



Embrace
S C I T T



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Person(s) Responsible for Review:

Head of SCITT & Operational Leadership Group

Approved by:

Strategic Leadership Group

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02.10.2023

Signed on behalf of the Strategic Leadership Group:

Ms Angela Holdsworth MBE

CEO & Accounting Officer

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to provide clear procedures for dealing with concerns raised by Embrace SCITT or its partner schools about a trainee's fitness to train. Trainee is a term used to refer to provider-led trainee and teacher apprentice. Nothing in this policy is intended to form the basis of a contract between the SCITT and Trainee. The SCITT may amend this policy at any time without prior notice.

2. Definitions & Examples

- 2.1. For the purposes of this policy, 'fitness to train' is defined as: 'trainees have the health and physical capacity to train to teach and will not put children and young people at risk of harm.'
- 2.2. Examples where this policy may be required to be implemented are:
- Failure to make sufficient progress towards the end of phase expectations and National Teacher Standards Part 1.
 - Factors which may impact on a Trainee's safety in fulfilling their duties and/or Training to Teach, including (but not limited to):

<i>Health and wellbeing</i>	<i>Not having the necessary knowledge of English</i>	<i>Concerns relating to disability, health and wellbeing</i>
<i>Failure to disclose any changes to disability, health and wellbeing during the programme</i>	<i>Withdrawal of a placement offer or self-withdrawal from a school-based placement</i>	

- 2.3. Please note that the above is not an exhaustive list and the SCITT fully reserves its right to identify other conduct which may be subject to the terms of the policy.

3. General Principles

- 3.1. Embrace SCITT aims to provide an inclusive training programme for the Trainees it serves.
- 3.2. Embrace SCITT and its partner schools recognise that Trainees are still learning about the professional standards and conduct required in the teaching profession.
- 3.3. Embrace SCITT will seek to discuss concerns informally with a Trainee unless the issue giving rise to the Fitness to Practise concern is sufficiently serious.
- 3.4. Embrace SCITT expects all parties to act reasonably and fairly towards each other, and to treat the processes themselves with respect.
- 3.5. Embrace SCITT will work to ensure this policy is used fairly, proportionally and in a timely way.
- 3.6. Embrace SCITT will ensure that decisions are taken by people without actual or perceived conflicts of interest and that all involved will ensure an appropriate level of confidentiality through the process, without causing disadvantage.
- 3.7. Trainees will be offered the opportunity to be accompanied by a peer or representative from a Teaching Union or Students' Union.
- 3.8. Embrace SCITT will put all the outcomes of any investigation in writing for the Trainee. A Completion of Procedures (COP) letter will be used at 'end points' in the process.

4. Reasonable Adjustments

- 4.1. Embrace SCITT will utilise 'reasonable adjustments' where necessary to support Trainees to access the Embrace SCITT programme for a variety of reasons or barriers to access.
- 4.2. ACAS define a reasonable adjustment as "changes an employer makes to remove or reduce a disadvantage related to someone's disability."
- 4.3. When implementing action which constitutes a reasonable adjustment, Embrace SCITT will consider whether the adjustment:
- a. Will remove or reduce the disadvantage – we will talk with the person and not make assumptions.
 - b. Is practical to make.

- c. Is affordable.
 - d. Could harm the health and safety of others.
- 4.4. Any Initial Teacher Training Programme is demanding and Embrace SCITT is not able to change the basic nature of the programme, e.g. attending centre- and school-based training and the activity associated with practising teaching.

5. Suspension from Training

- 5.1. Suspension is not a disciplinary action and will not be viewed as a judgement upon alleged, suspected or known misconduct.
- 5.2. The Head of SCITT is responsible for decisions regarding suspending Trainees from training.
- 5.3. Embrace SCITT reserves the right to suspend Trainees from their training with immediate effect if;
 - i. Further investigation is required to support their health and safety, such as Occupational Health assessments.
 - ii. In severe cases of ill health, a Trainee is considered not to be well enough to complete their training.
 - iii. A Trainee's capability to train to teach is detrimental to their wellbeing and the wellbeing and/or the progress of pupils.
- 5.4. Confirmation of the decision to suspend, outlining the nature and conditions will be shared within three working days of the notification of suspension.

6. Failure to make sufficient progress towards the end of phase expectations and National Teacher Standards Part 1.

6.1. Emergent Support – *Informal Support*

- i. Where concerns arise regarding Trainees' progress towards the outlined competencies in the Assessment Framework and QTS, School-Based Mentors will raise these during weekly Mentoring and Target Setting meetings. These will be recorded using the SCITT's online platform.
- ii. Trainees will be given clear guidance, direction and opportunity to improve the identified areas for a maximum of two working weeks (considering ITT curriculum sequencing, e.g. ITaPs).
- iii. A review of progress meeting will take place between Mentor and Trainee following the agreed timescale to monitor progress. Trainees are encouraged to bring to the meeting all evidence against the agreed actions.
 - a) If the trainee has not made adequate progress and there are no mitigating circumstances, the Mentor will refer the matter to the Lead Mentor, for consideration to move to the next stage of support (TRIP).
 - b) If the trainee has made significant progress but small improvements are still required, the Mentor can use their discretion to extend the emergent support by no more than one week. This must be communicated with the Lead Mentor.
 - c) If the trainee has made sufficient progress, the Mentor removes the trainee from emergent support.
- iv. Mentors are responsible for notifying the SCITT Lead Mentor of their concerns via the online platform and email, if necessary.

6.2. Trainee Recovery & Improvement Plans (TRIPs) – *Formal Support*

- i. Where a Trainee's not demonstrated significant or sufficient progress towards the targets outlined in the Emergent Support stage, School-Based Mentors will notify and recommend to Lead Mentors that a TRIP may need to be implemented to support the Trainee further.
- ii. School-Based Mentors and Lead Mentors will collaborate with the Trainee to co-produce a supportive Trainee Recovery and Improvement Plan (TRIP).
- iii. Where this occurs, Embrace SCITT utilises a support framework designed to lift Trainees and get them 'back on track' quickly. A Trainee Recovery & Improvement Plan (TRIP) (Appendix A) is co-produced to

diagnose the difficulties and initiate robust, rapid and targeted support to help Trainees be the best they can be.

- iv. Embrace SCITT has identified two stages of support with appropriate timescales and support provided:

	Stage	Timescale*	Response to	Initiated & reviewed by
i.	Serious	2 weeks	Inconsistent demonstration in 1-2 curriculum areas and/or inappropriate progress at Emergent Support.	Trainee School-Based Mentor Lead Mentor
ii.	Intensive	3 weeks	Inconsistent demonstration in 3-4 areas of the curriculum and/or inappropriate progress at Serious Support.	Trainee School-Based Mentor Lead Mentor

- v. * Timescales are adaptable, considerate of ITT curriculum sequence, e.g. ITaPs.
- vi. Lead Mentors are responsible for the final review and further recommendations of the TRIP and its support.
- vii. School-Based Mentors are responsible for providing expert support and feedback about progress towards the actions and outcomes outlined in the TRIP. School-Based Mentors are also responsible for monitoring the progress and providing feedback to the Trainee on a weekly basis.
- viii. Trainees are responsible for enacting and engaging with the TRIP process and presenting evidence towards the identified outcomes.
- ix. Following the final review, Lead Mentors may recommend the following;
- If the trainee has not made adequate progress at the 'Serious' stage, and there are no mitigating circumstances, the Lead Mentor may recommend the Trainee is referred to the 'Intensive' stage of support
 - If the trainee has not made adequate progress at the 'Intensive' stage, and there are no mitigating circumstances, the Lead Mentor may recommend the Trainee is referred to a Fitness to Train Review Panel.
 - If the trainee has made significant progress but small improvements are still required, the Lead Mentor can use their discretion to extend the support by no more than one week.
 - If the trainee has made sufficient progress, the Lead Mentor removes the trainee from all TRIP support.
- x. If the Trainee's performance is deemed to require further support, Embrace SCITT reserve the right to recommence the TRIP support at the formal stages of support.
- xi. At each stage, the Trainee will be informed verbally and will form part of the co-production of the TRIP.

7. Fitness to Train Review Board – *Formal Proceedings*

- In the event of insufficient progress towards the requirements of the TRIP, it *may* be appropriate to convene a Fitness to Train Review Board with respect to the Trainee's capability and progress towards Part 1 of the National Teacher Standards.
- The Trainee will be informed verbally and in writing within 5 working days of the final review of the TRIP.
- The Review Board meeting will be held within 20 school days of notification of the meeting.
- The Trainee will be invited to attend with a peer or Teaching / Student's Union representative.
- The Review Board will:
 - Be made up of at least three people from the Embrace SCITT team, including representation from the SCITT Leadership Team, Strategic Leadership Group, Programme Leaders and Lead Mentors.
 - Be held in the Trainee's absence unless they are able to provide sufficient medical evidence to explain why they are not able to attend.
- The Review Board will consider:
 - The evidence provided by the Investigating Officer. This will be supplemented by a verbal summary on the day, and will include;
 - The Trainee's progress towards the programme expectations and National Teacher Standards.

- The support provided to ensure that Trainee is given the necessary strategic direction to make progress.
 - The actions the Trainee has taken to make progress towards the PEERS targets, programme expectations and National Teacher Standards.
 - Any further evidence provided by the Trainee beforehand or during discussions.
- vii. The Review Board will be minuted and these will be provided to the Trainee within 10 school days following the meeting. This communication will inform the Trainee of the outcome of the Review Board.
- viii. Potential outcomes of the Review Board are:
- a) The Trainee is not currently fit to train to teach.
 - *The Trainee may be suspended from training until such a time as undertakings, recommendations or conditions by the Review Board have been met.*
 - *The Trainee may be dismissed from the Embrace SCITT programme.*
 - b) The concern is dismissed. The Review Board will inform the Trainee of a remedy and whether an apology is required.
- ix. The Review Board will write to the Trainee informing them of their decision.
- x. If the Trainee does not choose to appeal the decision of the Fitness to Train Review Board in line with this policy, a Completion of Procedures letter will be issued.

8. Appeals

- 8.1. The Trainee has the right to appeal against the decision of the Fitness to Train Review Board.
- 8.2. If the Trainee wishes to appeal they should inform the Head of SCITT in writing, outlining the reasons for the appeal within 10 working days of the outcome having been given to the Trainee.
- 8.3. If the Trainee is dissatisfied with the outcome of the formal stage, they can appeal via a review.
- 8.4. A review will consider:
- i. a review of the procedures followed at the formal stage.
 - ii. a consideration of whether the outcome was reasonable.
- 8.5. The review will not:
- i. re-hear the case afresh
 - ii. involve a further investigation
- 8.6. The case must have been heard by the Fitness to Train Review Board before it can be considered as an appeal.
- 8.7. The Trainee will be invited in writing to attend an appeal hearing and given 10 school days' notice of the hearing date.
- i. Trainees will be offered the opportunity to be accompanied by a peer or representative from a Teaching Union or Students' Union (legal representation will not be permitted).
 - ii. The Trainee will be provided with information about the composition of the panel, a summary of the evidence to be considered and information about the support that is available to them including contact details.
 - iii. The panel will consist of three untainted members of the Strategic Leadership Group. They will consider the evidence of the appeal.
 - iv. A record of the meeting will be taken recording the date, people in attendance and a brief summary of the meeting.
- 8.8. The Panel will consider the following questions:
- i. Were the relevant procedures followed during the formal stage?
 - ii. Was the outcome reasonable in all the circumstances?
 - iii. Has the Trainee received clear reasons why the outcome from previous stages has been determined.
- 8.9. The Appeals Panel, having considered the appeal submitted to them may:
- i. Overturn the outcome of the formal stage and recommend a remedy.
 - ii. Refer the appeal back to the formal stage for reconsideration.

- iii. Uphold the outcome of the formal stage.
- 8.10. The Chair of the Review Panel will write to the Trainee with their decision and an outline of the reasons for their decision within five school days of the hearing. Where appropriate, this letter will also advise the Trainee on their right to appeal to the OIA, the time limit for doing so and where and how to access advice and support with this process. This letter will serve as the Completion of Procedures letter.

9. Office of the Independent Adjudicator

- 9.1. Once the formal proceedings have been completed, the Trainee has the right to ask the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA), the independent ombudsman service, to review the process and outcome of the Embrace SCITT Fitness to Train process. The request should be submitted to the OIA within 12 months of the date of the Completion of Procedures letter from the Chair of the Review Panel.

10. Data Protection

- 10.1. Embrace SCITT will retain data related to the investigation for 7 years from the start of the investigation and after this time all data will be deleted. All data will be stored securely during this time.
- 10.2. All investigations will be treated confidentially. Embrace SCITT will only disclose information to those who need it to investigate or to respond to the issues raised.
- 10.3. When a Trainee responds to an investigation they should only include any necessary information about third parties. Evidence provided must focus on the impact that a third party has had on the Trainee themselves and kept to that which is necessary for the submission being made. For example, if the investigation is based on the health of a family member, Embrace SCITT does not need to see the detailed medical information about that person.