



Guidance for Subject Mentors

Thank you for agreeing to be a subject mentor for a trainee teacher this year. This rewarding role is integral to the development of our trainees and a key element of Warwick's PGCE.

Throughout the year, your trainee will require different kinds of support as they navigate the demands of the teaching role and increase their hours and responsibilities. The Warwick Instructional Coaching approach will enable you to support your trainee gain the knowledge, skills and understanding required to become an effective teacher.

The principles and practices of Warwick's 'Instructional Coaching' approach (based on Knight, J (2017))

- The subject mentor works with a trainee in weekly one-to-one sessions to gradually improve both their teaching and their learning.
- The trainee and the subject mentor develop a trusting relationship, so that the trainee is willing to try new things and get the most out of the process.
- The level of support is matched to the trainees' level of proficiency. Instructional coaching works on a continuum of support and will involve the mentor, and other experts, modelling practice, providing opportunities for observation, providing instruction, data collection and most importantly the use of questioning.
- The trainees' rationale should always be considered, trainees who are struggling more should have more time with their mentor.
- The trainee should be part of the decision-making process – while the mentor should guide them. The trainee should ultimately decide what they think will work best in their classroom.
- The whole process should be adaptable; if a certain strategy isn't working, the mentor and trainee should come up with a new one. If a certain target seems unachievable, it should be adjusted.

Supporting your trainee to become a reflective teacher with Instructional Coaching

Reflection in the context of mentoring involves helping your trainee work towards setting their own agenda for mentor meetings and taking a lead in their professional development.

In the initial stages of your mentoring relationship there may be a lot for your trainee to discover and learn, and this is where you are likely to be in a more **'directive'** role. However, as your trainee progresses in their teacher development, you should find yourself increasingly utilising a **'dialogical'** approach, with your trainee developing their ability to make their own professional decisions as they reflect on and adjust their practices.

The most important aspect to your role as a subject mentor is to listen and question effectively. Jim Knight (2017) offers the following guidance:

- Make sure your trainee does most of the talking.
- Pause and affirm before you start talking.
- Don't interrupt (except when it is very helpful).
- Ask one question at a time.
- Ask for clarification when you are not certain what is being said. Ask, "And what else?"
- Assume people are doing their best.
- Avoid leading questions.
- Avoid giving advice disguised as a question

Preparing your trainees for mentoring

To maximise the benefits of the mentoring experience, your trainee should be encouraged to come with an open mind, a willingness to learn, and the capacity to seek and act upon feedback. Adopting a positive 'mentee mindset' (Searby, 2014) will encourage the mentee to become more self-aware, more reflective, and more proactive in identifying their own agenda and goals within the mentoring conversations. The following article has been shared with trainees in foundation week - [The protégé mentoring mindset: A framework for consideration](#), Searby, 2014, International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education, 3(3), pp.255–276.

Mentoring your trainee using Warwick's 'Instructional Coaching' approach

The first meeting Where are we now?	Guidance for Mentors
<p>Trainee should have reflected on their current experience.</p>	<p>Suggested questions to ask your trainee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your previous teaching experience? • How would you assess your level of confidence currently? • Can you share your hopes and ambitions? • What are your aspirations? • Do you have any worries? <p>Check trainees have completed their self-assessment document and a SWOT analysis task</p>
<p>The Contract</p> <p>The expectations, roles and responsibilities for the partnership between the Subject Mentor and trainee.</p> <p>An equal partnership whereby both the Subject Mentor and trainee are valued.</p>	<p>Ensure that the contract is discussed and agreed by both mentor and mentee before signing and uploading to SharePoint</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish the responsibilities and commitment of both the Subject Mentor and the trainee. • Establish a commitment for regular and protected time for meetings with the Subject Mentor /trainee. When will this be? • Where will this be? Agree a suitable environment to meet away from distractions to encourage open dialogue free from judgment • Ensure lines of communication are established. What is the plan for re-scheduling if there is a need? (missed meetings, Subject Mentor not available etc.)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish timings for lessons plans and resources to be shared to ensure that timely feedback can be provided
<p>Discuss the trainee’s longer-term targets</p> <p>By asking questions you will be: Empowering and enabling. Challenging and encouraging ownership.</p>	<p>Suggested questions to ask your trainee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you hope to achieve by the end of the placement/term 1? • What are your long-term targets? • What is it you would like to achieve personally and professionally? • What skills would you like to develop? • What knowledge do you want to develop? • Is there anything that you are finding challenging currently? • What support do you think you might need? <p>(Trainees may want to refer to their SWOT analysis here completed on 16th Sept)</p>
<p>The CCF, CRD your subject plan and Professional Practice Units</p>	<p>Look together at the Core Content Framework and Collaborative Review Document together. These will be used in each meeting to support the trainee develop in the 5 core CCF areas/8 Teachers’ Standards.</p> <p>Look together at the Professional Practice Units These will be used to shape the trainees’ professional practice in school and are linked to the CCF and university taught days.</p>
<p>Setting the first target</p> <p>Targets should be: Powerful Easy Emotionally Compelling Reachable Student-focused</p>	<p>Refer to Core Content Framework and the Professional Practice Units</p> <p>Suggested questions to ask your trainee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your priorities? • What can you realistically achieve by next week? • How does your first target link to a Professional Practice Unit? • What strategies will help you achieve your first target?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What have you learnt at university / through research that could have a positive impact? (Mentors to offers options/ideas for trainee to select from so they are invested in the target) • What will your steps to success/checklist look like to help you achieve your target? • What will be the first step? • What will come next?
<p>Collecting Data</p>	<p>Discuss with your trainee the range of data that could be collected to analyse the impact of the targets.</p> <p>Ideas of types of data to collect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many pupils are responding to questions? • How many pupils are asking questions? • How much time are pupils given to think about questions? • How many pupils are on task? • When do pupils ask for help? • Who do they ask? • How many positive / concern points provided? • Does the quality and quantity of work in the books match the time spent? • What is the quality of the pupils' talk?
<p>Providing support</p> <p>By guiding and supporting, you will be motivating and inspiring</p> <p>Supporting resources could be: Rosenshine, B., 2010. <i>Principles of instruction</i>. Brussels, Belgium: International Academy of Education. Sherrington, T., 2020. <i>Teaching WalkThrus: Five-step guides to instructional coaching</i>. John Catt Educational.</p>	<p>Discuss with your trainee the range of Instructional Coaching activities which can be undertaken by yourself and other expert colleagues to enable target/s to be met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainee observes specific strategies in use – use Observation record in mentors' toolkit • Mentor/class teacher/subject mentor modelling expert practice/teaching strategy • Observation of subject specialists • Video analysis (record trainee's practice and review collaboratively) • Team teaching • Role play

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional dialogue with colleagues • Live feedback (feedback within lesson) • Additional planning/assessment support and guidance
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For subsequent meetings follow Warwick's Instructional Coaching approach alongside the guidance below.

Instructional Coaching Stages	Suggested questions to ask your trainee:
<p>Prior to the mentoring meetings, the trainee should have reflected on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from their observers • Progress towards their targets • Their impact on learners 	<p>...and come to the meeting ready to discuss their professional development.</p>
<p>With your mentor reflect on the impact of your Professional Practice Unit activity on your classroom practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where are you now with your current target? • In a few words sum up what it's like for you in your classroom this week compared to last? • What are you now doing as a consequence of your target/s? • What are you now doing that you weren't doing before that is having a more positive impact on pupil learning? • What are the pupils doing differently? • What else? How do you know? • On the basis of what you have taught/taught this week, on a scale of 1-10 how would you judge your lesson(s)? What pleased you? What could have been more effective? Why? Tell me more... • What strategies have you successfully implemented? What data evidence do you have for this? • Sum up the key learning you have gained from undertaking this Professional Practice Unit • How will you extend this Professional Practice Unit <p>At this point, mentors should share data that they have gathered in relation to the trainee's target e.g. number of pupils who answered questions.</p>

	This will ensure that you have a shared understanding of the reality of ongoing targets
With your mentor set target/s, informed by your ongoing Professional Practice activity.	<p>Refer to CRD and Professional Practice Units</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on our conversations, what would you change to move your practice forward? • What can realistically be achieved by next week? • What needs prioritising?
With your mentor agree teaching strategies to meet targets	<p>Refer to CRD and Professional Practice Units</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What options/strategies are there to help you achieve your target? • What have you learnt at university/through research that could have a positive impact? (Mentor offers options/ideas for trainee to select from so they are invested in the target) • What will your steps to success/checklist look like to help you achieve your target? • What obstacles could slow down your progress and how can you overcome them? • Who can support you to achieve this target? • What will be the first step? • What will come next? • On a scale of 1 – 10 how confident are you with achieving your target? <p>At this stage, mentor and trainee also need to decide what data will need to be collected to analyse impact of target.</p>
What impact do you think implementing these strategies will have on learners?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will your pupils be doing differently? • What will this look like? • What will <u>you</u> be doing differently in your classroom? • How will learner progress be improved?

Supporting your trainee's well-being?

As you may remember, the PGCE year is a demanding year with multiple challenges and deadlines. It is understandable that at times trainees may feel overwhelmed and stressed. As their subject mentor you can lend a sympathetic ear to your trainee, acting as a sounding board and draw on your experience to help them find strategies for managing their workload and maintaining their well-being.

Top tips for supporting the well-being of your mentee - ETF (2021)

- Support their sense of belonging by helping your trainee to feel part of the team and the school community
- Be flexible and responsive in pursuing whatever is more immediately of concern to your trainee
- Allow them thinking time to explore what is going on for them
- Walk with them - walk and talk can be very useful as an approach that reduces direct gaze and can facilitate a more easeful communication. You could also ask them to simply talk for an agreed length of time noting that you will only ask questions to check your understanding
- Know about and signpost them to other supportive colleagues as well as to well-being services on offer - <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/cte/pintra/essentialdocuments/secondaryessentialdocs>
- Be careful not to assume or pass any judgement - avoid changing any label that your mentee applies to describe their emotional well-being
- Invite them to think about possible supportive strategies: what do they feel might work best and what are they wanting/ willing to try?
- Encourage them to reflect on what is going well for them
- Set small realistic targets, using praise to recognise their progress
- Invite the mentee to set the agenda for the next meeting

Subject Mentor Support

It is important to remember that as a mentor, you are not responsible for your trainee's actions nor are you acting alone. You will need to talk to your Professional Mentor (PM) and other colleagues/mentors to share e your practice. In addition, the Professional Practice Tutor (PPT) will be available to provide advice and guidance throughout the year, as well as undertaking termly visits to your school. Do ensure that you have signed up to Warwick's 'Mentoring Matters' bulletins which will provide you with ongoing information and support.

Sometimes, despite your best efforts, a mentoring relationship may break down and this may cause distress for both the mentor and trainee. If a relationship becomes difficult it is important to seek support from the PM and the PPT. It may be possible to get the mentoring relationship back on track, however, it is also important to recognise when the mentoring relationship has reached the point of no return and to take appropriate steps to reassign the trainee with a new mentor.

Communication

The school will be allocated a Professional Practice Tutor (PPT) who will be your first port of call with questions and queries.

The **mentoring matters bulletin** is emailed at 7am on Thursdays approximately every two weeks – sign up [here](#)

You can find any member of the secondary team contact details [here](#)

Overview of professional practice units

Professional Practice Units	Title	CCF Link	Sessions (SS, PrE, PP, FW)	Date
PPU1	Professional Roles and observation of expert practice	Professional Behaviours	PP, FW	Term 1a September
PPU2	Introduction to planning & assessment	Pedagogy	SS, FW	Term 1a September
PPU3	Introduction to classroom management	Managing behaviours	SS, FW	Term 1a October - November
PPU4	Understanding Learning in Subject	Pedagogy	FW, SS	Term 1b

				October-December
PPU5	Understanding Classroom Assessment in Subject	Assessment	SS	Term 1b October-December
*PPU6	*Re-Establishing Classroom Relationships	Managing behaviours	PrE, PP	Term 1b/2a December-February
*PPU7	Adaptive Teaching		PrE, SS, Inclusion conf.	Term 2a Jan-Feb
PPU8	Activating metacognition	Pedagogy, curriculum	SS, PrE	Term 2a Jan – Feb
PPU9	Deeper Learning in Subject	Pedagogy, curriculum	SS	Term 2b Feb – Apr
PPU10	Developing Pupils' Literacy	Pedagogy, curriculum	SS, PrE	Term 2b Feb – Apr
PPU11	Assessing & Reporting Progress in Subject	Assessment	PP, SS	Term 3a April – May