ECT Mentor session

Module 8: Developing quality pedagogy and making productive use of assessment

Week 11: Inquiry progress: checking for negative consequences

Session Elements

reflection

collaborative planning

analysis

Learning Intentions for this session

The focus of your mentee's inquiry for Module 8 is on an element of the Early Career Framework (ECF) from Standards 4, 5 or 6. They might have chosen a focus which combines different elements of these standards.

The case studies are a reminder that:

Case Study A

1.3   Teacher expectations can affect pupil outcomes; setting goals that challenge and stretch pupils is essential

4.9   Paired and group activities can increase pupil success, but to work together effectively pupils need guidance, support and practice

4.10   How pupils are grouped is also important; care should be taken to monitor the impact of groupings on pupil attainment, behaviour and motivation

And how to:

1a.   Use intentional and consistent language that promotes challenge and aspiration

1e.   Create a culture of respect and trust in the classroom that supports all pupils to succeed (e.g. by modelling the types of courteous behaviour expected of pupils)

Case Study B

6b.   Draw conclusions about what pupils have learned by looking at patterns of performance over a number of assessments (e.g. appreciating that assessments draw inferences about learning from performance)

4d.   Provide sufficient opportunity for pupils to consolidate and practice applying new knowledge and skills

Case Study C

6p.   Reduce the opportunity cost of marking (e.g. by using abbreviations and codes in written feedback)

6h.   Focus on specific actions for pupils and provide time for pupils to respond to feedback

Case Study D
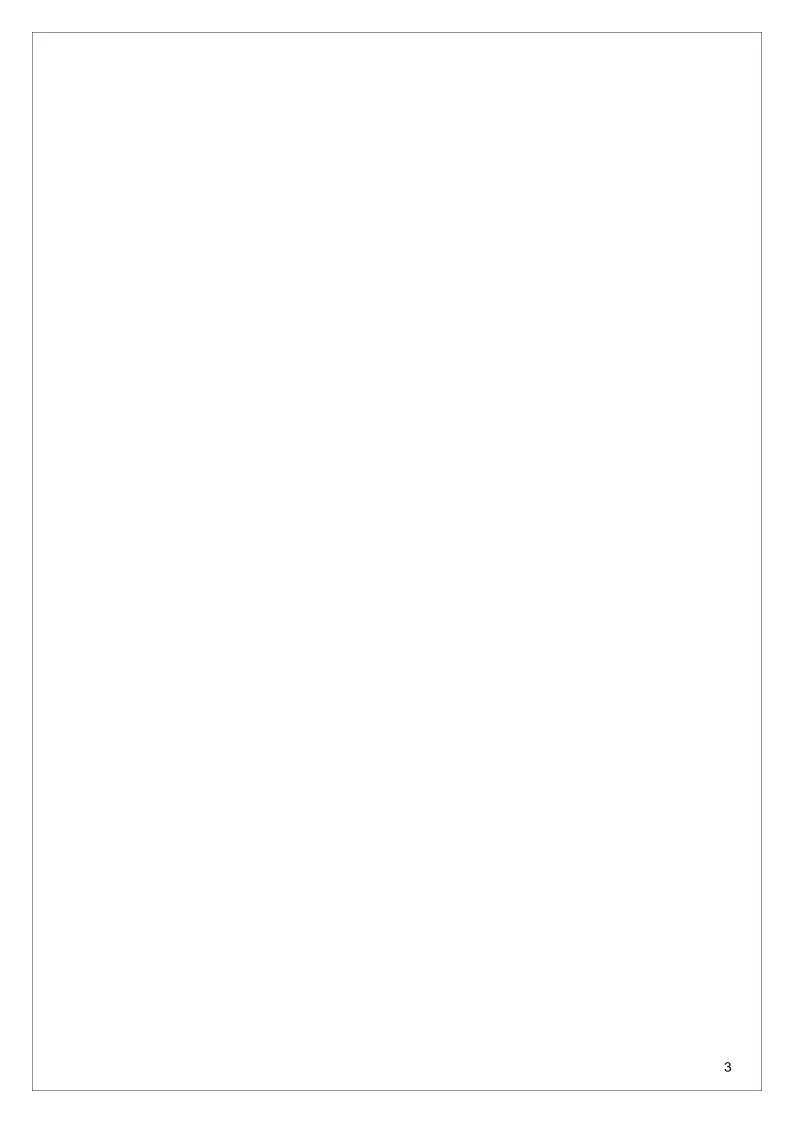
4m.   Include a range of types of questions in class discussions to extend and challenge pupils

4n.   Provide appropriate wait time between question and response where more developed responses are required

6f.   Prompt pupils to elaborate when responding to questioning to check that a correct answer stems from secure understanding

Introduction

Your ECT has made a 'claim' for their Module 8 inquiry so far, which they discussed with you at your last mentor meeting, where you also revisited the Module 8 audit.

This week, you will look at that claim again and seek to update it – now exploring any of the potential 'counter-evidence' for their inquiries so far. They may believe that there are some negative consequences of the implementation of their inquiry. More likely, your mentee is discovering that some pupils are benefiting more than others from their current teaching. This is a normal and healthy part of practice and reflection.

You should explore this counter-evidence with them. Then you will consider where any further adjustments to their practice or inquiry need to be made.

Case Studies

You have seen these case studies before: they explore how four teachers – improving their practice and without adding to their workload – conducted their own practitioner inquiries into developing quality pedagogy and making productive use of assessment.

You can read back to Week 3, if you want to remind yourself of the issue they wanted to tackle.

We pick them up here from the point where they have agreed an alteration to their practice and framed this as an evaluative inquiry question. We see the methods they decide to use to collect evidence. We also see how some of them choose to make a further adjustment to their practice after having collected some evidence. Finally, we see the claims they are making at this interim stage.

When reading these cases, your mentee will need to take account of their own pupils' characteristics, the context of their classroom and the nature of the material that they are teaching.

Case Study A: Grouping Pupils Effectively

Andy's approach to grouping pupils effectively in Year 1

To evaluate the impact of his pupil grouping intervention, Andy wrote the following evaluative question:

> How can I use group activities over two half-terms to improve the engagement and attainment of my Year 1 pupils?

Andy considered the following sources of data:

- brief observation notes made by himself and the Teaching Assistant during the lessons and shared at the end of the day three times a week
- his own observations and reflections on the extent to which the pupil grouping intervention was having the desired effect on their engagement
- the progress records for his class that he had been updating twice weekly to measure their attainment

Further adjustments

Andy was aware that this intervention might cause some pupils some distress, as he was nudging them out of their comfort zones. He was therefore prepared to experience a certain amount of pushback at first, while the children adjusted to this new way of working. He made time to listen to any of their concerns at the beginning of lunchtime, and found that after a few days, the complaints dried up as the children adapted to this new way of working.

The following half-term, as he monitored the impact of the paired and group activities, Andy decided to make a further adjustment, whereby pupils were required to work in near attainment groups for all literacy and numeracy lessons. They would then return to their mixed attainment group tables when studying other topics. He reminded himself of some of the other reading he had done of Research and Practice Summaries in Year 1, this time relating to setting high expectations (Standard 1) and managing behaviour effectively (Standard 7). Throughout the inquiry period, Andy repeatedly reminded the children of the aim they were all working towards – to be able to work and talk productively with everyone in the class (1.3). Andy reinforced good behaviour with the use of verbal praise and by awarding house points, publicly celebrating the features of productive talk he wanted to see more of, such as listening carefully, sharing resources and building on the ideas of others. (7.6, 7o)

Evidence of impact so far

The ECF statements, across several standards, helped Andy to make sense of what his evidence was telling him.

From the evidence he has collected so far, Andy understands that:

1.3. Teacher expectations can affect pupil outcomes; setting goals that challenge and stretch pupils is essential.

- by repeatedly making his intentions clear, he has been able to 'bring the children with him' on this journey to helping them to work productively with any of their peers

4.9. Paired and group activities can increase pupil success, but to work together effectively pupils need guidance, support and practice.

- by using the same near attainment grouping method in every literacy lesson for a term, and extending this to numeracy lessons after one half-term - and switching between mixed and near attainment groupings - he has given the children many opportunities to practise working with others, and therefore to get better at doing so over time

4.10. How pupils are grouped is also important; care should be taken to monitor the impact of groupings on pupil attainment, behaviour and motivation.

- a small number of the mixed attainment groupings have proven problematic
- several of his pupils have become much more confident in working with a wider range of peers

Through engaging in the inquiry so far, Andy has also learned better how to:

Communicate a belief in the academic potential of all of his pupils, by:
1a. Using intentional and consistent language that promotes challenge and aspiration.

- his TA – who had been working in Key Stage 1 for many years – feels the class have made much faster progress than other classes she has known.

And he has:
1e. Created a culture of respect and trust in the classroom that supports all pupils to succeed (e.g. by modelling the types of courteous behaviour expected of pupils).

- publicly celebrating the features of productive talk he wanted to see more of, such as listening carefully, sharing resources and building on the ideas of others

Case Study B: Modelling and Scaffolding

Vashti's use of modelling and scaffolds to support writing in Year 4

To ensure she was developing her practice effectively, Vashti devised this evaluative inquiry question:

How can I use 'speaking sentences' well, over the space of two terms, to reduce the prevalence of basic errors in written literacy among pupils with SpLCN in Year 4?

Vashti considered the following evidence she already had to hand:

- data from her marking of writing assessments from the target class

- data from her colleagues' marking of writing assessments from her control group, the two other Year 4 classes (they record such data centrally in her school)
- personal reflections and observations generated through dialogue in her mentor meetings, and recorded in her Learning Log

Additionally, she held a short, 5-minute 'focus group' with the 4 target pupils at the start and end of the intervention.

Further adjustments

Halfway through the study period, Vashti noticed that the pupils were improving in some aspects of their writing. However, they were still often mis-spelling high frequency words. As a result of this mid-cycle analysis, she realized she could use her scaffold to more deliberately plan for her pupils to be exposed to high-utility high-frequency vocabulary (3o): she decided to add a table of high-frequency words to the laminated scaffold sheet, with the correct spelling in the 'tick' column, and common mis-spellings in the 'cross' column. Because she was encouraged by her early observations and reflections, she also expanded the use of 'speaking sentences' to all pupils in her class, with three levels of scaffold sheets adapted for her pupils' prior attainment, monitor their use and withdraw them as her pupils became more successful (4a, 4c).

Evidence of impact so far

The ECF statements, across several standards, helped Vashti to make sense of what her evidence was telling her about her own practice. Through engaging in the inquiry so far, she learned better how to:

6b. Draw conclusions about what pupils have learned by looking at patterns of performance over a number of assessments (e.g. appreciating that assessments draw inferences about learning from performance).

- 5 of the 6 target SpLCN pupils have made significant progress in the summative writing assessment

4d. Provide sufficient opportunity for pupils to consolidate and practise applying new knowledge and skills.

- several pupils are able to describe how they have benefited from using the

laminated sheet and the speaking activity to organise their thinking and their writing

Reflecting on her findings, Vashti drew the following interim conclusion for her own teaching:

Classroom talk, combined with scaffolding resources, can be a powerful driver for improving written literacy among pupils with SpLCN in Year 4. (4a, 4p)

She realized that she should continue with this approach to supporting her pupils' writing, but keep a careful eye on the successful use of the scaffold, so her pupils could still succeed when she withdrew it.

Case Study C: Making Marking Manageable

Louise's new approach to marking in Secondary history

To ensure she was developing her practice effectively, Louise devised this evaluative inquiry question:

How can I implement codes and verbal feedback well, so that my Year 9 History pupils are able to correct misconceptions and make progress, and I am able to reduce the amount of time I spend marking?

To evaluate the impact of her 'minimal marking' intervention, Louise decided to collect the following naturally occurring data:

- pupil voice – using a hands-up survey in class – with the experimental class (before and after the half-term), to capture how well they felt they had been guided to improve their work
- book scrutiny of a sample of target pupils
- summative assessment of a written piece, from both of her classes so she could compare
- focus group conversation (5 min lunchtime conversation with target pupils)

Further adjustments

After using her new method once, Louise noticed that some of her pupils didn't seem to understand how they were supposed to respond to the coded feedback. She also realised that she was not always allowing them enough time in lesson to respond to her feedback.

In the next lesson, she used a visualizer to model how she expected pupils to

Evidence of impact so far

Through experimenting with 'minimal marking' as an alternative to always giving full written feedback, she learned better how:

6p. Reduce the opportunity cost of marking by using codes and verbal feedback

- she was able to cut the marking time for a set of books from 2 hours to 30 minutes
- her two Year 9 classes (one experimental, one control group) achieved a very similar distribution of scores in a summative written assessment
- her pupils in the experimental group had not encountered any significant problems as a result of the new way of marking

6h. Give whole-class feedback so they know what they need to do to improve and have the time to do it.

- she practised giving whole-class feedback, having created a standard slide, which reminded her to give specific feedback and 15 minutes a lesson to do it

Based on these findings, Louise made the following tentative claims from her inquiry:

- using codes/verbal feedback does not detrimentally affect pupil progress, compared with a standard written marking approach
- on average, using codes/verbal feedback saves the teacher about an hour a week, per teaching class, compared with a standard written marking approach

Having reviewed her practice in this way, she will use this insight to now apply the same principles of verbal feedback and minimal marking to her Year 7 and Year 8 classes, while monitoring the impact of that on her pupils and herself.

Case Study D: Questioning

Mo's use of direction and elaboration to improve questioning in GCSE PE

To ensure he was developing his practice effectively, Mo devised this evaluative inquiry question:

How can I best adapt the way I ask questions, implemented every lesson for one term, to improve the quality and amount of talk among Pupil Premium girls in Y11 GCSE PE?

To help him answer this question, Mo decided to collect the following data:

- arrange a follow-up lesson observation with the Assistant Head for Teaching and Learning, using the school's in-class video technology
- interview a sample of pupils, including Pupil Premium girls, in a focus group lasting 5 minutes after final period on a Wednesday
- book scrutiny, sampling 6 of the target pupils, compared with a sample of 6 high attaining pupils – Mo marks these books every other week, so this data is near to hand

Further adjustments

Once he started collecting evidence, Mo decided he needed to make one adjustment to his approach for the inquiry. In particular, based on his marking of books, he wrote key questions that he would target at particular pupils, to make sure that he was able to check understanding and fill gaps as they progress from one lesson to the next. (6a)

Mo also started using his new approach to 'responsive questioning' with his other classes. (4m)

Evidence of impact so far

Through expanding his range of questioning approaches, Mo has learned better how to:

4m. Include a range of types of questions in class discussions to extend and challenge pupils

- he saw much more evidence of high-quality questioning in his second filmed lesson

- all 16 pupils were asked a question at some point in the lesson

6f. Prompt pupils to elaborate when responding to questioning to check that a correct answer stems from secure understanding
- all were asked follow-up questions to help them elaborate on their thinking
- there was a change in the books of the Pupil Premium girls during the inquiry period – their written responses were far more articulate and well-structured, reflecting the discussions they had had in class

4n. Provide appropriate wait time between question and response where more developed responses are required
- all were given sufficient wait time
- the pupils liked the fact that he gave them time to prepare an answer before calling on them

Based on this, Mo made the following tentative claim from his inquiry so far:

> Responsive questioning is a useful tool for improving the quality of talk and writing among Pupil Premium girls in Year 11 GCSE PE.

And because he had developed his questioning practice to this extent, Mo decided to apply the same approaches to his other classroom-based lessons.

Mentor Meeting Activities

Throughout the session, try to refer explicitly to the learning intentions, and encourage your mentee to record key points in their Learning Log. Tailor your use of the Theory to Practice activities below in response to the Review and Plan sections of this session.

Review and Plan 5 mins

(1) Start this session by briefly following up the actions that the mentee set at the end of your last mentor meeting. Ask your mentee to summarise:
    a. what they did
    b. the impact of this on pupil learning (including how they are evaluating this)
    c. what they will do going forward to build on these actions

(2) Clarify the learning intentions for this session with your mentee.

(3) Invite your mentee to read the case studies on this module's topics, or the one or two that are most relevant to their own chosen area of development and the exploratory question they are investigating. As they read, reflect on:

- how similar this scenario is to their own situation
- how, despite any differences there may be to their own context, this case study may still be relevant to them
- what lessons there might be for the way they conduct their own inquiry

Theory to Practice 40 mins

1. Reflection

Briefly return to the interim claim that your mentee made for their inquiry at your last mentor meeting. Here is a reminder of the prompts you may have used to probe their thinking more deeply:

- the alteration to your practice…
  - can you describe the 'ingredients' of what you have changed in your practice?
  - one simple change, or a complex change?
- had what impact…
  - one impact, or multiple?
  - are any outcomes a surprise?
  - have the impacts been largely positive, or not?
- upon whom? …
  - upon all of the pupils you had in mind, or only some of them?
  - upon you?

Remember that, from the featured case studies…

Through her inquiry, Vashti was learning better how to plan effective lessons, by (4a) using scaffolds for pupils who needed more structure; and better how to stimulate her pupils' thinking, by (4p) providing scaffolds for talk to increase the focus and rigour of dialogue. Her claim is:

Classroom talk, combined with scaffolding resources, can be a powerful driver for improving written literacy among pupils with SpLCN in Year 4.

She is going to keep monitoring her use of the 'speaking sentences' scaffold.

Does your mentee want to update their claim in light of further evidence they have collected over the past two weeks?

2. Analyse

Below, for ease, we use the word 'negative' to describe some of the possible impacts on some pupils of what a teacher is doing. For clarity, this is what we mean:

Not all inquiries lead to entirely positive results. Inquiries that lead to uncertain conclusions are not a waste of time – quite the reverse, such inquiries often generate more questions for further investigation. 'Counter-evidence' – that which might show us that our teaching is having variable effects on different pupils – can also be incredibly valuable: it is as important to know what is not working for us right now as it is to know what is.

There are 3 levels of analysis worth looking at here:

1. Impact on (some) pupils
2. Impact on your mentee
3. No overall change

'Negative' impact on some pupils

Remember this from the case studies:

'Andy was aware that this intervention might cause some pupils some distress, as he was nudging them out of their comfort zones.'

'Halfway through the study period, Vashti noticed that the pupils were improving in some aspects of their writing. However, they were still often mis-spelling high frequency words.'

'After using her new method once, Louise noticed that some of her pupils didn't seem to understand how they were supposed to respond to the coded feedback.'

Andy, Vashti, Mo and Louise all made adjustments to their practice, in the hope that these small changes would make a positive difference for all of their pupils. (You can remind yourself of what those adjustments were.)

Here is a checklist of the types of 'negative' impacts upon your mentee's pupils that might be occurring as a result of their teaching or their inquiry. If they are not sure whether their teaching is having any of these effects, it would be worth collecting some further evidence around them.

<p align="center">Checklist of Negative Consequences on Pupils</p>

- ☐ distressed by change
- ☐ confused by changed expectations
- ☐ some learning skills have improved at the expense of others
- ☐ some areas of the curriculum have been neglected
- ☐ some pupils have improved, others have remained the same (or regressed)
- ☐ some pupils have progressed at the expense of others

Negative impact on your mentee

The teachers featured in the case studies did not report any detrimental consequences for themselves, but that may not be the case for your mentee. Here is another checklist that's worth exploring with your mentee.

<p align="center">Checklist of Negative Consequences for Teachers</p>

- ☐ distress at not meeting every pupil's needs
- ☐ loss of confidence
- ☐ opportunity costs: the focus on one area has come at the expense of others
- ☐ workload and time
- ☐ relationships with pupils
- ☐ relationships with colleagues

While it is important not to talk your mentee into negative feelings, it is equally important not to dismiss them if they occur.

<u>No overall change</u>

Sometimes this is a kind of positive, if it means that no harm is being done. Recall that Louise claimed:

> Using codes/verbal feedback does not detrimentally affect pupil progress, compared with a standard written marking approach.

Sometimes, if gains can be made in one area (e.g. Louise's workload) without a detrimental impact elsewhere, we can chalk that up as a positive overall.

But sometimes there is no positive change even despite considerable extra effort from the teacher. It is important to spot this when it happens: if there is no positive change (or only very little), your mentee should reconsider whether their focus is the right one.

3. Collaborative planning

To mitigate any negative consequences of their teaching or their inquiry, you should now consider further adjustments with your mentee. When discussing these adjustments, you should always refer first to the research within the ECF. The best place to look may be the Research and Practice Summaries across the modules of Year 1. You can navigate to an overview of these summaries in the Glossary. Even better, use the module overviews to locate a particular session material – the summaries there offer lots of guidance as to how to make the ECF statements work in practice. Finally, your mentee may have made notes in their Learning Log then that will be useful again now.

You might find it helpful to look again at what the teachers did in the four case studies.

To group his pupils more effectively, Andy looked at these areas of the ECF	**Considering the factors that support effective collaboration; changing groups regularly; and ensuring that, when based on attainment, they are for subject reasons** Look back at the further adjustments that Andy made
To improve her pupils' writing using modelling and scaffolds, Vashti looked at these areas of the ECF	**Modeling high-quality oral language, and the processes of planning, drafting and editing in writing.** **Giving novice learners more scaffolds and models at early stages; and removing these as they become more confident and successful** Look back at the further adjustments that Vashti made
To make her marking more manageable, Louise looked at these areas of the ECF	**Working with colleagues to discover alternative efficient approaches; using verbal feedback in place of written feedback; and reducing the opportunity costs of marking** Look back at the further adjustments that Louise made
To use questioning to stimulate his pupils to think, talk and write more in lessons, Mo looked at these areas of the ECF	**Including a range of question types; providing enough wait time; reframing questions; and prompting pupils to elaborate** Look back at the further adjustments that Mo made

Depending on the severity of any negative consequences, now may also be the time to think about either scaling up, or scaling back, the scope of your mentee's inquiry. Think:

- the number of pupils to include in my focus
- the number of classes to include in my focus
- the number of colleagues to involve
- the amount of class time I devote to this
- the amount of personal time I devote to this

Next Steps 5 mins

Agree with your mentee how they will now put their learning from this week's session into practice in their teaching. Help your mentee to clarify:

1. the action(s) they will take and how these action(s) are expected to contribute to improving pupil learning
2. what success will 'look like' in relation to these action(s)
3. how they will evaluate their success in taking these action(s)

Note that next week is an ECT Training session, where your mentee will learn about how to present and share their inquiry findings.

In the week following, in your next mentor meeting, you will consider other forms of emergent evidence.