

PGCE Secondary Mathematics

Phase 1 Mentor Curriculum Guide



This guide provides essential information for mentors supporting student teachers during Phase 1 of their placement. It outlines your role, key responsibilities, and the structures in place to ensure student teachers receive comprehensive training and support.

As a mentor, you play a crucial role in bridging theoretical learning with practical classroom experience. This guide will help you provide structured support while ensuring student teachers meet the required standards and competencies.

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Phase 1 Expectations and Timetable

All aspects of education and training for student teachers must align with the Secondary Phased Expectations.

These expectations are structured around ten curriculum questions, each containing three components with clearly defined expectations for each phase. Rather than serving as a checklist, these expectations provide a comprehensive picture of expected student teacher progress by the end of each phase.

You can find the full phased expectations here: <https://itt-placement.com/pgce-secondary/course-overview.php>

Purpose of Phase 1

Phase 1 primarily focuses on providing student teachers with opportunities to observe, develop awareness, and begin practicing teaching skills in a supportive, low-stakes environment.

Required Experiences

By the end of Phase 1, student teachers should have completed:

- Observations of multiple teachers with varied teaching styles
- One-to-one work with individual pupils
- Small group instruction
- Planning components of lessons
- Delivering specific lesson segments (such as starters and activities)
- Teaching one or two complete lessons

Timetabling Requirements

Student teachers require a timetable that supports these experiences, including a minimum of 15 hours of mentor-directed activity.

While there is no prescribed number of lessons that student teachers must teach by the end of Phase 1, it is essential that they gain experience leading various activities within lessons and deliver at least one or two complete lessons independently.

Induction into Home School

A comprehensive induction is essential for all student teachers, regardless of their prior experience in school settings.

Week One Requirements

By the end of the first week on placement, please ensure student teachers have completed:

- An initial meeting with both Subject Mentor and Professional Mentor to discuss expectations for student teachers within the school
- Introductions to key departmental staff
- A tour of school facilities
- Introduction to the SENDCo
- Introduction to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and completion of school-specific safeguarding briefing/training*
- Health and Safety briefing
- Overview of the school's behaviour management systems and procedures
- Briefing on absence reporting procedures and expectations

*Note: All student teachers will have completed the Hayes Level 2 Safeguarding Certificate prior to placement.

Phase 1 Professional Studies

Professional Studies introduces student teachers to key aspects of professional practice through a combination of lectures and mixed-subject workshops.

Below is a summary of the Phase 1 Professional Studies curriculum.

Week One: 8th–11th September All student teachers attend the following sessions at LJMU:

- Introduction to Professional Standards

- How Pupils Learn
- Reflective Practice
- Planning for Learning
- Introduction to SEND
- Trauma-Informed Practice
- Teaching for Educational Advantage
- Safeguarding Level 2 (online certificate)

Week Two: Variable Delivery

University-Led (Core) Route: Sessions at LJMU, 15th–18th September

School-Led Route: Sessions delivered within Lead Schools between September and December. For queries about School-Led professional studies, please contact your School-Led Lead.

Sessions include:

- Key Stage 2 Transition
- Early Reading and Phonics
- Anti-racism and Teaching
- Pastoral Care and the Form Tutor
- AI and the Classroom
- Principles of Oracy and Dialogic Teaching
- Inclusive Classroom and Adaptive Teaching
- Student Teacher Wellbeing

Phase 1 Subject Studies

All student teachers will have attended the following subject studies sessions during Phase 1. The full subject curriculum map can be found <https://itt-placement.com/pgce-secondary/course-overview.php>.

Date	Learning Outcomes	Mentor follow-up
19/09/2025	To understand best practice behind features of a maths lesson	This will be the first week on placement for student teachers on the core program. We have focussed largely on lesson design to this point, and this should inform observations and the discussions you have where possible. Within lesson design of course we cover things like modelling, questioning, assessment, but we want to feed that into well-structured lessons rather than having them in without purpose or flow. Set a target around lesson design or structure in maths.
26/09/2025	ITAP 1 – Behaviour Management	ITAP guidance will be sent separately with tasks outlined in detail. The focus will be on start of lesson routines and beginning to address behaviour, building to delivering some starters – it is important that the student teachers are provided with tasks in line with your sequence of lessons so that they can focus on their techniques and less about the content. Set a target based around behaviour management.
03/10/2025	To deliver prepared sessions to pupils in school for the first time, and understand the importance of literacy in maths	Student teachers will have had the opportunity to deliver starters in ITAP 1 and full lessons to small groups in our latest session. This should inform observation and discussion around challenges to lesson design, the impact routines in lessons have on behaviour, and therefore the ability to deliver what teachers have prepared. Ensuring use of mathematical language, whilst also understanding how much pupils struggle with literacy in maths from the infancy of the student teachers' practice is a priority, and observations and discussions of this would be welcome. Set a target either continuing with lesson design or on literacy in maths.
10/10/2025	To explore the important aspects of modelling in maths as well as the importance of clarity of instruction needed, and how these tie in to being an inclusive practitioner	After a focus on assessment last week, a focus on modelling and explanation picks apart how important physical demonstration and narrating our thinking are in the pupils' understanding. This naturally links to questioning and misconceptions in next week's session, however it is important to think carefully this week about the level of detail provided. Focus observations on strong 'I do' colleagues, practice delivery in parts of or full lessons. Set a target around modelling in Maths.
17/10/2025	ITAP 2 - Assessment	ITAP guidance will be sent separately with tasks outlined in detail. The focus will be on formative assessment, for maths we are particularly concerned with use of mini whiteboards to check for understanding and inform the next steps in a lesson – are pupils ready for independent practice, are there any misconceptions, do we need to repeat some teaching. Set a target specifically around use of whiteboards in maths lessons.
24/10/2025	To be able to practise a range of questioning techniques in the classroom and use the responses of pupils effectively	Building on last week's session on modelling, questioning during the 'I do' and 'we do' parts of a lesson ensures students teachers' lessons flow and check for understanding. Building on work from ITAP 2, it would be essential to see colleagues who's questioning following modelling and use of whiteboards is strong, particularly planning for misconceptions, exposing them through questioning, and using misconceptions that arise. Set a target around questioning or using misconceptions in maths.

Phase 1 Intensive Training and Practice (ITAP)

ITAP is a compulsory component of teacher education that introduces student teachers to foundational aspects of teaching practice. Through lectures and seminars, student teachers explore the relationship between theory and practice and deconstruct examples of practice.

Placement Expectations During ITAP

Student teachers will attend their placement as usual during ITAP periods. However, they must **not** follow their regular placement timetable. Instead, they will complete a structured series of activities focused on the specific aspect of practice being studied.

Mentor Responsibilities

As a mentor, you must ensure student teachers can complete all ITAP activities, which include:

- Focused observations of practice
- Planning specific aspects of practice
- Implementing their planning in classroom settings

Phase 1 ITAP Schedule

The following ITAPs occur during Phase 1:

- ITAP 1: Behaviour Management
- ITAP 2: Introduction to Assessment

Detailed guidance for supporting student teachers during each ITAP is available at: <https://itt-placement.com/pgce-secondary/course-overview.php>

Mentor Meetings

Weekly Mentor Meetings

Student teachers must meet with their mentor once per week throughout the programme. These meetings are essential for monitoring progress and maintaining consistent support.

Purpose of Weekly Meetings

Weekly meetings provide structured opportunities to:

- Review progress against Phase 1 expectations
- Discuss observations and teaching experiences from the previous week
- Set specific, achievable targets for the coming week
- Address any concerns or challenges
- Plan upcoming teaching opportunities

Meeting Structure

Each meeting should:

- Last approximately 45-60 minutes
- Take place at a consistent time each week where possible
- Be documented with brief notes on progress and agreed targets
- Focus on developmental feedback linked to the Phase 1 expectations

Setting Effective Targets

Targets are one of the primary mechanisms for ensuring student teachers make progress against the phased expectations and subject studies curriculum. Effective target-setting drives development and provides clear direction for improvement.

SHARP Target Framework

All targets must follow the SHARP framework:

- **Specific** – What exactly needs to be achieved? Is the target clearly defined? Does it use the language of the phase expectations?

- **How** – How will the target be achieved? What actions will need to be taken?
- **Achievable** – Is the target achievable within the timescale? Is there an opportunity to complete the target?
- **Related** – Is the target related to the LJMU ITE Curriculum questions and associated phase expectations so that progress can be tracked?
- **Progressive** – Is the target pitched in a progressive manner and appropriate for the current phase of training?

Target Requirements

Set a maximum of three targets each week, using the language of the phase expectations. Each phase has a distinct focus that should shape your targets:

- **Phase 1 – Observation and awareness:** Targets focus on watching, noticing, understanding
- **Phase 2 – Practice and collaboration:** Targets focus on trying strategies with support, working with others
- **Phase 3 – Confident application and evaluation:** Targets focus on independent implementation and assessing impact

Student teachers should review their targets before each weekly meeting and complete a self-evaluation on the weekly meeting form. Following discussion and review of the week's experiences, establish new targets with associated actions.

Drafting SHARP Targets: Four-Step Process

Step 1: Identify the area for improvement from recent lesson observations or discussions with the student teacher.

Step 2: Ensure the proposed target aligns with the appropriate phased expectation. All education and training (University and School-based) must align with phased expectations to ensure sustained, consistent progress.

Step 3: Check the Mentor Curriculum Guide to confirm what the student teacher has covered at University. For example, before setting a target about supporting EAL pupils, verify the student teacher has encountered EAL content at University.

Step 4: Ensure the 'actions' section includes specific tasks the student teacher will complete related to the target.

Example Target

Area identified: Improve questioning

Phase Expectation link (Secondary Q5, Phase 2): "I can implement questioning techniques that prompt deepening understanding."

Target: In classes 7b and 8a this week, use the 'Think-Pair-Share' questioning technique to deepen understanding at least twice per lesson.

Actions:

- Plan key questions for TPS and highlight them on plan
- Reflect on potential responses and prepare follow-up questions to deepen responses
- Reflect on effectiveness and be ready to discuss in next meeting

Phase 1 Subject Example Targets

Examples:

Target 1 aim: - To improve questioning

Phase Expectation: Q5 Phase 2 "I can implement questioning techniques that prompt deeper understanding"

Turned into a SHARP target: In year 10 this week use think-pair-share questioning at least twice during each lesson.

Actions: Plan key questions and probe responses, review how this supported learning in next meeting.

Target 2 aim: - To improve behaviour management

Phase Expectation: Q8 Phase 2 "I establish clear expectations at the start of the lesson and activities"

Turned into a SHARP target: Start lessons strongly by welcoming students at the door as well as policing their engagement with the entrance task, once all students are in use a countdown to ensure silence and start the lesson. Use praise and the rewards system to build this culture and support poor behaviour with the behaviour policy if needed.

Actions: Review points awarded and aim to lower negatives over the next 2 weeks.

Phase 1 Subject Observation Guidance

Please use the curriculum & mentor guide document to inform a focus each week on observations, a summary of weekly guidance is above outlined in the subject studies section of this document.

Features of maths lessons from the curriculum should be considered throughout the course, however please use the curriculum and the phased expectations to understand where the student teachers are expected to be with each element.

Ensure a focus on positive and constructive feedback, student teachers cannot act on too many areas that require improvement, use your professional judgement to address the area where progress can be made easily and/or it is vital progress is made.

Student Teacher Progress, Wellbeing and Support

Phase 1 represents a significant adjustment period for student teachers. For some, this marks their first professional experience, while others may find it intellectually and emotionally challenging.

Providing comprehensive support for student teachers' wellbeing is essential during this transition period, and mentors should maintain heightened awareness of their needs.

Available Support Resources

All student teachers have access to the 'I Need Help' page on Canvas (our virtual learning environment), which directs them to appropriate support services.

Raising Concerns

If you have concerns about a student teacher's wellbeing or welfare, please:

1. Contact your Lead Mentor in the first instance
2. Where appropriate, direct the student teacher to the LJMU student advice page:

[Student advice and wellbeing | Discover | Liverpool John Moores University](#)