

Hazel Hyder – My engagement with AFHEA

I work as a Lead Mentor for a School Centre Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) provider alongside my mentoring role supporting and developing student teachers in my workplace, including HE students from Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU), who is a collaborative partner. I mentor Initial Teacher Education (ITE) students and Newly Qualified Teachers and coach colleagues; I have previously led a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme in school involving peer mentoring and coaching and am currently engaged in a project to develop effective whole school CPD.

I believe that alongside my role as a primary classroom teacher, the support I offer HE students is key to their development and also my own professional development. Student teachers require a lot of support both academically and pastorally and I work closely with colleagues at Canterbury Christ Church University and in my own settings to ensure this support is as strong as possible.

The process of applying for Associate Fellowship via CCCU's internal Fellowship recognition scheme gave me time and space to reflect on my role and become even better at it. For example, I was able to reflect on moving away from what Hobson and Malderez (2013) have termed "judgementoring" and moving towards a coaching approach. It allowed me to show that what I've put in place was working through evaluation, for example a student identified that the coaching approach enabled her to "develop my own reasoning with every choice I make in and out of the classroom."

I had gained my PGCE at CCCU over 20 years ago and have retained professional links through mentoring student teachers on different pathways for over 15 years. I completed the CCCU Mentor Development Programme (which aligns to Descriptor D1- AFHEA of the UKPSF) and it was a straightforward process to then engage in the AFHEA scheme. I had support from CCCU - a tutor who guided me through the process, and resources on the internal VLE - so that it was relatively simple to write the necessary 1,500 words. It was much less demanding than having previously completing my MA in Education! My school supported me as part of my personal CPD but also as it recognises the importance of mentoring and coaching, including in teacher education.

Having achieved the award I feel more confident and better equipped when working alongside colleagues in SCITTs and HEIs, and I believe that it has changed the way in which some of my colleagues may perceive me. I am able to bring together skills and expertise from a primary classroom and in higher education to develop my practice further.