

National Mentor Standards - Initial Teacher Training

The role of the mentor

A mentor should understand the course structure and the requirement of trainees to meet the Teachers' Standards. They should prioritise meetings and discussions with a trainee, monitor performance, and help develop their teaching practice and effective classroom management strategies. A mentor should also keep their subject knowledge up-to-date and have the awareness to signpost trainees to other expertise and knowledge, for example subject associations.

About the Mentor Standards

We have developed the Mentor Standards based on the evidence we found and by reflecting on our own expertise. They are divided into four separate but related areas:

Standard 1 - Personal qualities

Establish trusting relationships, modelling high standards of practice, and empathising with the challenges a trainee faces.

Standard 2 – Teaching

Support trainees to develop their teaching practice in order to set high expectations and to meet the needs of all pupils.

Standard 3 – Professionalism

Induct the trainee into professional norms and values, helping them to understand the importance of the role and responsibilities of teachers in society.

Standard 4 – Self-development and working in partnership

Continue to develop their own professional knowledge, skills and understanding and invest time in developing a good working relationship within relevant ITT partnerships.

Using the Mentor Standards

We considered how the standards should be used and have set out how those in different roles can use the standards to enable the effective discharge of their professional duties.

Mentors should use the standards to:

- understand what is expected of them and see that it is a manageable role;
- enable self-evaluation of practice and help identify areas for further improvement;
- support the delivery of the training plan; and
- induct trainees into the school and the profession.

Aspiring mentors should use the standards to:

- help identify and seek to develop the skills and experience needed to undertake the mentoring role effectively.

Trainees should use the standards to:

- understand what support they can expect from their school-based mentor; and
- develop transferable skills, for example, in lesson observation and feedback.

ITT providers and school leaders should use the standards to:

- raise the status and recognition of the mentoring role;
- bring consistency in mentoring within any agreement made with schools in delivering ITT;
- inform the training of mentors and monitoring of their support to trainees;
- establish rigorous mentor selection processes; and

- enhance the professional development of mentors including developing or identifying training needs.

National Mentor Standards for Initial Teacher Training - in more detail

Standard 1 - Personal qualities. Establish trusting relationships, modelling high standards of practice, and understand how to support a trainee through initial teacher training

The mentor should:

- Be approachable, make time for the trainee, and prioritise meetings and discussions with them;
- use a range of effective interpersonal skills to respond to the needs of the trainee;
- offer support with integrity, honesty and respect;
- use appropriate challenge to encourage the trainee to reflect on their practice; and
- support the improvement of a trainee's teaching by modelling exemplary practice in planning, teaching and assessment.

Standard 2 – Teaching. Support trainees to develop their teaching practice in order to set high expectations of all pupils and to meet their needs

The mentor should:

- support the trainee in forming good relationships with pupils, and in developing effective behaviour and classroom management strategies;
- support the trainee in developing effective approaches to planning, teaching and assessment;
- support the trainee with marking and assessment of pupil work through moderation or double marking;
- give constructive, clear and timely feedback on lesson observations;
- broker opportunities to observe best practice;
- support the trainee in accessing expert subject and pedagogical knowledge;
- resolve in-school issues on the trainee's behalf where they lack the confidence or experience to do so themselves;
- enable and encourage the trainee to evaluate and improve their teaching; and
- enable the trainee to access, utilise and interpret robust educational research to inform their teaching.

Standard 3 – Professionalism. Set high expectations and induct the trainee to understand their role and responsibilities as a teacher

The mentor should:

- encourage the trainee to participate in the life of the school and understand its role within the wider community;
- support the trainee in developing the highest standards of professional and personal conduct;
- support the trainee in promoting equality and diversity;
- ensure the trainee understands and complies with relevant legislation, including that related to the safeguarding of children; and
- support the trainee to develop skills to manage time effectively.

Standard 4 – Self-development and working in partnership. Continue to develop their own professional knowledge, skills and understanding and invest time in developing a good working relationship within relevant ITT partnerships.

The mentor should:

- ensure consistency by working with other mentors and partners to moderate judgements; and
- continue to develop their own mentoring practice and subject and pedagogical expertise by accessing appropriate professional development and engaging with robust research.