

Early Career Training Programme

Year 2 Mentor Handbook 2026

Your guide to mentoring a year 2 Early Career Teacher

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Welcome

from James Toop



Dear colleague,

There is nothing we do as a country that is more important than educating the next generation. The quality of teaching young people receive is the biggest factor within our control in making that happen for every young person. And, in turn, it is the quality of leadership in schools that brings out the best in teachers. When leaders are well supported, when they thrive, their schools and communities thrive as well. So, it's with great pleasure that I welcome you to the Headship Next programme. The programme will create a community of aspirational future headteachers, collectively confident that they can lead the schools that need them most.

This Guide outlines the programme and your part in it: what's involved, the time commitment, who will support you, and what to expect. It offers advice on how to get as much as possible out of the programme. No one gets a second chance at childhood but, by working together, we can make sure everyone gets a first chance. I'm thrilled you are joining us on this programme.

Best wishes,

James Toop
Chief Executive Officer



Welcome

As early career teachers (ECTs) enter their second year on the programme, mentors continue to play a crucial role in supporting their professional development, growing confidence, and progression in the knowledge and skills that shape classroom practice. Year 2 is a time of consolidation and refinement, as ECTs move from establishing and embedding core knowledge and skills to developing greater autonomy, responsiveness, and impact.

Your role as a mentor remains vital. Through skilled instructional coaching conversations, precise feedback, and thoughtful support, you enable ECTs to reflect on their practice, deepen their professional judgement, and navigate the increasing complexity of their role. While the nature of mentoring may shift slightly in the second year, your guidance continues to be a key factor in helping ECTs not only succeed but thrive.

And thank you!

We recognise that mentoring in Year 2 may look different for each of you. For some, this may be your first time mentoring an ECT in their second year; for others, you may be continuing the journey with the same ECT you supported in Year 1. In both cases, your role is significant and deeply valued.

We know that being a great mentor takes time, skill, and commitment. We also know that you are a busy professional, balancing mentoring alongside your own teaching responsibilities and the needs of your pupils.

So, before we go any further, we want to say thank you. Thank you for your professionalism, and dedication. Your support makes a lasting difference to your ECT and to every pupil they go on to teach, now and in the future.

The purpose of this handbook

This handbook is designed to help you support your ECT through the second year of the Teach First Early Career Training Programme.

In this handbook, you'll find:

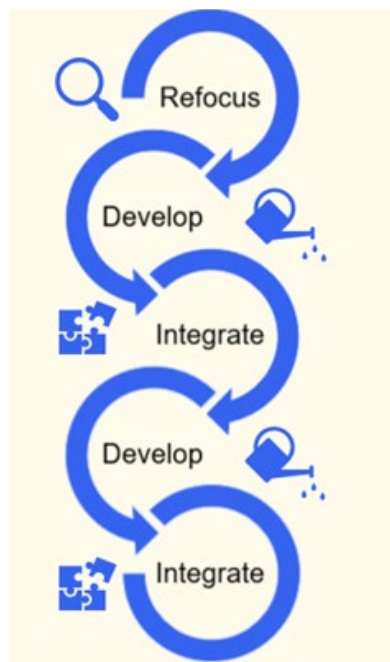
- A short overview video of the activity required of you each term as you support your ECT through a termly Development Cycle.
- Detailed meeting agendas to support you to run effective fortnightly mentor interactions.
- Appendices containing proformas for the 'Engage with an expert' opportunity that an ECT will undertake each term.

The Development Cycle

Year 2 of the ECTP is centred around the Development Cycle.

The Development Cycle has been designed through careful review of research into what makes professional development for teachers genuinely effective and most likely to lead to sustained improvement in classroom practice. Each cycle brings together several well-established principles from teacher development research and integrates them into a coherent, termly structure.

There are **three Development Cycles across Year 2 of the programme**, with each cycle being designed to run over a **12-week term**. Depending on the length and structure of terms in your school, you and your ECT should use your professional judgment to determine whether more or less time is needed at certain stages of the cycle.



The Development Cycle is split into 5 stages, with some stages being repeated to give ECTs time for further refinement of their practice and time to implement with feedback.

Before you begin

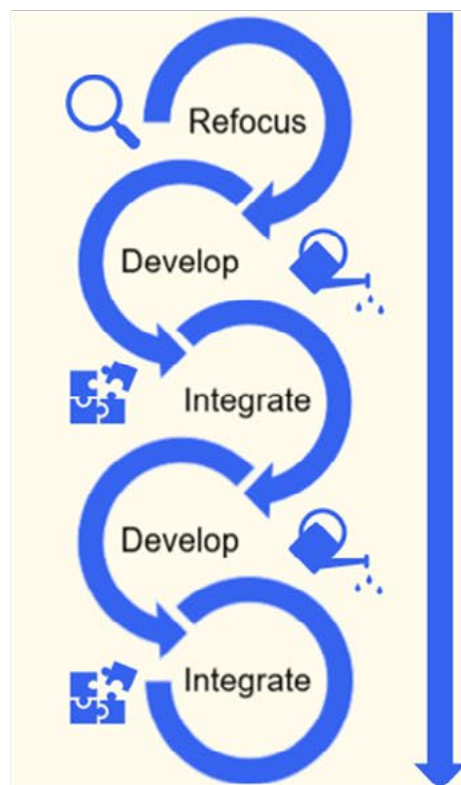
Before you begin mentoring your ECT in Year 2, you must complete the **'Supporting an ECT in Year 2'** unit, available on Brightspace.

This unit provides essential guidance on each stage of the cycle and clarifies expectations for each mentor interaction. It also includes video exemplification of modelled mentor and ECT interactions, designed to support you in leading high-quality fortnightly meetings.

Completion of this unit is a vital component of your mentor training. It contributes to your ongoing engagement with the programme and is required to ensure continued funding for your role as a mentor within your school.

Development Cycle overview

The following page provides an overview of the stages of the Development Cycle across a term. It is recommended that you print this page for display so you can track your current stage of the cycle and identify the next steps for you and your ECT.



Diagnostic (ECT / Mentor)

Refocus: Mentor interaction 1

Mentor and ECT reflect on diagnostic outcomes and identify two priority development areas for the cycle: one from each theme. Agree the half-term focus from theme 1.

Self-directed study x 1 | Seminar x 1

Refocus: Mentor interaction 2

Mentor and ECT discuss learning from the first self-study and seminar, agree clear action steps and success criteria, and plan 'Engage with an expert' discussion or observation.

ECT: 'Engage with an expert 1' observation/discussion

Develop: Mentor interaction 3

Mentor helps the ECT draw learning from the expert input, refine action steps if needed, and engage with deliberate practice.
Drop-in observation

Self-directed study x 1 | Seminar x 1

Integrate: Mentor interaction 4

Mentor provides feedback using the instructional coaching cycle and supports the ECT to refine the focus or set a new focus from theme 2. Plan a second 'Engage with an expert' discussion or observation.

ECT: Engage with an expert 2' observation/discussion

Develop: Mentor interaction 5

Mentor helps the ECT draw learning from the expert input, refine action steps if needed, and engage with deliberate practice.
Drop-in observation

Integrate: Mentor interaction 6

Mentor provides feedback using the instructional coaching cycle and reviews progress towards the overall goal,. Supports ECT to sustain and embed improvements over time.

Diagnostic Conversation

The termly diagnostic plays an important role in Year 2 by helping you and your ECT to identify a development area for each term. Each diagnostic can be found on Brightspace. They are designed to support the identification of areas of strength and development and are not a formal assessment of performance.

In Year 2, a diagnostic is completed **at the start of each term**, resulting in three diagnostics across the year. Each diagnostic draws on two perspectives:

- the ECT's **subject and pedagogical knowledge**
- the mentor's view of how well this knowledge is being **applied in practice**

Following completion, you and your ECTs are provided with a set of recommendations which should be used, alongside professional judgement, to identify a highest – leverage development area for the term.

A recommendation of *secure foundational knowledge* does not rule out a focus area; it may indicate that while the theory is understood by your ECT, further practice or refinement could still be beneficial.

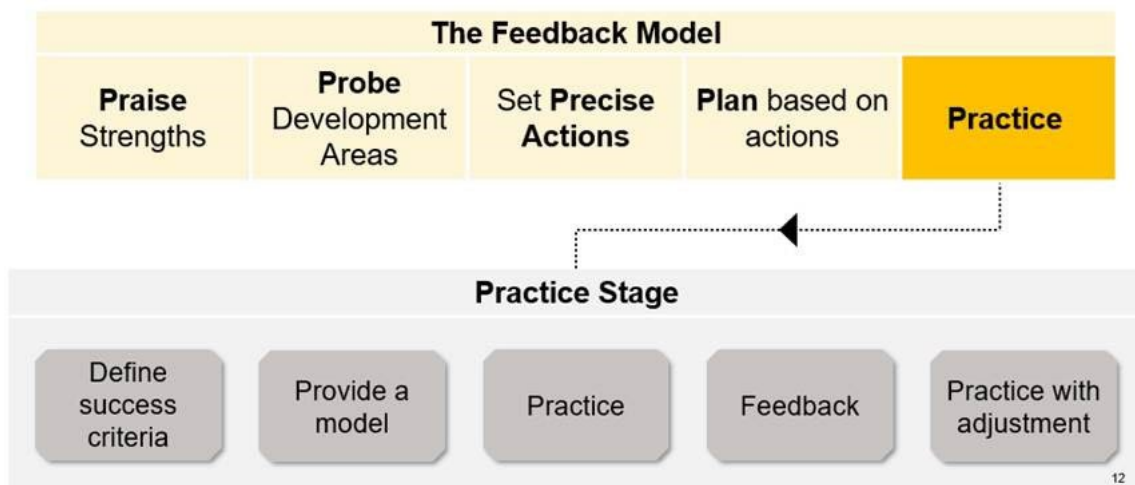
Instructional coaching

Instructional coaching remains a central feature of effective mentoring in Year 2 and continues to support ECTs to refine and embed high quality classroom practice.

Evidence indicates that instructional coaching has a higher impact on pupil outcomes than many other forms of professional development. Unlike traditional lesson observation models, which can result in broad or generic targets, instructional coaching focuses explicitly on the how of improvement. Feedback is mentor led and centres on a small number of precise actions, supported by targeted questioning and rehearsal.

Feedback model

Across **fortnightly mentor interactions**, you will use the following feedback model to support ECTs to incrementally improve their teaching practice.



Let's look at each stage in more detail.

Practice stage	What to do	Examples
Praise strengths	<i>Highlight key areas of strength.</i> • Explain what went well. • Be precise. • Back up with evidence. • Reference progress towards the previous week's actions.	'Thank you for allowing me to observe your lesson today' 'One thing I thought was effective about your practice was...' 'One real strength in the lesson I saw was...' 'This was evidenced when you...' 'A great example of this from the lesson was when you/pupils...' 'Your previous area for development was... I saw progress towards this when...'
Probe development areas	<i>Guide the teacher to reflect on their areas of development through a series of precise and direct questions.</i> • Plan questions in advance. • Use precise questions. • Use data and evidence. • Don't labour it – explain and tell if necessary. • Summarise specific areas for their development based on your probing of them.	'I'd like to explore with you some areas of development in your practice.' 'When the pupils were on the carpet, what was the key learning point you wanted to the pupils to grasp?' 'How do you know what the pupils had learned from the reading activity?' 'What did you expect the behaviour to be like when the pupils left the classroom/what did you want the behaviour to be?'

		Why did you choose that specific task/what did you want the pupils to achieve/how would you know if they had been successful?’ ‘What evidence do you have to show the lesson outcomes were met?’ ‘We’re now going to choose the area for development which will have the most impact on your practice. There were examples in the lesson when students did not fully understand teacher instruction in independent tasks (for example in the carpet task and the independent writing).’
Set precise action steps	<i>Identify the highest-leverage area of development to address and set a precise action step linked to this.</i> • Find highest-leverage areas. • Choose one to three key things. • Make sure they are actionable. • Be precise not generic. • Give a ‘how’ not just a what.	‘We’re now going to focus on setting an action step for this area of development which we will then plan and practise.’ ‘To address this development area, your action is to ...’ Give clear precise instructions by stating ‘what to do and why’ in as few words as possible.
Plan based on actions	<i>Focus on the action step from this area and plan how the teacher might address this in a future lesson.</i> • Look to a future lesson. • Plan where and how. • Script.	‘We’re now going to plan how you will put into practice this development area using the action we decided’. ‘What lesson, topic, class can we put this development area into place with?’ ‘What part(s) of the lesson might this development area most need to be addressed in?’ ‘Let’s script/sequence/decide etc. how you might go about doing this’. ‘What might this look like in your planning?’ ‘What would you ask, do, say...?’ ‘This is your success criteria’.

Deliberate practice	<i>Practise the plan for the action step that was created in the previous section to trial what it would look like in practice.</i> • Share success criteria. • Prime the deliberate practice by providing a model (e.g. mentor models/video clip). • Call the shots – say how you will act in the role (compliant/ authentic/near live). • Say how you will feedback to the teacher – wait until the end/ during? • Agree how many ‘turns’ you will give the teacher. • Get it on its feet/put the plan into practice with the teacher. • Feedback either after teacher has practised or during. • Repeat as appropriate	‘Now we’re going put into practice our planned action step. This is your success criteria; I’ll model this for you myself. ‘Look at how I achieve the success criteria.’ ‘I’m going to act as a compliant pupil. I will feedback after you have practised the action step and then I’m going to give you two more turns to practise the step based on my feedback.’ ‘Your voice was clear and well paced. Now do this again but I want you to remove the additional words – you don’t need such a long introduction – make it one sentence lasting no more than ten seconds.’
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Development Cycle 1

'Supporting pupils to develop intrinsic motivation' and
'Anticipating and addressing common misconceptions'



Development Cycle 1 – overview video

In preparation for supporting your ECT during this Development Cycle, please watch the Development Cycle 1 video available on Brightspace – Unit 3: Supporting an ECT in Year 2.

This will provide you with an overview of:

- The two themes for the cycle.
- The focus of the diagnostic questions.
- The key ideas ECTs will learn in their self-directed study and their two seminars.
- An overview of what you and your ECT will do during each stage of this Development Cycle.

Refocus – Mentor interaction 1

Focus: Use the diagnostic to reflect on ECT practice and consider areas for development.

In this mentor interaction you and your ECT will:

☐	Reflect on and discuss the diagnostic outcomes
☐	Consider possible development areas for your ECT based on this

Ensure you and your ECT have completed your diagnostic activities prior to this mentor interaction. The overview video will also support your preparations.

Diagnostic discussion

Use the three steps below to frame your diagnostic-focussed discussion. Use the prompts to support your ECT to critically reflect on their practice in relation to the areas covered in this Development Cycle.

1. Review the recommendations

Review your ECT's diagnostic outcome (focused on knowledge) alongside your mentor diagnostic outcome (focused on application) and discuss yours and your ECTs reflections on the 6 areas of development that it explored. The developmental areas are outlined in the table below:

Theme	Possible development areas
Developing pupils' intrinsic motivation	• Frame outcomes in a way that supports pupils to see their success or mitigate failure. • Introduce new material in small steps and provide practice after each step to support pupils to achieve success. • Model metacognitive regulation and support pupils to engage in this process during learning to help them become self-regulated learners.

Anticipating and addressing common misconceptions	• Strengthen subject knowledge to anticipate likely misconceptions during planning and address them through responsive teaching to secure accurate pupil understanding. • Introduce refutation texts to explicitly surface and challenge misconceptions and guide pupils towards accurate conceptual understanding. • Integrate concept cartoons to elicit pupils' ideas, surface misconceptions, stimulate structured discussion, and guide pupils towards accurate concepts.
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2. Reflect on ECT strengths and areas for development

Consider the outcomes of the diagnostic, and your ECT's current practice, and support your ECT to reflect on their areas of strength and development linked to the themes of this Development Cycle outlined in the previous table.

Draw on specific examples from their classroom practice. Use these prompts to support deeper reflection within the area you are exploring.

- Are you consistently applying this knowledge to your classroom practice?
- Are you applying this knowledge consistently well?
- Can you apply this knowledge consistently well in different contexts?
- Is this knowledge embedded well enough for you to be automatic in your use of it?
- Can you take this knowledge and integrate it with additional pedagogical concepts?

3. Select possible areas for development

Important: The highest-leverage development area for your ECT may differ from the recommended themes. In this case, set a development focus that reflects this priority. Use your professional judgement to decide whether this is appropriate.

Use the diagnostic recommendations as well as the conversation about their strengths and areas for development to select the ECTs highest leverage focus area(s) for this Development Cycle. Select one focus from each theme.

We will now focus on theme 1 for the rest of this half-term: **Supporting pupils to develop intrinsic motivation.**

Make a note of the possible focus area below:

This focus area will be refined into a more specific action step in your next meeting following their self-study and seminar attendance.

Refocus – Mentor interaction 2

Focus:

- Discuss learning from ECT self-directed study and seminar.
- Set action step(s) and success criteria.

In this mentor interaction you and your ECT will:

☐	Discuss learning from the first self-study and seminar for this Development Cycle and apply it to their context
☐	Define specific action step(s), and set clear success criteria to support them in working towards their first development area for this cycle
☐	Arrange their initial 'Engage with an expert' observation/discussion

Self-study and seminar discussion

Explore your ECT's learning from the self-study and from the seminar they have attended. Support them to consider how this learning applies to their context and to their current development focus area which you identified in the previous meeting for theme 1.

Discussion prompts:

From our last meeting, you identified a possible focus area of [insert focus area]. Since then, you've completed the relevant self directed study and participated in the seminar on **Supporting pupils to develop intrinsic motivation**.

To guide our discussion today, I'd like to start with:

General prompts:

- What key learning did you take from the self-directed study/seminars?
- Was there anything that challenged or reshaped your current thinking or practice?

Theme specific prompts:

Theme	Question prompts
Supporting pupils to develop intrinsic motivation <i>Seminar 1.1</i>	• Evaluate practice of self-study strategy: How effectively do you frame pupil outcomes so that it makes them aware of their success or mitigates failure? • Evaluate practice of seminar strategies: How confident are you in your use of the strategies explored in the seminars, such as, teaching in small steps and developing metacognitive regulation? • Evaluate adaptive teaching practice: How are you adapting your approaches to respond to pupil needs? • Application: What learning or strategies from the self-study or seminar could support you to develop further?

Setting an action step

Based on your discussion, refine your ECTs broader development area into action step(s).

Action step examples: (these are just examples to use as a guide, develop an action step that is relevant for your ECT's development).

Theme	Example action steps
Supporting pupils to develop intrinsic motivation <i>Self-study and seminar 1.1</i>	• Frame success: During feedback to pupils, frame success by explicitly referencing individual progress against their own previous work rather than comparing them to others (e.g. "Well done, you are much more confident at [insert skill], compared to last week", "Wow, look how much you have improved since the last time you tried this.") • Teach in small steps: Support pupils to be successful by providing guided practice after each small step to check understanding and adapt teaching in response. • Model metacognitive regulation: Before independent practice, model the planning stage of metacognitive regulation by asking and answering metacognitive questions (e.g. "What is this task asking me to do?" and "How should I begin?").

Record the area for development, the action step(s) and success criteria here:

An example can be found in **Appendix B:**



Setting up 'Engage with an expert 1'

Identify an expert colleague who can demonstrate this development area and whether an observation or discussion would be more appropriate.

- Work with your ECT to set up the 'Engage with an expert' proforma to focus either their observation or discussion. They can download their form from Brightspace. **See Appendix A.**
- Ensure your ECT shares the focus area and key elements they wish to observe with the expert colleague so they know what your ECT will be looking for.
- Remind ECTs they will need to upload their completed proforma after the observation onto Brightspace.

Develop – Mentor interaction 3

Focus: Draw out learning insights from 'Engage with an expert', review action steps and prepare for integration.

☐	Draw out learning insights from the 'Engage with an expert' observation or discussion
☐	Refine action steps and success criteria (if needed)
☐	Engage in plan and practice of action step(s)

Draw out learning insights

Use the discussion prompts below to discuss your ECT's learning from the 'Engage with an expert' observation or discussion.

Focus ECT's thinking on learning from the observation/discussion in relation to their action steps.

Learning from the observation

- How did the observed teacher effectively [insert focus/action step here]?
- What specifically did the teacher say or do to support this?
- What was the impact on pupils?
 - How did you know?
 - Was this the intended impact?
- What do you think the teacher had prepared or ensured was in place to enable this teaching to have the intended impact?
- What aspects of this observation are most relevant to your current action step(s)?
- How will what you observed influence what you do next in your own classroom, and how will you incorporate this learning to improve pupil outcomes?

Learning from the 'Engage with an expert' discussion

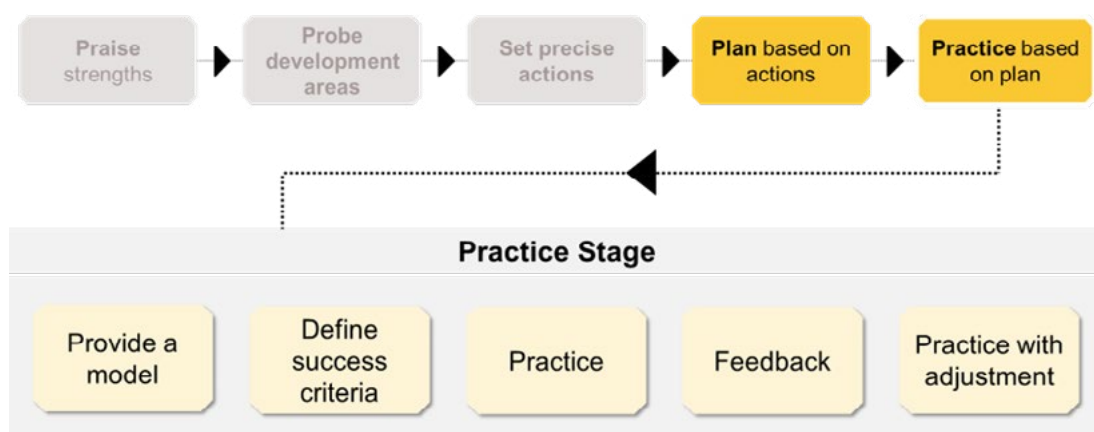
- What key ideas or principles did the expert emphasise in relation to [insert focus/action step here]?
- How did the expert explain why these approaches are effective?
- What practical examples, strategies or cautions did the expert highlight?
- How did this discussion deepen or challenge your existing understanding?
- How does the learning from the expert discussion inform or refine your action step(s)?
- How will the ideas and guidance from the expert discussion shape your approach in the classroom, and how will you incorporate this learning to improve pupil outcomes?

Refining action step(s) and success criteria

Based on the 'Engage with an expert' observation or discussion, do the ECT's action step(s) and success criteria need refining? **See Appendix B for example.**

Deliberate practice: plan and practice

Use the practice model from your mentor training to prepare your ECT for integration:



As a reminder:

1. **Plan the practice:** Plan what the practice will look like by setting success criteria for their action step(s).
2. **Mentor models the approach:** Demonstrate how to do this, using the identified success criteria.
3. **Plan a script:** Give your ECT time to script their practice, using the space below. You may wish to provide support with this.
4. **Prime the practice:** Get your ECT ready and then give them time to practice whilst you observe.
5. **Feedback on practice:** Give your ECT specific feedback on their practice, referencing the success criteria.
6. **ECT re-practices:** Your ECT then uses the feedback to re-practice.

Use the space below to script the practice:

Integrate – Mentor interaction 4

Focus: Feedback on ECT practice following your observation and set new or refined action steps.

In this mentor interaction you and your ECT will:

☐	Discuss learning from the self-study 2 and seminar 2 for this development cycle and apply it to their context
☐	Feedback on ECT practice using the instructional coaching cycle
☐	Set new action step(s) and success criteria from theme 2 or refine from theme 1
☐	Arrange the second 'Engage with an expert' observation/discussion

Prior to this mentor interaction you will need to conduct a drop in observation focused on your ECT's action step.

Self-study and seminar discussion

Explore your ECT's learning from the second self-study and from the seminar they have attended. Support them to consider how this learning applies to their context. Consider the feedback from the diagnostic that you discussed in mentor interaction 1.

Discussion prompts:

From our first meeting for this Development Cycle last half term, you identified a possible focus area of [insert focus area] for theme 2. Since then, you've completed the relevant self directed study and participated in the seminar on: **Identifying and addressing misconceptions.**

To guide our discussion today, I'd like to start with:

General prompts:

- What key learning did you take from the self-directed study/seminar?
- Was there anything that challenged or reshaped your current thinking or practice?

Theme specific prompts:

Theme	Question prompts
Identifying and addressing misconceptions prompts <i>Seminar 1.2</i>	• Evaluate practice of self-study strategy: How well does your subject knowledge enable you to anticipate and address common misconceptions in your lessons? • Evaluate practice of seminar strategies: How confident are you in your use of the strategies explored in the seminars, such as, using refutation texts and concept cartoons? • Evaluate adaptive teaching practice: How are you adapting your approaches to respond to pupil needs? • Application: What learning or strategies from the self-study or seminar could support you to develop this further?

Pause in theme 2 discussion

Discussion prompt: I'm now going to use the instructional coaching cycle to feedback on your observation. This will help us decide whether to continue with your current focus or move on to an area from theme 2.

Instructional coaching cycle

Use the instructional coaching cycle below to discuss and feedback on your observation. You will be familiar with this from Year 1.

Praise

Address strengths identified during the observation.

Probe

Use carefully developed questions to probe ECTs understanding, reflection on their practice and impact on pupils.

Decision:

Discussion prompt: Explain that together, you now need to decide their area for development for half term 2.

Has the ECT met the agreed action step(s) in their development area for theme 1?

Yes

Agree new action step(s) informed by development area from theme 2

No

- Refine the existing action step(s)
- Refine and clarify success criteria
- Continue with the revised action step(s)

Precise action steps – set new or refine current

Based on the decision above, agree new action step(s) from theme 2 or refine current action step(s).

Setting a new action step for theme 2

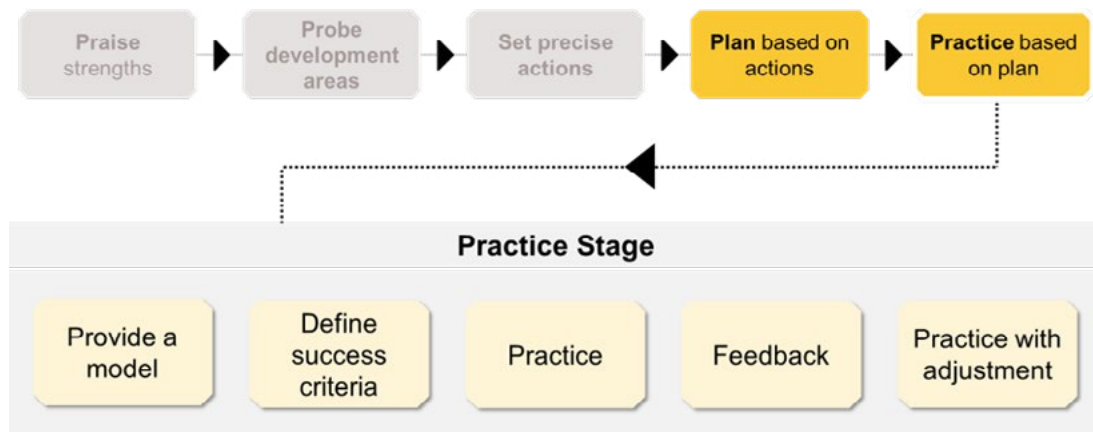
There is guidance below to help refine your ECTs broader development area for theme 2 into action step(s).

Action step examples: *(these are just examples to use as a guide, develop an action step that is relevant for your ECT's development).*

Theme	Example action steps
Identifying and addressing misconceptions prompts <i>Seminar 1.2</i>	• Ask probing questions: Secure accurate pupil understanding when misconceptions arise by pausing the lesson, asking a probing question to surface reasoning, and then re modelling the correct concept. • Use refutation texts: Anticipate subject specific misconceptions during planning and address them explicitly in a lesson by using a refutation text that (a) clearly states the common misconception, (b) explicitly refutes it, and (c) provides and explains the correct concept. • Use concept cartoons: Identify and address pupils' misconceptions by using a concept cartoon at the start of a lesson to elicit pupils' initial ideas about a specific concept and facilitate a discussion that surfaces and challenges a common misconception.

Use the box below to record you new or refined action steps and success criteria.

To prepare your ECT for integration, work through a plan and practice cycle:



Use the space below to script the practice:

Setting up 'Engage with an expert 2'

Identify an expert colleague who can demonstrate this development area and whether an observation or discussion would be more appropriate.

- Work with your ECT to set up the 'Engage with an expert' proforma to focus either their observation or discussion. **See Appendix A.**
- Ensure your ECT shares the focus area and key elements they wish to observe with the expert colleague so they know what your ECT will be looking for.
- Remind ECTs they will need to upload their completed proforma after the observation onto Brightspace.

Develop – Mentor interaction 5

Focus: Draw out learning insights from 'Engage with an expert', review action steps and prepare for integration.

In this mentor interaction you and your ECT will:

☐	Draw out learning insights from the 'Engage with an expert' observation or discussion
☐	Refine action steps and success criteria (if needed)
☐	Engage in plan and practice of action step(s)

Draw out learning insights

Use the discussion prompts below to discuss your ECT's learning from the 'Engage with an expert' observation or discussion.

Focus ECT's thinking on learning from the observation/discussion in relation to their action steps.

Learning from the observation

- How did the observed teacher effectively [insert focus/action step here]?
- What specifically did the teacher say or do to support this?
- What was the impact on pupils?
 - o How did you know?
 - o Was this the intended impact?
- What do you think the teacher had prepared or ensured was in place to enable this teaching to have the intended impact?
- What aspects of this observation are most relevant to your current action step(s)?
- How will what you observed influence what you do next in your own classroom, and how will you incorporate this learning to improve pupil outcomes?

Learning from the 'Engage with an expert' discussion

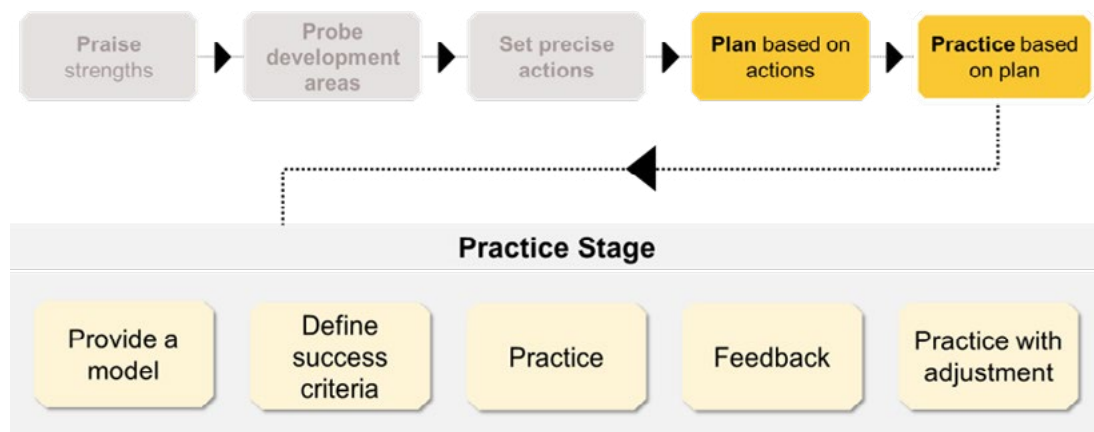
- What key ideas or principles did the expert emphasise in relation to [insert focus/action step here]?
- How did the expert explain why these approaches are effective?
- What practical examples, strategies or cautions did the expert highlight?
- How did this discussion deepen or challenge your existing understanding?
- How does the learning from the expert discussion inform or refine your action step(s)?
- How will the ideas and guidance from the expert discussion shape your approach in the classroom, and how will you incorporate this learning to improve pupil outcomes?

Refining action step(s) and success criteria

Based on the 'Engage with an expert' observation or discussion, do the ECT's action step(s) or success criteria need refining? **See Appendix B for example.**

Deliberate practice: plan and practice

To prepare your ECT for integration, work through a plan and practice cycle:



Use the space below to script the practice:

Integrate – Mentor interaction 6

Focus: Feedback on ECT practice following your observation.

In this mentor interaction you and your ECT will:

☐	Feedback on ECT practice using the instructional coaching cycle
☐	Share feedback on progress toward their overall development goal
☐	Support them how to sustain progress over time
☐	Bring the Development Cycle to a close

Prior to this mentor interaction you will need to conduct a drop in observation focused on your ECT's action step.

Instructional coaching cycle

Use the instructional coaching cycle below to discuss and feedback on your observation.

Praise

- Explicitly recognise progress across the cycle, not just the lesson observed.
- Name what the ECT is now doing independently.
- Link teacher action to pupil impact (and confidence).

Probe

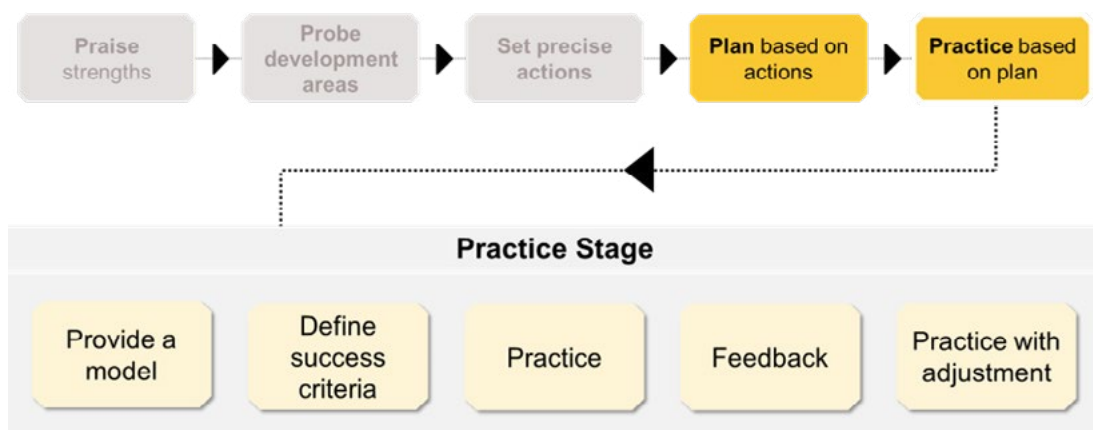
- Explore the ECT's thinking and reasoning.
- Focus on what feels easier or more automatic now.
- Prompt the ECT to articulate impact and learning.

Precise action steps – set new or refine

As this is the final mentor interaction in Development Cycle 1, adjust the remaining elements of the instructional coaching cycle accordingly. Use your professional judgement to decide whether the ECT should continue with their current development focus into the next cycle, but only where this is essential to their development.

- Consolidate the core practice rather than introduce anything new.
- Frame the action as something to *embed and sustain*.

To support your ECT in sustaining their practice over time, work through a plan and practice cycle:



Plan

- Light touch planning focused on confidence and sustainability.
- Identify where the strategy will be used next.
- Clarify what success will look like and how to respond if it wobbles.

Practice

- Short, low stakes rehearsal to build confidence.
- Practise a likely tricky moment or challenge.

Use the space below to script the practice:

Looking ahead

Explicitly recognise that the coaching cycle is closing because progress has been made, naming what is now secure and no longer needs weekly coaching support. Reinforce that the focus is now on sustaining the improvements and being able to adapt them when necessary.

This is the last stage in this Development Cycle. Your ECT's next Development Cycle will be Development Cycle 2: Supporting pupils to develop subject specific skills and using structured talk to develop pupils' literacy.

Ensure your ECT is aware of their seminar dates for Development Cycle 2 and use the space below to set a time for your first Refocus mentor meeting.



Development Cycle 2

‘Supporting pupils to develop subject specific skills’ and ‘Using structured talk to develop pupils’ literacy’



Development Cycle 2 – overview video

In preparation for supporting your ECT during this Development Cycle, please watch the Development Cycle 2 video available on Brightspace – Unit 3: Supporting an ECT in Year 2.

This will provide you with an overview of:

- The two themes for the cycle.
- The focus of the diagnostic questions.
- The key ideas ECTs will learn in their self-directed study and their two seminars.
- An overview of what you and your ECT will do during each stage of this Development Cycle.

Refocus – Mentor interaction 1

Focus: Use the diagnostic to reflect on ECT practice and consider areas for development.

In this mentor interaction you and your ECT will:

☐	Reflect on and discuss the diagnostic outcomes
☐	Consider possible development areas for your ECT based on this

Ensure you and your ECT have completed your diagnostic activities prior to this mentor interaction. The overview video will also support your preparations.

Diagnostic discussion

Use the 3 steps below to frame diagnostic-focussed discussion. Use the prompts to support your ECT to critically reflect on their practice in relation to the areas covered in this Development Cycle.

1. Review the recommendations

Review your ECT's diagnostic outcome alongside your mentor diagnostic outcome and discuss yours and you ECTs reflections on the 6 areas of development that it explored. The developmental areas are outlined in the table below:

Theme	Possible development areas
Developing pupils' subject-specific skills	• Break subject-specific skills into component parts to focus teaching. • Use modelling to teach subject-specific skills. • Combine verbal and graphical representations to support the development of subject-specific skills.
Using structured talk to develop pupils' literacy	• Create a culture for talk in your classroom. • Use questioning to develop pupils' oracy. • Use scaffolds to support pupils to clearly communicate their ideas using high quality language.

2. Reflect on strengths and areas for development

Consider the recommendations from the diagnostic and ECT current practice and support your ECT to reflect on their areas of strength and development. Draw on specific examples from their classroom practice. Use these prompts to support your discussion:

- Are you consistently applying this knowledge to your classroom practice?
- Are you applying this knowledge consistently well?
- Can you apply this knowledge consistently well in different contexts?
- Is this knowledge embedded well enough for you to be automatic in your use of it?
- Can you take this knowledge and integrate it with additional pedagogical concepts?

3. Select possible areas for development

Important: The highest-leverage development area for your ECT may differ from the recommended themes. In this case, set a development focus that reflects this priority. Use your professional judgement to decide whether this is appropriate.

Use the diagnostic recommendations as well as the conversation about their strengths and areas for development to select ECTs highest leverage focus area(s) for this Development Cycle. Select one focus from each theme.

We will now focus on theme 1 for the rest of this half-term: **Developing pupils' subject-specific skills.**

Make a note of the possible focus area below:

This focus area will be refined into more specific action step(s) in your next meeting following their self-study and seminar attendance.

Refocus – Mentor interaction 2

Focus:

- Discuss learning from ECT self-directed study and seminar.
- Set action steps and success criteria.

In this mentor interaction you and your ECT will:

☐	Discuss learning from the first self-study and seminar for this development cycle and apply it to their context
☐	Define specific action step(s), and set clear success criteria to support them in working towards their development area for this cycle
☐	Arrange their 'Engage with an expert' observation/discussion

Self-study and seminar discussion

Explore your ECT's learning from the self-study and from the seminar they have attended. Support them to consider how this learning applies to their context and to their current development focus area which you identified in the previous meeting for theme 1.

Discussion prompts:

From our last meeting, you identified a possible focus area of [insert focus area]. Since then, you've completed the relevant self directed study and participated in the seminar on **Developing pupils' subject-specific skills**.

To guide our discussion today, I'd like to start with:

General prompts:

- What key learning did you take from the self-directed study/seminars?
- Was there anything that challenged or reshaped your current thinking or practice?

Theme specific prompts:

Theme	Question prompts
Supporting pupils to develop subject specific skills <i>Self-study and seminar 2.1</i>	• Evaluate practice of self-study strategy: How do you identify the key skills in your subject? How effectively do you break these down into component parts? • Evaluate practice of seminar strategies: How confident are you in your use of the strategies explored in the seminars, such as modelling (think aloud, demonstrations, worked examples) and dual coding? • Evaluate adaptive teaching practice: How are you adapting your instructional approaches to respond to pupil needs when teaching subject-specific skills? • Application: What learning or strategies from the self-study or seminar could support you to develop further?

Setting an action step(s)

Based on your discussion, refine your ECTs broader development area into action step(s).

Action step examples: *(these are just examples to use as a guide, develop an action step that is relevant for your ECT's development).*

Theme	Example action steps
Supporting pupils to develop subject specific skills <i>Self-study and seminar 2.1</i>	• Use Think Aloud: Model expert thinking when undertaking [insert subject specific skill here] by talking through my thought processes for each step • Use dual coding: Use graphical representations to support understanding of a skill by presenting each visual alongside each step of my explanation. • Gradually remove scaffolding: Fade visual scaffolds as pupils develop expertise by prompting pupils to create and label diagrams independently.

Record the area for development, the action step(s) and success criteria here:

Setting up 'Engage with an expert 1'

Identify an expert colleague who can demonstrate this development area and whether an observation or discussion would be more appropriate.

- Work with your ECT to set up the 'Engage with an expert' proforma to focus either their observation or discussion. **See Appendix A.**
- Ensure your ECT shares the focus area and key elements they wish to observe with the expert colleague so they know what your ECT will be looking for.
- Remind ECTs they will need to upload their completed proforma after the observation onto Brightspace.

Develop – Mentor interaction 3

Focus: Draw out learning insights from 'Engage with an expert', review action steps and prepare for integration.

In this mentor interaction you and your ECT will:

☐	Draw out learning insights from the 'Engage with an expert' observation or discussion
☐	Refine action steps and success criteria (if needed)
☐	Engage in plan and practice of action step(s)

Draw out learning insights

Use the discussion prompts below to discuss your ECT's learning from the 'Engage with an expert' observation or discussion.

Focus ECT's thinking on learning from the observation/discussion in relation to their action steps.

Learning from the observation

- How did the observed teacher effectively [insert focus/action step here]?
- What specifically did the teacher say or do to support this?
- What was the impact on pupils?
 - How did you know?
 - Was this the intended impact?
- What do you think the teacher had prepared or ensured was in place to enable this teaching to have the intended impact?
- What aspects of this observation are most relevant to your current action step(s)?
- How will what you observed influence what you do next in your own classroom, and how will you incorporate this learning to improve pupil outcomes?

Learning from the 'Engage with an expert' discussion

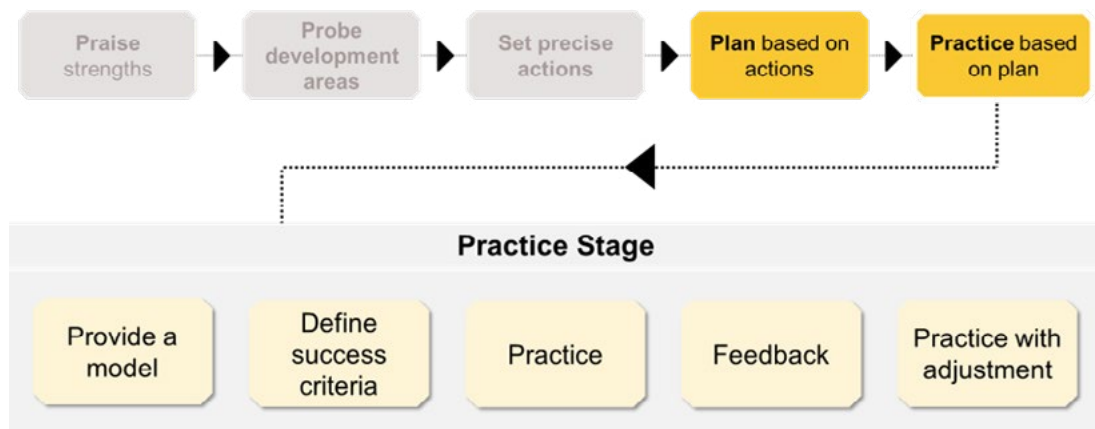
- What key ideas or principles did the expert emphasise in relation to [insert focus/action step here]?
- How did the expert explain why these approaches are effective?
- What practical examples, strategies or cautions did the expert highlight?
- How did this discussion deepen or challenge your existing understanding?
- How does the learning from the expert discussion inform or refine your action step(s)?
- How will the ideas and guidance from the expert discussion shape your approach in the classroom, and how will you incorporate this learning to improve pupil outcomes?

Refining action step(s) and success criteria

Based on the 'Engage with an expert' observation or discussion, do the ECT's action step(s) and success criteria need refining? **See Appendix B for example.**

Deliberate practice: plan and practice

Use the practice model from your mentor training to prepare your ECT for integration:



Use the space below to script the practice:

Integrate – Mentor interaction 4

Focus: Feedback on ECT practice following your observation and set new or refined action steps.

In this mentor interaction you and your ECT will:

☐	Discuss learning from the self-study 2 and seminar 2 for this development cycle and apply it to their context
☐	Feedback on ECT practice using the instructional coaching cycle
☐	Set new action step(s) and success criteria from theme 2 or refine from theme 1
☐	Arrange the second 'Engage with an expert' observation/discussion

Prior to this mentor interaction you will need to conduct a drop in observation focused on your ECT's action step.

Self-study and seminar discussion

Explore your ECT's learning from the second self-study and from the seminar they have attended. Support them to consider how this learning applies to their context. Consider the feedback from the diagnostic that you discussed in mentor interaction 1.

Discussion prompts:

From our first meeting for this Development Cycle last half term, you identified a possible focus area of [insert focus area]. Since then, you've completed the relevant self directed study and participated in the seminar on: **Using structured talk to develop pupils' literacy.**

To guide our discussion today, I'd like to start with:

General prompts:

- What key learning did you take from the self-directed study/seminar?
- Was there anything that challenged or reshaped your current thinking or practice?

Theme	Question prompts
Using structured talk to develop pupils' literacy <i>Self-study and seminar 2.2</i>	• Evaluate practice of self-study strategy: How effectively have you established and maintained a culture for talk using the areas covered in the self-directed study (talk norms, set goals, assign roles, model talk, provide feedback)? • Evaluate practice of seminar strategies: How confident are you in your use of the strategies explored in the seminars, such as, asking open questions to extend responses and using scaffolds for talk? • Evaluate adaptive teaching practice: How are you adapting your instructional approaches to respond to pupil needs when scaffolding talk? • Application: What learning or strategies from the self-study or seminar could support you to develop this further?

Pause in theme 2 discussion.

Discussion prompts: I'm now going to use the instructional coaching cycle to feedback on your observation. This will help us decide whether to continue with your current focus or move on to an area from theme 2.

Instructional coaching cycle

Use the instructional coaching cycle below to discuss and feedback on your observation. You will be familiar with this from Year 1.

Praise

Address strengths identified during the observation.

Probe

Use carefully developed questions to probe ECTs understanding, reflection on their practice and impact on pupils.

Decision

Explain that together, you now need to decide about their area for development for half term 2.

Has the ECT met the agreed action step(s) in their development area for theme 1?

Yes

Agree new action step(s) informed by development area from theme 2

No

- Refine the existing action step(s)
- Refine and clarify success criteria
- Continue with the revised action step(s)

Precise action steps – set new or refine current

Based on your observation and the probe stage, set a new action step or refine the current one. **See Appendix B.**

Setting a new action step for theme 2

There is guidance below to help refine your ECTs broader development area for theme 2 into action step(s).

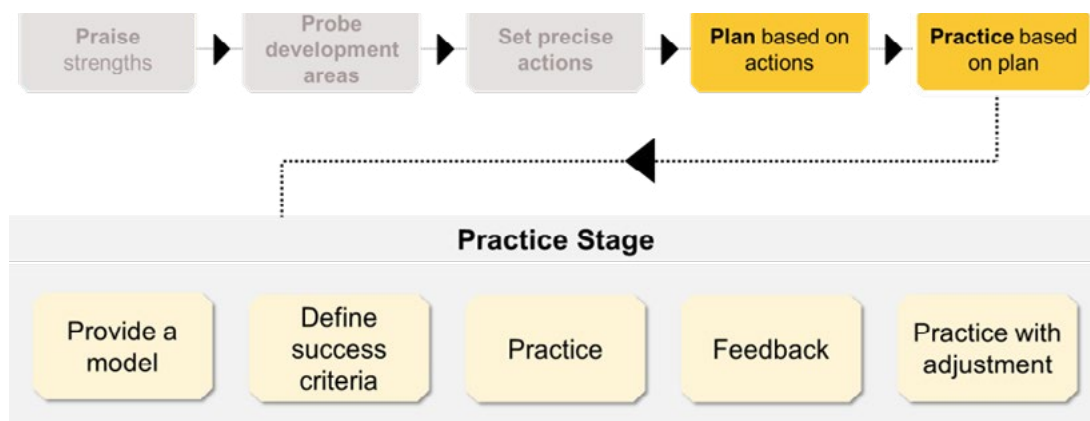
Action step examples: *(these are just examples to use as a guide, develop an action step that is relevant for your ECT's development).*

Theme	Example action steps
Using structured talk to develop pupils' literacy <i>Self-study and seminar 2.2</i>	• Establish a culture for talk: Create a culture for talk by explicitly teaching and modelling how to actively listen to others when they are speaking. • Enhance dialogic approach: Support pupils to respond to and build on each other's ideas by using prompts during talk activities. • Respond to need: Adapt speaking frames to make them accessible to those who have reading difficulties by replacing text with symbols.

Use the box below to record you new or refined action steps and success criteria.

Deliberate practice: plan and practice

To prepare your ECT for integration, work through a plan and practice cycle:



Use the space below to script the practice:

Setting up 'Engage with an expert 2'

Identify an expert colleague who can demonstrate this development area and whether an observation or discussion would be more appropriate.

- Work with your ECT to set up the 'Engage with an expert' proforma to focus either their observation or discussion. **See Appendix A.**
- Ensure your ECT shares the focus area and key elements they wish to observe with the expert colleague so they know what your ECT will be looking for.
- Remind ECTs they will need to upload their completed proforma after the observation onto Brightspace.

Develop – Mentor interaction 5

Focus: Draw out learning insights from 'Engage with an expert', review action steps and prepare for integration.

In this mentor interaction you and your ECT will:

☐	Draw out learning insights from the 'Engage with an expert' observation or discussion
☐	Refine action steps and success criteria (if needed)
☐	Engage in plan and practice of action step(s)

Draw out learning insights

Use the discussion prompts below to discuss your ECT's learning from the 'Engage with an expert' observation or discussion.

Focus ECT's thinking on learning from the observation/discussion in relation to their action steps.

Learning from the observation

- How did the observed teacher effectively [insert focus/action step here]?
- What specifically did the teacher say or do to support this?
- What was the impact on pupils?
 - o How did you know?
 - o Was this the intended impact?
- What do you think the teacher had prepared or ensured was in place to enable this teaching to have the intended impact?
- What aspects of this observation are most relevant to your current action step(s)?
- How will what you observed influence what you do next in your own classroom, and how will you incorporate this learning to improve pupil outcomes?

Learning from the 'Engage with an expert' discussion

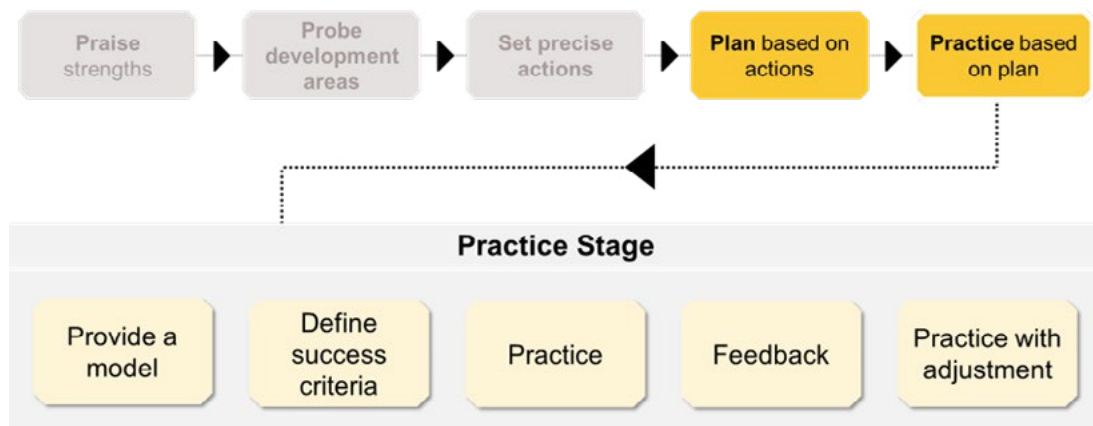
- What key ideas or principles did the expert emphasise in relation to [insert focus/action step here]?
- How did the expert explain why these approaches are effective?
- What practical examples, strategies or cautions did the expert highlight?
- How did this discussion deepen or challenge your existing understanding?
- How does the learning from the expert discussion inform or refine your action step(s)?
- How will the ideas and guidance from the expert discussion shape your approach in the classroom, and how will you incorporate this learning to improve pupil outcomes?

Refining action step(s) and success criteria

Based on the 'Engage with an expert' observation or discussion, do the ECT's action step(s) or success criteria need refining? **See Appendix B for example.**

Deliberate practice: plan and practice

To prepare your ECT for integration, work through a plan and practice cycle:



Use the space below to script the practice:

Integrate – Mentor interaction 6

Focus: Feedback on ECT practice following your observation.

In this mentor interaction you and your ECT will:

☐	Feedback on ECT practice using the instructional coaching cycle
☐	Share feedback on progress toward their overall development goal
☐	Support them how to sustain progress over time
☐	Bring the Development Cycle to a close

Prior to this mentor interaction you will need to conduct a drop in observation focused on your ECT's action step.

Instructional coaching cycle

Use the instructional coaching cycle below to discuss and feedback on your observation.

Praise

- Explicitly recognise progress across the cycle, not just the lesson observed.
- Name what the ECT is now doing independently.
- Link teacher action to pupil impact (and confidence).

Probe

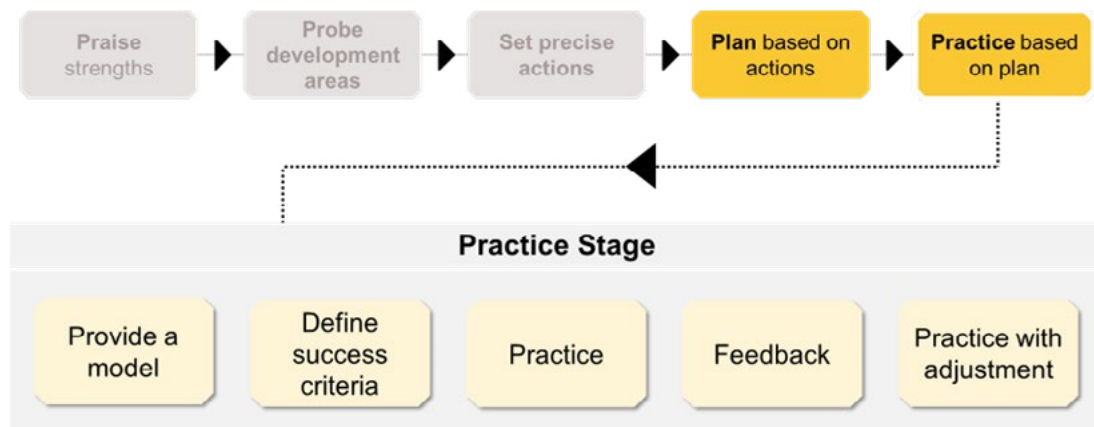
- Explore the ECT's thinking and reasoning.
- Focus on what feels easier or more automatic now.
- Prompt the ECT to articulate impact and learning.

Precise action steps – set new or refine

As this is the final mentor interaction in Development Cycle 2, adjust the remaining elements of the instructional coaching cycle accordingly. Use your professional judgement to decide whether the ECT should continue with their current development focus into the next cycle, but only where this is essential to their development.

- Consolidate the core practice rather than introduce anything new.
- Frame the action as something to embed and sustain.

To support your ECT in sustaining their practice over time, work through a plan and practice cycle:



Plan

- Light touch planning focused on confidence and sustainability.
- Identify where the strategy will be used next.
- Clarify what success will look like and how to respond if it wobbles.

Practice

- Short, low stakes rehearsal to build confidence.
- Practise a likely tricky moment or challenge.

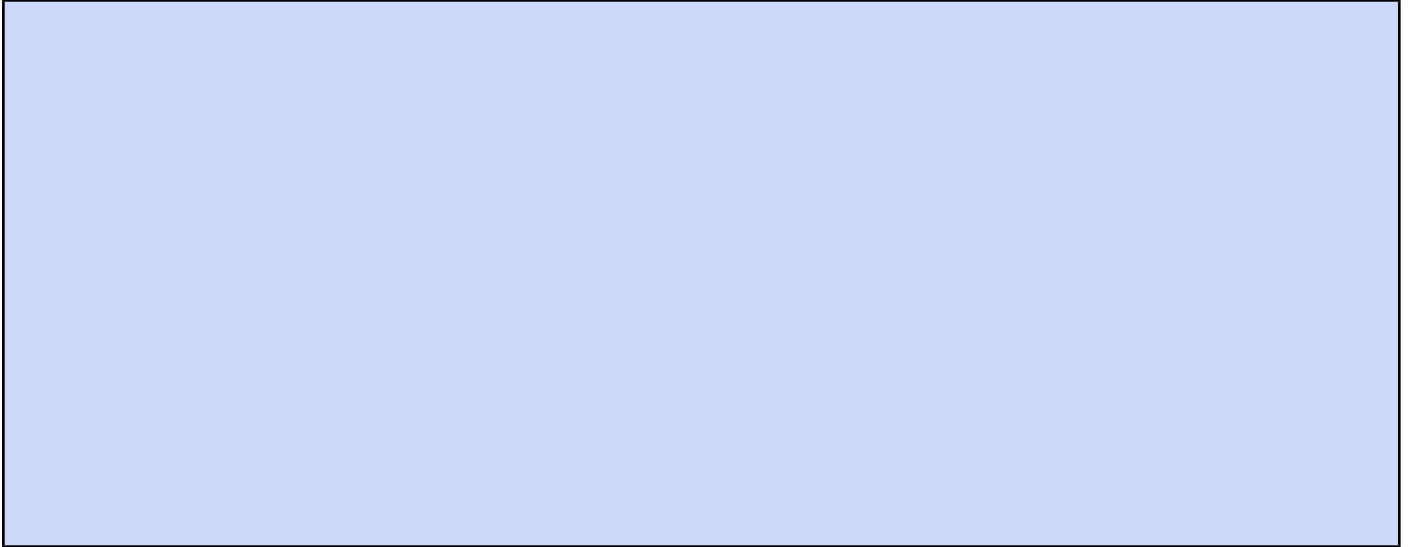
Use the space below to script the practice:

Looking ahead

Explicitly recognise that the coaching cycle is closing because progress has been made, naming what is now secure and no longer needs weekly coaching support. Reinforce that the focus is now on sustaining the improvements and being able to adapt them when necessary.

This is the last stage in this Development Cycle. Your ECT's next Development Cycle will be Development Cycle 3: Using meaningful and memorable explanations and designing a coherent curriculum.

Ensure your ECT is aware of their seminar dates for Development Cycle 3 and use the space below to set a time for your first Refocus mentor meeting.



Development Cycle 3

‘Using meaningful and memorable explanations’ and ‘Developing a coherent curriculum’



Development Cycle 3 – overview video

In preparation for supporting your ECT during this Development Cycle, please watch the Development Cycle 1 video available on Brightspace – Unit 3: Supporting an ECT in Year 2.

- The two themes for the cycle.
- The focus of the diagnostic questions.
- The key ideas ECTs will learn in their self-directed study and their two seminars.
- An overview of what you and your ECT will do during each stage of this Development Cycle.

Refocus – Mentor interaction 1

Focus: Use the diagnostic to reflect on ECT practice and consider areas for development

In this mentor interaction you and your ECT will:

☐	Reflect on and discuss the diagnostic outcomes
☐	Consider possible development areas for your ECT based on this

Ensure you and your ECT have completed your diagnostic activities prior to this mentor interaction. The overview video will also support your preparations.

Diagnostic discussion

Use the 3 steps below to frame diagnostic-focussed discussion. Use the prompts to support your ECT to critically reflect on their practice in relation to the areas covered in this Development Cycle.

1. Review the recommendations

Review your ECT's diagnostic outcome (focused on knowledge) alongside your mentor diagnostic outcome (focused on application) and discuss yours and your ECTs reflections on the 6 areas of development that it explored. The developmental areas are outlined in the table below:

Theme	Possible development areas
Using meaningful and memorable explanations	• Connecting new learning to prior knowledge. • Using concrete representations to make abstract ideas meaningful. • Making the steps in a process or complex sets of information memorable.
Developing a coherent curriculum	• Planning and implementing curriculum focused on foundational concepts of a subject. • Effectively sequencing curriculum. • Supporting the transfer of learning e.g. through retrieval, spaced practice and multiple examples.

2. Reflect on strengths and areas for development

Consider the recommendations from the diagnostic and ECT current practice and support your ECT to reflect on their areas of strength and development. Draw on specific examples from their classroom practice. Use these prompts to support your discussion:

- Are you consistently applying this knowledge to your classroom practice?
- Are you applying this knowledge consistently well?
- Can you apply this knowledge consistently well in different contexts?
- Is this knowledge embedded well enough for you to be automatic in your use of it?
- Can you take this knowledge and integrate it with additional pedagogical concepts?

3. Select possible areas for development

Important: The highest-leverage development area for your ECT may differ from the recommended themes. In this case, set a development focus that reflects this priority. Use your professional judgement to decide whether this is appropriate.

Use the diagnostic recommendations as well as the conversation about their strengths and areas for development to select ECTs highest leverage focus area(s) for this Development Cycle. Select one focus from each theme.

We will now focus on theme 1 for the rest of this half-term: **Use meaningful and memorable explanations.**

Make a note of the possible focus area below:



This focus area will be refined into more specific action step(s) in your next meeting following their self-study and seminar attendance.

Refocus – Mentor interaction 2

Focus:

- Discuss learning from ECT self-directed study and seminar.
- Set action steps and success criteria.

In this mentor interaction you and your ECT will:

☐	Discuss learning from the self-study and seminar and apply it to their context
☐	Define specific action steps, and set clear success criteria to support them in working towards their development area for this cycle
☐	Arrange their 'Engage with an expert' observation/discussion

Self-study and seminar discussion

Explore your ECT's learning from the self-study and from the seminar they have attended. Support them to consider how this learning applies to their context and to their current development focus area(s) which you identified in the previous meeting for theme 1.

Discussion prompts:

From our last meeting, you identified a possible focus area of [insert focus area]. Since then, you've completed the relevant self directed study and participated in the seminar on: **Using meaningful and memorable explanations.**

To guide our discussion today, I'd like to start with:

General prompts:

- What key learning did you take from the self-directed study/seminar?
- Was there anything that challenged or reshaped your current thinking or practice?

Theme specific prompts:

Theme	Question prompts
Use meaningful and memorable explanations <i>Self-study and seminar 3.1</i>	• Evaluate practice of self-study strategy: How do you connect new ideas to pupils' prior knowledge to develop understanding? • Evaluate practice of seminar strategies: How confident are you in your use of the strategies explored in the seminars, such as, mnemonics or stories and examples & non-examples or analogies? • Evaluate adaptive teaching practice: How are you adapting your approaches to respond to pupil needs? • Application: What learning or strategies from the self-study or seminar could support you to develop further?

Setting an action step

Based on your discussion, refine your ECTs broader development area into action steps.

Action step examples: *(these are just examples to use as a guide, develop an action step that is relevant for your ECT's development).*

Theme	Example action steps
Use meaningful and memorable explanations <i>Self-study and seminar 3.1</i>	• Make meaningful links: Support pupils to connect new learning to what they already know by prompting them to recall prior knowledge and explicitly highlighting the connections between previous content and the new concept. • Use analogies: Make abstract ideas concrete by using an analogy which connects the new idea to pupils' prior experiences. • Use mnemonics: Support pupils to remember the steps of a process by using a mnemonic which clearly chunks the information and provides cues for recall.

Record the area for development, the action step(s) and success criteria here:

Setting up 'Engage with an expert 1'

Identify an expert colleague who can demonstrate this development area and whether an observation or discussion would be more appropriate.

- Work with your ECT to set up the 'Engage with an expert' proforma to focus either their observation or discussion. **See Appendix A.**
- Ensure your ECT shares the focus area and key elements they wish to observe with the expert colleague so they know what your ECT will be looking for.
- Remind ECTs they will need to upload their completed proforma after the observation onto Brightspace.

Develop – Mentor interaction 3

Focus: Draw out learning insights from 'Engage with an expert', review action steps and prepare for integration.

In this mentor interaction you and your ECT will:

☐	Draw out learning insights from the 'Engage with an expert' observation or discussion
☐	Refine action steps and success criteria (if needed)
☐	Engage in plan and practice of action step(s)

Draw out learning insights

Use the discussion prompts below to discuss your ECT's learning from the 'Engage with an expert' observation or discussion.

Focus ECT's thinking on learning from the observation/discussion in relation to their action steps.

Learning from the observation

- How did the observed teacher effectively [insert focus/action step here]?
- What specifically did the teacher say or do to support this?
- What was the impact on pupils?
 - o How did you know?
 - o Was this the intended impact?
- What do you think the teacher had prepared or ensured was in place to enable this teaching to have the intended impact?
- What aspects of this observation are most relevant to your current action step(s)?
- How will what you observed influence what you do next in your own classroom, and how will you incorporate this learning to improve pupil outcomes?

Learning from the 'Engage with an expert' discussion

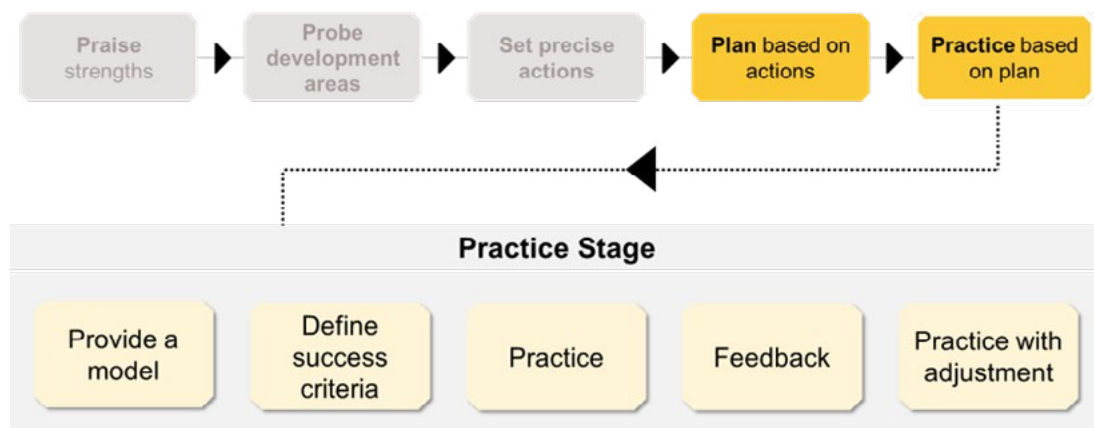
- What key ideas or principles did the expert emphasise in relation to [insert focus/action step here]?
- How did the expert explain why these approaches are effective?
- What practical examples, strategies or cautions did the expert highlight?
- How did this discussion deepen or challenge your existing understanding?
- How does the learning from the expert discussion inform or refine your action step(s)?
- How will the ideas and guidance from the expert discussion shape your approach in the classroom, and how will you incorporate this learning to improve pupil outcomes?

Refining action step(s) and success criteria

Based on the 'Engage with an expert' observation or discussion, do the ECT's action step(s) and success criteria need refining? **See Appendix B for example.**

Deliberate practice: plan and practice

Use the practice model from your mentor training to prepare your ECT for integration:



Use the space below to script the practice:

Integrate – Mentor interaction 4

Focus: Feedback on ECT practice following your observation and set new or refined action steps.

In this mentor interaction you and your ECT will:

☐	Discuss learning from the self-study 2 and seminar 2 for this Development Cycle and apply it to their context
☐	Feedback on ECT practice using the instructional coaching cycle
☐	Set new action step(s) and success criteria from theme 2 or refine from theme 1
☐	Arrange the second 'Engage with an expert' observation/discussion

Prior to this mentor interaction you will need to conduct a drop in observation focused on your ECT's action step.

Self-study and seminar discussion

Explore your ECT's learning from the second self-study and from the seminar they have attended. Support them to consider how this learning applies to their context. Consider the feedback from the diagnostic that you discussed in mentor interaction 1.

Discussion prompts:

From our first meeting for this Development Cycle last half term, you identified a possible focus area of [insert focus area]. Since then, you've completed the relevant self directed study and participated in the seminar on: **Develop a coherent curriculum.**

To guide our discussion today, I'd like to start with:

General prompts:

- What key learning did you take from the self-directed study/seminar?
- Was there anything that challenged or reshaped your current thinking or practice?

Theme specific prompts:

Theme	Question prompts
Develop a coherent curriculum <i>Self-study and seminar 3.2</i>	• Evaluate practice of self-study strategy: How do you connect topics to the foundational concept or big ideas of the subject? How do you make these explicit for pupils? • Evaluate practice of seminar strategies: How confident are you in your use of the strategies explored in the seminars, such as, revisiting and on concepts and supporting the transfer of learning? • Evaluate adaptive teaching practice: How are you adapting your approaches to respond to pupil needs? • Application: What learning or strategies from the self-study or seminar could support you to develop this further?

Pause in theme 2 discussion

I'm now going to use the instructional coaching cycle to feedback on your observation. This will help us decide whether to continue with your current focus or move on to an area from theme 2.

Instructional coaching cycle

Use the instructional coaching cycle below to discuss and feedback on your observation. You will be familiar with this from Year 1.

Praise

Address strengths identified during the observation.

Probe

Use carefully developed questions to probe ECTs understanding, reflection on their practice and impact on pupils.

Decision

Explain that together, you now need to decide about their area for development for half term 2.

Has the ECT met the agreed action step(s) in their development area for theme 1?

Yes

Agree new action step(s) informed by development area from theme 2

No

- Refine the existing action step(s)
- Refine and clarify success criteria
- Continue with the revised action step(s)

Precise action steps – set new or refine current

Based on evidence from observation and the probe discussion, agree new action step(s) or refine current action step(s). **See Appendix B for example.**

Setting a new action step for theme 2

There is guidance below to help refine your ECTs broader development area for theme 2 into action step(s).

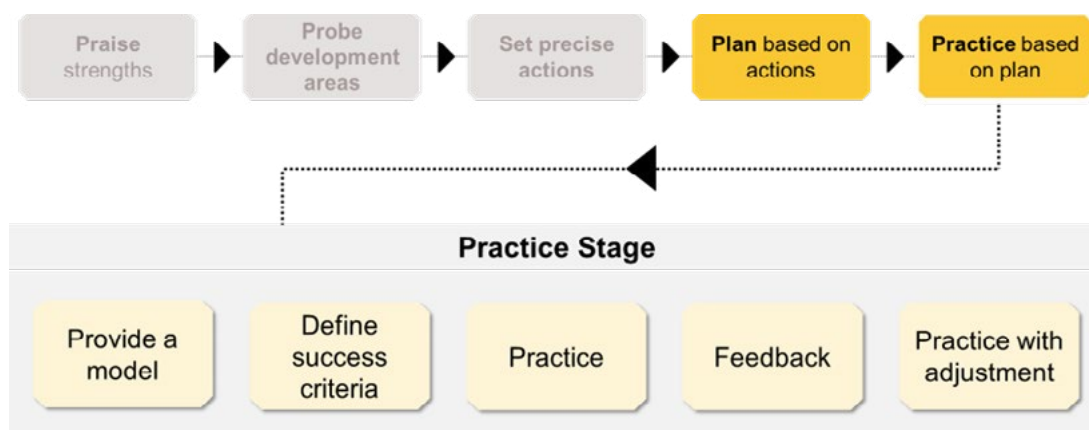
Action step examples: *(these are just examples to use as a guide, develop an action step that is relevant for your ECT's development).*

Theme	Example action steps
Develop a coherent curriculum <i>Self-study and seminar 3.2</i>	• Identify placement of foundational concepts: Enact a coherent curriculum by identifying where foundational concepts recur throughout each unit. • Support transfer: Support pupils to transfer learning from one context to another by including retrieval practice at key points in the unit. • Expose underlying principles: Expose the underlying principles of a concept by providing a range of examples and identifying how they are the same and how they are different.

Use the box below to record you new or refined action steps and success criteria.

Deliberate practice: plan and practice

To prepare your ECT for integration, work through a plan and practice cycle:



Use the space below to script the practice:

Setting up 'Engage with an expert 2'

Identify an expert colleague who can demonstrate this development area and whether an observation or discussion would be more appropriate.

- Work with your ECT to set up the 'Engage with an expert' proforma to focus either their observation or discussion. **See Appendix A.**
- Ensure your ECT shares the focus area and key elements they wish to observe with the expert colleague so they know what your ECT will be looking for.
- Remind ECTs they will need to upload their completed proforma after the observation onto Brightspace.

Develop – Mentor interaction 5

Focus: Draw out learning insights from 'Engage with an expert', review action steps and prepare for integration.

In this mentor interaction you and your ECT will:

☐	Draw out learning insights from the 'Engage with an expert' observation or discussion
☐	Refine action steps and success criteria (if needed)
☐	Engage in plan and practice of action step(s)

Draw out learning insights

Use the discussion prompts below to discuss your ECT's learning from the 'Engage with an expert' observation or discussion.

Focus ECT's thinking on learning from the observation/discussion in relation to their action steps.

Learning from the observation

- How did the observed teacher effectively [insert focus/action step here]?
- What specifically did the teacher say or do to support this?
- What was the impact on pupils?
 - o How did you know?
 - o Was this the intended impact?
- What do you think the teacher had prepared or ensured was in place to enable this teaching to have the intended impact?
- What aspects of this observation are most relevant to your current action step(s)?
- How will what you observed influence what you do next in your own classroom, and how will you incorporate this learning to improve pupil outcomes?

Learning from the 'Engage with an expert' discussion

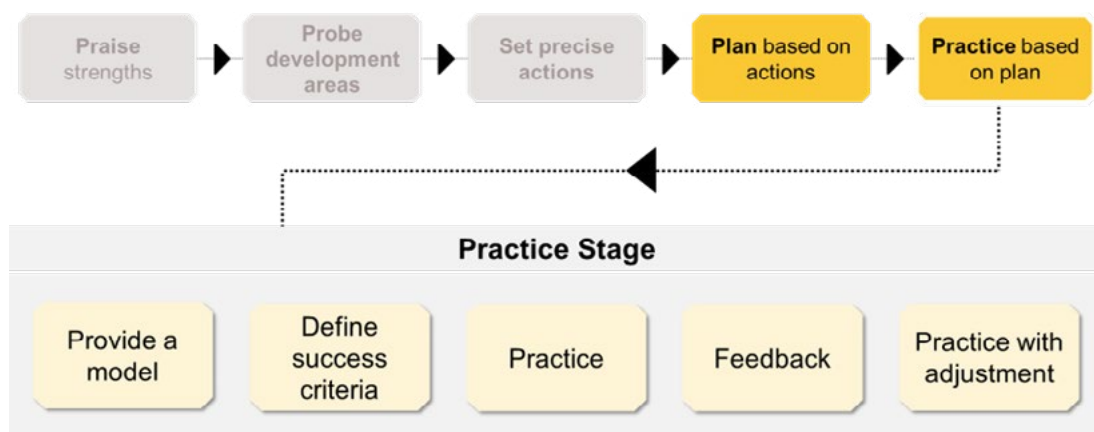
- What key ideas or principles did the expert emphasise in relation to [insert focus/action step here]?
- How did the expert explain why these approaches are effective?
- What practical examples, strategies or cautions did the expert highlight?
- How did this discussion deepen or challenge your existing understanding?
- How does the learning from the expert discussion inform or refine your action step(s)?
- How will the ideas and guidance from the expert discussion shape your approach in the classroom, and how will you incorporate this learning to improve pupil outcomes?

Refining action step(s) and success criteria

Based on the 'Engage with an expert' observation or discussion, do the ECT's action step(s) or success criteria need refining? **See Appendix B for example.**

Deliberate practice: plan and practice

To prepare your ECT for integration, work through a plan and practice cycle:



Use the space below to script the practice:

Integrate – Mentor interaction 6

Focus: Feedback on ECT practice following your observation.

In this mentor interaction you and your ECT will:

☐	Feedback on ECT practice using the instructional coaching cycle
☐	Share feedback on progress toward their overall development goal
☐	Support them how to sustain progress over time
☐	Bring the Development Cycle to a close

Prior to this mentor interaction you will need to conduct a drop in observation focused on your ECT's action step.

Instructional coaching cycle

Use the instructional coaching cycle below to discuss and feedback on your observation.

Praise

- Explicitly recognise progress across the cycle, not just the lesson observed.
- Name what the ECT is now doing independently.
- Link teacher action to pupil impact (and confidence).

Probe

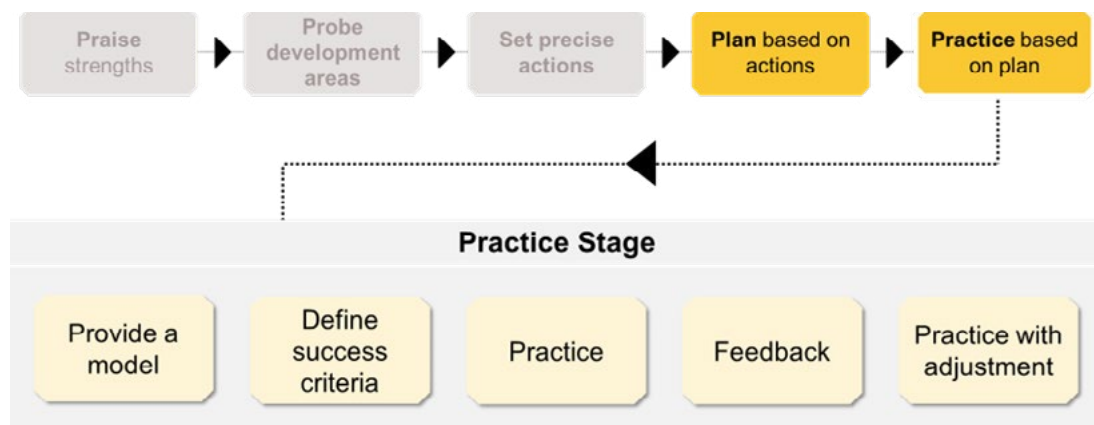
- Explore the ECT's thinking and reasoning.
- Focus on what feels easier or more automatic now.
- Prompt the ECT to articulate impact and learning.

Precise action steps – set new or refine

As this is the final mentor interaction in Development Cycle 3, adjust the remaining elements of the instructional coaching cycle accordingly. Use your professional judgement to decide whether the ECT should continue with their current development focus into the next cycle, but only where this is essential to their development.

- Consolidate the core practice rather than introduce anything new.
- Frame the action as something to embed and sustain.

To support your ECT in sustaining their practice over time, work through a plan and practice cycle:



Plan

- Light touch planning focused on confidence and sustainability.
- Identify where the strategy will be used next.
- Clarify what success will look like and how to respond if it wobbles.

Practice

- Short, low stakes rehearsal to build confidence.
- Practise a likely tricky moment or challenge.

Use the space below to script the practice:

Looking ahead

Explicitly recognise that the coaching cycle is closing because progress has been made, naming what is now secure and no longer needs weekly coaching support. Reinforce that the focus is now on sustaining the improvements and being able to adapt them when necessary.

Please congratulate your ECT on reaching the end of their mentoring sessions, a significant milestone marking the final stage of the Development Cycles.

As we come to the end of the programme, we also want to take a moment to thank you. We recognise the time, skill and commitment that great mentoring requires, alongside the many demands of your role.

Your professionalism and dedication make a lasting difference, not only to your ECT, but to every pupil they go on to teach, both now and in the future.

Appendix A

Engage with an expert – proformas

Use the proformas below to plan for and conduct your 'Engage with an expert' observation **or** discussion. You do not need to do both. Please remember that this is a learning tool, not an evaluation of the expert.

'Engage with an expert' observation

To more accurately understand what is taking place in the classroom consider the following questions prior to and during your observation:

- What views do I hold about the pupils, class, subject or teacher? – Check these at the door!
- How can I remain focused on my area of development?
- What are the specific words the teacher is saying?
- What are the specific actions the teacher is doing?
- What is the impact on pupils? What are the pupils doing and saying?

Observation proforma	
Name of expert colleague:	Date of observation:
Observation focus (linked to my development target):	
What I am looking to learn / notice:	
Lesson context and aims:	
Teacher actions	Impact on pupils
What this suggests. What will I try in my classroom?	

Engage with an expert' discussion

To make the most of your time together, prepare and share your discussion questions with your expert colleague in advance of the meeting. You may want to consider some of the questions below:

- What do I want to understand about how this works in practice, not just in theory?
(What teacher actions, routines, or decisions am I curious about?)
- How can I frame a question that reveals what success looks like for pupils?
(What would pupils be doing, saying, or producing if this was effective?)
- What do I need to ask to understand how and when the expert uses this approach?
(Timing, triggers, decision making.)
- How can I prompt the expert to explain what they notice or pay attention to in the moment?
(Pupil cues, misconceptions, behaviours, levels of understanding.)
- What question will help me understand how this is adapted for different pupils or contexts?
- How can I ask about common pitfalls or mistakes, so I can avoid them early on?

Discussion proforma	
Name of expert colleague:	Date of discussion:
Discussion focus (linked to my development target):	
What I am looking to learn / notice:	
Questions	Notes
What this suggests. What will I try in my classroom?	
Follow up questions with mentor:	

Appendix B

Refining and new actions steps

Scenario 1: Refining an Action Step and Success Criteria.

In a mentor meeting, the ECT identified developing pupils' metacognitive skills as a priority. Further discussion showed that the key area for improvement was how the planning stage is modelled before pupils begin independent work.

Original action steps:

- Before independent work, the ECT models planning by thinking aloud and answering questions such as "What is this task asking me to do?" and "How should I begin?"
- During independent work, the ECT checks pupils' planning by circulating, asking pupils to explain their plan, and giving feedback where needed.

Success criteria linked to the original action steps:

- Before independent work, the ECT clearly thinks aloud and answers planning questions about what the task requires and how to start. The ECT explains the purpose of planning, showing pupils how it helps them approach a task.
- During independent work, the ECT circulates and prompts pupils to explain their plan using planning language. Following prompting or feedback, pupils can clarify or improve their plan before continuing with the task.

What was noticed in observation and discussion: *The ECT clearly explains the learning goal. The ECT selects appropriate strategies and explains how to carry them out. However, the ECT does not consistently explain why those strategies are chosen, and prior knowledge is not always activated or explicitly linked to strategy choice. As a result, strategies are presented as steps to follow rather than as choices based on what pupils already know.*

Why the action step needs refining:

Although the ECT's explanations are clear, pupils are not shown how to use prior learning to decide on an approach. Without this, pupils are less likely to understand why strategies work or to choose strategies independently in future lessons. The refinement therefore focuses on strengthening this specific part of the planning stage.

Refined action step:

When modelling a task, consistently activate and verbalise relevant prior knowledge and use it to justify strategy choice by thinking aloud about what is already known, why it is relevant, and how it informs how to begin, making these links explicit before starting the task.

Success criteria linked to the refined action step - The ECT:

- Deliberately pauses before starting a modelled task to identify relevant prior knowledge.
- Names specific concepts, methods, or experiences pupils have encountered previously.
- Explains why this prior knowledge is relevant to the current task.
- Clearly links prior knowledge to the chosen strategy, for example "Because I already know..., I'm going to..."

Impact on pupils:

- When prompted, pupils can identify relevant prior knowledge linked to the task.
- Pupils can explain why a particular strategy is being used, referring to previous learning.
- Pupils begin independent work with a clearer, more purposeful plan.

Scenario 2: Introducing a New Action Step and Success Criteria

Through lesson observation and probe discussion, the mentor identifies that the ECT's modelling of the planning stage of metacognitive regulation is secure, consistent, and effective across lessons. As this action step is now embedded, the ECT is ready to move on to a new focus. The next focus is selected from Theme 1 or Theme 2, or from outside the current development cycle where this has the highest leverage for improving pupil learning.

With the planning stage now securely embedded, the next area with the greatest impact on pupil learning is addressing subject specific misconceptions, this has been identified through the diagnostic and discussions with the ECT. Anticipating and explicitly challenging misconceptions supports pupils to revise incorrect thinking and develop secure understanding. This represents a natural progression from supporting how pupils plan to strengthening what pupils understand during teaching.

New focus and action step(s)

During lesson planning, anticipate subject specific misconceptions and plan to address them explicitly during teaching using a refutation text. This refutation text will:

- Clearly state the common misconception.
- Explicitly refute the misconception.
- Provide and explain the correct concept, supporting pupils to revise their thinking.

Success criteria linked to the new action step(s)

During lesson planning:

Likely subject specific misconceptions related to the lesson content are accurately identified in advance.

During the lesson:

- A refutation text is used that clearly states the misconception, making pupils' existing thinking explicit.
- The misconception is explicitly refuted, with an explanation of why the idea is incorrect rather than simply presenting the correct answer.
- The correct concept is clearly explained and explicitly linked back to the refuted misconception.
- Impact on pupils: Pupils revise or refine their thinking, demonstrating improved understanding through their responses, explanations, or application in subsequent tasks.

Appendix Ci: Development Cycle 1 planner

Use this as a guide to support your planning, adapting the timings as needed to suit your context and ECT's needs.

Development Cycle			Date
Half term 1	Diagnostic (ECT / Mentor)		
	Refocus: Mentor interaction 1	Mentor and ECT reflect on the diagnostic outcomes and identify two priority development areas for this cycle. Agree the half-term focus from theme 1.	
	Theme 1 ECT: Self-directed study x 1 ECT: Seminar x 1		
	Refocus: Mentor interaction 2	Mentor and ECT discuss learning from the first self study and seminar, agree clear action steps and success criteria, and plan 'Engage with an expert' discussion or observation.	
	ECT: 'Engage with an expert 1' observation/discussion		
	Develop: Mentor interaction 3	Mentor helps the ECT draw learning from the expert input, refine action steps if needed, and engage with deliberate practice.	
	Drop in observation		
Half term 2	Theme 2 ECT: Self-directed study x 1 ECT: Seminar x 1		
	Integrate: Mentor interaction 4	Mentor provides feedback using the instructional coaching cycle and supports the ECT to refine or set a new development focus. Plan a second 'Engage with an expert' discussion or observation.	
	ECT: Engage with an expert 2' observation/discussion		
	Develop: Mentor interaction 5	Mentor helps the ECT draw learning from the expert input, refine action steps if needed, and engage with deliberate practice.	
	Drop in observation		
	Integrate: Mentor interaction 6	Mentor provides feedback using the instructional coaching cycle and reviews progress towards the overall goal. Supports ECT to sustain and embed improvements over time.	

Appendix Cii: Development Cycle 2 planner

Use this as a guide to support your planning, adapting the timings as needed to suit your context and ECT's needs.

Development Cycle			Date
Half term 1	Diagnostic (ECT / Mentor)		
	Refocus: Mentor interaction 1	Mentor and ECT reflect on the diagnostic outcomes and identify two priority development areas for this cycle. Agree the half-term focus from theme 1.	
	Theme 1 ECT: Self-directed study x 1 ECT: Seminar x 1		
	Refocus: Mentor interaction 2	Mentor and ECT discuss learning from the first self study and seminar, agree clear action steps and success criteria, and plan 'Engage with an expert' discussion or observation.	
	ECT: 'Engage with an expert 1' observation/discussion		
	Develop: Mentor interaction 3	Mentor helps the ECT draw learning from the expert input, refine action steps if needed, and engage with deliberate practice.	
	Drop in observation		
Half term 2	Theme 2 ECT: Self-directed study x 1 ECT: Seminar x 1		
	Integrate: Mentor interaction 4	Mentor provides feedback using the instructional coaching cycle and supports the ECT to refine or set a new development focus. Plan a second 'Engage with an expert' discussion or observation.	
	ECT: Engage with an expert 2' observation/discussion		
	Develop: Mentor interaction 5	Mentor helps the ECT draw learning from the expert input, refine action steps if needed, and engage with deliberate practice.	
	Drop in observation		
	Integrate: Mentor interaction 6	Mentor provides feedback using the instructional coaching cycle and reviews progress towards the overall goal. Supports ECT to sustain and embed improvements over time.	

Appendix Ciii: Development Cycle 3 planner

Use this as a guide to support your planning, adapting the timings as needed to suit your context and ECT's needs.

Development Cycle			Date
Half term 1	Diagnostic (ECT / Mentor)		
	Refocus: Mentor interaction 1	Mentor and ECT reflect on the diagnostic outcomes and identify two priority development areas for this cycle. Agree the half-term focus from theme 1.	
	Theme 1 ECT: Self-directed study x 1 ECT: Seminar x 1		
	Refocus: Mentor interaction 2	Mentor and ECT discuss learning from the first self study and seminar, agree clear action steps and success criteria, and plan 'Engage with an expert' discussion or observation.	
	ECT: 'Engage with an expert 1' observation/discussion		
	Develop: Mentor interaction 3	Mentor helps the ECT draw learning from the expert input, refine action steps if needed, and engage with deliberate practice.	
	Drop in observation		
Half term 2	Theme 2 ECT: Self-directed study x 1 ECT: Seminar x 1		
	Integrate: Mentor interaction 4	Mentor provides feedback using the instructional coaching cycle and supports the ECT to refine or set a new development focus. Plan a second 'Engage with an expert' discussion or observation.	
	ECT: Engage with an expert 2' observation/discussion		
	Develop: Mentor interaction 5	Mentor helps the ECT draw learning from the expert input, refine action steps if needed, and engage with deliberate practice.	
	Drop in observation		
	Integrate: Mentor interaction 6	Mentor provides feedback using the instructional coaching cycle and reviews progress towards the overall goal. Supports ECT to sustain and embed improvements over time.	

Thank you



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