative nominated on their behalf.

There are **three** possible outcomes from the ASP review:

1. **If sufficient progress has been made** i.e., the trainee has achieved a satisfactory level of performance commensurate with that particular stage of the course, the trainee will continue on the course with the usual processes of support and guidance.
2. **If no or insufficient progress** has been made and it is the view of the school (Professional Tutor, Principal or their nominated representative or Principal of Department) and the Lead Subject Mentor/Lead Mentor and a Consortium Director that the trainee is unlikely to make progress towards achieving QTS or the presence of the Trainee in the school is having a serious negative impact on pupil learning, then the Consortium Director will recommend to the Chair of the Personnel Committee that a Professional Suitability Panel (PSP) should be convened to consider the case.

Whilst awaiting the PSP meeting, the trainee should continue to attend training and observe teaching in their placement school until the review has taken place.

The PSP will consider the evidence provided by the Consortium Director and make a decision about whether the trainee should leave the course. A letter will be sent to the Trainee immediately after the meeting of the Steering Group Personnel Committee outlining the decision and the appeal process. For Salaried and Apprentice trainees, the employing school will then need to consider the continued employment of that trainee.

The trainee will be given the option to **not** refer their case to the PSP if they wish to withdraw from the course. They will be informed that if they take this option, they will be entitled to reapply for a place on an Initial Teacher Training Course with another provider and receive a bursary/student finance again if they are eligible and accepted onto a course. The trainee will be informed that they are not entitled to reapply for a training place with CTTC in the future.

3. **If some progress has been made** i.e., the trainee has achieved a satisfactory level of performance in a number of areas and it is the view of the school (Professional Tutor, Principal or their nominated representative or Principal of Department), the Lead Subject Mentor / Lead Mentor and a Consortium Director that it is likely that the trainee will continue to make progress towards achieving QTS then the trainee will move to Stage 3.

Stage 3 Optional FINAL ASP (APPENDIX 3)

If a trainee has partially achieved an ASP or has had an ASP in place at some point in the duration of the course, then they can be supported by another **FINAL** ASP.

The steps under **Stage 2** will be followed again with the following additional actions:

- An alternative placement, change of mentor or classes should be considered if this is in the best interest of the trainee, pupils or the staff involved.
- The Principal or their nominated representative should observe the trainee teach at some point during the period of the ASP.

The final review after 4 weeks must involve a Consortium Director along with another Consortium Director or a Professional Tutor, Lead Subject Mentor, Assistant Lead Subject Mentor, Lead Mentor or Principal or a representative nominated on their behalf.

A Principal or external representative from another partner school or another training provider should observe at the final review meeting for quality assurance purposes. The Principal or representative is allowed to ask clarifying questions as appropriate in the final review meeting.

There are **two** possible outcomes from the ASP review:

1. **If sufficient progress has been made** i.e., the trainee has achieved a satisfactory level of performance commensurate with that particular stage of the course, the trainee will continue on the course with the usual processes of support and guidance.
2. **If no or insufficient progress** has been made and it is the view of the school (Professional Tutor, Principal or their nominated representative or Principal of Department) and the Lead Subject Mentor/Lead Mentor and a Consortium Director that the trainee is unlikely to make progress towards achieving QTS or the presence of the Trainee in the school is having a serious negative impact on pupil learning, then the Consortium Director will recommend to the Steering Group that Professional Suitability Panel (PSP) should be convened to consider the case.

Whilst awaiting the PSP meeting, the trainee should continue to attend training and observe teaching in their placement school until the review has taken place.

The PSP will consider the evidence provided by a Consortium Director and make a decision about whether the trainee should leave the course. A letter will be sent to the Trainee immediately after the meeting of the Professional Suitability Panel, by the chair, outlining the decision and the appeal process. For School Direct Salaried Trainees, the employing school will then need to consider the continued employment of that trainee.

The trainee will be given the option to **not** refer their case to the PSP if they wish to withdraw from the course. They will be informed that if they take this option, they will be entitled to reapply for a place on an Initial Teacher Training Course with another provider and receive a bursary/student finance again if they are eligible and accepted onto a course. The trainee will be informed that they are not entitled to reapply for a training place with CTC in the future.

Trainee Absence During the ISP or ASP process

During the ISP or ASP process, the ISP or ASP can be extended at the discretion of a Consortium Director due to trainee absence:

- The ISP can be extended by a maximum of three working weeks
- The ASP can be extended by a maximum of four working weeks

If, despite an extension being granted, it has still not been possible to observe the trainee teach the review meeting must take place at the end of the period of extension.

Trainee Representation

At any time during the ISP or ASP process, the trainee is entitled to contact their union for guidance or support if necessary.

Professional Suitability Panel (Ability to meet The Teachers' Standards) – Processes and Procedures

1. Introduction

- 1.1.** The CTTC will take action when there are concerns about a Trainee's suitability to practice and their progress is insufficient in order to meet the Teachers' Standards by the end of the course. Where concerns of this nature arise the CTTC will convene a Professional Suitability Panel (PSP) and will share information regarding individual cases with the relevant partner school(s) and/or regulatory bodies in line with their requirements.
- 1.2.** The purpose of the PSP Policy is to ensure the provision of a timely, transparent, and consistent response to concerns about a trainee's suitability to practice and their progress is insufficient in order to meet the Teachers' Standards by the end of the course.
- 1.3.** If a Trainee with a disclosed disability is called to a PSP, the chair of the panel will ensure that all reasonable adjustments had been made to support the student before commencing panel proceedings.
- 1.4.** The Chair of the PSP can suspend a Trainee, pending the review, with immediate effect from all or part of a programme where the Trainee's capability, health or character is such that it is inappropriate for the Trainee to remain on the programme.
- 1.5.** Trainees who are referred to the Professional Suitability Panel will be advised of the support available to them and how to use the representation available.

2. Terms of Reference of the Student Professional Suitability Panel

- 2.1.** To hear concerns about the trainee's suitability to practice and the Trainee's response to these concerns, regarding his/her capability, professional practice and/or the ability to conduct him/herself in line with the requirements of the relevant regulatory body;
- 2.2.** To decide whether the trainee should continue on the course or has failed to meet the expectations of the course and to take the appropriate action, i.e. record that the trainee has not met the requirements for Qualified Teaching Status (QTS) against the Teachers' Standards with the Department for Education (DfE) or allow them to continue on the course with further support. (Note: Panels use the standard of proof that is applied to civil proceedings, that of the balance of probability);

- 2.3.** To ensure that the requirements of relevant Regulatory bodies and the Vetting and Barring Scheme relating to notification of outcomes of PSP are met (*i.e. that if a trainee is deemed not to meet the requirements for QTS, they will be barred from applying for Initial Teacher Training in the future*).

3. Membership of the Professional Suitability Panel

- 3.1.** The PSP will comprise a quorum of three members.
- 3.2.** The Chair of the Panel will be the Chair of the Personnel Committee, or should they be unavailable, another Principal from the Personnel Committee.
- 3.3.** The Panel will normally consist of (not from the school the trainee is **currently** placed in):
- A Principal from the CTTC Personnel committee;
 - Two other Principals from CTTC Partner schools;
- 3.4.** The following persons will be invited to attend the panel meeting to present the evidence:
- a Consortium Director
 - the trainee, if they chose to attend, and their representative (see 4.8) if the trainee chooses to bring one.
- 3.5.** A minute taker will minute the meeting and maintain records of Panels.
- 3.6.** Panel members will be advised of the rules and regulations of the CTTC and other relevant statutory regulations.
- 3.7.** All members of the Panel have a duty to declare before the Panel meets any conflicts of interest in cases presented to the Panel. This may be of a private or personal nature as well as in a professional context. Where it is the case that there is or could be a conflict of interest, the prospective Panel member will make this known to the Chair at the earliest opportunity.
- 3.8.** The case presenter (Consortium Director) will not take part in the decision-making process.

4. Procedure

- 4.1.** If a trainee has failed to meet the targets set in an Additional Support Plan or **FINAL** Additional Support Plan, the Chair of the Personnel Committee will be notified by the Consortium Director, to invoke the PSP procedure. Case logging will commence.

- 4.2.** The trainee will be informed by the Chair of the case against them, made aware of their rights and directed to relevant Trainee disciplinary policies.
- 4.3.** A Consortium Director, in consultation with the Personnel Committee, may suspend the trainee from all or part of the programme pending the outcome of the PSP. This may include being withdrawn from the school placement.
- 4.4.** The Panel will normally meet within 15 working days of the notification to the trainee by the Chair that the Panel will be convening.
- 4.5.** A Consortium Director will normally be responsible for reporting and presenting the particular trainee case to the PSP. The panel will be presented with the evidence from the Initial and Additional Support Plans along with any additional assessment tracking, record keeping on the trainee's performance or attendance records, where appropriate.
- 4.6.** The Minute taker to the Panel will distribute all documentation being presented at the Panel meeting to each member of the Panel, the Trainee, the Consortium Director, together with notice of the meeting and the time and place at which it will be held. The documents and notice shall normally be sent not less than 5 working days before the date set for the meeting of the Panel. In exceptional cases the Chair of the Panel may permit the later submission or circulation of papers.
- 4.7.** The Trainee will be invited to attend and speak about the concerns raised. A trainee attending for interview may be accompanied by a friend who may be a fellow trainee, or another suitable representative such as a member of staff from their placement school or a union representative who may speak on his/her behalf.
- 4.8.** The Trainee will be advised of his/her right to submit a written statement before the Panel meeting; this must be sent to the Minute taker not less than three working days before the Panel meeting is scheduled to take place.
- 4.9.** All additional information, from any party, will be circulated not less than 3 days before the meeting and papers will not normally be permitted to be tabled at meeting.
- 4.10.** Members of the Panel may ask questions of the trainee and the Consortium Director. The Trainee and Consortium Director may also ask questions of each other.
- 4.11.** The PSP may adjourn proceedings if necessary.

- 4.12.** The Chair of the PSP is responsible for communicating the outcome to the trainee and all relevant parties. This also includes informing regulatory bodies and any other organisations as required.

5. Decision Making

- 5.1.** Any concerns about a trainee's suitability to practice which are referred to the PSP will be thoroughly considered. The resultant outcome and decision must be based on all the evidence presented.
- 5.2.** The burden of proof rests with CTTC. It must prove that the Trainee is not fit to practise. The standard of proof is the same applicable to civil proceedings, that of the balance of probability.
- 5.3.** Panel members must exercise their own personal and professional judgement in coming to a conclusion regarding the decision and courses of action. They must ensure that any recommended courses of action it will deal effectively with the suitability to practice issue(s).
- 5.4.** The possible decisions and sanctions of Panel hearings are as follows:

Outcomes

1. There is no case to answer

The Trainee is able to return to the course as normal and continue with their placement. If it is the end of the course, the panel can recommend that the trainee is awarded QTS.

2. The trainee is found not be meeting the required standard in order to achieve QTS and the Panel recommends appropriate courses of action (see below).

(Alternative courses of action may be suggested as appropriate to individual cases):

- The trainee is not awarded QTS and is recorded as having failed the course with the DfE
- The trainee is required to retake or extend part of the programme

- 5.5.** The Chair of the PSP will be responsible for communicating the outcome and courses of action agreed by the PSP to the Trainee and all relevant parties, including regulatory bodies and other organisations as required.

5.6. Outcomes and courses of action agreed by the Panel will be clearly documented and will be attached to the relevant Trainee's file. Any subsequent referrals may be considered in light of this review

5.7. The Trainee shall have the right to appeal, as set out in the CTTC Appeals Policy.

6. Appeal Process

6.1. The Trainee will be informed of the rights of appeal, the grounds and the procedures at the time when the decision is communicated.

6.2. The decision of the PSP shall take effect and remain in force pending the decision of an Appeals Panel.

6.3. The Appeals process will follow the procedures set out in the CTTC Appeals Policy.

Reviewed: July 2024

Next Review: July 2026

Appendix 1

Does the trainee have any additional needs that require support or taking account of during this process? YES/NO (if yes, please include in Summary of Discussion)

STAGE 1: Initial Support Plan (ISP)

TRAINEE, MENTOR & WHOEVER RAISED THE ISP (PT, LSM, TM, CD) MUST BE INVOLVED

- *This plan is to support a trainee at any point to support them to remain on track with their progression through the training programme.*
- *It can be initiated at any time during the training by any member of the team responsible for assessing trainees.*

Trainee:

Date Initiated:

Date of 3 week review:

School:

Term: 1 / 2 / 3

If the date of the final review is extended, explain the reason for this and the revised review date:

Nature of Concern (linked to CTTC Curriculum (aligned to ITT CCF) Assessment and/or QTS Standards):

Summary of Discussion:

Targets (linked to CTTC Curriculum (aligned to ITT CCF) Assessment and/or QTS Standards):	Support / Actions:

TRAINEE, MENTOR & WHOEVER RAISED THE ISP (PT, LSM, TM, CD) MUST BE INVOLVED

Meeting attended by (designation):

Signed:

1.

2.

3.

Copy to: Trainee SM TM (HT-salaried only) PT LSM CTTC Office

Review:

Date:

1.

2.

3.

Follow up action (**delete as applicable*):

*Return to standard assessment procedures**

*Move to Additional Support Plan**

Notes:

TRAINEE, MENTOR & WHOEVER RAISED THE ISP (PT, LSM, TM, CD) MUST BE INVOLVED

Review attended by (designation):

Signed:

1.

2.

3.

Copy to: Trainee SM TM (HT- salaried) PT LSM CTTC Office

Appendix 2

STAGE 2: Additional Support Plan (ASP)

- *This plan is to support a trainee following an Assessment Point or where the targets set in an Initial Support Plan have not been met in order to support them to remain on track with their progression through the training programme.*
- *It can be initiated at any time during the training by any member of the team responsible for assessing trainees.*

Trainee:

Date Initiated:

Date of 4 week review:

School:

Term: 1 / 2 / 3

If the date of the final review is extended, explain the reason for this and the revised review date:

Reason for initiating the plan (linked to CTTC Curriculum (aligned to ITT CCF) Assessment and/or QTS Standards):

Summary of Discussion:

Targets (linked to CTTC Curriculum (aligned to ITT CCF) Assessment and/or QTS Standards):	Support / Actions:

TRAINEE, A CONSORTIUM DIRECTOR & MENTOR OR PT, LSM, or TM MUST BE INVOLVED

Meeting attended by:

Signed:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Copy to: Trainee SM TM HT PT LSM CTTC Office – PERSONNEL COMMITTEE NOTIFIED AT NEXT MEETING

Review:

Date:

1.

2.

3.

Follow up action (**delete as applicable*):

1. *Return to standard assessment procedures**
2. *Move to a Final Support Plan**
3. *Refer to the Personnel Committee**

Notes:

TRAINEE, A CONSORTIUM DIRECTOR & MENTOR OR PT, LSM, or TM MUST BE INVOLVED

Review attended by (designation):

Signed:

1.

2.

3.

Copy to: Trainee SM TM HT PT LSM CTTC Office – PERSONNEL COMMITTEE NOTIFIED AT NEXT MEETING

STAGE 3: Final Support Plan (FSP)

- *This plan is to support a trainee following an Assessment Point or where the targets set in an Initial Support Plan have not been met in order to support them to remain on track with their progression through the training programme.*
- *It can be initiated at any time during the training by any member of the team responsible for assessing trainees.*

Trainee:

Date Initiated:

Date of 4 week review:

School:

Term: 1 / 2 / 3

If the date of the final review is extended, explain the reason for this and the revised review date:

Reason for initiating the plan (linked to CTTC Curriculum (aligned to ITT CCF) Assessment and/or QTS Standards):

Summary of Discussion:

Targets (linked to CTTC Curriculum (aligned to ITT CCF) Assessment and/or QTS Standards):	Support / Actions:

TRAINEE, A CONSORTIUM DIRECTOR & MENTOR OR PT, LSM, or TM MUST BE INVOLVED

Meeting attended by:

Signed:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Copy to: Trainee SM TM HT PT LSM CTTC Office – PERSONNEL COMMITTEE NOTIFIED AT NEXT MEETING

Review:

Date:

1.

2.

3.

TRAINEE, A CONSORTIUM DIRECTOR & MENTOR OR PT, LSM, or TM MUST BE INVOLVED

Review attended by (designation):

Signed:

1.

2.

3.

Copy to: Trainee SM TM HT PT LSM CTTC Office – PERSONNEL COMMITTEE NOTIFIED AT NEXT MEETING

Follow up action (**delete as applicable*):

1. *Return to standard assessment procedures**
2. *Refer to the Professional Suitability Panel (PSP)**

Notes: