# Intensive Training and Practice (ITaP)

# Secondary PGCE (11-16) with QTS

# AY 2024-2025



# Pivotal Practice: Questioning

# Mentor & Trainee Manual for those training to teach Secondary Mathematics

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# What is an ITaP?

From September 2024, all Initial Teacher Training providers must include periods of **Intensive Training and Practice (ITaP)** in their QTS programmes. The length of these ITaPs vary across undergraduate and postgraduate provision and are part of the ITE compliance and OFSTED criteria set by the DfE for all delivery from September 2024.

**The intention of the ITaP is to consolidate trainees’ understanding of how the research evidence base underpinning their ITE curriculum should shape their teaching practice.**

ITaPs are a blend of centre- and school-based activities to:

* **Introduce**: support trainees’ learning about the theory of teaching and learning around a given aspect of pivotal practice (e.g. questioning).
* **Analyse**: support trainees to analyse and deconstruct expert teaching in relation to the pivotal practice.
* **Prepare**: provide opportunities for trainees to use approximations practice and to get multiple opportunities for expert feedback on their pivotal practice.
* **Enact**: support trainees to apply their learning of the pivotal practice in the classroom in different scenarios and contexts
* **Assess:** monitor trainees’ knowledge and skills of the pivotal practice.

Each ITaP focuses on just one specific aspect of pivotal practice and this is linked to the [ITTECF](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/661d24ac08c3be25cfbd3e61/Initial_Teacher_Training_and_Early_Career_Framework.pdf). **This mentor and trainee handbook focuses on the PGCE ITaP which is titled ‘Questioning for assessment’** which has a focus on the pivotal practice of ensuring trainees know that **‘Questioning is an essential tool for teachers; questions can be used for many purposes, including to check pupils’ prior knowledge, assess understanding and break down problems (Classroom Practice, 6)’.**

For trainees training to teach in the secondary phase, the pivotal practice for each of the ITaPs is set out in the table below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Secondary PGCE with QTS | Pivotal Practice | Dates |
| Modelling accurate subject knowledge and addressing misconceptions | Modelling helps pupils understand new processes and ideas; good models make abstract ideas concrete and accessible (Classroom Practice, 4) | w/b 16th September 2024 |
| Creating a culture of inclusion for all learners | Pupils are likely to learn at different rates and to require different levels and types of support from teachers to succeed (Adaptive Teaching, 5) | w/b 30th September 2024 |
| Establishing and reinforcing routines and structures | Establishing and reinforcing routines, including through positive reinforcement, can help create an effective learning environment (Managing Behaviour, 1) | w/b 13th January 2025 |
| Questioning for assessment | Questioning is an essential tool for teachers; questions can be used for many purposes, including to check pupils’ prior knowledge, assess understanding and break down problems (Classroom Practice, 6) | w/b 17th March 2025 |

During the school-based element of the ITaP, trainees will need to have:

* **Opportunities to observe and reflect upon expert practice**. **They should be** **supported to understand exactly what it is that makes such practice effective and to think about how it could be embedded in their own teaching and subject**.
* **Opportunity to apply what they have learned, deconstruct practice, and receive feedback from their expert colleagues in their subject area**.
* **Opportunity to expand their knowledge, deepen their understanding of theory and practice and increase their confidence to teach using a given aspect of pivotal practice.**

## The role of the mentor and other expert colleagues during the school-based phase of an ITaP

Mentor: A school-based expert colleague within that subject who is assigned to a specific trainee and who has undertaken their Edge Hill mentor training

Expert Colleague: Any colleague (school or centre-based) who has expertise within a specific subject and/or area of practice.

During the ITaP period, trainees should be given the opportunity to intensify the focus on these foundational and pivotal aspects of the ITE curriculum; benefit from immediate and targeted feedback focused on improvement in relation to their pivotal practice; and access appropriate expert support. As a mentor, you will have responsibility in ensuring that trainees receive the broad range of experiences required during the school-based ITaP days and that purposeful feedback is provided to enable trainees to develop knowledge, skills and confidence in this area.

Throughout this manual we have referred to ‘expert colleague(s)’. This can be anyone who has expertise and does not have to be the Edge Hill trained mentor. This has been done to assist with mentor workload but also to ensure trainees are able to benefit from expert advice from a range of colleagues.

## The role of the mentor during the school-based phase of an ITaP

During the ITaP period, trainees should be given the opportunity to intensify the focus on these foundational and pivotal aspects of the ITE curriculum; benefit from immediate and targeted feedback focused on improvement in relation to their pivotal practice; and access appropriate expert support. As a mentor, you will have responsibility in ensuring that trainees receive the broad range of experiences required during the school-based ITaP days and that purposeful feedback is provided to enable trainees to develop knowledge, skills and confidence in this area.

## Focus of pivotal practice: Questioning

Questions are an integral part of classroom life and essential to every teacher’s pedagogical repertoire. Questioning serves many purposes: it engages students in the learning process and provides opportunities for students to ask questions themselves. It challenges levels of thinking and informs whether students are ready to progress with their learning. Questions that probe for deeper meaning foster critical thinking skills, as well as higher-order capabilities such as problem-solving. Paramore (Paramore, 2017) identifies an imbalance of questions often found in teaching, saying there is a dominance of teacher talk and an over-reliance on closed questions, providing only limited assessment for learning. The issue then is how classroom questioning strategies can become more effective.

This has been chosen for an ITaP during the consolidation placement as questioning is an aspect of teaching which is embedded into practice and so the way they are managed is not always explicit. By focusing on different types of questioning throughout lessons, trainees will gain insights into many aspects of practice.

For full coverage of our ITE curriculum, please see the PGCE Secondary ITE Curriculum for Mathematics is available on our mentor site.

## Intended learning & links to the Core Content Framework

On completion of the ITaP, trainees will have a greater understanding of questioning and recognise they form an integral part of their practice. Trainees will:

**Learn that:**

* Questioning is an essential tool for teachers; questions can be used for many purposes, including to check pupils’ prior knowledge, assess understanding and break down problems (*Classroom Practice 6)*
* High-quality classroom talk can support pupils to articulate key ideas, consolidate understanding and extend their vocabulary *(Classroom Practice 7)*

**Learn how to meet individual needs without creating unnecessary workload, by…and following expert input - by taking opportunities to practise, receive feedback and improve at:**

* Reframing questions to provide greater scaffolding or greater stretch *(Adaptive Teaching F)*

**Learn how to stimulate pupil thinking and check for understanding, by:**

* Including a range of types of questions in class discussions to extend and challenge pupils (e.g. by modelling new vocabulary or asking pupils to justify answers) *(Classroom Practice G)*

**Learn how to check prior knowledge and understanding during lessons, by:**

* Structuring tasks and questions to enable the identification of knowledge gaps and misconceptions (e.g. by using common misconceptions within multiple-choice questions) *(Assessment C).*

**Monitoring and evaluating the impact of ITAP**

“The outcomes of Intensive Training and Practice for trainees should include a strong understanding of the evidence base for the area concerned, which trainees can articulate, justify, and exemplify, and the ability to discuss effective classroom practice and to prepare and apply those aspects of teaching confidently in a range of contexts.” DFE 2024

 ITAP’s are integral to the training curriculum and individual trainee progress in practice and understanding. It is important, therefore, that careful consideration is given to the monitoring and evaluation of the impact each ITAP experience has had, both on individual trainee practice, mentoring and on the coherence and progression of the trainee curriculum.

As part of the evaluation EHU will monitor and seek feedback from

* trainees on the impact of ITAP on their practice
* mentors and other key stakeholders on the impact of the ITAP

## Structure of ITaP

On the Secondary PGCE programme, **the ITaP will take place during w/b 22nd March 2024 and run for 5 consecutive days.** This will be split between sessions at university, and opportunities to enact and assess on the consolidation professional practice.

**Monday 17th March and Tuesday 18th March:** Trainees will be based on campus and will not be in their consolidation setting.

**Wednesday 19th March-Friday 21st March:** Trainees will be based in their consolidation setting and mentors will be supported with any delivery /support required.

We have provided an overview of the opportunities trainees will need to be afforded on days 3, 4 & 5. These opportunities are listed in the preferred order of action and the order which would most benefit trainee learning, however expert colleagues can apply flexibility with this order to best suit their school day. **We ask that the assess task takes place on the Friday (day 5) so that trainees are assessed at the most appropriate time of their learning. If this is an issue, please do speak to your Link Tutor who will be able to support.**

|  |
| --- |
| Day 1 |
| Campus:Programme Lecture (delivered by EHU tutors on campus) | **Lecture: Principles of Effective Questioning**Overview of session:* Consolidate trainees’ understanding that questioning is a technique that is used for a variety of reasons.
* Consider the underlying challenges and solutions in planning and implementing questioning in the classroom.
* Consolidate trainees’ awareness of the approaches used in planning and implementing a variety of questioning approaches in the classroom such as cold calling, probing questions, hinge questions, open and closed questioning, Socratic questioning, and dialogic teaching.
* Opportunities for trainees to consider how their own questioning techniques might be further developed.
 |
| Seminars | **Seminar: Questioning in subject areas*** Peer discussions and reflections focusing on subject specific approaches to questioning. In Mathematics this will focus on the principles and context of questioning in the mathematics classroom.
 |
| **Seminar: Questioning led by subject expert*** Peer discussions and reflections focusing on subject specific approaches to questioning for challenge and asking questions that focus on the subject.
 |
| Digital Approximation | **Proxima: Questioning in the Classroom*** Trainees can practice questioning, strategies, and techniques in a digital environment
* Trainees receive immediate and targeted feedback from experts
 |
| Day 2 |
| Campus: Subject seminars | **Lecture: Crafting Effective Questions for Evidence-Based Teaching and Deep Learning**This session will equip trainees with the skills to design purposeful and impactful questions that drive student learning, provide meaningful assessment evidence, and support deep cognitive engagement. Through an exploration of different questioning techniques, trainees will learn how to use questioning as a tool for both formative assessment and scaffolding higher-order thinking.  |
| **Seminar: Scenario Planning: Questioning in the Classroom**Trainees will engage with case studies and stimulations in their subject areas exploring different types of questioning in practice and determine how they can be used to achieve specific goals e.g. process questions. |
| **Assigned Readings for Engaged Reading**General:Alexander, R. (2017) Towards Dialogic Teaching: rethinking classroom talk. York: Dialogos.Lemov, D. & Robinson, M (2017) Classroom Talk and Questioning. In Hendrick, C. & McPherson, R. (Eds.) What Does This Look Like in the Classroom? Bridging the gap between research and practice. Woodbridge: John Catt.Walsh, J. & Sattes, B. (2015) Questioning for Classroom Discussion: Purposeful Speaking, Engaged Listening, Deep Thinking Paperback |
|  | **Panel Q&A****How expert colleagues approach questioning****Lead Mentors**This panel discussion will explore how experienced educators use questioning effectively to support trainee teachers and early career teachers. Lead mentors will share insights on:* Types of Questions: Open vs. closed questions, probing for deeper thinking.
* Scaffolding and Adaption: Adapting questioning techniques based on teacher development stages and meeting pupils’ needs.
* Encouraging Reflection: Using questioning to prompt self-evaluation and professional growth.
* Managing Responses: Creating a supportive dialogue while maintaining high expectations.
 |
| Day 3 |
| Placement | **Lesson observation: Questioning in subject area*** Trainee to observe expert colleague(s) within their subject area with a specific focus on the use of questioning.
* Questions to support reflection and/or discussion with expert colleague(s) in their subject area.
 |
| **Lesson observation: Questioning outside subject area*** Trainee to observe expert colleague(s) outside their subject area with a specific focus on the use of questioning. Trainee should use this opportunity to explore some differences between subject areas (for example, how is questioning implemented in mathematics different to questioning in Mathematics?)
* Questions to support reflection and/or discussion with expert colleague(s). This may be an expert colleague in their subject area or someone outside of their area.
 |
| **Co-planning with expert colleague in preparation for deliberate practice in the subject area*** Trainees to plan with mentor what types of questioning will be implemented in upcoming deliberate practice and to discuss rationales for their practice. This lesson will be delivered on day 4.
* Trainees should be encouraged to draw from their observations both within and outside of their subject areas.
 |
| **Trainees to reflect on classroom artefacts e.g. Schemes of Work, Curriculum maps, lesson plans in preparation for deliberate practise*** Trainee should be provided with access to classroom artefacts.
* Independently and/or with support they should reflect on what they have learnt about approaches to effective questioning in the context of the school, their department, and their subject.
* They should be encouraged to reflect and consider what impact their learning about questioning would have on their own classroom artefacts. For example, how a resource may be utilised, how planning may reflect the deliberate and pivotal practice.
 |
| Day 4 |
| Placement | **Demonstration: Trainee Deliberate Practise*** Trainee to deliver a lesson with a particular focus on questioning (planned with their mentor during day 3)
 |
| **Subject specific expert feedback and Co-planning in preparation for lesson observation*** Deconstruct observation with expert colleague focusing on the effectiveness of approaches implemented in relation to questioning.
* Mentors may wish to make use of the prompts provided.
* Utilising targets and feedback from post-lesson observation discussion to plan and prepare for upcoming lesson observation with a focus on improving questioning (day 5)
 |
| **Expert Modelling:** Questioning in subject areas* Trainee to observe expert colleague in delivering a lesson focusing specifically on skills relating to questioning
 |
| Day 5 |
| Placement | **Lesson observation and feedback- completed by mentor*** Trainee to deliver a lesson with a particular focus on questioning, demonstrating an improvement from previous practice and taking their ITaP learning into account.
* Mentor should make use of the EHU lesson observation form for their observation of the deliberate practice [form on Abyasa]. As per the outline provided, observation and feedback should focus on the use of the pivotal practice (questioning) which is the focus of the ITE curriculum for that week.
* Deconstruct observation with expert colleague and identifying areas for further development
 |
| **Assigned readings**General: Rosenshine, B. (2012) Principles of Instruction: Research-based strategies that all teachers should know. American Educator, 12–20.<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8535.2005.00507.x>Alexander R (2017) *Towards Dialogic Teaching: The effective use of talk for teaching and learning:  Rethinking Classroom Talk*. 5th ed. Cambridge: Dialogo |
| **Trainees to complete assessment with mentor [WDS document to be completed and targets set]*** Trainee and expert colleague to reflect on trainees’ progress this week in relation to their ITE curriculum making use of the WDS.
* Identify areas of good practice and areas of further development as part of the weekly WDS which is filled out on Abyasa
 |

## Practice should trainees have opportunity to observe during day 3 and 4

Trainees must have an opportunity to observe experts enacting different types of questioning. **They should be provided with opportunity to observe practice in the essential column at least once during the ITaP, and ideally should experience them for each key stage (KS3 and 4) to enable them to note the differences**. Opportunities to observe practice from the desirable column would be beneficial (even if this is limited to one key stage or year group).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Closed questioning | Pupils to ask questions |
| Open Questioning | Unusual or speculative questioning approaches to challenge pupils in their thinking e.g. ‘if’ questioning or ‘why would it be wrong to suggest….?’ |
| Methods of questioning e.g. no hands, wait time, elaboration, name the question, retrieval starter | Variety approaches e.g. think, pair, share, use of mini whiteboards, show me boards, choral response, multiple choice questions, say it again better, randomised questioning |
|  Subject specific question taxonomy e.g. key questions for enquiry | Questioning to extend vocabulary  |
| Build questions from previous questions asked e.g. pupils disagreeing constructively, supporting responses with evidence | Questioning to correct misconceptions |
| Management-related questioning e.g. Has everyone finished this piece of work now?’ |  |
| Information recall-related, e.g.‘ What is the name of 5 sided polygon? |  |
| Higher-order questions, e.g.‘What evidence do you have for saying that?’ |  |
| Dialogic questioning |  |
| Questioning to stretch and challenge e.g. non-directive prompt, directive prompt |  |
| Probing questioning e.g. Can you give an example?’, ‘Is that always, sometimes, or never true?’, ‘Do you agree with Michael’s answer?’ |  |
| Scaffolding for dialogue  |  |
| Process questions e.g. ‘what calculations did you use?’ |  |
| Hinge questions |  |
| High-quality classroom talk and implement a range of strategies, for example, collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative, purposeful |  |

## Trainee prompts for observation and expert modelling on day 3

During their observations of expert colleagues [**expert modelling**/ **lesson observation** **in subject area and outside subject area**] trainees may want to consider these questions, so they are prepared to have a reflective discussion with their expert colleague(s):

* How would you describe the behaviour of the pupils during questioning? What do you think influenced that behaviour?
* How would you compare the effectiveness of the different types of questioning that you observed?
* What routines did you notice in relation to questioning– how do you think these were established?
* Did any individual pupils stand out – how was questioning adapted for these pupils. What strategies were employed to manage more disruptive behaviours?
* How was the teachers voice used during questioning?
* Do you have any suggestions on how the questioning you observed could be improved?
* How did questioning differ from equivalent questioning in other key stages?
* Which types of questioning do you think are harder to manage and why?
* What did you notice about any adaptations made for pupils with additional needs or SEND and why were these made?
* How did the adaptations support these pupils?
* What is the difference between closed and open questions?
* How can questioning be used to check pupils’ prior knowledge?
* How can questioning be used to assess pupils’ understanding?
* What constitutes high-quality classroom talk?
* How can it be used effectively?
* Think of a key concept you will be teaching in an upcoming lesson. Write three scaffold questions and three stretch questions.
* Can you write five open questions for an upcoming lesson?
* Element of classroom talk: Collective: What does it look like in the classroom?
* Element of classroom talk: Reciprocal: What does it look like in the classroom?
* Element of classroom talk: Supportive: What does it look like in the classroom?
* Element of classroom talk: Cumulative: What does it look like in the classroom?
* Element of classroom talk: Purposeful: What does it look like in the classroom?

## Trainee prompts for observation and expert modelling on day 3 and preparation for deliberate practice on day 4

During preparation for their own deliberate practice on day 4, [**deliberate practice**/ **lesson observation**], trainees might want to consider these questions, so they are prepared to have a reflective discussion with their mentor.

* How often do you use questioning in your lessons?
* What kind of questions do you use?
* When you ask questions, do you know what answers you are trying to get from pupils? Do you usually get the answers you expect?
* What is the difference between closed and open questions?
* How can questioning be used to check pupils’ prior knowledge?
* How can questioning be used to assess pupils’ understanding?
* What constitutes high-quality classroom talk? How can it be used effectively?
* How did you extend and challenge pupils using a range of questioning techniques? How effective was this?
* How did you adapt your questioning to meet the needs of individuals or groups of pupils? How effective was this?
* Why plan questions that become increasingly difficult? How effective was your planning for this?
* What is the importance of follow-on questions? How effective was your planning for this?
* How did you probe understanding?
* How long do you wait for pupils to answer questions?
* How many pupils typically answer questions in one lesson?
* How often do you quickly move on or answer the question yourself?
* Do you always hold out for an answer that is 100% correct?
* What are your next steps?
* What resources / support do you need?
* When will you do this by?
* How has your thinking / practice changed through this experience?
* How has your thinking / practice developed since beginning of the PGCE?
* What has resonated with you from this experience?

# Further support, research, and resources

[ITT Core Content Framework](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974307/ITT_core_content_framework_.pdf)

[ITT Core Content Framework Exemplification Resource Materials](https://www.ucet.ac.uk/12124/itt-core-content-framework-exemplification-resourcesept-2020)

[Education Endowment Foundation](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/)

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# Frequently asked questions

* Who is the expert colleague?

This term applies to anyone who is an expert in their subject. This includes tutors at Edge Hill, mentors during placement, and other expert colleagues in the placement setting. Where the term ‘expert colleague’ is used on days 3, 4, & 5, this may be the mentor. However, another expert colleague from within the school may also be more appropriate for that task. Where the term ‘mentor’ is used, this is the subject mentor.

* Should trainees be released from the other teaching commitments to engage in the iTaP activities?

Yes. During the week trainees will only teach 2 lessons (day 4 & day 5). The rest of the week they will need to be released for observations, co-planning, and reflection tasks.

* What about “everything else” which is part of good teaching and learning? Do trainees have any input, focus, or feedback on these aspects during the week?

The purpose of an iTaP is that it affords trainees opportunity to focus on one aspect of pivotal practice. We have chosen questioning as this focus. The only way in which a trainee would have input or feedback on an aspect unrelated to questioning (e.g. behaviour management) would be if the use of effective or ineffective questioning had led to poor behaviour. For example, poor questioning will make it difficult to assess progress and this may impact on the behaviour of pupils. The focus of the discussion in this instance would be how questioning should be used to assess progress and thus manage behaviour.

* It is not suitable/appropriate for the trainee to focus only on questioning for this week. Can we as a school choose another focus or move the curriculum to another week when it better suits the school?

Unfortunately, this is not possible. Our ITE curriculum has been carefully sequenced so that trainees receive the most appropriate instruction at the most appropriate point of their ITE. This week has been chosen as it builds on their prior learning of questioning and prepares them as they progress towards the end of their consolidation phase.

* What is the trainee is absent during the week?

We expect our trainees to attend placement every day as per the expectations of the teaching profession. Any absences from placement can have a detrimental impact on their progression throughout the curriculum. If the trainee is absent at any point during the iTaP week, they will miss out key delivery, on opportunities to observe, discuss, co-plan and/or receive feedback. This may impact on their progression which would be managed via the usual process such as a Progress Support Plan or sourcing further opportunities on placement (which may delay their award of PGCE with QTS).