

Frequently Asked Questions for Early Career Mentors

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1. What qualifications do I need to be a mentor?

You will need to have QTS (Qualified Teacher Status). You also need to complete the mandatory ECF mentor training. You should also have a range of experience to offer and draw upon in supporting your ECT.

2. How can I support my Early Career Teachers? (ECT)

Your responsibilities include: working with the school to make sure the ECTs (Early Careers Teachers) receive a high-quality induction programme, meet regularly with your ECT to provide support and feedback, provide mentoring and coaching around specific phases and subject areas, take prompt, appropriate action if an ECT is having difficulties. You will receive training on how to do all of this.

3. Do we need to collect evidence during the ECF (Early Career Framework) training?

The ECF is not an assessment tool, so you do not need to collect data on the ECT's performance. However, it may be within your school's individual process to do this. The mentor role is separate to the assessment carried out by the induction tutor and the role should only focus on supporting the ECT through their ECF programme. The induction tutor will be supporting the ECT through their Induction and Appropriate body.

In the ECF training it recommends regular observation and feedback to the ECT by the Mentor and gives guidance on what to do. See Q9 below.

(See induction tutor FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) for more detail on this).

4. How do I register with the DfE (Department for Education) portal?

It is the Induction Tutors responsibility to register you as a mentor on the DfE portal. When your school's induction tutor tells DfE you will be mentoring, you will get an email asking you to register with the DfE.

This is a DfE-funded programme, so they need to confirm everyone who takes part is eligible. Once this is done, you will receive access to Brightspace where you will be able to watch weekly videos and track your ECTs progress.

5. What is the time commitment like for a mentor?

You will attend an induction day at the start of each academic year and a 1 hour long seminar per half-term. You will also have weekly interactions with your ECT and observe where required. There is also some self-study information on Brightspace.

6. Can I mentor more than one ECT?

You can mentor multiple ECTs, however your school will only receive funding for the first ECT you support, it therefore may be beneficial to recommend only one ECT per mentor.

7. What do I do if my ECT has concerns, or difficulties?

You should speak to their Induction Tutor first, as this is the person responsible for ECT induction at your school. You can also speak with the ECF lead within your area who will explain options and support available.

If they are unable to help, the ECT should speak to your school's Appropriate Body. They are responsible for making sure ECTs receive their statutory entitlements. Your school should provide ECTs with contact details for the right person to speak to.

There are several variations available, such as extensions, reductions, breaks or transfers.

8. How should the ECTs teaching be observed?

Each ECT's teaching should be observed at regular intervals throughout their induction period. Full details are contained in the Mentor Handbook. This is to make sure a fair and effective assessment of the ECT's teaching practice, conduct and efficiency can be made against the Teachers' Standards.

You as the Mentor or the Induction Tutor can be the observer, or they can select another suitable person from inside or outside of your school. Speak to your Induction Tutor to find out more.

9. What should I do if I have concerns about mentoring?

Your first point of call should be to contact your school leader if you have concerns about your time off timetable or your entitlements. If you have concerns with accessing seminars or Brightspace you should contact Generate Teaching Hub.

10. If my ECT withdraws, can I carry on my mentor training?

Yes. If you were assigned an ECT at the start of the programme, you can continue training so you are ready to work with other ECTs.

11. Can the mentor change mid-way through the ECF?

Ideally not.... however, there is an opportunity to change in exceptional circumstances, such as if you leave the school or setting, or extended periods of leave such as maternity leave or sickness. Contact Generate Teaching Hub, if this applies, as soon as possible to ensure that accurate records are maintained and communications are sent to the correct people.

12. Can my ECT fail their ECF training?

No - ECTs should participate in their ECF-based training programme as fully as possible, but failing to complete it will not mean they fail their induction. However, completing the training programme will help them to develop the knowledge and skills they need to meet the Teachers' Standards.

Headteachers are responsible for making sure ECTs are assessed against the Teachers' Standards as part of their progress reviews, and in 2 formal assessments that will take place during the induction. This assessment is separate to the ECF programme itself and managed by the Appropriate Body who determine if an ECT passes or fails their induction period.