



# DEVELOPING TOGETHER

## SOCIAL WORK TEACHING PARTNERSHIP

### INTRODUCTION

This document provides a short summary of the key activities and work carried out by the Teaching Partnership (TP) between April 2020 and March 2021. The vast majority of deliverables for 2020-22 that were identified at the Visioning Day in January 2020 have progressed exceptionally well, in spite of the pandemic, and are either embedded, or making good progress towards being embedded. There have also been many additional areas of work, arising from the pandemic, that the TP has led on or played a significant role in, in order to support students, practitioners, people with lived experience, the University and Employers.

### KEY THEMES

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**Admissions & Curriculum**

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**Teaching Consultants**

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**Placements & Practice Education**

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**Recruitment**

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**Retention & Workforce Development**

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**Identity, Brand & Reputation**

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*"It is heartening to see that engagement has not waned...our partnership remains strong, in spite of us all needing to prioritise our response to a global pandemic over the last year"*

*- Ian Dodds, Director of Children's Services  
AFC*

*"The fact that teaching partnerships have survived this long is indicative of the current value of social work and how it is perceived and how the investment is necessary. We must keep fighting for that"*

*- Isabelle Trowler, Chief Social Worker for  
Children & Families*

# ADMISSIONS & CURRICULUM

- Entry requirements for the BA in social work remain at 120 UCAS pts with 85% having at least 120 UCAS points in 19-20 (up from 52% in 17-18).
- The University's Fast Track Post Graduate Diploma (PgDip) has proved increasingly popular, with a number of spaces on the programme funded by the TP in both 2019 and 2020.
- The People with Lived Experience (PLE) Group at the HEI remains stable, with 11 PLEs actively involved with HEI activities such as admissions and the PLE Film Project proving to be a valuable teaching resource.
- The annual 'Admissions Processes Review' was held in summer 2020, virtually. This involved workforce development and academic staff, TCs and PLEs reviewing the processes and agreeing how these would be carried out for the upcoming academic year.
- The proportion of BA students graduating with a 2:1 or 1st increased from 44% in 17-18 to 59% in 19-20.
- The proportion of MSW students graduating with a distinction or commendation increased from 76% in 17-18 to 87% in 19-20.
- 67% of NQSW positions across AfC and Sutton went to KU graduates in 2019-20, up from 12% in 2018.

*"I think there is more to achieve in enabling university staff to support practice in the same way that Teaching Consultants have been able to support university teaching"*

# 100%

- The pass rate on the MSW readiness for Direct Practice Module.

# TEACHING CONSULTANTS

- 20 Teaching Consultants (TCs) have remained in post and have continued to be involved in admissions throughout the pandemic and delivering of teaching
- 7 TCs completed the Individual Work-Based Learning Project, worth 30 academic credits, with most marks being in the A range and 5 have successfully been granted AFHEA status. It is anticipated that future TCs will be offered similar opportunities
- Recruitment for new TCs begins in May 2021, targeting specialisms that are not currently represented by the existing TCs
- TC Forums are hosted by the HEI's TC Coordinator, to identify support needs and new opportunities for collaborative working
- First time pass rate on the Readiness for Direct Practice module improved from 71% in 17-18, to 94% (BA) and 100% (MSW) in 19-20
- The proportion of BA students progressing from Level 4 to Level 5 has improved from 77% to 87%
- 67% of NQSW positions across AfC and Sutton went to KU graduates in 2019-20, up from 12% in 2018

*"The Teaching Consultant (TC) role is well established and embedded into teaching practices across the majority of KU social work courses..."*

*"The role of the TC has existed long enough for the impact of the role to be seen by the students and the university. It has been positive and beneficial. The TC role can be seen as one of professional development"*

# PLACEMENTS & PRACTICE EDUCATION

- The Onsite Supervisor (OSS) Programme was revised and reduced in length to incorporate feedback from the Strategic Board. The revised Programme has since run once in January 2021 with 9 OSSs in attendance from across the TP. 2 further occurrences have been scheduled for Autumn 2021 and Spring 2022.
- 9 workshops were delivered across the year to develop PE skills and knowledge; 116 experienced/trainee/aspiring PEs, OSSs and PAs have attended workshops to date.
- The developing Practice Education Community of Practice worked together over a number of months to produce a comprehensive “Guide to Being a Practice Educator in a ‘Blended’ Placement”.
- A Student Internship Scheme was launched in Autumn 2020, where students on the MSW Programme could apply to have both their placements with a partner local authority and at the end of their course be guaranteed an interview for an NQSW position.
- The percentage of students offered two statutory placements has improved, with 85% of students on BA and 100% of students on MSW having 2 statutory placements in 20-21 up from 22% and 85% in 18-19, respectively.
- A pilot group for a new peer review QA process for student placement PE reports has been established.

*“...the biggest success is having so many students successfully complete their Social Work placements during this pandemic”*

*“This training has been so helpful. I am left feeling empowered and far more capable of meeting my new student on Monday and being an effective PE.”*

*“.. really useful training session.. helped to ease some anxieties by providing me with ideas regarding managing a placement during Covid-19 times..”*

# RECRUITMENT

- The TP has funded a number of places on Kingston University's Fast Track Post Graduate Diploma in Social Work
- A subgroup of the TP - AfC, Sutton Children and Kingston University - was successful in its application to the DfE to form a new Regional Partnership (RP) and deliver Cohort 7 of the national Step Up to Social Work Programme
- A Student Internship Scheme was launched in Autumn 2020, where students on the MSW Programme could apply to have both their placements with a partner local authority and at the end of their course be guaranteed an interview for an NQSW position
- The Social Worker (Integrated Degree) Apprenticeship was launched in late 2019, and Kingston University was appointed principal provider to co-produce the programme for London and surrounding regions, recruiting 60 to their programme, exceeding their target of 55
- 67% of NQSW positions across AfC and Sutton went to KU graduates in 2019-20 up from 12% in 2018
- In December 2020, the TP procured its own Careers Site, to explore more joined up strategies for recruitment and fulfil the need for a local talent pool for more experienced roles

# 67%

- The percentage of NQSW positions across AFC & Sutton that went to KU graduates.

*"It is anticipated that promotion of various workforce development initiatives, such as the EPD Framework, Early Career Managers' Programme and the Career Pathways & CPD Framework, will influence recruitment of social workers, with prospective candidates being attracted to work in the region thanks to the comprehensive learning and development offer"*

# RETENTION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- A new Career Pathways & CPD Framework was developed, illustrating progression routes to practitioners and including a range of supporting CPD opportunities - to be launched in June 2021
- Also launching in June is the new EPD Framework, created to support practitioners 2-3 years post qualifying
- Over 90 events and training sessions were offered by the TP last year including the popular BLM Discussion Groups and Wellbeing Events
- A new employer led PQ course has been developed in collaboration with Kingston University, Kingston Adults and Merton Adults. The Strengths Based Practice module will be delivered to staff from June 2021
- The 30 credit Coaching module from Kingston University continues to be popular with practitioners, with 55 undertaking this to date
- A 9 day Early Career Managers' Programme, accredited by the CPD Standards Office, was designed and delivered to 60 managers. This was also sold to another TP - a potential ongoing form of income generation
- The Strategic Board agreed to align Health Check Surveys for easier comparison of trends - all partners will be utilising the new LGA Health Check to achieve this
- The TP's first Labour Market Plan was published in 2020, receiving praise from the DfE for being advanced in the area of workforce planning
- One of the TP research projects - Using Outcome Measures in Child Protection Work - has recently been published in the Journal of Child and Family Social Work
- A fantastic Celebration Conference was held in December 2020, ending in a Social Work Awards ceremony - due to popular demand, this will now be an annual event!

# IDENTITY BRAND & REPUTATION

- The TP website is rich resource hub, generating on average 100 visits a day! We have also provided consultation to another TP looking to set up their own website, who found ours to be the best established from across the national TP network
- Regular newsletters continue to be circulated, including additional special editions, such as 'Celebrating Excellent Social Work Practice during CV19' and 'Celebrating Black History Month'
- A strong and active social media presence on Twitter has continued. Since the last annual progress report, the TP's following has nearly doubled, going from 337 to 668 followers
- The TP was selected by the DfE to establish, manage and quality assure a new National Teaching Partnership document library, which has been set up on Sharepoint - another source of income generation
- The TP has used its existing infrastructure and professional relationships to successfully bid for new work, for example the Step Up to Social Work Programme
- One of the TP research projects - 'Using Outcome Measures in Child Protection Work' - has recently been published in the Journal of Child and Family Social Work

*"I have personally experienced great communication from the partnership in terms of what is happening, the achievements and opportunities to work and collaborate with colleagues across the partnership for the mutual benefit of our organisations and workforce"*

*"All comms are very professional and frequent. I think the recent awards were a good way to share success.."*

# CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- The TP should take advantage of how accustomed those across the TP have become to working virtually, moving the majority of governance meetings online to enable maximum attendance and reduce the administrative burden on partners.
- The membership of the Teaching Partnership (TP) and governance structure should remain consistent. Agencies who pay an annual membership fee should use the Annual Progress report as a basis for reviewing their return on investment; it would not be possible to sustain the TP beyond March 2022 in its current form without this vital contribution.
- Given the successes of virtual learning, we should continue to take a blended approach, with a mixture of an online and face to face provision.
- The TP should further build on engaging with and sharing information with key professional and regulatory bodies and networks to promote its achievements and communicate future priorities within the sector.
- The 2021 Visioning Day will be held at the end of April, after which the existing Logic Model will be updated to reflect any changes. It is expected that some changes or additions will be targeted at addressing repercussions from the pandemic and that there will be an increased focus on income generation, in order to sustain the TP.



# FUTURE AMBITIONS

## **Some potential new areas of focus for the coming year/s include:**

- Revisiting the academics in practice initiative;
- Exploring a strategy for research in practice and supporting partners to become 'learning organisations';
- Developing a new provision for more experienced managers;
- Understanding the extent of the coaching culture across the TP;
- Expanding the CPD offer;
- Developing a suite of elearning modules;
- Launching and embedding the Career Pathways & CPD Framework and Early Professional Development Framework;
- Completing the People with Lived Experience Film project;
- Recruiting, training and supporting more Teaching Consultants;
- Improving the level of student engagement and involvement;
- Designing new Careers Fairs/Open Evenings to support with employers with recruitment;
- Identifying further opportunities for generating an income;
- Working more closely with people with lived experience across the whole TP;
- Following closely the implementation of the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES);
- Overseeing the delivery of the Step Up to Social Work Programme