Guidance on finding an external placement

If you are accepted to do a Teacher Ed course, you'll need to complete a placement of at least 50hrs (part-time course) or 100hrs (full-time course) within the academic year at an Educational Establishment.

The Bedford College Group do provide placements for pre-service routes. However, if you choose to look for you own external placement this is the information you need.

As part of the application process, you will need to approach and 'sign up' one Educational Establishment to provide you with a placement. The placement needs to be with students aged 16 and above: e.g. A-Levels, BTEC Vocational Programmes or Adult Learners)

1.   Identifying an Establishment to approach
You may already work in, or have good contacts with an Educational Establishment that is likely to support you. You may also want to begin your search by;

- Talking to friends and family and following up and contacts that they might have
- Using the internet. The EduBase (www/edubase.gov.uk) and Ofsted (www.ofsted.gov.uk) sites are good places.

2.   Selecting a suitable placement
There are many different types of Educational Establishment:
- State Comprehensive Schools which work closely with the Local Authority
- State Grammar Schools (which select on academic ability at age 11),
- Academies (state schools which are outside Local Authority control),
- Free Schools (private schools with state funding),
- Private Schools,
- Further Education Colleges,
- Adult Training Providers,
- Universities.

3.   Preparing to approach an Establishment
Look at the Establishments website and learn as much as you can about the institution. Consider whether you think it sounds as if it is somewhere you would fit in.

Before you approach an Establishment, make sure that you have understood what they would need to provide in the way of support. You will need;
- At least 50hrs (part-time course) or 100hrs (full-time course) classroom experience with students aged at least 16 yrs old and over during the academic year.
- A Mentor to support you and complete Formal Observations within the year.

4.   Approaching an Establishment
The approach you take will depend on the level of any previous contact you may have had with the Establishment, but the person you need to speak to is the member of the senior management team who is in charge of teacher training within the Establishment (often known as the ITE coordinator or senior mentor). You can telephone the Institution to find out the name of this person and their contact details.

Once you know the name of you contact, get in touch by letter or email.

It would be a good idea to consider providing a link to, or enclosing a copy of the Information on the Bedford/ Tresham College Website that outlines the key points about your placement requirements.

Make sure that you approach the Institution in the same way that you would if you were applying for a job or attending an interview. There may be competition for places.

5. Securing a placement

If your approach is positive, the Establishment will usually suggest a meeting or interview before confirming that they will support you. You might also wish to take copies of your certificates and a CV.

<u>Questions about you, your motivations and experience.</u>

- **Why do you want to teach?**

Your answer will depend on your own circumstances. The Institution will expect you to be clear about your wishes to enter the profession. They will also want you to show that you have a real passion for teaching and an understanding of what is involved.

<u>Questions about the course and the role of the Institution.</u>

- **Will the Mentor be paid for supporting you?**

There is a £200 Honorarium that is paid to the Mentor on completion of the course.

- **How long will you need to be in our Institution?**

The regulations state there needs to be at least 50hrs (part-time course) or 100hrs (full-time course) classroom experience with students aged at least 16 yrs and over during the academic year. This often works out as a day/ half day throughout the academic year.

- **Will you be supported by a Bedford College Group Tutor as well as an institution mentor?**

During the course of the year there will be observations in practice. These will be from both the tutor and the mentor.

- **What support does the institution need to offer you?**

Details of the Mentor roles can be seen in the Mentor Handbook. The Institution does not need to provide a programme of activities to support 'professional studies' as this is covered in the course materials.

Once the Institution has confirmed that it will support your placement, you should ask the member of the senior management team with responsibility for staff development and training to provide their details and sign the 'My Placement' form contained in your application pack. (Further copies can be requested via Email) mbrookes@bedford.ac.uk

6. If you're having difficulty in finding a placement

Sometimes it can be difficult finding an Establishment to support you and this can be due to many reasons. It is possible that there will be things you can do to improve your prospects, or that it may simply be that the Institution does not have the capacity to offer a placement at present.

If, despite substantial effort, you have not secured a placement and you don't know why, consider:

- Volunteering in a school/Institution to gain experience.
- Altering the way in which you approach Establishments. For example, could you improve the letter and/or Emails you are sending?
- Contacting Institutions that have interviewed you. Ask them for constructive feedback as to how you might improve your chances of success with other Establishments.
- Reviewing the extent to which you are prepared to be flexible. How prepared are you to travel? Have any Institutions that you have approached suggested that could support you at a later date?
- We will do or best to support your search for an Educational Establishment, but in extreme circumstances where it is not possible to find a placement within a reasonable timescale, we will not be able to progress your application.