

Guidance for Host Teachers of Trainees - Frequently Asked Questions

1. How “active” and “visible” should my trainee be when they first start coming into my lessons?

This is something you will need to agree in advance with your trainee so that you are both clear on protocols and are comfortable working together. In general it would seem a good idea to introduce your trainee by title and surname to the class from the beginning and assign them a specific role that they understand and the class also recognises; this signals that you value the trainee and they are an active participant in the teaching and learning process. Some examples might be:

- To support a small group of pupils who have additional needs – more or less able, EAL, reticent students, pupils who present specific behaviour challenges etc.
- To scribe key learning points during a class and/or group discussion
- To conduct a role-play/demonstration with the class teacher

2. In addition to teaching the class, what other activities can I ask trainees do which would contribute positively to their training?

If/When trainees do have a more observing role in your classroom, it would be particularly helpful to ask them to look out for particular things (e.g. how you give praise and how often; how you handle wrong or incomplete answers from pupils etc.) as sometimes trainees, particularly at the start of their ITT year, are not sure what teachers are doing so that learning occurs and how or why they are managing learning and behaviour in the way they are doing. Following up their observations explicitly with them via a brief professional discussion would be excellent, although we fully understand that time is always an issue!

Some trainees in the past have found it particularly helpful to deliver a lesson planned by the host teacher or to plan a lesson which the class teacher delivers. This can work for different people in different ways and at different points of the training year.

Try and involve trainees as soon as possible in marking and assessing pupils’ work as this will help them get to know pupils as learners. This knowledge should then feed into their lesson planning helping them to pitch lessons better. Show and explain to trainees how you mark pupil work rather than assume they will just pick it up. Ask them to ghost mark a handful of pupil assessments and then discuss with them, confirming and challenging their judgements as appropriate.

3. When should the trainee actually start teaching my students?

This is something for you, the trainee and the trainee’s school mentor to decide upon together through ongoing discussion. The mentor will have drawn up the trainee’s timetable carefully and will have a view on how the trainee’s teaching commitment should be staggered. There are key expectations that the mentor will have factored in i.e.

- that in placement 1 the trainee will have planned and taught a minimum of 8 full lessons by the end of the Autumn Term
- that in placement 1 the trainee will be teaching 50% of a teacher’s timetable by the start of February half term
- that in placement 2 the trainee will rapidly build up to teaching 50% of a teacher’s timetable
- that in the second half of placement 2 the trainee will be teaching between 50% and 75% of a teacher’s timetable

Within these broad expectations there is the opportunity for a trainee's teaching commitments to be bespoke to their individual needs and kept under constant review.

4. Should the trainee only teach parts of lessons to begin with?

This is something for you as the teacher to discuss with the trainee and with the school mentor. The dynamics and needs of your particular class may also have a bearing upon this. It is certainly possible and quite common for trainees to deliver just a segment of a lesson in the first instance e.g. the starter or plenary.

5. Should I expect a lesson plan from a trainee?

Absolutely! You need to clarify expectations with the mentor who has ideally clarified this with the school's professional tutor, but it is helpful if all host teachers working with a trainee have the same expectations. Lesson planning is a key part of a trainee's professional learning and as host teacher you have a vital role to play. The trainee should supply you with a written lesson plan at least two **working** days in advance of the lesson so that you have the opportunity to look over it and give professional feedback. It is generally not acceptable for a trainee to send you a lesson plan over a weekend for a lesson they are teaching on Monday, however there may be exceptional circumstances where you have agreed to do this for the trainee. Trainees will expect feedback on lesson plans as part of their training so please do this. Trainees should give you a lesson plan, amended accordingly in the light of your feedback, at the start of any lesson they teach.

6. What happens if I am concerned about the trainee's lesson plan or if they have not provided me with a plan in advance of the lesson?

At the end of the day, the progress of the learners in your class is your responsibility and therefore your first consideration. If you are concerned about a trainee's lesson plan in terms of a lack of quality or they do not accept your proposed amendments or if you do not see a lesson plan with sufficient time beforehand to check its quality, you should feel able to take back the teaching of that lesson. If this happens, please inform the mentor as soon as possible so that the mentor, school professional tutor and university tutor are aware and can take appropriate action.

7. What kind of written feedback am I expected to provide

Your trainee should supply you with a blank copy of the lesson observation pro-forma (M /PaM / PiM/ RKM) at the start of each lesson. We advise trainees to have a supply of the official feedback forms always at hand. If, for some reason, an official form is not available, please record your thoughts on a blank sheet of paper which the trainee can attach later to an official feedback form. Please always sign and date your feedback as it is an ongoing, formal audit trail of evidence of the trainee's progress towards meeting the Teachers' Standards. Copies of lesson feedback go into the trainee's Assessment File and are part of the evidence used on a weekly basis by the subject mentor in coaching discussions and in the weekly target setting process. School Professional Tutors, University Tutors, External Examiners and Ofsted Inspectors would have sight of lesson observation forms when scrutinising trainees' files.

The University of York's lesson observation pro-forma is deliberately designed to be open-ended. We would like you to record what you see, hear and think as the lesson unfolds. Your comments are a narrative on the lesson as you experience it. An example of a completed feedback form is provided for your information (see Appendix 1).

8. How much and how often should I give written feedback to the trainee?

We ask that you provide written feedback to the trainee as often as possible. Most host teachers do this every time they are in a lesson observing the trainee. Even if the trainee only teaches a segment of the lesson, it is possible, and indeed desirable to aid the trainee's reflection, for written feedback to be provided on just that segment.

9. Do I make links to the Teachers' Standards in my written feedback?

We ask trainees to make links to the Teachers' Standards to help them consider your feedback in an active and reflective way, however we also ask that you comment on particular strengths retrospectively as you review the lesson; this may involve specific links to the Teacher's Standards. The text box on the second side of the observation sheet entitled "Overall Comments" is where you would do this. A summary of the Teachers' Standards is attached to this guidance (Appendix 2); your trainee should always have a copy to hand which you could refer to in the lesson.

10. Is it okay to write lesson feedback by hand?

Absolutely! Please do not waste time afterwards typing up your feedback. Any time you have after the lesson would be much better spent in a professional discussion with your trainee.

11. Should I discuss the feedback with the trainee or is the written feedback sufficient?

We would ask please that you have at least a brief professional discussion with the trainee and that the discussion is a dialogue so that the trainee feels actively involved in their own progress. We want, as we are sure you do too, for trainees to feel that you work **with** them. As part of the feedback, we would ask that you start by asking the trainee for their thoughts on the lesson – e.g. what went well and how they know it went well; what progress pupils made and how progress could be evidenced; what could be improved or done differently next time. It may well be that discussions cannot take place immediately after the lesson as you and/or the trainee may well have another lesson to go to or a meeting to attend, however we ask that professional discussions take place as soon as possible after the lesson to facilitate the trainee's self-reflection.

12. Should I be setting targets as part of my lesson observations and written feedback?

No. At the end of the lesson observation form there are boxes which are for you to jot down things for the trainee to consider, but the formal target setting process is part of the weekly mentor meeting and a joint responsibility between trainee and mentor rather than host teacher. There would be just too many targets if after every lesson observation observers filled in targets! That is not to say that you are not contributing to the target setting process and the trainee's professional development – the idea is that mentors and trainees gather all of the lesson observation feedback from a week in school, sift through the wealth of information and draw out just 2 or 3 key issues as targets which will really help to move the trainee on professionally.

13. Who can I turn to for support if I have any concerns about my trainee?

Ideally you should raise concerns directly with your trainee in the first instance via a professional conversation, however a key person in school from whom to seek additional support is the trainee's subject mentor. School professional tutors have responsibility for all trainees and mentors and are another source of professional support for you. University Tutors may also be able to help, although it is more likely that they liaise with mentors and professional tutors rather than with host teachers. All of the handbooks and forms used as part of our ITT course are available for you to view at: <http://www.york.ac.uk/education/pgce/mentors/>

14. Should I ever leave the trainee alone to teach the lesson?

This is something for you to decide in discussion with the trainee, the mentor and possibly the professional tutor as well as being mindful of any whole school requirements. Ultimately as class teacher you have responsibility for your pupils so you may prefer always to be present in lessons, however particularly towards the end of their training to help them make a confident start as an NQT, trainees may well benefit from being left in sole charge of the classroom. If your trainee is left alone with your class, they need to be clear about procedures for summoning assistance in the event of an accident or something else untoward occurring. If you are away from school because you are attending a course or ill, the trainee can still take your class, however the cover teacher must be available to support the trainee.

M: Weekly Lesson Observation Form

Trainee:

Date:

School:

Lesson:

| Observer's Comments on the lesson | Trainee to make links to Standards |
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| <p>Your lesson plan was very detailed in terms of the activities being undertaken by pupils and you as teacher, but the key learning was still not clear so it was difficult to see how activities were going to progress learning. Why are you not setting a key question? (This is usual Department policy.)</p> <p>The classroom was organised in advance of lesson (during break time) – resources already distributed, desks arranged into groups, groupings displayed on IWB so pupils can see immediately where they should be sitting. Well done.</p> <p>You greeted pupils at the door – smiling & good use of names. Nice that you mentioned quietly to Joel his star performance in the football tournament (you must have remembered this from staff briefing yesterday or did you actually see him play?) Good to see you encouraging individual pupils to wear uniform (e.g. top buttons done up) properly via non-verbal signals or quiet verbal reminders.</p> <p>Effective starter activity to introduce some key terminology for the main part of the lesson. Starter also linked back to prior learning and was a useful recapping activity. Class settled and engaged quickly while you took the register. The objectives you shared with the class visually on the board were descriptions of tasks they would complete rather than indicating the learning. Better, especially for SEND pupils, to use a mixture of upper and lower case letters rather than all capitals on slides and worksheets.</p> <p>Good handling of late-comer (Tara). Clearly, there had been another issue, but you were welcoming, calm and focused on getting her working. She quickly engaged in the lesson and tried to catch up – good relationships evident. Good that you spoke to her quietly later to check that she was all right and to try and ascertain the cause of the problem.</p> <p>Clear introduction to and explanation of main activity. Good to see you drawing out behaviour for learning reminders by establishing success criteria from the pupils in answer to your question "What does good group work look like?" Allocation of group roles was also a good strategy. Remember to give a clear deadline and do return to this periodically to remind class to behave and work purposefully (perhaps you could have used an electronic timer on the board?)</p> <p>Pupils settled quickly into the group task and you began by circulating well ensuring that everyone knew what to do. After five minutes your attention was taken up by one group – try not to get too drawn in as your monitoring of the whole class suffered resulting in some off task behaviour & inappropriate language which you should have heard, but didn't seem to have done (or maybe you chose not to hear?)</p> <p>You regained the class' attention effectively to move them on from the group work and</p> | |

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| <p>draw out the learning displaying good presence. Effective whole class questioning – good use of names, use of no hands up & some questions targeted to specific pupils – excellent that you brought in Joel and Tara here. Pupils were eager to contribute and clearly want to please you. At times, however, your subject knowledge seemed insecure so that pupils’ misconceptions were not effectively dealt with.</p> <p>Interesting and effective kinaesthetic plenary. Pupils seemed really proud of the work they had done, but it was a pity that the reflection stayed on the level of reflection on their “work” rather than reflection on learning. Nice touch to reward one group for the way they worked – and even better that you justified your choice by referring to the success criteria they had helped you draw up at the start of the lesson.</p> <p>You remembered to set homework, but how was it contributing to the learning in the lesson?</p> <p>Orderly and good humoured dismissal.</p> | |
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| <p>Comments: e.g. particular strengths linked to the Teacher’s Standards</p> <p>TS1: Good, mutually respectful relationships evident. Pupils respond well to you and seek your approval. You consistently model enthusiasm and courtesy.</p> <p>TS7 & TS1: Good classroom and behaviour management evident, including use of the school’s behaviour for learning policy. You move around the classroom well and are able to draw back pupils’ attention to you with ease. You have a calm, assured manner.</p> |
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| Points to consider (before your next mentor meeting): | |
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| Subject specific: | General teaching and learning: |
| <p>What were pupils meant to be learning in this lesson?</p> <p>How could pupils demonstrate progress in learning during this lesson?</p> <p>What aspects of your own subject knowledge need development in the light of this lesson?</p> <p>How can you make subject specific terminology more meaningful/accessible to pupils?</p> | <p>How might you improve your ability to monitor the whole class while still endeavouring to circulate and intervene purposefully with individuals or groups?</p> <p>When, if ever, would you invite pupils to put their hands up in lessons?</p> <p>How can you bring about greater independent learning so that pupils are less dependent on you as teacher?</p> |

Signed:

Mentor/Tutor/Teacher

Signed:

Trainee

Date:

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| <p>PREAMBLE Teachers make the education of their pupils their first concern, and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up-to-date and are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents in the best interests of their pupils.</p> <p>PART ONE: Teaching</p> <p>1 Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils - establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect - set goals that stretch and challenge pupils of all backgrounds, abilities and dispositions - demonstrate consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviour which are expected of pupils.</p> <p>2 Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils - be accountable for attainment, progress and outcomes of the pupils plan teaching to build on pupils' capabilities and prior knowledge - guide pupils to reflect on the progress they have made and their emerging needs - demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn and how this impacts on teaching - encourage pupils to take a responsible and conscientious attitude to their own work and study.</p> <p>3 Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge -have a secure knowledge of the relevant subject(s) and curriculum areas, foster and maintain pupils' interest in the subject, and address misunderstandings - demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in the subject and curriculum areas, and promote the value of scholarship -demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject</p> <p>4 Plan and teach well structured lessons - impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective</p> | <p>use of lesson time -promote a love of learning and children's intellectual curiosity -set homework and plan other out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding pupils have acquired -reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching -contribute to the design and provision of an engaging curriculum within the relevant subject area(s).</p> <p>5 Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils - know when and how to differentiate appropriately, using approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively -have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn, and how best to overcome these -demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development -have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them.</p> <p>6 Make accurate and productive use of assessment -know and understand how to assess the relevant subject and curriculum areas, including statutory assessment requirements -make use of formative and summative assessment to secure pupils' progress -use relevant data to monitor progress, set targets, and plan subsequent lessons -give pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback.</p> <p>7 Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment -have clear rules and routines for behaviour in classrooms, and take responsibility for promoting good and courteous behaviour both in classrooms and around the school, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy -have high expectations of behaviour, and establish a framework for discipline with a range of strategies, using praise, sanctions</p> | <p>and rewards consistently and fairly -manage classes effectively, using approaches which are appropriate to pupils' needs in order to involve and motivate them -maintain good relationships with pupils, exercise appropriate authority, and act decisively when necessary.</p> <p>8 Fulfil wider professional responsibilities -make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school -develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on advice and specialist support -deploy support staff effectively -take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues -communicate effectively with parents with regard to pupils' achievements and well-being.</p> <p>PART TWO: Personal and professional conduct</p> <p>A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career. Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by: - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position -having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions -showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others -not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs -ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law. Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards of attendance and punctuality. Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.</p> |
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