

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 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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Related documents:	SCITT Attendance & Absence Policy, SCITT Disciplinary Policy, SCITT Appeals Policy, SCITT Complaints Policy, SCITT Fitness to Practise Policy, SCITT Fitness to Study Policy, SCITT Suitability Declaration Policy, SCITT Training Contract



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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 Training 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 What is a cause for concern and how is the Trainee supported?

- 3.1.1 There may be occasions during training or placement when the performance of a Trainee is such that additional action is required to support them to achieve the course objectives during a particular phase. In such cases the Hub Lead Teacher in consultation with the Course Leader or Director and school-based mentor are required to set in motion the cause for concern process.

3.1.2 The cause for concern process should be initiated in cases of:

- Lack of progress against the phase progress descriptors
- Lack of professionalism in reference to the SCITT Codes of Conduct such as inconsistent punctuality, inappropriate dress, lack of self-critical awareness, inability or unwillingness to accept professional feedback, difficulty in forming professional relationships with colleagues, poor communication etc. (unless identified in Personal Support Plan)

3.1.3 The cause for concern process will ensure that areas for development, necessary short-term targets and available support are clearly identified and timelines agreed.

3.1.4 The Trainee will be involved throughout the process, will be able to ask questions and request further support.

3.1.5 The process will be explained to the Trainee and relevant policies, which are all available on the SCITT websites and online platform, will be referred to.

3.2 Outline of the process

3.2.1 A Trainee may not make the expected progress for a number of reasons. 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 or via their Hub Lead Teacher or the Course Leader.

3.2.2 Lack of progress in placement will be evidenced through lesson observation feedback, the online portfolio, review points, quality assurance feedback and feedback from colleagues in reference to the SCITT Phase Progress Descriptors. The Mentor after discussion with the ITT Coordinator/SMC will have reported their concerns to the Hub Lead Teacher who will report to the and the Course Leader. This will initiate the 'C4C' process.

3.2.3 Lack of progress in relation to engagement with the training course or professional behaviours will be evidenced by training day feedback from facilitators, the online portfolio, review points, quality assurance feedback and feedback from colleagues in reference to the SCITT Phase Progress Descriptors and SCITT Code of Conduct. Colleagues within the SCITT partnership will have reported their concerns to the Hub Lead Teacher or Course Leader. The Course Leader will initiate the 'C4C' process unless the severity of unprofessional behaviour requires the start of disciplinary procedures.

3.2.4 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, ITT Coordinator/SMC, the Hub Lead Teacher and the Course Leader will monitor this process and take a joint decision as to the end of the process or an escalation to the next stage.

3.2.5 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 Director and the placement school. Careers advice where possible and appropriate support will be offered.

3.2.6 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 a Trainee is not making the expected progress and is considered to be “not on track” in a particular phase of the training programme, they are given early indication by the Mentor, Hub Lead Teacher or Course Leader through informal discussion, via the formal lesson observations, the weekly Mentor Progress Meeting and Review Points and during QA visits of the perceived weakness(es) in reference to the SCITT Phase Progress Descriptors. The online portfolio is used to draw together information on the Trainee’s progress and will provide early warning of a possible Cause for Concern.
- 4.1.2 In placement, the Mentor will involve the ITT Coordinator/SMC and will inform the Hub Lead Teacher 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 oversee the process and inform the SCITT Director.
- 4.1.3 Where concerns arise during the training sessions and during periodical reviews of trainee progress, the Hub Lead Teacher and Course Leader will be informed. The Course Leader will oversee the process and inform the SCITT Director.
- 4.1.4 A **Stage One ‘Early Support Plan’** will be set up by Hub Lead Teacher in collaboration with the Mentor and ITT coordinator/SMC. This plan will be reviewed and approved by the Course Leader and discussed with the Trainee in a formal meeting.
- 4.1.5 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 SCITT Administrators. The targets are shared with all host teachers, and the support is put in place as outlined in the plan.
- 4.1.6 The Trainee will be referred to the **‘Cause for Concern Policy’**.
- 4.1.7 At the midpoint review, the Hub Lead Teacher will meet with the mentor and Trainee. Each target on the Support Plan will be reviewed with the Trainee, progress made will be acknowledged on the plan and concerns will be highlighted. The Course Leader will monitor the review.
- 4.1.8 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 Review Meeting, each target on the Support Plan will be reviewed with the Trainee, progress made will be acknowledged and concerns will be highlighted.
- 4.1.9 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. The Course Leader will inform the Director.

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 and approved by the Course Leader. 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, each target on the Support Plan will be reviewed with the Trainee, progress made will be acknowledged and concerns will be highlighted.
- 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, the Trainee may not have addressed the targets outlined in the **Stage One 'Early Support Plan'** and there is not enough evidence of sustained progress. The Course Leader will set up the Formal Progress Review Meeting with the Trainee, Mentor and Hub Lead Teacher and all concerns will be discussed. The Trainee will be informed that they will now move to a **Stage Two 'Detailed Support Plan'**.
- 4.3.2 The **Stage Two 'Detailed Support Plan'** will be set up by the Course Leader with the support of the Mentor and Hub Lead Teacher and approved by the Director.
- 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 Administrators.
- 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 **Stage Two '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 termination of the placement in the school and the training.
- 4.3.6 At the midpoint review, the Course Leader or Director will set up a meeting with the Mentor and Trainee to gather feedback, acknowledge progress made and highlight any concerns to the Trainee.
- 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

Review Meeting, each target on the Support Plan will be reviewed with the Trainee, progress made will be acknowledged and concerns will be highlighted.

- 4.3.8 At the Formal Progress Review Meeting at the end of the **Stage Two 'Detailed Support Plan'**, the Mentor and Course Leader or Director will review the Trainee's progress against the targets and will either recommend a **'Post Stage Two Support Plan'** or trigger Stage Three.

4.4 Post Stage Two Support Plan

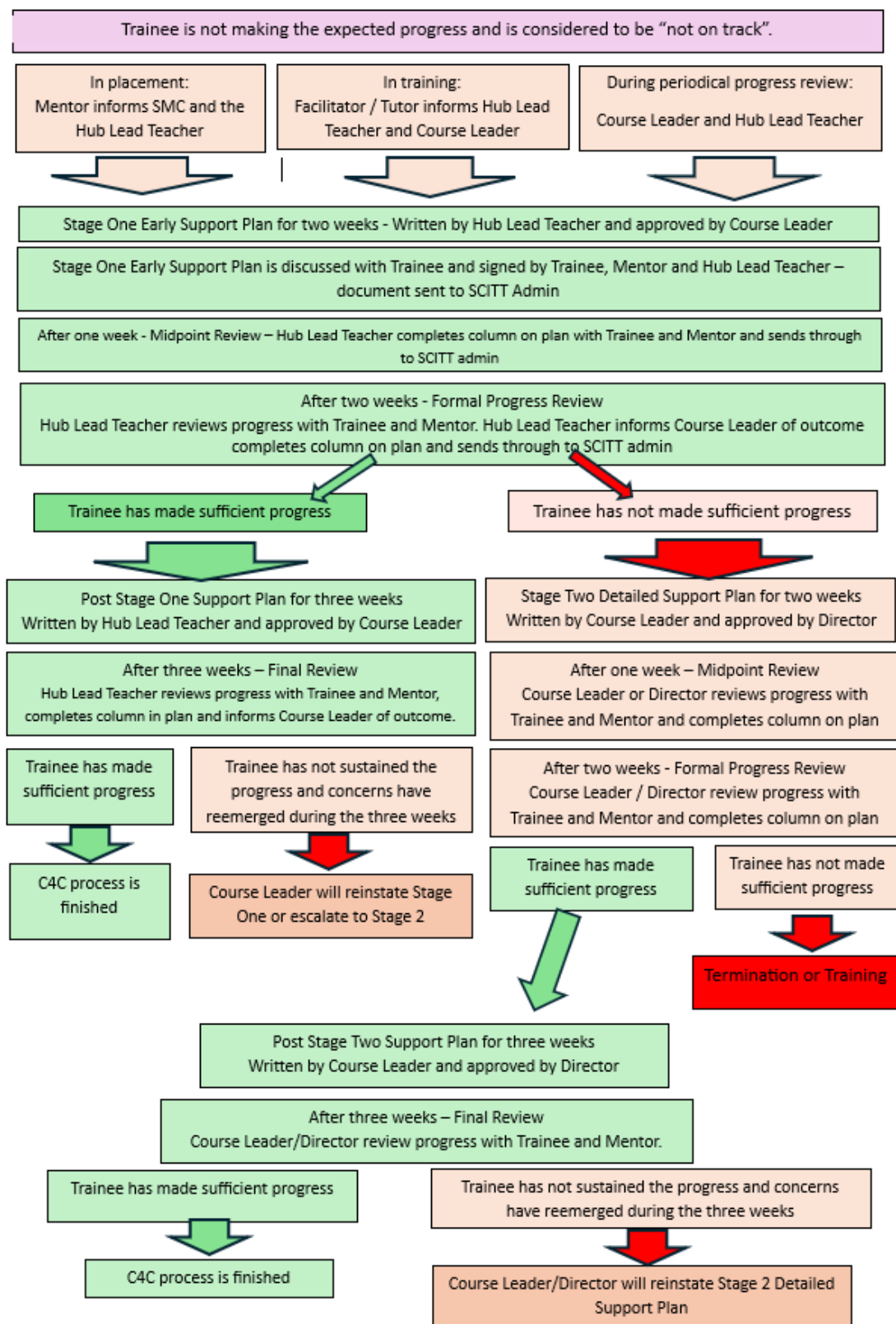
- 4.4.1 If the Mentor, ITT Coordinator/SMC, Hub Lead Teacher and Course Leader or Director agree that the Trainee has made significant progress against the targets set out in the **'Detailed Support Plan'** at Stage two, the **Stage Two 'Detailed Support Plan'** will be signed off. To continue to support 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 Course Leader and approved by the Director. 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, each target on the Support Plan will be reviewed with the Trainee, progress made will be acknowledged and concerns will be highlighted.
- 4.4.3 If the Mentor, Hub Lead Teacher and Course Leader 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 Course Leader or Director will reinstate the **Stage Two 'Detailed Support Plan'**, inform the Director, 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:
- 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
 - 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 Director.
- 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 **'Training 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. 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 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> .