

National Specialist SCITTs

National Mathematics and Physics SCITT

National Modern Languages SCITT

Cause for Concern Policy

Important: This document can only be considered valid when viewed on the SCITT intranet and SCITT website. If this document has been printed or saved to another location, you must check that the version number on your copy matches that of the document online. The accredited provider for both the National Mathematics and Physics SCITT and the National Modern Languages SCITT, is Chorus Education Trust operating as National Specialist SCITTs.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy is to assist the SCITT Director, Course Leader and Strategic Board of National Specialist SCITTs, the accredited provider for the National Modern Languages (NML) SCITT and the National Mathematics and Physics (NMAP) SCITT, in making fair and reasonable decisions regarding the progress of all trainees. This policy should be read in conjunction with the ***Attendance & Absence Policy***, the ***Disciplinary Policy***, the ***Fitness to Practise Policy***, the ***Fitness to Study Policy***, the ***Suitability Declaration Policy***, the ***Appeals Policy*** and the ***Complaints Policy***.
- 1.2 The over-riding consideration will be:
- a) the impact of any trainee's progress on the learning of the children that are taught by the trainee
 - b) the trainee's progress towards meeting the Teachers' Standards at the career appropriate level in order to be awarded QTS; ensuring that the SCITT is compliant with the conditions of the document ***'Initial teacher training criteria and supporting advice, Information for accredited initial teacher training providers'***
 - c) the professional behaviour of trainees whilst on the course in reference to the trainee contract.
- 1.3 However, consideration will also reflect obligations to trainees in terms of legal and contractual requirements and moral obligations.

2. Purpose Scope & Principles

- 2.1 The responsibility for exercising discretion on behalf of the SCITT Strategic Board is the SCITT Director's in accordance with the scope of the SCITT Strategic Board terms of reference. The SCITT Director may delegate certain discretions to the Course Leader. However, any such discretions will be in accordance with the principles and guidelines within this document and within the overall authority of the SCITT Director.
- 2.2 Any dispute or grievance about the "Cause for Concern" process will be dealt with by the SCITT Director in the first instance but referred to the sub-group of the Hub Lead Teachers' Committee. This may then be referred to the SCITT Strategic Board or the Appeals Committee if deemed necessary by the Hub Lead Teachers' Committee.
- 2.3 The trainee may appeal any decision via the SCITT ***Complaints or Appeals Procedure***.
- 2.4 A principal purpose in setting out this Policy is to ensure that any issues around trainee progress are dealt with fairly and consistently but within a framework of recognising that on certain occasions depending upon the circumstances, discretions will need to be applied by the SCITT Director.

3. Trainee Progress against Teachers' Standards

3.1 Outline of the process

- 3.1.1 Occasionally, a trainee discovers that teaching is not for them. This can be for a number of reasons to do with preference but also to do with suitability for teaching. If a trainee is not

fulfilling their potential identified during the selection process, it will be made clear to the trainee initially through their weekly Mentor Progress Meeting. The Mentor will have evidence of this underachievement in the form of all and any of the following: lesson observation feedback, the online portfolio, review points, quality assurance feedback and feedback from colleagues. The Mentor after discussion with the ITT Coordinator/SMC will have reported their concerns to the Hub Lead Teacher and the Course Leader who will report to the SCITT Director. This is the beginning of the 'C4C' process.

- 3.1.2 Where a trainee is not making the expected progress and is considered to be "not on track", a 'Formal Progress Review Meeting' will take place at a mutually convenient time and place. Appropriate support will be put in place with focussed and achievable targets to improve. The SCITT will normally increase the amount of support given to the trainee at this time. In most cases, trainees will get back on track and progress indicators will improve. The Mentor will report to the ITT Coordinator/SMC, the Hub Lead Teacher and the Course Leader.
- 3.1.3 In the unlikely event that a trainee is not on track to meet the expectations in the particular Phase, and the support offered has not helped, then the trainee will be informed formally that they are not making sufficient progress towards achieving the Teachers' Standards and will be advised to withdraw from the course at that point. The trainee will leave the school at a time negotiated with the Course Leader and the Head Teacher. Careers advice where possible and appropriate support will be offered.
- 3.1.4 This support is formalised within the ***Cause for Concern procedures***.

4. Cause for Concern (C4C) procedures

4.1 Stage One: Early Support Plan

- 4.1.1 Where, after a series of supportive lesson observation and feedback sessions, the trainee is judged to be failing to make appropriate progress in any Phase of the training programme, they are given early indication by the Mentor through informal discussion and notification via the formal lesson observations, the weekly Mentor Progress Meeting and Review Points of the perceived weakness(es). The online portfolio is used to draw together information on the trainee's progress and will provide early warning of a possible C4C. The Mentor will involve the ITT Coordinator/SMC and will inform the Hub Lead Teacher of the Hub by email or telephone at the earliest opportunity. The Hub Lead Teacher will inform the Course Leader and SCITT Administrator as soon as they are made aware of the situation. The Course Leader will inform the SCITT Director.
- 4.1.2 An '**Early Support Plan**' will be set up by the Mentor and ITT coordinator/SMC with the support of the Hub Lead Teacher, which will be agreed with the trainee in a formal meeting.
- 4.1.3 A copy of the **Stage One 'Early Support Plan'** with specific targets and deadlines including a date for a midpoint review of the plan and any support needed to ensure the trainee has every opportunity to meet the targets, will be signed by all parties and shared with the Course Leader and the SCITT Administrator. The targets are shared with all host teachers and the support is put in place as outlined in the plan.
- 4.1.4 The trainee will be referred to the '**Cause for Concern Policy**'.

- 4.1.5 At the midpoint review, the Hub Lead Teacher will email the mentor and trainee to request feedback. The Mentor will use the evidence gathered to acknowledge progress made and highlight any concerns to the trainee and to the Hub Lead Teacher.
- 4.1.6 The Stage One process will take two weeks from start to completion with a Formal Progress Review Meeting between the trainee and the Mentor and either the Hub Lead Teacher or Course Leader at the end. This Formal Progress meeting must take place as per agreed schedule on the Support Plan irrespective of when the Mentor progress meeting is timetabled. During the Formal Progress meeting, the Mentor will use the evidence gathered to review each target on the Support Plan with the trainee, acknowledge progress made and highlight any concerns.
- 4.1.7 The **'Early Support Plan'** normally results in the trainee improving their teaching and/or professional behaviours with immediate effect. However, should the trainee continue to need further support, the Mentor (with the knowledge of the trainee, the ITT Coordinator/SMC and Hub Lead Teacher) and the Course Leader will trigger Stage Two of the process.

4.2 Post Stage One Support Plan

- 4.2.1 If the Mentor, ITT Coordinator/SMC, Hub Lead Teacher and Course Leader agree that the trainee has made significant progress against the targets set out at Stage One, the **Stage One 'Early Support Plan'** will be signed off. To continue to support the trainee and ensure that they are able to sustain the progress made, a **'Post Stage One Support Plan'** is put in place.
- 4.2.2 The **'Post Stage One Support plan'** is agreed between the trainee and the Mentor with the support of the Hub Lead Teacher. The targets and support are outlined in the support plan and a time frame with a minimum of three weeks is agreed. A final review meeting is detailed on the plan. This final review meeting must take place as per agreed schedule on the Support Plan irrespective of when the Mentor progress meeting is timetabled. During the final review meeting, the Mentor will use the evidence gathered to review each target to ensure that the trainee has sustained the progress.
- 4.2.3 If the Mentor and Hub Lead Teacher agree at the end of the **'Post Stage One Support Plan'** that the trainee has shown enough evidence of sustained progress, the trainee will be signed off from the **Cause for Concern process**. If the trainee has not maintained the good progress, they will move to Stage Two of the C4C process and a **Stage Two 'Detailed Support Plan'** will be agreed (see 4.3).
- 4.2.4 Regardless of the successful completion of the **'Post Stage One Support Plan'**, if concerns identified in a previous C4C process are raised again at a later stage of the training, Stage One C4C will be omitted and a **Stage Two 'Detailed Support Plan'** will be put in place.

4.3 Stage Two: Detailed Support Plan

- 4.3.1 Sometimes in Stage One, not enough improvement is made. If the trainee does not make sufficient progress in response to the **'Early Support Plan'** at Stage One, the trainee is informed by the Mentor, (normally) the ITT coordinator/SMC and the Hub Lead Teacher at the Formal Progress Review Meeting. The Course Leader will either attend the meeting or arrange a telephone conversation with the trainee. At this meeting, all concerns will be discussed. The trainee will be either counselled to withdraw from the course, if staff believe that the trainee is unsuited to teaching, or the **'Detailed Support Plan'** is agreed and put in place.

- 4.3.2 The **'Detailed Support Plan'** will be set up by the Hub Lead Teacher with the support of the Mentor and Course Leader, which will be agreed with the trainee in a formal meeting.
- 4.3.3 A copy of the **Stage Two 'Detailed Support Plan'** with specific targets and deadlines including a date for a midpoint review of the plan and any support needed to ensure the trainee has every opportunity to meet the targets, will be signed by all parties and shared with the SCITT Administrator.
- 4.3.4 The trainee is given specific time-limited targets and specific advice for improvement by the Mentor, the ITT Coordinator/SMC and the Course Leader, which will be outlined in the **'Detailed Support Plan'**. The targets are shared with all host teachers and the support is put in place as outlined in the plan.
- 4.3.5 The trainee will be referred to the **'Cause for Concern Policy'** and made aware that failure to reach targets set by the deadline specified in the **'Detailed Support Plan'** is likely to lead to a 'fail' recommendation and termination of the placement in the school.
- 4.3.6 At the midpoint review, the Course Leader will email the mentor and trainee to request feedback. The Mentor will use the evidence gathered to acknowledge progress made and highlight any concerns to the trainee and to the Course Leader.
- 4.3.7 The Stage Two process will take two weeks from start to completion, at the end of which a Formal Progress Review Meeting will take place between the trainee, the Mentor and either the Director or Course Leader. This Formal Progress meeting must take place as per agreed schedule on the Support Plan irrespective of when the Mentor progress meeting is timetabled. During the Formal Progress meeting, the Mentor will use the evidence gathered to review each target on the Support Plan with the trainee, acknowledge progress made and highlight any concerns.
- 4.3.8 At the Formal Progress meeting at the end of the Stage Two **'Detailed Support Plan'**, the Mentor and Course Leader/ Director will review the trainee's progress against the targets and will either recommend a **'Post Stage Two Support Plan'** or trigger Stage 3.

4.4 Post Stage Two Support Plan

- 4.4.1 If the Mentor, ITT Coordinator/SMC, Hub Lead Teacher and Course Leader agree that the trainee has made significant progress against the targets set out in the **'Detailed Support Plan'** at Stage two, the Stage Two **'Detailed Support Plan'** will be signed off. To continue to support the trainee and ensure that they are able to sustain the progress made, a **'Post Stage Two Support Plan'** is agreed and put in place.
- 4.4.2 The **'Post Stage Two Support plan'** is agreed between the trainee and the Mentor with the support of the Hub Lead Teacher. The targets and support are outlined in the support plan and a time frame with a minimum of three weeks is agreed. A final review meeting is detailed on the plan. This final review meeting must take place as per agreed schedule on the Support Plan irrespective of when the Mentor progress meeting is timetabled. During the final review meeting, the Mentor will use the evidence gathered to review each target to ensure that the trainee has sustained the progress.
- 4.4.3 If the Mentor and Hub Lead Teacher agree at the end of the **'Post Stage Two Support Plan'** that the trainee has shown enough evidence of sustained progress, the trainee will be signed off

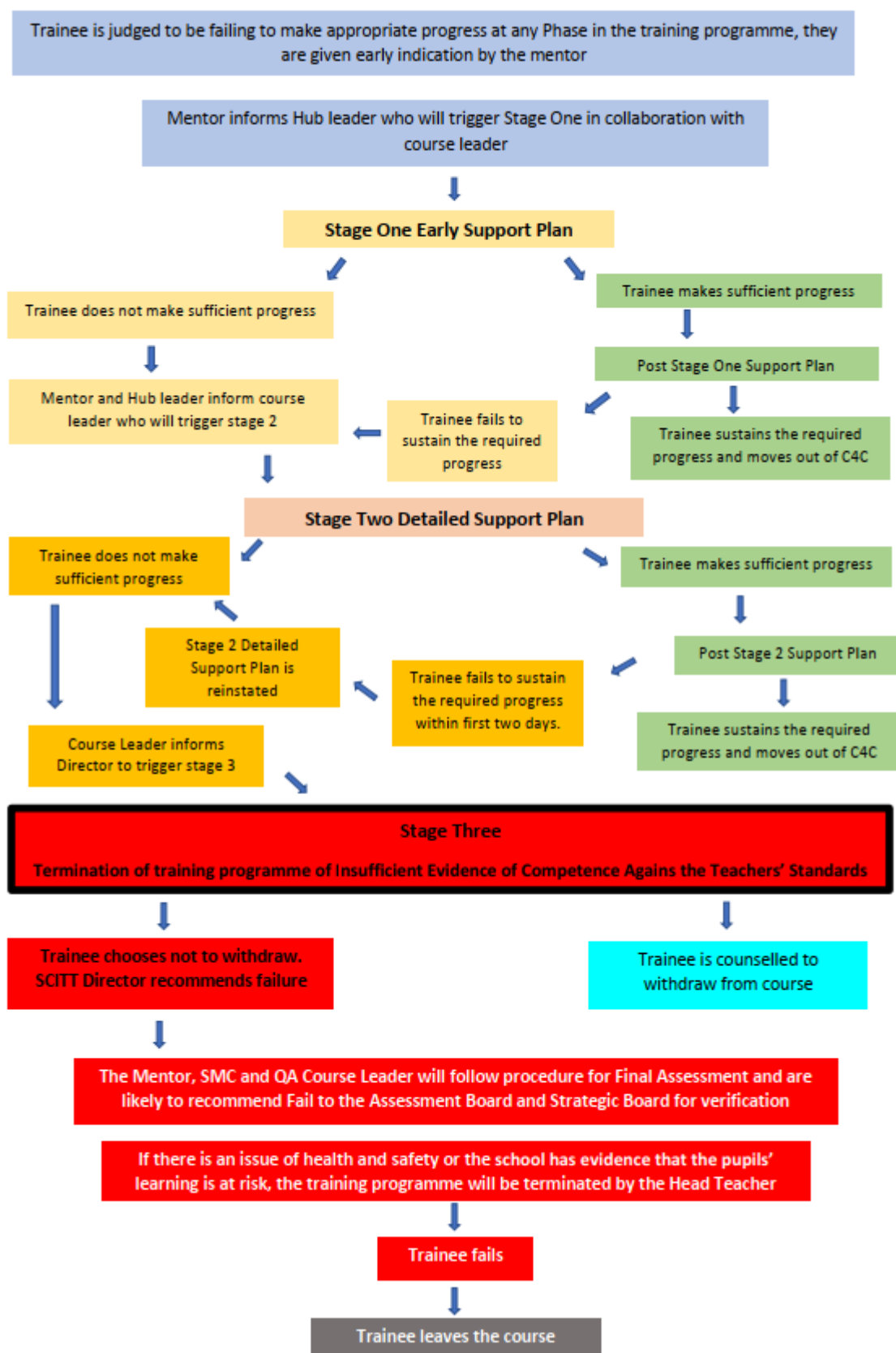
from the ***Cause for Concern process***. If the trainee has not made enough progress, the ***Stage Two 'Detailed Support Plan'*** will be reinstated, and the process resumes (see 4.3).

- 4.4.4 Regardless of the successful completion of the '***Post Stage Two Support Plan***', if concerns identified in a previous C4C process are raised again at a later stage of the training, Stage One C4C will be omitted and the ***Stage Two 'Detailed Support Plan'*** will be reinstated.

4.5 Stage Three: Termination of Training Programme or Insufficient Evidence of Competence Against the Teachers' Standards.

- 4.5.1 If satisfactory progress is not made in accordance with the timetable set out in the '***Detailed Support Plan***', and the trainee is judged to be in danger of not having appropriate and sufficient evidence of competence against the Teachers' Standards, and if the trainee refuses advice to withdraw from the programme and to be on course to fail, either:
- a) the Mentor, ITT Coordinator/SMC and Course Leader will follow procedures for Final Assessment and are likely to recommend Fail to the Assessment Board, or
 - b) if there is an issue of health and safety or the school has evidence that the pupils' learning is at risk, the training programme will be terminated by the Head Teacher.
- 4.5.2 Fail recommendations are extremely rare due to the thorough monitoring procedures set out above. However, where, in exceptional circumstances, the school and SCITT Director recommend a Fail, the ***Cause for Concern procedures*** will be followed before a Fail recommendation can be made to the Assessment Board.
- 4.5.3 Please refer to the '***Trainee Contract***' for the full details of the circumstances that could trigger a termination of the training programme.

5. Flow chart of process



6. Publishing this Policy

This policy is available through the SCITT website and our SCITT Intranet. A copy can also be requested via our SCITT office.

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) runs an independent scheme to review student complaints. Chorus Education Trust operating as National Specialist SCITTs, and the accredited provider for the National Modern Languages (NML) SCITT and the National Mathematics and Physics (NMAP) SCITT, is a member of this scheme. If a trainee teacher is unhappy with decisions made by the SCITT regarding this Policy, they may be able to ask the OIA to review this decision. More information about making a complaint to the OIA, what it can and can't look at and what it can do to put things right if something has gone wrong can be found here: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students>.