

Year 2 ECT/Mentor/IT Bulletin (Including January 2025 cohort)

Bulletin Section - January 2026

Welcome to the third Early Career Framework (ECF) Bulletin from Vantage Teaching School Hub for the Year 2 September & January 2025 cohort. The purpose of this Bulletin is to share relevant information regarding the Early Career Framework Full Induction Programme with Induction Tutors, Mentors and Early Career Teachers (ECTs). We will circulate these Bulletins at the start of each new module in the Full Induction Programme Calendar.

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Welcome to the January 2025 cohort into Y2 of our ECF programme

Thank you to our January 2025 Mentors and ECTs who attended our Induction into Year 2 of the ECF programme on the 10th December. These programme members are now joining the September 2024 cohort for the remainder of this academic year. They will access the Year 2 programme in a slightly different order but will receive all of the training and support that they are entitled to. We look forward to welcoming ECTs into the Year 2 seminar groups and mentors into our existing mentor groups.

Any January programme members who were unable to access an Induction event have been contacted with instructions as to how they can catch up.

Development Cycle 3 for ECTs & Mentors

This week heralds the start of Development Cycle 3 for ECTs on Year 2 of the programme which focuses on, 'Using meaningful & memorable explanations.'

Using meaningful and memorable explanations

When planning meaningful and memorable explanations, it can be tempting to focus on developing fun activities that you think will engage pupils. However, this can sometimes distract pupils from the key learning that you want them to remember. Therefore, the focus for your third development cycle will be on how to

plan explanations that help pupils pay attention to, and remember, the information you want them to learn.

Week 1: Retrieve

At the very start of the development cycle, you will need to complete the retrieval quiz on Brightspace and revisit areas of the self-directed study that would benefit your development. The areas that relate most to this development cycle are:

- Module 2 – Session: [The working and long-term memory](#)
- Module 2 – Session: [Considering how to introduce new knowledge to pupils](#)
- Module 3 – Session: [Explanations and modelling](#)

Whilst this development cycle relates to the sessions identified above, the retrieval quiz is focused on retrieving learning from Year 1, Module 3 sessions.

Teach First ECT Development cycle 3

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Search titles, descriptions

Unit 1: Development Cycle 3

Development cycle 3 overview

Retrieval quiz 3

Unit 2: Seminar recordings and slides

What can you remember from Y1: Module 3?

We know from cognitive science that revisiting learning is important for strengthening memory so completing this quiz will help you to retain the information you have learnt. This quiz will also help you to identify any areas within the programme that you are unsure of. The quiz will provide you with feedback, to inform you where in the course the questions relate to so that you can revisit the related content to address any misconceptions you may have.

Q **Retrieval quiz 3**

Please complete this [short retrieval quiz](#) to practise recalling information from Module 3 and to help identify areas of the module you may wish to revisit.

Weeks 1 – 2: Extend Seminars

An important reminder regarding our Y2 Seminars

These seminars are NOT subject knowledge enhancement. The seminars, regardless of the subject, all cover the same pedagogical themes from the Early Career Framework which new teachers need to be able to master. Each Year 2 ECT has been carefully placed into a group based on the main subject or phase that we have been informed that they teach. This is to support them in networking with other ECTs & to view the strategies through a subject lens. The subject examples provided by Teach First are a guide to support in exemplifying the strategies & are to be used to develop discussions about an ECT's own practice.

ECTs will attend the third seminar which is titled: Using meaningful and memorable explanations. See summary of the combined seminars in January 2026 below which constitute the training for the whole of the Spring Term from Vantage TSH.

In this seminar, ECTs will explore the following strategies to support them to plan and deliver effective explanations:

- Using analogies
- Using metaphors
- Using examples and non-examples
- Using mnemonics
- Using stories

Each strategy will be exemplified through subject or phase specific topics.

Weeks 2: Refocus

In this stage, you'll meet with your mentor and using the information and learnings from the retrieve and extend stage, you'll work together to identify a development focus for this Development Cycle.

Weeks 2 – 3: Demonstration and deconstruction

After selecting a focus area, you will observe and/or hold a discussion with an expert colleague which will focus on your chosen area of development for this cycle. This will be followed by a second mentor interaction where you will deconstruct the approach taken by the expert colleague.

After the demonstration and prior to the deconstruction mentor interaction you'll complete a reflection (located within this unit). This will then be used to support the deconstruction interaction with your mentor.

Weeks 3 – 5: Integration and feedback

You'll then integrate your new learning into your practice. The third mentor interaction, Feedback, will be structured using instructional coaching and the feedback model that was used in year one. Depending on your area of development, the stimulus for this interaction will either be an informal drop-in observation, or a discussion.

To support **ECTs and Mentors** to understand the expectations for each half termly Development Cycle, below is an overview of expectations:

For each half term's development cycle you will:

- complete a retrieval quiz and revisit identified areas of self-directed study from year one (45 min) **(Via Brightspace)**
- attend a seminar (1 hour 30 min) **(In our programme this is a 3-hour seminar at the start of each term as both seminars have been joined together)**
- arrange and attend a demonstration (observation and / or discussion) (1 hour per half term)
- have three fortnightly interactions with your mentor (1 hour each)

The focus for each cycle is outlined in the table below:

DEVELOPMENT CYCLE FOCUS

Half term 1 Developing pupils' intrinsic motivation (Autumn 1)

Half term 2 Supporting pupils to develop subject-specific skills (Autumn 2)

Half term 3 Using meaningful and memorable explanations (Spring 1)

Half term 4 Anticipating and addressing common misconceptions (Spring 2)

Half term 5 Using structured talk to develop pupils' literacy

Half term 6 Developing a coherent curriculum

Below is a reminder of how each Development Cycle is structured:

1-2	Extend – ECT seminar Using meaningful and memorable explanations (Spring 1) Anticipating and addressing common misconceptions (Spring 2)
	Refocus – mentor interaction one Focus: Decide upon an area of development.
2-3	Demonstration – observation and/or discussion ECT observes and/or has a discussion with an expert colleague focused on their chosen area of development.
	Deconstruction – mentor interaction two Focus: Deconstructing the approach from the demonstration.
3-5	Integration ECT incorporates new learning into their practice.
5or6	Feedback – mentor interaction three Mentors attend a drop-in observation (10 min) focused upon the new practice, followed by feedback and practice using the feedback model. Then the training and retrieval focus of the next development cycle is discussed.

The demonstration – observation and/or discussion

This is a really important part of the Development Cycle. Mentors support ECTs in selecting who as an expert colleague, the ECT should visit. Ideally the mentor also joins the ECT in attending the observation/discussion but we appreciate capacity in schools may not allow for this. Below are prompts/guidance that is available on Brightspace to support the ECT when they have observed/had a discussion with an expert colleague in preparation for feedback to their mentor.

Demonstration reflection

Following your demonstration, you'll discuss your learning with your mentor as part of the deconstruction interaction. To ensure a focused deconstruction interaction with your mentor it's important to spend some time reflecting on your learning from the demonstration.



Over to you!

Take some time to reflect on the demonstration in preparation for your next mentor interaction:

- What were the strengths of the demonstration?
- What further questions would you have for the teacher?
- How can your learning from this demonstration feed into your own practice?
- Consider your learning from both the seminar and the demonstration, what will you now plan to integrate into your own practice during this development cycle? This may be decided in collaboration with your mentor.

Make notes on each of these reflective prompts and share with your mentor using the [assignment tool](#) in advance of your next mentor interaction. These reflections can then be used to support your deconstruction conversation.

Extend seminars for ECTs

Thank you to all ECTs who attended the extend seminars during w/b: 8th September 2025 and w/b: 15th September 2025. These seminars formed the training for the whole of the Autumn Term - Development Cycle 1 (Autumn Term 1) of the Year 2 programme and also Development Cycle 2 (Autumn Term 2).

For these seminars, each Year 2 ECT has been placed into a group based on the main subject or phase that we have been informed that they teach. All groups focus on the same pedagogical strategies but look at and discuss these through a subject lens.

The extend seminars for **ECTs for the Spring Term 2026** are due to take place as follows:

W/b: 12th January 2026 – Secondary Group D & Primary Group A, specific seminars will take place during this week. Please see your individual calendars for the date of your ECT seminar within this week. All seminars start at 1.30pm until 4.30pm.

W/b: 19th January 2026 – Secondary Group C, Primary Group B & MFL subject/phase specific seminars will take place during this week. Please see your individual calendars for the date of your ECT seminar within this week. All seminars start at 1.30pm until 4.30pm

The first half of the extend seminar relates to: 'Using meaningful and memorable explanations' - Development Cycle 3 (Spring 1)

You will attend your third seminar which is titled: Using meaningful and memorable explanations.

In this seminar, you will explore the following strategies to support you to plan and deliver effective explanations:

- Using analogies
- Using metaphors
- Using examples and non-examples
- Using mnemonics
- Using stories

The second half of the extend seminar relates to: 'Anticipating and addressing common misconceptions' - Development Cycle 4 (Spring 2)

You'll attend your fourth seminar which is titled: Anticipating and addressing common misconceptions.

In this seminar you will explore strategies that will support you to identify and address subject-specific common misconceptions. You'll consider how you can use 'refutation texts' to provide feedback and help pupils change their thinking and you'll also explore the following strategies:

- Using concept cartoons
- Using examples and non-examples

These strategies will be exemplified through subject or phase specific topics.

Attendance at these seminars is vital as the two seminars that ECTs are entitled to per term, have been joined together to create one half day's training. This means that there is only one half day event for ECTs to attend at the beginning of each term in Year 2 of the programme.

Seminars for Mentors

Spring Term seminar – ‘The adaptive teacher’ & ‘A professionally acceptable workload’ combined.

The Mentor seminars for the the Spring Term will take place on 10.2.26 3pm – 4.30pm (Face to Face) or 23.2.26 via Zoom. Please see individual training calendars for the exact date that you will you attend your mentor training. This is the **ONLY** training for Y2 mentors in the Spring Term 2026. It is vital that all mentors attend to ensure their continued engagement and funding on the programme.

Seminar preparation Mentor Y2 seminar 3

To make the most of your time in the upcoming seminar it's important to familiarise yourself with the preparation information in advance of the seminar.

Seminar title: **The adaptive teacher**

By the end of your upcoming seminar, you will:

- be able to describe the importance of adaptive expertise in teaching
- understand the influence of mentoring on adaptive expertise
- think critically about how you could support your ECT to acquire adaptive expertise.



Important!

During the seminar you will need:

- Pen and paper for note taking

The following [worksheet](#)

Seminar preparation Mentor Y2 seminar 4

In this section you will find information to help you prepare for your upcoming seminar.

To make the most of your time in the upcoming seminar it's important to familiarise yourself with the preparation information in advance of the seminar.

Seminar title: **Professionally-acceptable workload**

By the end of your upcoming seminar, you will:

- understand the key drivers of workload
- know strategies to support with individual workload
- be able to support your ECT to look critically at their workload.



Important!

During the seminar you will need:

- Pen and paper for note taking
- The following [worksheet](#)

Please note that the information about these Y2 seminars differs from what is advertised on Brightspace. Delivery Partners have the option to choose the seminars that they can deliver to Mentors in Y2 on the programme. Vantage TSH have chosen to deliver a combination of both seminars in the Spring Term 2026, to give Y2 Mentors the best possible training experience and relevant content.

Invites to seminars for ECTs and Mentors

Reminders regarding these events will be sent out a week before the seminars are due to take place via email. The email will also contain any resources or pre-reading/information that is needed prior to attendance; we urge ECTs and Mentors to read these carefully so that they are fully prepared for the seminars.

Attendance at these seminars is very important so please do let us know if there are any issues. Attendance and engagement at these seminars are part of the statutory entitlement for all ECTs. We would like to remind everyone about the importance of ensuring that their cameras are turned on during the online training and that participants attend the training ready to be active participants in discussions, whether the session is face to face or online, to get the most out of them. Attendance at all of the seminars is recorded and this data is used to inform whether schools receive statutory funding from the DfE.

Mentors have been placed into a face to face group or the zoom group during the seminar delivery weeks. If any mentor is unable to attend their normal group session for an extraordinary reason, we are able to offer the alternative session to attend as long as you let us know in advance, via email: teachingschoolhub@smchull.org

All Y2 programme members have been given a new Programme Guide for Year 2 of the programme. If anyone does not have access to this, then please email: TeachingSchoolHub@smchull.org

Navigating Brightspace

My Teach First is the home page that you log on to access the ECF Programme. The platform **Brightspace** is where all of the curriculum materials are housed and this is accessed once you log onto My Teach First.

ECTs

The use of Brightspace by ECTs in Y2 of the programme is far less than in Y1 of the programme.

ECTs need to ensure that they start every half term new Development Cycle by completing a retrieval quiz on Brightspace. The retrieval quizzes link to previous year 1 content related to the Development Cycle that they are currently studying. For this half term, Year 2 ECTs should be starting the half term by completing the retrieval quiz which is based on **Y1 Module 3 sessions**. It is expected that ECTs log onto Brightspace for up to 30 mins at the start of each half term to complete the retrieval quiz before they attend any seminars and have their first interaction with their mentor. The retrieval quizzes are mandatory. From the quiz, an ECT may be directed to look back and re-study content from Y1 Modules – this is advised but is optional.

Y2 ECTs are also expected to complete any Y2 Induction activities that were not covered in the live induction event. These are found in a separate Module on Brightspace named, 'Y2 Induction'. The induction activities are mandatory.

Y2 ECTs are expected to complete a demonstration reflection which is accessed on Brightspace, after they have observed an expert colleague and before they meet their mentor for their second interaction of the half term. This activity is advised but is optional.

An ECT's engagement on Brightspace is tracked by Teach First and ECTs will receive reminder emails if they have not been completing their retrieval quizzes regularly and/or if they have not completed the induction activities.

In addition to this there is optional content on Brightspace:

'Wellbeing' Modules that can be accessed at any time and 'Excellent Teaching in Special Schools'.

The pathway to finding the **Wellbeing Modules** is:

Brightspace > ECT 2024 > Cross Programme > My Wellbeing

The pathway to finding the **Special Schools** content is:

Brightspace > ECT2024 > All Courses > Optional: Excellent Teaching in Special Schools

Mentors

A key responsibility of a mentor on the ECF and ECTP is to help their ECT to contextualise their learning from the programme and apply it within their own school and classroom context.

Understanding the curriculum your ECT has engaged with – alongside knowing the research and pedagogical strategies that underpin it - enables mentors to guide them effectively through their six Year 2 ECF Development Cycles. This knowledge also supports the tailoring of goals within the cycle to meet the ECTs specific developmental needs.

Mentors are expected to log onto Brightspace every half-term if they are mentoring a Year 2 ECT to check they have completed the retrieval quizzes so that they can discuss this with them and escalate any issues to the Induction Tutor - reminders about how to do this are below.

Mentors are advised when they need to complete the mentor assessment on Brightspace – this activity is mandatory. This is for mentors on our two-year training programme.

Y2 Mentors are also expected to complete any Y2 Induction activities that were not covered in the live induction event. These are found in a separate Module on Brightspace named, 'Y2 Induction'. The induction activities are mandatory.

The self-study for a Mentor for each of the modules is optional, although a Mentor's completion of this will support with their engagement on the programme. This is for mentors on our two-year training programme.

New/ Replacement mentors who are mentoring a Y2 ECT will be sent a table which highlights key ECTP weekly mentor overview videos – accessed via Brightspace - designed to help them understand the curriculum and strategies underpinning each ECF Year 2 Development Cycle. We recommend prioritising watching these videos to strengthen their mentoring knowledge and practice for each cycle. Mentors can access these videos through the 'Early Career Training Programme for Mentors' or 'Early Career Training Programme for Trained Mentors' self-directed training on Brightspace.

Here is the pathway that a mentor can follow to check the progress of their Year 2 ECT:

Login to My TeachFirst > Click on ECF2024 (Year 2 ECTs) > **Click on the chosen Development Cycle for ECTs** (Do not click on the Module for Mentors) > Click on Audit Users > Select the ECT

You will then be able to see an overview of their engagement in the content of the Development Cycle.

We hope that Development Cycle 3 runs smoothly for you all – remember we are here to help should you need any support.

**Email: teachingschoolhub@smchull.org
Tel: 01482 851136**

Best Wishes
Andrea Tonks ECTP Lead