# Guidance for Link Tutors on providing feedback to mentors

Providing mentors with high-quality feedback helps them to develop but also allows us, as the ITE provider, to assure the quality of the mentoring which our trainees receive during their placement. **Mentors receive written feedback on their mentoring via the QA checks during the placement. On Secondary this is done at QA2 and QA3**. **On Further Education this is QA2, QA3, QA4, and QA5**. Mentors can access their feedback via the ‘free text’ comments which Link Tutors enter onto InPlace/Abyassa and Link Tutors should support mentors to access their feedback. Colleagues should avoid using the ‘free text’ boxes for the purpose of making notes. The feedback provided should summarise and reflect the verbal feedback already given, identifying areas of mentoring strength and (if needed), ways in which the mentoring could be developed. In short, mentors should know if they are mentoring effectively, or not, and how to improve if needed.

## 5 features of effective mentor feedback

1. Capture the oral feedback provided. No surprises!
2. Focussed on the completion of the WDS or the mentoring you have observed rather than the trainee.
3. Written to, not about, the mentor. Mentors can view all data entered for each QA point.
4. Succinct, professional, and honest (including signposting to strategies or resources to develop mentoring)
5. Mentors should be shown how to access and view their feedback on InPlace/Abyassa (58% of mentors in 2023/24 said they received no feedback on their mentoring despite all mentors having feedback provided to them)

## **Feedback to mentors in relation to their WDS (Secondary QA2, FE QA2 & QA4)**

This feedback is related to their completion of the Weekly Development Summary (WDS) rather than their mentoring in general. The feedback provided to mentors and entered online should relate to the WDS’ which have been submitted up until that point, noting the importance of the WDS for the Edge Hill approach to mentoring. Feedback may relate to; accuracy of assessment of the trainee against the weekly curriculum, appropriate target setting including opportunities for development, detail of trainee responses, use of research/engaged reading in the mentor meetings, completion/submission of WDS by deadline.

### **Suggested feedback for WDS’**

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| Areas of strength: | The WDS could be enhanced by: |
| Your responses to the weekly questions on the WDS clearly capture the progression XXX has made. | Providing more detail in the trainee responses. This would make it clearer to you, me, and or XXX about the progress which is being made. |
| You set clear targets and identify opportunities for the trainee to act on these targets. | Include opportunities for the trainee to act on their targets. For example, where they can observe, practice, and/or receive feedback. |
| You provide XXX with opportunities to work with a range of expert colleagues | Make use of the curriculum documents which provide suggested opportunities for development on a weekly basis. |
| You provide opportunities for [name of trainee] to develop and act on their targets. | Indicating the additional support which has been provided in the final box (if ticking ‘Yes with additional support’ |
| You provide opportunities for [name of trainee] to work with a range of experts. | Arrange for XXXX to meet with key colleagues to assist with XXXX |
| You make good use of the weekly mentor meetings to discuss progress and set clear targets. | Making time in the mentor meeting to discuss the weekly questions with XXX. |

## **Feedback to mentors in relation to their mentoring (Secondary QA3, FE QA3 & QA5)**

Where mentoring is of high-quality, trainees make good progress and require very little day to day monitoring from the Link Tutor. Therefore, the feedback entered at this point is related to the mentoring you have observed as part of a mentor meeting, or during lesson observation feedback. The feedback should assist the mentor to develop or to continue to demonstrate high-quality mentoring which enables the trainee to make progress. Feedback may relate to; accuracy of assessment of the trainee against the weekly curriculum, appropriate target setting including opportunities for development, use of pertinent research, the use of the EHU approach to mentoring, the way in which feedback is provided to the trainee or the questions which are posed, the links made to prior and future learning, and how the mentor is making use of their training and development (such as the core training and/or optional modules).

### **Suggested feedback for mentoring**

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| Mentoring is effective because… | Mentoring could be enhanced by… |
| You understand the ITE curriculum, what XXX needs to do to make progress, and this is clear in how you provide feedback to XXX. | Organising appropriate activities and opportunities for [name of trainee] to support them in meeting their targets. For example, by brokering opportunities for them to engage with. |
| You understand and make use of research in your mentoring such as your discussion about XXX | Supporting [name of trainee] in making more use of the evidence base in their practice. For example, making use of the research summaries in the weekly mentor comms. |
| You set SMART targets which are subject specific, and which identify how XXX could meet those targets. | Breaking down the targets into the skill(s) which XXX needs to develop and the opportunities they have to observe, practice and/or receive feedback on this skill(s). |
| You provide opportunities for XXX to develop and act on their targets. | Making use of the opportunities suggested in the curriculum to identify opportunities which may help [name of trainee] meet their targets. |
| You provide opportunities for XXX to work with a range of experts in support of the curriculum for that week. | Seeking advice from me as your Link Tutor if you need support or guidance with using InPlace/Abyassa. |
| You model high standards of practice and support XXX to develop as a subject expert. | Make use of the optional modules on the mentor site which cover areas such as supporting trainees who have SpLD needs. |
| You make good use of the weekly mentor meetings to discuss progress and set clear targets. | Reviewing the content of the online core mentor training you have already completed. |
| Your lesson observation feedback provides clear guidance on how [trainee] is making progress against the curriculum. | Providing structured feedback which is aligned with the curriculum for that week so that XXX knows if they are making progress each week. |
| You provide a supportive environment in which [name of trainee] is able to progress and develop as a novice teacher. | Using the weekly mentoring meeting to identify opportunities for [trainee] to make progress. There are suggested opportunities in the ITE curriculum for each week. |
| You make good use of prompt questions to encourage XXX to reflect on how practice could be altered, developed, or improved. | Making greater use of prompt questions during feedback so that XXX considers their progression and learning, which you then reinforce. |

# Examples of feedback provided to mentors

Link Tutors are asked to provide feedback which is authentic, constructive, and which identifies what makes that mentoring ‘effective’. The examples below reflect the range of ways in which Link Tutors provide feedback to mentors. These show the variation in how feedback may be written/provided and the areas of strength/development within the feedback provided.

1. The mentor provided high quality feedback and set appropriate targets associated with purposeful opportunities for development.  Reference was made to the trainee’s observation and a helpful discussion followed. The discussion regarding the responses to the weekly questions were thorough and meaningful.  Strong links were made with the key readings and other relevant research. *This feedback tells the mentor what they are doing well and why their mentoring is effective. It could be improved by being addressed to the mentor, not about them.*
2. Expertise: The mentor demonstrates comprehensive knowledge of EHU's ambitious teacher training curriculum and educational philosophy.

Communication: Conveys concepts clearly, ensuring that trainees understand the curriculum and its application in the classroom.

Supportive Nature: Provides an encouraging environment, essential for fostering educational curiosity and professional inquiry

Aspects for Development:

1. Goal Setting: There is an opportunity to enhance mentoring by assisting trainees in setting precise, actionable goals.

2. Feedback: Providing structured feedback with concrete examples could further improve the trainees' learning outcomes.

*This feedback tells the mentor what they are doing well and why their mentoring is effective. It also suggests ways in which the mentoring could be developed. It could be improved by being addressed to the mentor, not about them, and by being more specific to the mentoring, which was observed, rather than a summary of what good mentoring looks like.*

1. As an experienced mentor you have worked with XXX flexibly to maximise her progress through the curriculum. WDS conversations are impactful, and targets and opportunities are well constructed to focus on the key aspects XXX needs to address to be a successful teacher. *This feedback tells the mentor what they are doing well and why their mentoring is effective. It is also personable and reflects the practice observed. It could be improved by suggesting resources which the mentor may find useful as an aide.*
2. [Mentor], many thanks for allowing me to observe your mentor meeting today. It was great to see the way you used questions to prompt XXX to reflect on her practice and the skills she was developing before you then affirmed the conclusions she came to. As we chatted about, you may want to encourage XXX to link her learning to what she has previously learnt in her university sessions. You can see everything XXX has covered in the weekly curriculum. *This feedback is personable, thanks for the mentoring for the observation and tells them mentor what they are doing well and why their mentoring is effective. It also suggests ways in which the mentoring could be developed, even though the mentoring is already of a high-quality.*