



STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
A College of Queen's University Belfast



Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Stranmillis University College and the Controlled Schools' Support Council

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sets out a framework for co-operation between Stranmillis University College (SUC) and the Controlled Schools' Support Council (CSSC).

I. Purpose & scope

The purpose of this MOU is to clearly identify the respective roles and responsibilities of each party. This MOU is not intended to be legally binding and accordingly no legal obligations or legal rights shall arise between the parties from its terms.

II. Stranmillis University College's responsibilities

Stranmillis University College is a Higher Education Institution, founded in 1922, for the purpose of providing teacher education in Northern Ireland. Stranmillis University College is an autonomous institution in ethos, governance and finance. The College receives funding from the Department for the Economy. Its academic awards are validated by Queen's University. The College was granted University College status by the Privy Council in 1999 and may use the title 'Stranmillis University College: A College of The Queen's University of Belfast'.

The University College has developed over time into a multi-professional institution although the provision of courses in Initial Teacher Education leading to the award of the BEd (Honours) degree remains its core business. The University College also offers a BA (Early Childhood Studies), a BSc (Health, Physical Activity and Sport), a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) in Early Years Education and a range of courses at Master's level.

The University College collaborates with those working in the field of education to provide a range of Continuing Professional Development Programmes. It is currently implementing a Professional and Intergenerational Learning Strategy in response to the Learning Leaders Strategy published by the Department of Education. Intergenerational learning is also promoted through the College's Lifelong Learning programme.

Over the years the University College has developed an international strategy and currently works with a significant number of overseas partners. These partnerships not only facilitate student and staff exchanges but the development of research projects.

The University College is developing a vibrant culture of scholarship and research related to the field of education and is continuing to expand its research capacity; the University College achieved pleasing results in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework and is preparing for the next Framework exercise in 2021.

III. Controlled Schools' Support Council's responsibilities

The Controlled Schools Support Council (CSSC) was established in September 2016 to provide support for controlled schools in accordance and its functions. The functions of CSSC as agreed by the Northern Ireland Executive include:

- providing a representational and advocacy role for controlled schools including advice and support in responding to consultation exercises in respect of education policies, initiatives and schemes and in regard to relationships with the Department, the Education Authority and other Departments
- working with schools within the sector to develop and maintain its collective and inclusive ethos, including, where appropriate, a role in identifying, encouraging and nominating governors and ensuring that ethos is part of employment considerations
- working with the Education Authority to raise educational standards
- participating in area-based planning coordinated by DE and the Education Authority, including membership of the Department's area planning steering group
- engaging, where appropriate, in strategic planning processes, including community planning; and
- building co-operation and engaging with other sectors in matters of mutual interest, including the promotion of tolerance and understanding.

IV. Terms and conditions

It is mutually understood and agreed by and between the parties that:

1. each party takes legal and financial responsibility for the actions of its respective employees, officers, agents, representatives and volunteers
2. each party, at its sole cost and expense, shall carry insurance or self-insure to cover its activities in connection with this MOU

3. SUC and the CSSC will provide advice to each other for the purpose and scope of this MOU. Unless agreement is made to the contrary in writing, SUC and the CSSC will provide this advice at no cost. Where permitted by relevant legislation, SUC and the CSSC may, by mutual agreement, enter into arrangements to pay for advice or services from the other.

V. Collaboration

It is agreed that SUC and the CSSC should work together in the best interests of all controlled schools in Northern Ireland, sharing an open and transparent relationship which recognises and respects one another's roles and responsibilities. This necessarily implies ongoing dialogue and exchange of information on matters of mutual interest.

- Collaboration will at all times respect the individual responsibilities of SUC and CSSC.
- SUC and CSSC will work together to facilitate the effective delivery of the functions, roles and responsibilities of each organisation.
- Collaborative work will be approved by the Principal and Chief Executive of SUC & CSSC's Chief Executive

Collaboration regarding professional development of staff

- SUC and CSSC will collaborate on a range of activities that will enhance the professional development of their staff.
- When appropriate, SUC and CSSC will invite representation at each organisation's events to provide staff with maximum opportunities for professional learning and networking.

Collaboration regarding development of staff in controlled schools

- SUC and CSSC will encourage and facilitate the cooperation between their staff on activities that will support the development of effective practice in controlled schools.

Collaboration regarding on research and scholarship

- SUC and CSSC will collaborate on areas of research and scholarship which are mutually beneficial. This may include: joint research and scholarship projects; exchange of information, publications and reports of common interest; joint initiatives such as seminars, courses and lectures; and access to library resources.

Encouraging evidence-based practice in the controlled sector

- SUC and CSSC will facilitate opportunities for staff, researchers, and students to disseminate their research to staff in both organisations and the controlled sector as a whole through such means as (but not limited to) conferences, seminars and newsletters.

VI. It is mutually understood and agreed by and between the parties that:

1. SUC and the CSSC will review this MOU not later than three years after it has been agreed
2. this MOU will be amended as required to reflect changes in policy
3. the agreement will be terminated upon the agreement of both parties giving two months' notice in writing to the other party.

VII. Effective date and signature

This MOU shall be in effect upon the signature of SUC's and CSSC's authorised officials.


Date: 21 January 2019.
Dr Anne Heaslett, Principal and Chief Executive, SUC


Date: 21/1/19.
Mr Barry Mulholland, Chief Executive, CSSC