

ECT Mentor session

Module 9: Fulfilling professional responsibilities (II)

Week 3: Managing workload and well-being

Session Elements



discussion with
mentor

Learning Intentions for this session

Your ECT will learn how to:

Manage workload and well-being, by:

- 8m.** Using and personalising systems and routines to support efficient time and task management.
- 8n.** Understanding the right to support (e.g. to deal with misbehaviour).
- 8o.** Collaborating with colleagues to share the load of planning, and preparation and making use of shared resources (e.g. textbooks).
- 8p.** Protecting time for rest and recovery.

Introduction

In Year 1 of this programme, ECTs were introduced to the content of the Early Career Framework relating to Teachers' Standard 8: Fulfil wider professional responsibilities. In this final module of the programme, you are returning to this content with your mentee. In this week's session, you are focusing on how your mentee manages their workload and well-being.

Research and Practice Summary

Technology: tool or tyrant

Marsha and Greg are enthusiastic and proactive in looking for opportunities to improve their teaching. Marsha has recently completed a web-based course on teaching online, and Greg has been experimenting with using different technologies to support his teaching. Reflecting on their recent learning, they draw up a list of experiences that includes:

- I can use specialist software to set quizzes for pupils that are marked automatically (takes a while to set up but saves time overall and gives pupils instant feedback)
- I can get really bogged down in playing around with lots of new features – important to stay focused on the task and not on unnecessary extras that look nice but don't directly improve learning
- I needed help at the beginning because this was all new to me – I'm glad I asked the head of learning technology for her advice and support
- there are some really exciting opportunities for new pedagogies, like helping pupils collaborate with each other online
- pupils think they can contact me at any time by email or instant message – I'm finding it hard to switch off in the evenings, and now some parents are starting to demand that I reply to emails in the evening, too
- my online diary has made it much easier for me to schedule planning for each subject and to set reminders so I stick to my schedule

Marsha and Greg are typical of many teachers in their desire to keep improving their practice. They have clearly found ways to make technology work for them – around their teaching and for managing workload – but they have also encountered some possible challenges to their workload and well-being.

It is important for teachers like Marsha and Greg to set boundaries on their work so that they protect time for rest and recovery – diarising bounded time for planning (and stopping when this time is up) can be a good strategy. Online systems can sometimes help with this. It can be helpful, though, to turn off alerts and reminders outside working hours, especially on personal devices. Being clear

with pupils, parents, carers and colleagues about expectations can also help to maintain good boundaries between work and home life.

As you continue to develop as a teacher, you will likely become more effective at managing your workload and well-being. However, you may also take on additional formal or informal leadership responsibilities. This can bring increasing demands, so it remains important to consider, and actively manage, your own well-being and workload.

It remains crucial to use and personalise systems for effective time and task management. You may find it helpful to consider

- **Medium-term planning** – inevitably, there are crunch points in each week and half-term at school. By having a medium-term plan, you can even out these crunch points. Adding key dates from your school’s calendar is a good starting point. As you consider additional responsibilities, it is important to factor these in too. This will help you to manage your time efficiently
- **Data entry** – entering data into online systems is part of a teacher’s job, but it can become very burdensome. When entering data, ensure it is correct the first time. Also, if you do not understand why data is being collected, ask, so that you are clear in advance about what is expected
- **Prioritisation** – there are things that need doing and things that it is nice to do. By prioritising your work and starting with the non-negotiables, you can effectively manage your workload. For instance, pupil safeguarding is always a high priority, whereas making teaching materials look attractive with images and animation is a low priority as it usually has little impact on learning

It is also important to recall that working with colleagues can help to make you both more efficient and more effective as a teacher. Collaboration is particularly important when it comes to planning and preparation, which can be a significant source of workload. As you become more experienced, you should feel confident to explore different opportunities for collaboration within and beyond your school. This collaboration can also contribute to your own professional development.

By working with colleagues, you can – together – develop better plans and resources

than you could alone. Using shared resources, including published materials like textbooks, can also help to reduce your workload. To make the most of collaborative planning, consider:

- What opportunities there are for collaborative planning
- how you will adapt these resources for your own classes and teaching style
- how you can contribute towards an open culture where sharing resources and collaborative planning is the norm

Colleagues are also important sources of support to draw on when you need help. This could be when you need advice or guidance, or when managing tricky situations. This can include dealing with poor pupil behaviour. You should feel confident in asking colleagues, particularly your mentor, to observe any classes in which you find behaviour challenging to manage. Remember that more experienced teachers in your school will have acquired many methods of managing pupil behaviour and should be well versed in the school's system of rewards and sanctions. As you develop in your career, you will become a colleague on whom others draw, as well as continuing to seek support from others yourself.

Finally, managing your workload by using the strategies outlined above, and more extensively in Module 5, will make a dramatically positive contribution to your well-being. Excessive workload over a sustained period can have long-term consequences for you as an individual as well as a teacher, so this is an aspect of professionalism which is vital to maintain.

While managing workload is important, it is not a substitute for time away from work. Therefore, it is important to protect time for rest and recovery both during the school holidays and during a normal week. As you continue to develop as a teacher, it is critical that you establish sustainable habits so that you can enjoy and flourish in your career.

Mentor Meeting Activities

The mentor meeting activities for Module 9 are deliberately discursive and flexible to accommodate the context in which your mentee is working, as well as their career development pathway and aspirations. You are encouraged to shape your discussions accordingly.

Review and Plan: 10 mins

- (1) Start this session by allocating some time for you and your mentee to read this week's research and practice summary.
- (2) Clarify the Learning Intentions for this session with your mentee.

Plan and Theory to Practice: 35 mins



1. Discuss with mentor

The research and practice summary above illustrates different ways that recently qualified teachers can manage their workload and well-being.

Spend the time available in this ECT mentor meeting talking to your mentee about the strategies that they currently use to manage their workload and well-being. Explore approaches that your mentee can use as they move into their third year of teaching and take on a full teaching load.

To help shape this discussion you could:

- ask your mentee to talk about how well they currently feel they are able to manage their workload and well-being
- discuss with your mentee strategies that are currently working well to help them manage their workload and well-being

- identify with your mentee any current 'pinch points' or challenges which are threatening their ability to manage workload and well-being effectively
- consider the likely factors in your mentor's context in the coming year that need to be considered in managing workload and well-being effectively
- explore strategies that can further support your mentee to manage their workload and well-being

Next Steps: 5 mins

You will have time in the final session of this module to complete a formal action plan with your mentee. For now, encourage them to make notes of any ideas that they have about specific actions they would like to incorporate into this plan and to keep these safe until the final session of the module.

Note the date of your next mentor meeting, when you will work with your mentee to draft an action plan for their professional responsibilities as they move into their third year as a teacher.