

Case study

Reference number

Subject details (fields in red to be completed by DfE staff)

Teaching Partnership name	Kent, Medway and the South East Social Work Teaching Partnership (KMTP)
Lead Organisation	Medway Council
Sector	Social work
Subject	Academic Delivery
Potential related work area	Workforce and labour market planning

Case study details

Main title

Developing Social Work Practitioner Teachers to deliver teaching sessions and participate in student selection for Social Work Programmes.

Subtitle

A strategy to recruit and train Social Work Practitioners to increase the quality and amount of Local Authority Social Work practitioner's involvement in teaching and student selection on qualifying Social Work programmes at Canterbury Christ Church University and the University of Kent.

Introduction (max 100 words)

Social work practitioners were already regularly involved in delivering teaching sessions and skills development days for social work students at both local HEIs before the KMTP. However, this was largely on an informal basis with academic staff approaching individual social work practitioners who were known to them to deliver teaching sessions or there were identified social work practitioners in the LAs who were designated as practitioner teachers. There were no formal arrangements to recruit and train new practitioner teachers and no clear route for social work practitioners to become involved in delivering teaching sessions.

Some work had already been undertaken to formalise arrangements for recruiting and training practitioner teachers and to produce a directory of practitioner teachers. The Teaching Partnership provided an opportunity to take this work forward and to increase the number of social work practitioners from across all service areas available to teach on social work programmes.

Fact box

Through the Teaching Partnership in the academic year 2017/18:

- A working group of academics and LA reps was established to work on the promotion of the practitioner teacher role and recruitment to it.
- A protocol had been established between the LAs and the HEIs that all requests for practice teachers would be submitted to a named senior academic in each university who would then liaise with a nominated lead for practitioner teaching within each LA.
- Both HEIs had identified the teaching sessions and skills development days where practitioner input was required.
- An 'expression of interest' flyer for practitioner teacher recruitment had been jointly produced by the HEIs and the LAs and agreed by senior managers
- 34 practitioner teachers had been recruited from across all service areas.

Body of case study text

Objectives

The teaching partnership has six objectives:

- To increase the number of social work practitioners involved in delivering teaching sessions and skills development days for social work programmes by building on the work already undertaken.
- To develop a strategy for recruiting, training and supporting social work practitioners to undertake the practitioner teacher role and to produce a Teaching Partnership policy that can be adopted by all partners.
- To create a practitioner teacher directory for both LAs and the HEIs to create a similar directory of people with experience of using social work services who teach on their programs.
- To develop and deliver a training programme for practitioner teachers facilitated jointly by the 2 HEIs.
- To develop a process for quality assuring and monitoring practitioner teachers.
- To enhance the quality and standard of academic delivery for social work programmes by improving the integration of theory, practice and lived experience through greater involvement of social work practitioners and people with experience of using social work services in student selection, curriculum development and teaching.

Impact

'There is a range of positive consequences arising from social workers teaching in the classroom. Social work students get to meet social workers and learn how they practice. Social work students value practice knowledge.'

(The Experiences of Social Workers who Teach Social Work Students in the Classroom, South East London (Social Work) Teaching Partnership, Mark Taylor, Goldsmiths, University of London, 2017)

The Practitioner Teacher Role as a CPD Opportunity

The Practitioner Teacher role and participation in student selection provides an excellent CPD opportunity for social workers who want to share their knowledge and experience about social work practice with social work students and develop teaching and facilitation skills. It also provides a great opportunity for the social work practitioner to reflect on their own practice and contribute to the recruitment and development of the next generation of social work practitioners. One employer partner has now included the practitioner teacher role in their career progression pathway for social workers (see Workforce and Labour Market Planning).

The opportunity for experienced social work practitioners was advertised across all service areas in both LAs following the same process that was used in 2017/18 when work on the practitioner teacher role first started. Social work practitioners were asked to submit 'an expression of interest' in the role with some information about their knowledge, skills and experience and their areas of interest. An introductory workshop was set up for all potential practitioner teachers and the workshop was co-facilitated by both HEIs. Over 40 social work practitioners attended. The workshop delivered information about the role and the expectations and the teaching opportunities available for social work practitioners.

Practitioner Teacher Training Programme

The feedback on the workshop from the attendees was very positive and it was agreed that further workshops would be arranged. There was a second workshop in October on developing, planning and delivering a teaching session and a third workshop is scheduled for January 2020 on anti-oppressive practice in the class room. The workshops have also been offered to people with experience of using social work services who are involved in delivering teaching sessions and 6 of them attended the October workshop with very positive feedback. The workshops have been developed and are co-facilitated by the HEI partners. The content of the workshops reflects what the practitioner teachers want, and they now form the 3-day training programme for Practitioner Teachers. New Practitioner Teachers will also be offered opportunities to shadow more experienced Practitioner Teachers.

Practitioner Teacher Guidance

The Teaching Partnership has written guidance which sets out the strategy to recruit, train and support social work practitioners to participate in the student selection process and deliver teaching sessions and provide input to modules for social work students. The guidance also clearly identifies the process for requesting practitioner teacher input by the HEIs. There will be a named contact in each LA to liaise with the HEIs to identify practitioners to deliver teaching sessions and participate in student selection. The guidance was submitted to the Teaching Partnership Strategic Board in September 2019 for sign off and it has now been handed over to the employer partners for implementation.

This guidance was approved by Medway's Children and Adults Directorate Management Team in January and we are still awaiting the decision from KCC.

Practitioner Teacher Directory

A directory of practitioner teachers has been created for the LAs. This commenced with the current list being reviewed and updated and this will now be updated every year. Currently there are over 40 practitioner teachers across all service areas in the directory. The directory combines the existing practitioner teachers with the new ones. An application form for the practitioner teacher role has also been created, for future recruitment. Each employer partner will hold their own directory. Medway Council, Children's services have now included the practitioner teacher role in their career progression pathway for social workers and are looking to introduce into their Adults services.

The HEIs have developed similar directories for people with experience of using social work services and one HEI partner is looking to increase their pool.

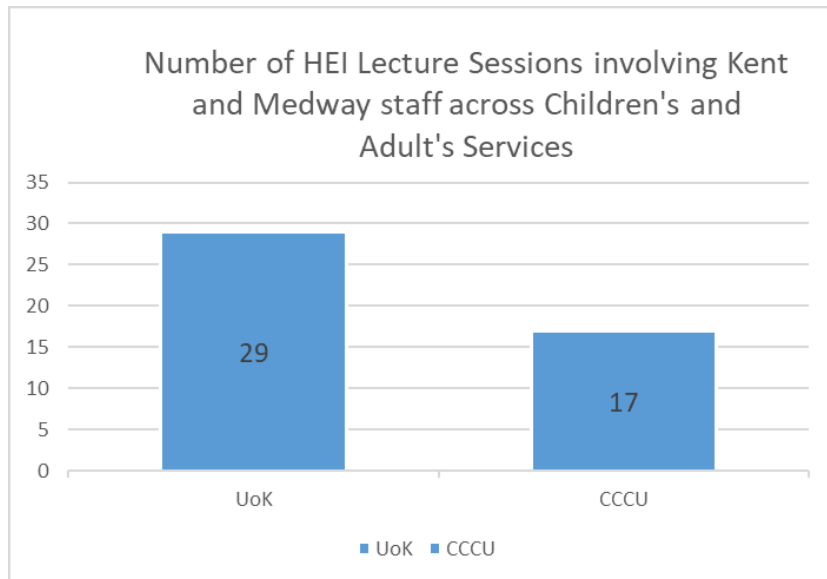
Practitioner Teacher Quality Assurance

Some work has been done on a quality assurance and feedback process for practitioner teachers. A brief student feedback form has been developed and agreement has been reached about provision of feedback to the practitioner teacher and this has now been included in the guidance. Further work will be done on developing a 'peer observation' process. The process will involve the module leader/convenor observing the practitioner teacher and providing feedback immediately following the session. The student feedback and the peer observation process will be key to identifying the impact and added value of the practitioner teacher role in raising the quality and standard of academic teaching on the social work programmes.

Practitioner Teacher Activity in the Current Academic Year 2019 – 2020

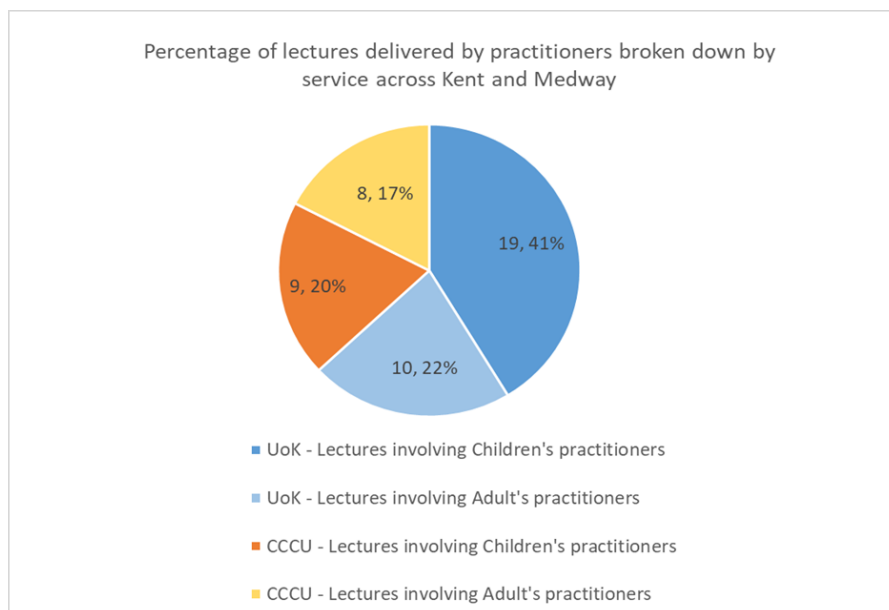
The Teaching Partnership has undertaken a review of the amount of activity that will be undertaken by practitioner teachers in the academic year 2019/20. The results indicate an increase in the activity and the number of hours that practitioner teachers have contributed to the social work programmes.

Practitioner Teachers are currently scheduled to deliver a total of 46 teaching sessions in the 2019/20 academic year. They will be contributing to 17 sessions at Canterbury Christ University and 29 sessions at the University of Kent.



* the UoK lecture sessions are throughout the academic year 2019/20.

**CCCU lecture sessions are currently up until the end of the winter term 2019.

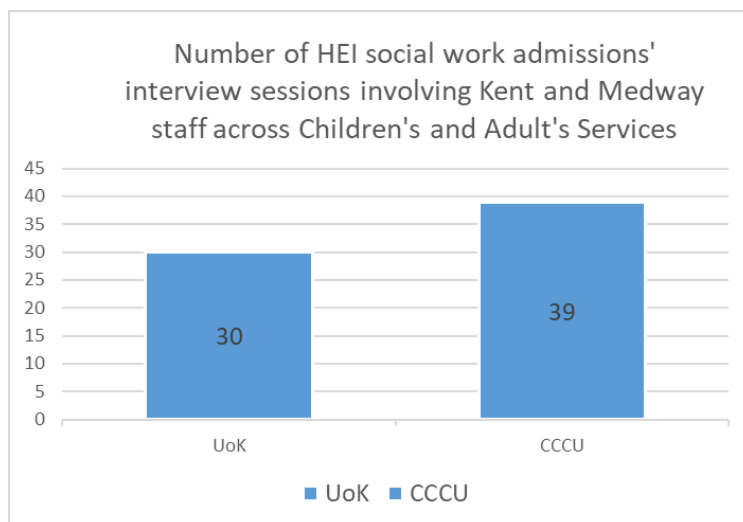


Practitioner Teacher Time Commitment

The contribution of Practitioner Teachers to the lecture sessions is flexible but each lecture session is approximately 2 hours per session, alongside preparation and travel time. This equates to a total of 92 hours of Practitioner Teacher time: 54 hours of Children's Services practitioner's time, and 34 hours of Adult's Services practitioner's time plus travel and preparation time, across both HEIs.

Practitioner Teacher Involvement in Student Admissions

In the academic year September 2019 - August 2020, practitioners will contribute to approximately 39 half day interview sessions at Canterbury Christchurch University and to approximately 30 (full day interview sessions at the University of Kent.



Time Commitment for Admissions

The practitioner time taken to undertake admissions, equates to 336 hours of practitioner time.

Total Predicted Time Commitment for Practitioner Teachers

A total of 428 hours of practitioner teacher time is currently predicted to be undertaken with the HEI's during the academic year 2019/20.

Recommendations Post March 2020

We put forward four recommendations:

- Continue to support and develop practitioner teachers and people with experience of using social work services and continue to recruit annually to these roles.
- Develop the 'peer observation' process for quality assurance and practitioner teacher development.
- Expand the number and diversity of practitioner teachers and people with experience of using social work services.
- Medway Council to commit to selecting Practitioner Teachers through their career progression route.