

ECT Mentor session

Module 8: Developing quality pedagogy and making productive use of assessment

Week 12: Inquiry progress: considering the fuller range of emergent evidence

Session Elements



reflection



self-assessment



analysis

Learning Intentions for this session

The focus of your mentee's inquiry for Module 8 is on an element of the Early Career Framework (ECF) from Standards 4, 5 or 6. They might have chosen a focus which combines different elements of these standards.

The case studies are a reminder that:

Case Study A

- 4.9** Paired and group activities can increase pupil success, but to work together effectively pupils need guidance, support and practice
- 4.10** How pupils are grouped is also important; care should be taken to monitor the impact of groupings on pupil attainment, behaviour and motivation

And how to:

- 4o.** Consider the factors that will support effective collaboration

Case Study B

- 3s.** Teach different forms of writing by modelling planning, drafting and editing
- 3r.** Model and require high-quality oral language, recognising that it underpins the development of reading and writing (e.g. requiring pupils to respond to each other's questions in full sentences, making use of relevant technical vocabulary)
- 4a.** Use modelling, explanations and scaffolds, acknowledging that novices need

more structure early in a domain

4d. Provide sufficient opportunity for pupils to consolidate and practise applying new knowledge and skills

4p. Provide scaffolds for pupil talk to increase the focus and rigour of dialogue

Case Study C

6h. Focus on specific actions for pupils and providing time for pupils to respond to feedback

6i. Appreciate that pupils' responses to feedback can vary depending on a range of social factors (e.g. the message the feedback contains...)

6n. Use verbal feedback during lessons in place of written feedback after lessons where possible

6p. Reduce the opportunity cost of marking (e.g. by using abbreviations and codes in written feedback)

Case Study D

4l. Plan activities around what you want pupils to think hard about

8f. Contribute positively to the wider school culture and develop a feeling of shared responsibility for improving the lives of all pupils within the school

Introduction

Last week, you looked at your mentee's interim inquiry claim again and sought to update it by exploring any of the potential negative consequences of the implementation of their inquiry. Together you considered where any further adjustments to their practice or inquiry needed to be made.

This week you will consider the fuller range of emergent evidence that might be available: the deliberate (that evidence your mentee collected purposefully); the overheard (evidence your mentee chanced upon); the unexpected (consequences the mentee did not anticipate); the counter-evidence (that which challenges the prevailing findings.)

The good news is that all of this wider evidence is normally readily available: you don't have to work hard to find it.

Case Studies

You have seen these case studies before: they explore how four teachers – improving their practice and without adding to their workload – conducted their own practitioner inquiries into developing quality pedagogy and making productive use of assessment.

You can read back to Week 3, if you want to remind yourself of the issue they wanted to tackle.

We pick them up here from the point where they have agreed an alteration to their practice and framed this as an evaluative inquiry question. We see the deliberate methods they decide to use to collect evidence and their findings from that so far. Now we also see some of the cautious conclusions they infer from the wider emergent evidence.

When reading these cases, your mentee will need to take account of their own pupils' characteristics, the context of their classroom and the nature of the material that they are teaching.

Case Study A: Grouping Pupils Effectively

Andy's approach to grouping pupils effectively in Year 1

To evaluate the impact of his pupil grouping intervention, Andy wrote the following evaluative question:

How can I use group activities over two half-terms to improve the engagement and attainment of my Year 1 pupils?

To evaluate the impact of his pupil grouping intervention, Andy deliberately collected the following sources of data:

- brief observation notes made by himself and the Teaching Assistant (TA) during the lessons and discussed after school three times a week
- his own observations and reflections on the extent to which the pupil grouping intervention was having the desired effect on their engagement
- the progress records for his class that he had been updating twice weekly to measure their attainment

After making small adjustments to his inquiry he was able to draw these insights from the deliberate evidence:

1.3. Teacher expectations can affect pupil outcomes; setting goals that challenge and stretch pupils is essential.

- by repeatedly making his intentions clear, he has been able to 'bring the children with him' on this journey to helping them to work productively with any of their peers

4.9. Paired and group activities can increase pupil success, but to work together effectively pupils need guidance, support and practice.

- by using the same near attainment grouping method in every literacy lesson for a term, and extending this to numeracy lessons after one half-term - and switching between mixed and near attainment grouping for different tasks - he has given the children many opportunities to practise working with others, and therefore to get better at doing so over time

4.10. How pupils are grouped is also important; care should be taken to monitor the impact of groupings on pupil attainment, behaviour and motivation.

- a small number of the mixed attainment have proven problematic, but
- several of his pupils have become much more confident in working with a wider range of peers.

Through engaging in the inquiry so far, Andy has also learned better how to:

Communicate a belief in the academic potential of all of his pupils, by:

1a. Using intentional and consistent language that promotes challenge and aspiration.

- his TA – who had been working in Key Stage 1 for many years – feels the class have made much faster progress than other classes she has known.

And he has:

1e. Created a culture of respect and trust in the classroom that supports all pupils to succeed (e.g. by modelling the types of courteous behaviour expected of pupils).

- publicly celebrating the features of productive talk he wanted to see more of, such as listening carefully, sharing resources and building on the ideas of others



From the wider emergent (overheard and unexpected) evidence, Andy made these additional inferences:

- he overheard his pupils say things like 'I used to not like working with X, but now I like it' – the new pupil grouping is having the desired effect
- his Year 1s overall made unexpectedly rapid progress with the accuracy of their mark making – the new pupil grouping improved the pupils socially and with their written literacy

He inferred that this was because he had understood that:

- 4.9 Paired and group activities can increase pupil success, but to work together effectively pupils need guidance, support and practice.
- 4.10 How pupils are grouped is also important; care should be taken to monitor the impact of groupings on pupil attainment, behaviour and motivation.

And he had learned better how to stimulate pupil thinking by:

- 4o. Considering the factors that will support effective collaboration.

Case Study B: Modelling and Scaffolding

Vashti's use of modelling and scaffolds to support writing in Year 4

To ensure she was developing her practice effectively, Vashti devised this evaluative inquiry question:

How can I use 'speaking sentences' well, over the space of two terms, to reduce the prevalence of basic errors in written literacy among pupils with a Speech, Language and Communication Need (SpLCN) in Year 4?

Vashti considered the following evidence she already had to hand:

- data from her marking of writing assessments from the target class

- data from her colleagues' marking of writing assessments from her control group, the two other Year 4 classes (they record such data centrally in her school)
- personal reflections and observations generated through dialogue in her mentor meetings, and recorded in her Learning Log

Additionally, she held a short, 5-minute 'focus group' with the 4 target pupils at the start and end of the intervention.

After making small adjustments to her inquiry she was able to draw these insights from the deliberate evidence:

- 6b. Drawing conclusions about what pupils have learned by looking at patterns of performance over a number of assessments (e.g. appreciating that assessments draw inferences about learning from performance).
- 5 of the 6 target SpLCN pupils have made significant progress in the summative writing assessment
- 4d. Providing sufficient opportunity for pupils to consolidate and practise applying new knowledge and skills.
- several pupils are able to describe how they have benefited from using the laminated sheet and the speaking activity to organise their thinking and their writing

Reflecting on her findings, Vashti drew the following interim conclusion for her own teaching:

Classroom talk, combined with scaffolding resources, can be a powerful driver for improving written literacy among pupils with SpLCN in Year 4. (4a, 4p)

She realised that she should continue with this approach to supporting her pupils' writing, but keep a careful eye on the successful use of the scaffold, so her pupils could still succeed when she withdrew it.



From the wider emergent (overheard and unexpected) evidence, Vashti made these additional inferences:

- she overheard several of the non-SpLCN pupils, but who also have other additional needs, say that the ‘speaking sentences’ approach made them much more confident when writing – the approach can work with all pupils who have additional needs
- unexpectedly, the oracy of the SpLCN pupils also improved markedly over the period – scaffolds which reduce basic errors in one area of literacy may also have a similar effect in others

She inferred that this was because she had learned better how to:

- 3s. Teach different forms of writing by modelling planning, drafting and editing
- 4a. Use modelling, explanations and scaffolds, acknowledging that novices need more structure early in a domain
- 4d. Provide sufficient opportunity for pupils to consolidate and practise applying new knowledge and skills.
- 3r. Model and require high-quality oral language, recognising that it underpins the development of reading and writing (e.g. requiring pupils to respond to each other’s questions in full sentences, making use of relevant technical vocabulary)
- 4p. Provide scaffolds for pupil talk to increase the focus and rigour of dialogue

Case Study C: Making Marking Manageable

Louise’s new approach to marking in Secondary History

To ensure she was developing her practice effectively, Louise devised this evaluative inquiry question:

How can I implement codes and verbal feedback well, so that my Year 9 History pupils are able to correct misconceptions and make progress, and I am able to reduce the amount of time I spend marking?

To evaluate the impact of her intervention, Louise decided to deliberately collect the following naturally occurring data:

- pupil voice – using a hands-up survey in class – with the experimental class (before and after the half-term), to capture how well they felt they had been guided to improve their work
- book scrutiny of a sample of target pupils
- summative assessment of a written piece, from both of her classes so she could compare
- focus group conversation (5 min lunchtime conversation with target pupils)

After making small adjustments to her inquiry she was able to draw these insights from the deliberate evidence:

6p. Reduce the opportunity cost of marking by using codes and verbal feedback

- she was able to cut the marking time for a set of books from 2 hours to 30 minutes
- her two Year 9 classes (one experimental, one control group) achieved a very similar distribution of scores in a summative written assessment
- that her pupils in the experimental group had not encountered any significant problems as a result of the new way of marking

6h. to give whole-class feedback so they knew what they needed to do to improve and had the time to do it.

- she practised giving whole-class feedback, having created a standard slide, which reminded her to give specific feedback and 15 minutes a lesson to do it.

Based on these findings, Louise made the following tentative claims from her inquiry:

Using codes/verbal feedback does not detrimentally affect pupil progress, compared with a standard written marking approach.

On average, using codes/verbal feedback saves the teacher about an hour a week, per teaching class, compared with a standard written marking approach.

Having reviewed her practice in this way, she will use this insight to now apply the same principles of verbal feedback and minimal marking to her Year 7 and Year 8 classes, while monitoring the impact of that on her pupils and herself.



From the wider emergent (overheard and unexpected) evidence, Louise made these additional inferences:

- she overheard several high prior attaining girls in her experimental Year 9 class say that they preferred the new form of feedback, because they received it much more quickly – pupils don't necessarily 'miss' having their work marked all of the time
- she overheard a few pupils in her control Year 9 class say they heard what she was doing in her other class, and 'why can't we have that?' – verbal and coded feedback might be popular with pupils
- expectedly, she saved time on marking; unexpectedly, she used that gained time to prepare better lessons – reducing unnecessary marking can have an overall positive impact on her teaching

She inferred that this was because she had learned better how to:

- 6h. Focus on specific actions for pupils and provide time for pupils to respond to feedback
- 6i. Appreciate that pupils' responses to feedback can vary depending on a range of social factors (e.g. the message the feedback contains...)
- 6n. Use verbal feedback during lessons in place of written feedback after lessons where possible
- 6p. Reduce the opportunity cost of marking (e.g. by using abbreviations and codes in written feedback)

Case Study D: Questioning

Mo's use of direction and elaboration to improve questioning in GCSE PE

To ensure he was developing his practice effectively, Mo devised this evaluative inquiry question:

How can I best adapt the way I ask questions, implemented every lesson for one term, to improve the quality and amount of talk among Pupil Premium girls in Y11 GCSE PE?

To help him answer this question, Mo decided to deliberately collect the following

data:

- arrange a follow-up lesson observation with the Assistant Head for Teaching and Learning, using the school's in-class video technology
- interview a sample of pupils, including Pupil Premium girls, in a focus group lasting 5 minutes after final period on a Wednesday
- book scrutiny, sampling 6 of the target pupils, compared with a sample of 6 high attaining pupils – Mo marks these books every other week, so this data is near to hand.

After extending his approach to his other classes, he was able to draw these insights from the deliberate evidence:

4m. Include a range of types of questions in class discussions to extend and challenge pupils

- he saw much more evidence of high-quality questioning in his second filmed lesson.
- all 16 pupils were asked a question at some point in the lesson

6f. Prompt pupils to elaborate when responding to questioning to check that a correct answer stems from secure understanding

- all were asked follow-up questions to help them elaborate on their thinking
- there was a change in the books of the Pupil Premium girls during the inquiry period – their written responses were far more articulate and well-structured, reflecting the discussions they had had in class

4n. Provide appropriate wait time between question and response where more developed responses are required

- all were given sufficient wait time
- the pupils liked the fact that he gave them time to prepare an answer before calling on them

Based on this, Mo made the following tentative claim from his inquiry so far:

Responsive questioning is a useful tool for improving the quality of talk and writing among Pupil Premium girls in Year 11 GCSE PE.

And because he had developed his questioning practice to this extent, Mo decided to apply the same approaches to his other classroom-based lessons.



From the wider emergent (overheard and unexpected) evidence, Mo made these inferences:

- he overheard pupils outside of his focus group comment on his new approach to questioning. ‘Sir makes us think much harder these days.’ – this approach can work for all, not just some, pupils
- a colleague in the staffroom told him he had heard about Mo’s approach to questioning, and asked for more information – doing an inquiry about an aspect of teaching can improve collaborative relationships with colleagues
- the Pupil Premium girls also improved with their practical PE work – although tempted, Mo could not infer from that that his approach to questioning improves their sporting skills

Mentor Meeting Activities

Throughout the session, try to refer explicitly to the learning intentions, and encourage your mentee to record key points in their Learning Log. Tailor your use of the Theory to Practice activities below in response to the Review and Plan sections of this session.

Review and Plan 5 mins

- (1) Start this session by briefly following up the actions that the mentee set at the end of your last mentor meeting. Ask your mentee to summarise
 - a. what they did
 - b. the impact of this on pupil learning (including how they are evaluating this)
 - c. what they will do going forward to build on these actions
- (2) Clarify the learning intentions for this session with your mentee.
- (3) Invite your mentee to read the case studies on this module’s topics, or the one or two that are most relevant to their own chosen area of development and the exploratory question they are investigating. As they read, reflect on:
 - how similar this scenario is to their own situation
 - how, despite any differences there may be to their own context, this case study may still be relevant to them
 - what lessons there might be for the way they conduct their own inquiry

Theory to Practice 40 mins



1. Reflection

Your mentee has been developing an area of their practice and conducting their inquiry – implementing their altered practice and deliberately gathering evidence – for several weeks. Last week, you encouraged them to look for counter-evidence: that which challenges their main claims or suggests there have been some negative consequences. Now you are inviting them to consider a fuller range of emergent evidence, similar to the teachers in the case studies.

Get them to try to list in the 2 unshaded boxes examples of emergent evidence for their inquiry. (They should see the case studies for inspiration.)

Deliberate (that evidence your mentee collected purposefully)	Overheard (evidence your mentee chanced upon)
Unexpected (consequences the mentee did not anticipate)	Counter (that which challenges the prevailing findings)



2. Analyse

With your mentee, you should now try to draw inferences from this wider evidence.

How strong should your inferences be?

Rarely can we say conclusively that there is a causal relationship between a particular action that a teacher takes and a particular consequence for their pupils.

Often the true impact of a teacher's actions will take a long time to emerge. However, we can be confident that teachers *do* have a direct influence on their pupils' outcomes and behaviours.

Consider this brief scenario:

A teacher teaches the same way for 4 years, and her pupils over that time have made broadly similar progress.

In the fifth year she deliberately changes one aspect of her teaching, and she notices that her pupils make much faster progress. She surmises that they made better progress because she changed that one aspect of her teaching.

She then notices that her pupils have improved in other respects too. 'But,' she says, 'I made no other changes to my teaching.' She infers that changing her teaching in one way may have had multiple consequences, not all of them anticipated.

The teacher has made a reasonable inference, even if she cannot be absolutely sure.

What reasonable inferences can you make from the 'overheard' and 'unexpected' evidence you listed above?

(See again the examples in the case studies.)



3. Self-assessment

Ask your mentee to update their claim one more time, now to take account of all the wider emergent evidence

<p style="text-align: center;">Deliberate</p> <p>The evidence they collected in a systematic, planned way for outcomes they anticipated</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Overheard</p> <p>The evidence that fell into their laps, for example chance conversations with colleagues and pupils</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Unexpected</p> <p>The evidence for outcomes they did not anticipate</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Counter</p> <p>The evidence, possibly negative, which sits at odds with their overall claim</p>

For example, Mo might update his claim to say:

Responsive questioning is a useful tool for improving the quality of talk and writing among Pupil Premium girls in Year 11 GCSE PE... It may also make them and other pupils aware that they are thinking harder, but it is unlikely that it makes any difference to their outcomes in sport. Conducting a practitioner inquiry can improve your collaboration with colleagues in that you contribute to wider professional development.

Next Steps 5 mins

Agree with your mentee how they will now put their learning from this week's session into practice in their teaching. Help your mentee to clarify:

1. the action(s) they will take and how these action(s) are expected to contribute to improving pupil learning
2. what success will 'look like' in relation to these action(s)
3. how they will evaluate their success in taking these action(s)

Note that this week your mentee also has an ECT Training session, where they will learn about how to present and share their inquiry findings.

Next week, your mentee will consider other forms of emergent evidence – the impacts of the inquiry on themselves. They will share that with you in the mentor meeting that follows.