



LIVERPOOL
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UNIVERSITY



MENTORING MEMOS

PGCE Secondary: Week 6 (w/c 12th October 2026)

Focus this Week

ITAP 3 - How do I ask and respond to questions in my subject to check understanding?

By the end of this week, student teachers should begin to be able to:

- Ask effective questions to check pupil understanding
- Respond effectively to hesitant or incorrect pupil responses
- Explore different modes of pupil responses (eg written responses)

Thank you to all Professional and General Mentors for ensuring ITAPs 1 and 2 have been a success! Feedback so far shows that student teachers are growing in confidence, feel well supported in school, and see this sequence of ITAPs as a clear roadmap towards teaching their first full lessons. This is exactly what it is designed to do.

As we enter ITAP 3, just a reminder of the key messages:

- Student teachers **should** have an ITAP timetable, which resembles the [exemplar found here](#).
- Student teachers **should** be teaching elements of lessons as required in the [ITAP booklet](#). They **should not** yet be teaching full lessons.
- Student teachers **should not** be completing the usual mentor meeting form. All that needs to be done is complete the booklet.

If in doubt, reach out to your Lead Mentor or Mike Sweeney (m.j.sweeney@ljmu.ac.uk).

This week, please focus on the ITAP mentor meeting form in the ITAP booklet.

The first question asks student teachers to consider the literature they have read alongside what they have observed in school practice. Talk with them about what they have read in the research base: ask about their key takeaways, and how these compare with what they have seen in classrooms. Student teachers should be specific about the literature they have read in their answers to this question.

To support these conversations, the subject-specific ITAP guidance includes a summary of the key literature all student teachers will have read. You can find that here: [LJMU ITT Placement : PGCE Secondary : Programme Information](#) (under Intensive Training and Practice). If you can't see your subject there, just contact your lead mentor.

Updates	During ITAP 4, student teachers should continue to teach parts of lessons. However, confident student teachers may well be ready for their first full lesson during ITAP 4. If you think yours are ready, please talk this through with them. ITAPs 1 – 4 are designed to prepare student teachers with the basic elements of their first full lessons. Routine full lessons should commence in Phase 2a. Give student teachers as much notice about what they will be teaching so they can use half-term to prepare. All student teachers should use the new lesson plan in Phase 2a onwards. LJMU ITT Placement : PGCE Secondary : Planning & Learning Activities There are no changes to the teaching expectations for Phases 2 and 3. As a reminder, these are: Phase 2a • Building up to 1 full lesson per day by the middle of the phase • Building up to 2 full lessons per day by the end of the phase Phase 2b • 2 – 3 days of school induction and then 1 full lesson per day • From week 3, 1 – 2 full lessons per day • By the end of the phase, 2 full lessons per day Phase 3a • Beginning at 2 lessons per day • By the end of the phase, 3 lessons per day Phase 3b • 80% of an ECT timetable In every phase, there should always be a minimum of 15 hours directed activity on the timetable, including solo-teaching, team teaching, observations, planning, meetings ect.
Reminders for Students	Focus on ITAP The only activities you should be completing this week are ITAP 3 related. By the end of this week, ITAP 1, 2 and 3 in the booklet should be completed. If you have any concerns or questions about that, please contact your general or lead mentor.
Reminders for Mentors	Planning for Phase 2a Please ensure student teachers know which lessons they will be teaching in the first few weeks of Phase 2a before the half-term, giving them plenty of time to begin their planning.
Key Dates	• Friday 16th October - ITAP 4 starts at LJMU • Thursday 22nd October – Phase 1 Review Deadline EXTENDED HALF TERM • School-Led: If your school has an extended half-term, ITAP 4 will be completed w/c 2nd November. The Phase 1 Review Deadline will be Thursday 5th November. • University-Led: If your school has an extended half-term, ITAP 4 will be completed w/c 9th November. The Phase 1 Review Deadline will be Thursday 12th November. • From Monday 9th November – all student teachers begin Phase 2a

	• Thursday 12th November 15:30 – 16:30 – online subject general mentor training. Link and information to follow.
Education Updates	TES: How to banish impostor syndrome when you start a new role - link – Many of us can feel at times that we aren't good enough for the role we hold. Student teachers may feel this particularly strongly as they begin teaching full lessons for themselves. Self-reflection matters, but we can easily become our own harshest critic. In this article, a school leader shares some practical ways to avoid being derailed by self-doubt.
Recommended Reading	High Challenge, Low Threat: Finding the Balance by Mary Myatt This week's recommended reading is a good companion to the article above. It makes the case that mistakes are most useful when high expectations come with low threat, and that is a helpful lens for how we talk to student teachers about their first full lessons. If a lesson doesn't go to plan, the way we respond shapes whether it becomes a learning point or a confidence knock.
Wellbeing	As we approach the autumn and winter terms, and the accountability of student teachers begins to increase, we want to make sure we don't forget the building blocks of good mental wellbeing. Here is a guide for to help create healthy habits and a lifestyle that supports your mental wellbeing at your own pace. If you have any concerns about student teacher wellbeing, please contact lead mentos asap. Student teachers can also talk to a Wellbeing Advisor using these links: • Book an appointment online • Visit our drop-in sessions: Monday to Friday, 10am until 4pm in the Student Life Building. • Contact us by phone: 0151 231 3664 or email: studentwellbeing@ljmu.ac.uk

