



Align

Early career teacher
development

Briefing for Headteachers and Induction Leads

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Teachers are the foundation of the education system – there are no great schools without great teachers. Teachers deserve high quality support throughout their careers, particularly in those first years of teaching when the learning curve is steepest.

Early Career Framework

DfE guidance - April 2025

[Early career teacher entitlement - GOV.UK](#)

The term 'early career teacher entitlement (ECTE)' replaces 'ECF based training and induction' from September 2025

 **GOV.UK**


Department
for Education

Guidance

Early career teacher entitlement

Published 22 April 2025

Applies to England

Early Career Teacher Entitlement (ECTE)

The Early Career Teacher Entitlement (ECTE) is the umbrella term that brings together two strands of support

- The 2-year professional development/training programme (CPD element)
- The statutory induction (with an Appropriate Body)

It is designed to:

- develop their professional skills
- provide them with the knowledge and skills to meet the Teachers' Standards.

It includes:

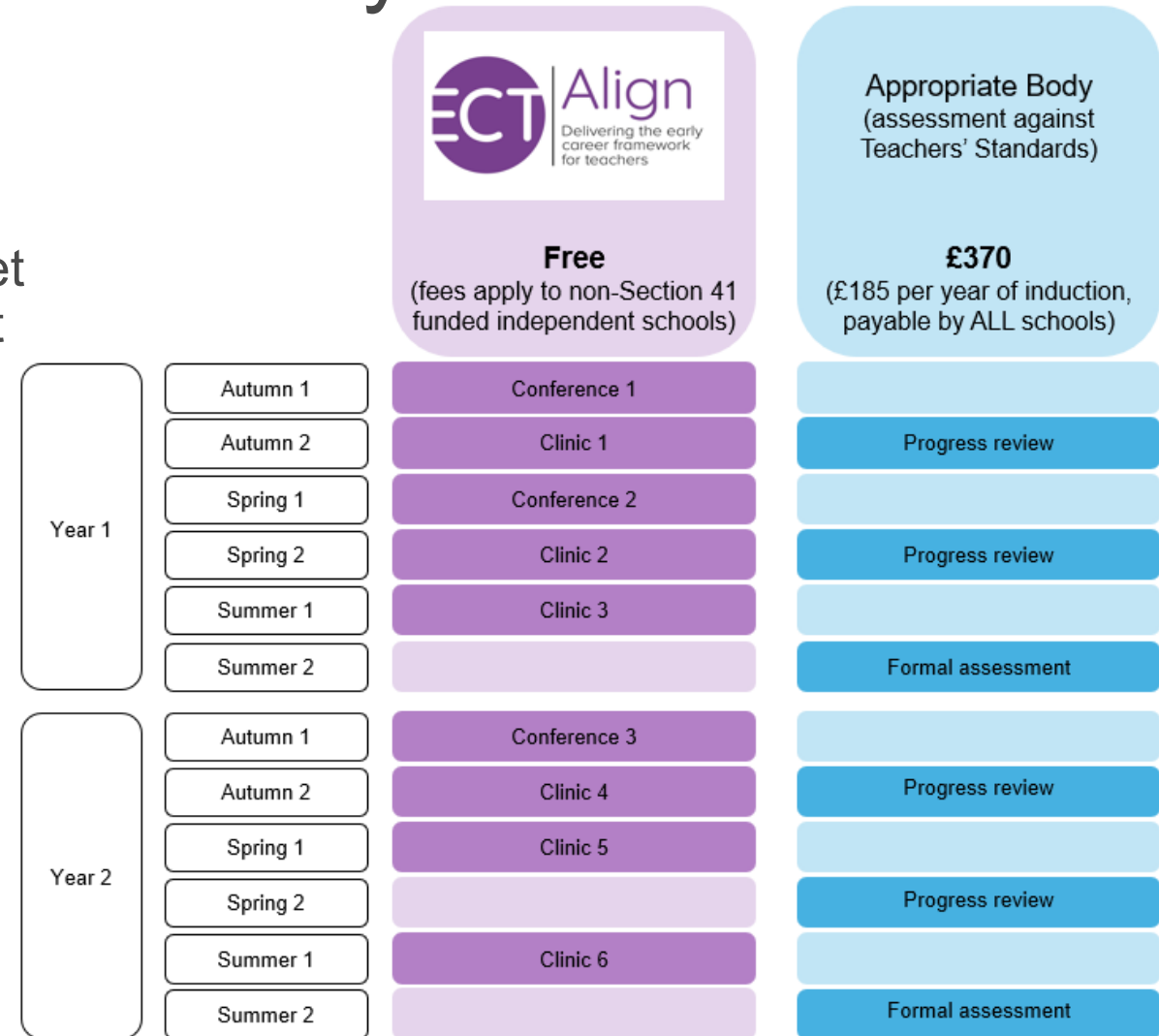
- a training programme for ECTs
- mentor support for ECTs
- a training programme for new mentors
- time off timetable for ECTs and mentors
- regular progress reviews and two formal assessment for ECTs against the Teachers' Standards.

ECT Align and the Appropriate Body

Teaching School Hubs (TSHs) provide all Appropriate Body (AB) services to schools.

ECT Align and the AB operate independently yet in tandem to fully support ECTs during their first two years of teaching.

Your training provider and AB can be different.





In collaboration with Ambition Institute,
HIAS continue to offer our **fully funded** training programme for ECTs
ECT Align

Why choose ECT Align?

Evidence informed curriculum: the carefully sequenced, evidence informed programme provides a strong foundation for ECTs as they progress with their career, supporting consistent improvement and long term impact in the classroom. The curriculum supports ECTs to develop strong models of effective teaching.

Designed with flexibility in mind: we recognise that every school is different. That's why our programme is designed to fit around school life, with a 'little and often' approach that allows ECTs and mentors to engaged with learning alongside their existing commitments.

Benefit from instructional coaching: ECTs benefit from regular instructional coaching sessions, where mentors provide focused, bite sized steps to practice each week. Coaching is responsive to individual classroom contexts, with regular observation and feedback enabling ECTs to keep getting better over time.

Why choose ECT Align?

Commitment to quality: Hampshire is dedicated to supporting teachers at all stages of their careers. We strive to ensure that every pupil across the county receives an excellent educational experience through quality first teaching.

Tailored support: specialist content supports ECTs in meeting pupils' needs, including oracy, early cognitive development and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). A wide range of training materials is available, with subject, phase and setting specific examples, ensuring a personalised pathway through the programme. This aligns strongly with Hampshire's commitment to inclusive, high quality teaching for every child.

ECT Align 2026-28

Building on the success of the existing programme, and incorporating feedback from participants, Ambition Institute have made significant improvements to the programme:

- improved curriculum structure for ECTs
- updated event schedule to provide more targeted support throughout the programme
- self study tailored to the needs of ECTs through improved diagnostic tools
- increased subject and phase specific exemplification
- higher pitched content, building on knowledge gained during ITT
- ECT self study fortnightly throughout the programme
- the option of pastoral coaching within planned coaching cycles
- new one year training programme for mentors
- new way to access online content and resources – MyECT.

ECT Align 2026-28 – The ECT Programme

10% release time in first year

5% release time in second year

Funded by the DfE

The programme supports ECTs in mastering the essential aspects of teaching through four key strands:

1. curriculum and assessment
2. behaviour
3. instruction
4. professional practice.

Attendance at all events within the programme is critical and is expected.



Self-study

Events

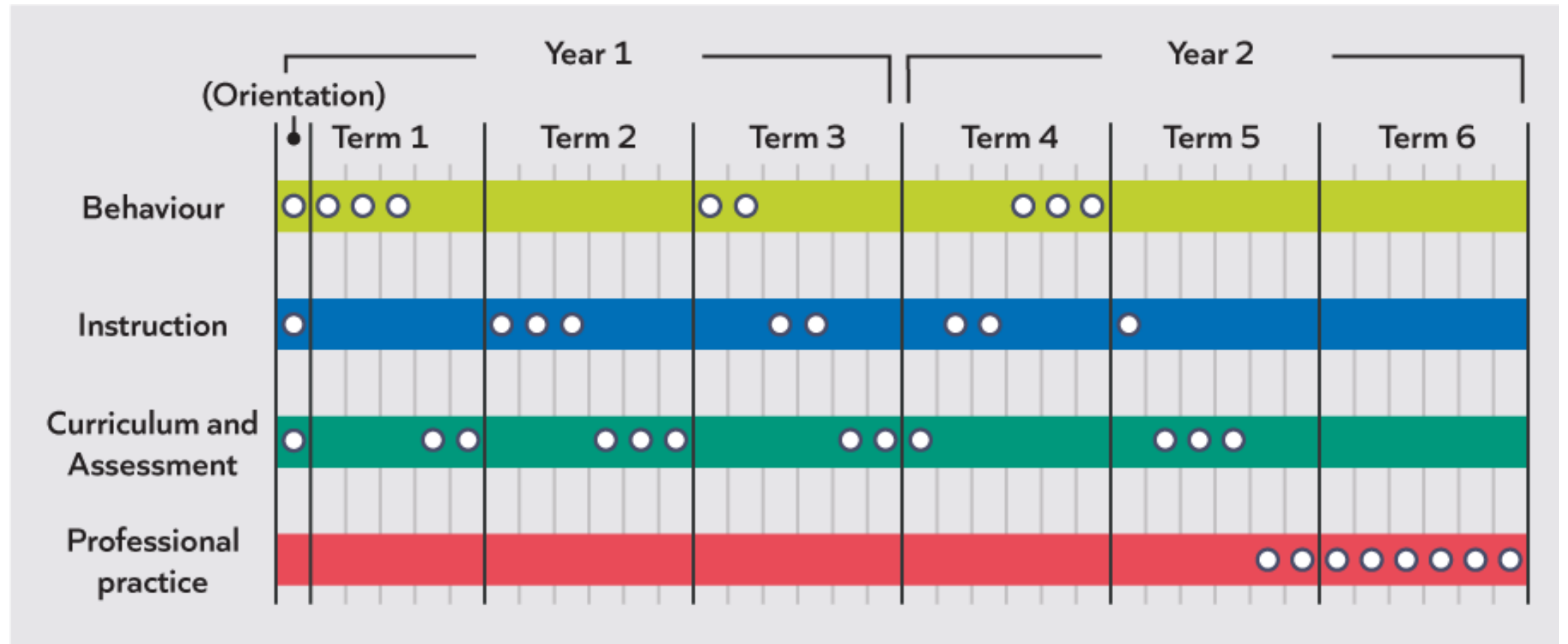
Coaching

Self Study

Fortnightly self study schedule over two years with a termly theme

Year 1	Autumn	Creating the enabling conditions for learning
	Spring	Introducing pupils to new knowledge
	Summer	Enabling pupils to engage in high quality practice
Year 2	Autumn	Increasing challenge for pupils
	Spring	Working in education
	Summer	Reflecting, revisiting and embedding good teaching practices

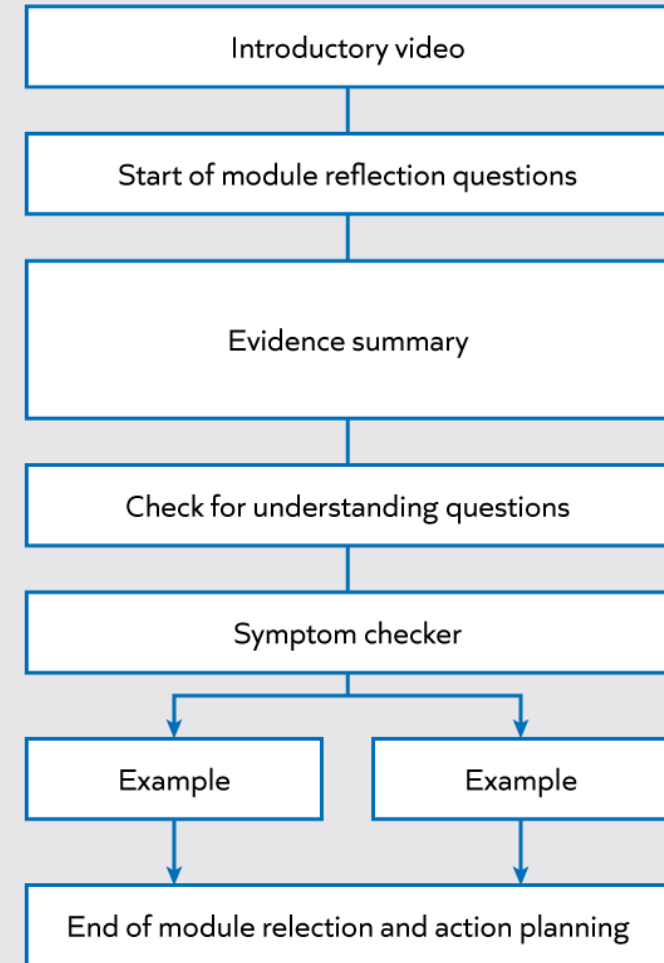
Strands



Self Study

- ~40 minutes per module
- One module per fortnight
- Each module follows the same structure
- Diagnostic symptom checkers are new for this year
- Tailored to prior knowledge
- Accessed on Steplab

Module Structure:



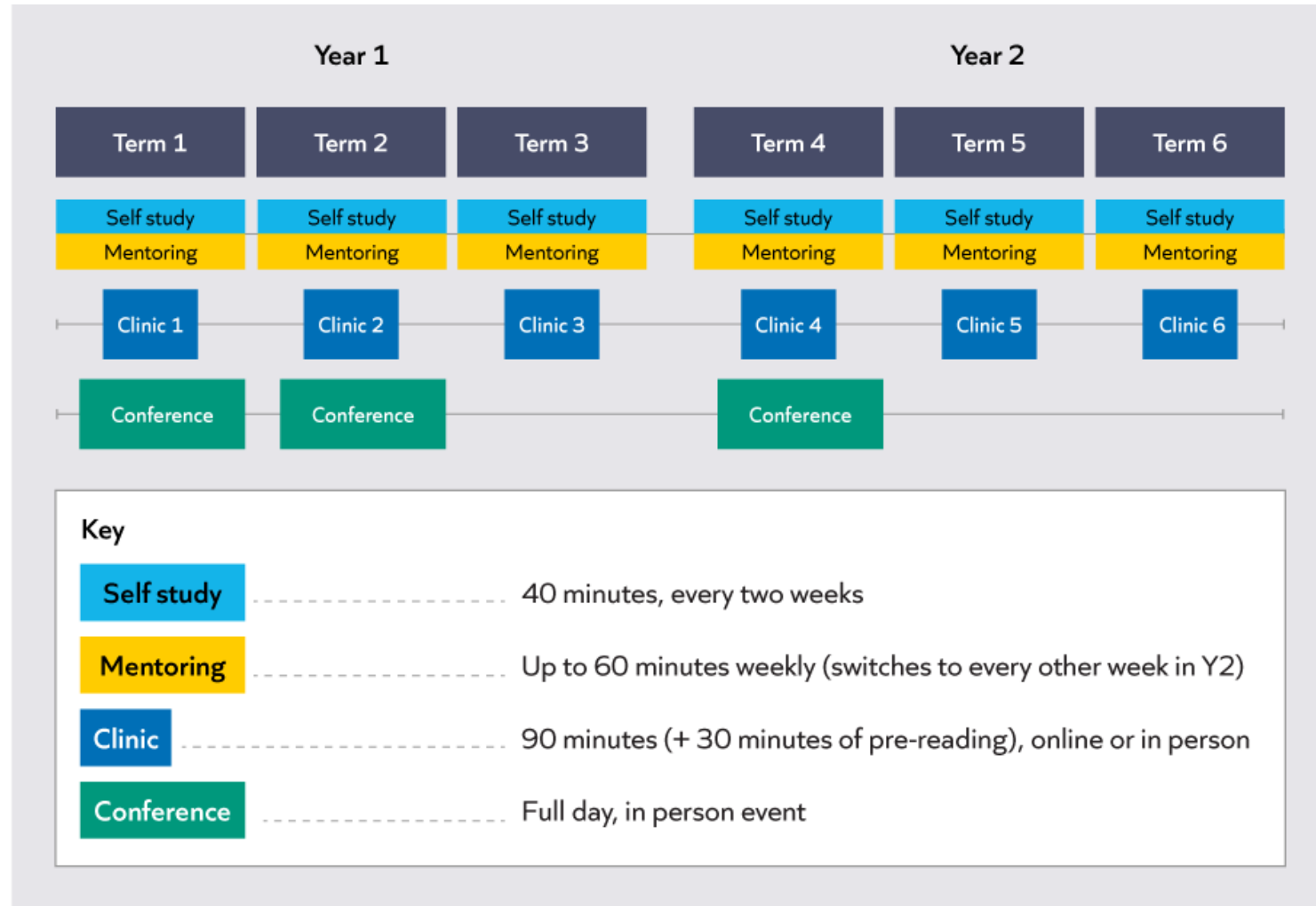
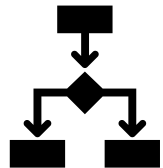
Essential ECT Events

Year 1	Autumn	Conference 1: Enabling conditions for the ECT programme Clinic 1: High expectations
	Spring	Conference 2: Adaptive teaching Clinic 2: Working together
	Summer	Clinic 3: Effective feedback
Year 2	Autumn	Conference 3: Supporting pupil success in all subjects Clinic 4: Thinking hard
	Spring	Clinic 5: Oracy
	Summer	Clinic 6: Supporting all pupils

ECT Events

Year 1 content	Year 2 content
Conference 1 – Enabling conditions for the ECT programme	Conference 3 – Supporting pupil success in all subjects
Conference 2 – Adaptive teaching	
Clinic 1 – Maintaining high expectations	Clinic 4 – Helping pupils to think hard
Clinic 2 – Working together	Clinic 5 – Oracy
Clinic 3 – Effective feedback	Clinic 6 – Supporting all pupils

The Full Programme



ECT Align 2026-28 – The Mentor Programme

One year programme for new mentors

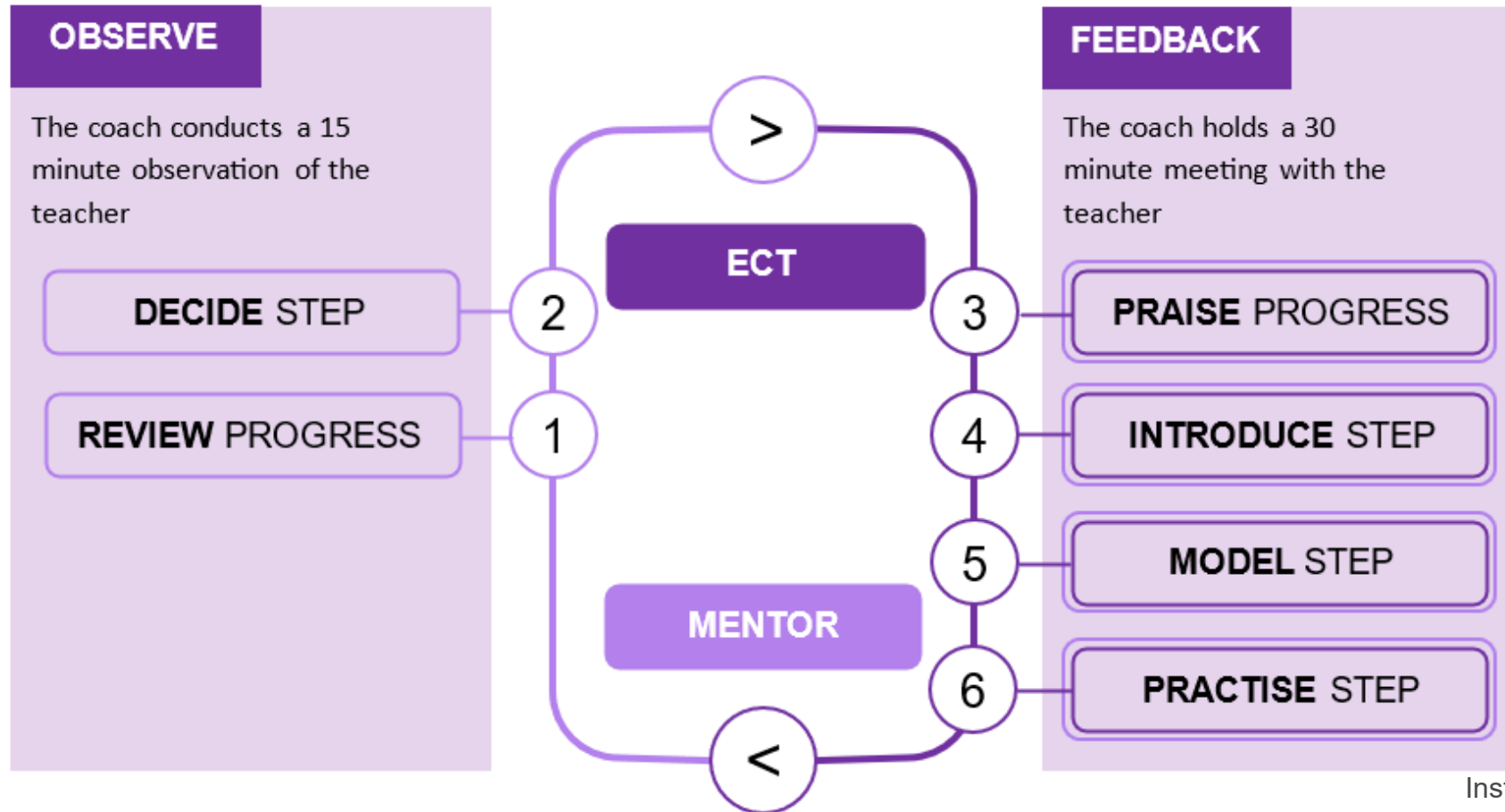
Previously trained mentors do not need to repeat the programme

Funded by the DfE

The programme enables mentors to have a thorough understanding of instructional coaching, how to do it well and how to adapt it to the needs of their ECT.

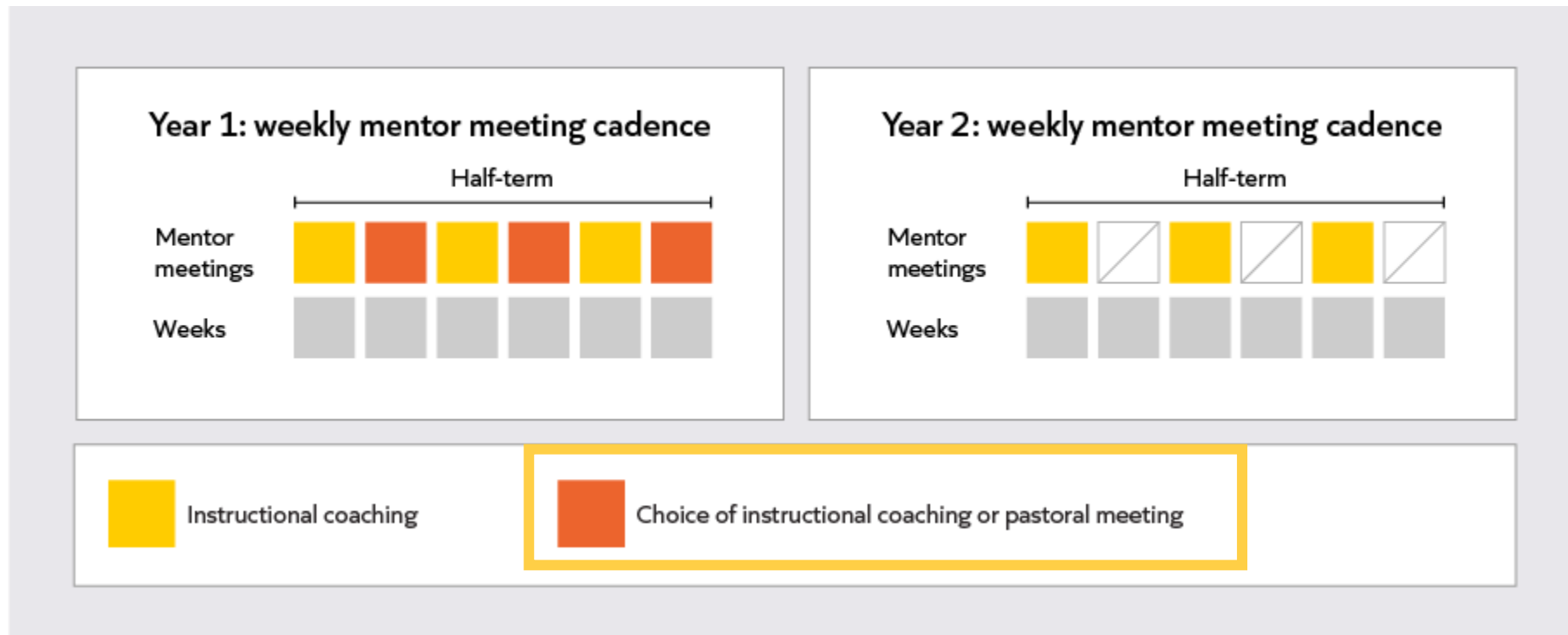
Coaching

Instructional coaching is at the heart of our programme because it's the most effective, evidence-backed way of developing knowledge and expertise.



Instructional coaching model

Instructional Coaching



Essential events

Year 1	Autumn	Conference 1: Developing high quality instructional coaching
	Spring	Conference 2: Adapting the instructional coaching model to ECT expertise
	Summer	Clinic 1: Providing challenge through instructional coaching

Mentor Curriculum Map

TERM 1

Weeks

1 - 12

Mentor conference 1

This session covers essentials for mentors' and ECTs' success. It includes:

- An overview of the ITTECF and Ambition Institute's high-quality training.
- Research and best practices shaping the ECT programme, including the science of learning and instructional coaching benefits.
- A detailed look at the instructional coaching model, its importance for mentoring, and its use in performance and task-based modelling. Mentors will practise each stage and receive feedback.

TERM 2

Weeks

14 - 25

Mentor conference 2

Building on mentor conference 1, this session helps mentors enhance their instructional coaching by adapting to ECTs' growing expertise. It covers:

- Research on flexible knowledge and adaptive expertise.
- Strategies for adapting the coaching model to support ECTs. Mentors will practise these strategies and receive feedback.

TERM 3

Weeks

27 - 38

Mentor Clinic

Building on mentor conference 2, this session helps mentors understand adaptive expertise and introduces a new strategy they can use. Mentors will practise and receive feedback on this strategy. There are three clinic options, each focusing on a different strategy. Facilitators will choose the most appropriate strategy for the session.

Mentor Learning and Development

Mentor and Coaching Development Area

An optional online self-study course for mentors focuses on instructional coaching and their interests. Modules enhance knowledge, offer targeted practice, and cover the mentor's role in ITTECF.

Coaching for mentors

We offer additional support sessions for mentors to receive tailored practice and feedback on instructional coaching. Sessions focus on areas of need in mentoring practice, prioritising effective modelling and practice.

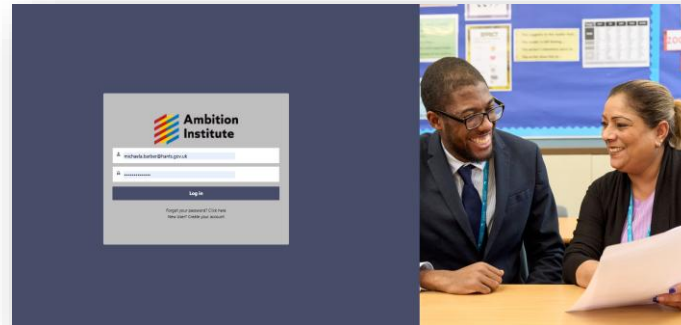
Roles and responsibilities

Induction Tutor

- Lead and co-ordinate the delivery of the ECTP in your school
- Register delegates with the DfE and update as required
- Check engagement in study materials (ECT)
Check observations and feedback (coaching) has taken place
- Check events are scheduled and all requirements in place
- Check event attendance

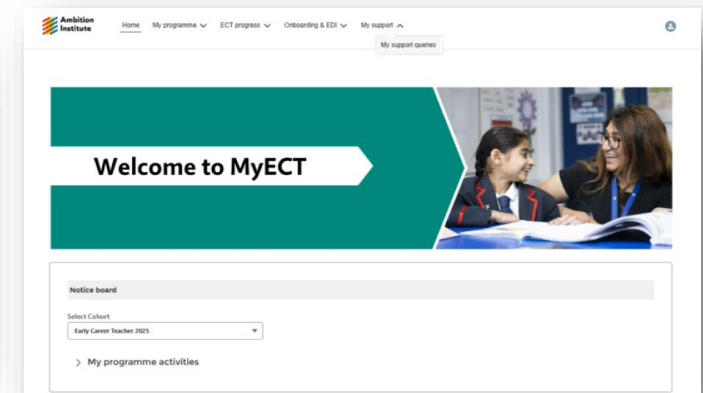
Mentor

- Provide coaching (observation and feedback) and pastoral mentoring recorded on Steplab/MyECT
- Attend conferences and clinic



ECT

- Engage in fortnightly study
- Engage in feedback from coaching
- Attend clinics and conferences



Here to Help

- Online orientations
- Steplab support tab
- ECT Align Moodle resources
- ECT.Align@hants.gov.uk
- Team of Visiting Fellows



Steplab Book a Masterclass Upcoming webinars Back to Steplab English

Search for articles...

All Collections > Ambition Institute

Ambition Institute
Articles and support for Ambition Institute users
45 articles

Help for programme participants

- All programmes - Finding and using the 'Learn' tab
- All programmes - Accessing your course modules
- All programmes - Navigating a module
- All programmes - Completing a self-study quiz
- All programmes - Accessing materials for clinics and conferences
- ECT - Using MyECT and Steplab as an ECT
- ECT - How to view all modules on Year 2
- ECT and ITT - Viewing your instructional coaching feedback
- ECT and ITT - Viewing your step history
- ITT - Using MyTT and Steplab
- ITT - Viewing your preparation for teaching sessions
- NPQ - Completing an 'Apply' module

Help for mentors

- ECT and ITT - Seeing which trainee or ECT you are coaching
- ECT and ITT - Selecting the correct teacher when you have a school account and an Ambition account
- ECT and ITT - Seeing the last action step
- ECT and ITT - Setting a new action step
- ECT and ITT - Customising an action step
- ECT and ITT - Using the 'Deliberate practice engine' to support with achieving action steps
- ECT and ITT - Viewing coaching/session history
- ECT and ITT - Completing the feedback stage of coaching
- ECT and ITT - Finding the coaching simulator

ECT Align
Early career teacher development

As part of their induction, all Early Career Teachers (ECTs) are required to complete an approved two year programme based on the Initial Teacher Training and Early Career Framework (ITTECF). This entitlement represents a critical investment in teacher quality, retention and long term impact on pupils' outcomes. In Hampshire, we are dedicated to supporting teachers at every stage, and at every step, of their career.

Hampshire Improvement and Advisory Service (HIAS) are proud to partner with Ambition Institute, a nationally recognised lead provider whose Early Career Training Programme was judged *Outstanding* by Ofsted in 2025 to deliver the ECT Align programme.

Key features:

- **fully funded** for maintained and academy schools by the Department of Education (based on full participation)
- expert trainers with classroom examples and experience to draw on to help your ECTs in their journey
- aimed at sharing the joy and self fulfilment of teaching whilst balancing workload and wellbeing
- helping your ECTs become more confident, competent and expert in the classroom through our open approaches.

Why choose ECT Align?

An evidence informed curriculum: carefully sequenced to support consistent improvement and long term impact in the classroom.

Designed with flexibility in mind: every school is different, so we have a 'little and often' approach to learning.

Benefit from instructional coaching: regular, instructional coaching where mentors provide bite sized steps to practice.

Tailored support: subject, phase and setting specific examples available ensuring a personalised pathway through the programme.

Commitment to quality: we strive to ensure that every pupil receives an excellent educational experience through quality first teaching.

Together we can make a difference in the lives of pupils across Hampshire.

ECT Align

Find out more

Forms

Roles & Responsibilities

FAQs

Registration

Newsletters and briefings

Events Overview & Resources

DfE Guidance

ECT Align 2026-28 Registration

- ECTs and mentors **must** be registered through the DfE [Register early career teachers](#)
- Sign in uses your DfE sign in details
- Registration opened on Monday 15 June for September 2026 starters
- More than one person can be registered as an Induction Tutor on the service
- Please also complete our [registration form](#)

ECT Align 2026-28 Registration

Our [registration](#) page on the [ECT Align Moodle](#) details all the steps needed to register your ECTs and mentors and has links to our flowchart and guidance.



ECT Align 2026-28 Registration Process Guidance

[Registering an Induction Lead](#)

[Registering an ECT for the first time](#)

[Registering an ECT](#)

[Registering a transferring ECT](#)

[Assigning a new Mentor to an ECT](#)

[Assigning an existing Mentor to an ECT](#)

[Updating the details of an ECT or Mentor](#)

[Registering a mentor who has previously been registered at another school](#)

[Updating Induction Lead details](#)

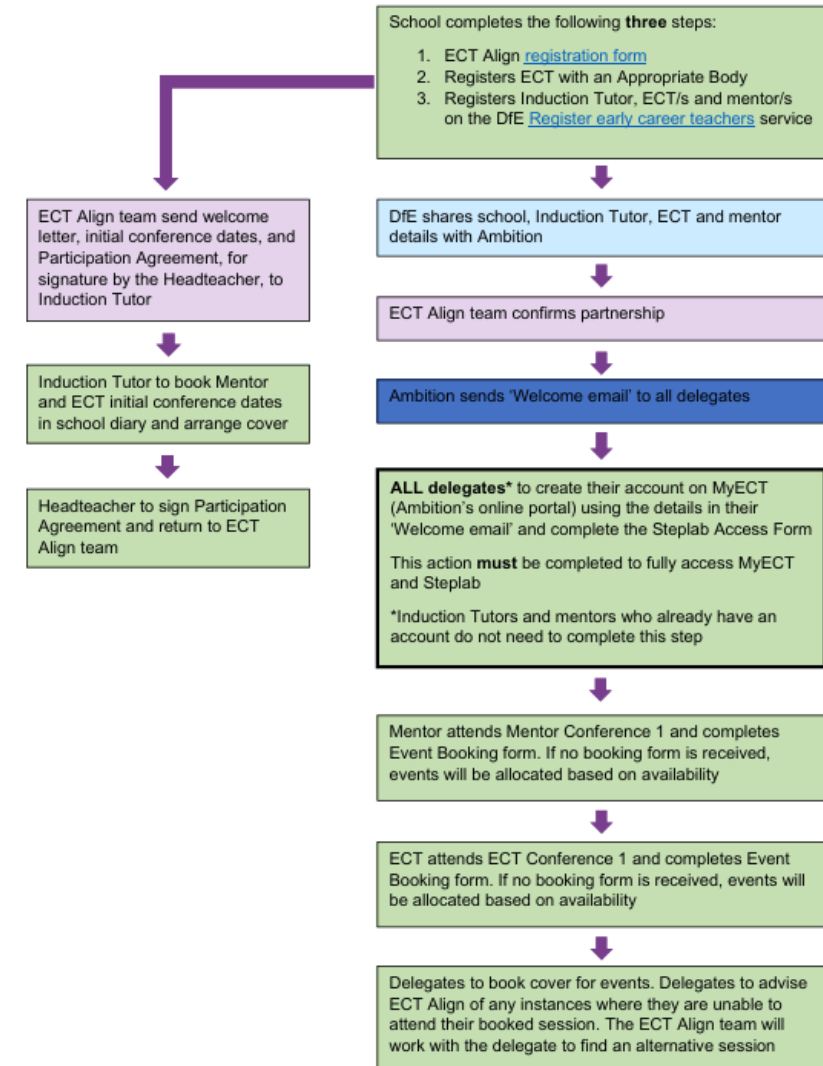
[Telling the DfE about an ECT or Mentor who is leaving your school](#)

Registering an Induction Lead

1. Log in to [Register early career teachers](#)
2. Enter the Induction Lead name and email address
3. Check and confirm details

Registering an ECT for the first time

1. Induction Lead logs in to [Register early career teachers](#)
2. Click 'Register an ECT starting at your school' button
3. Enter the Teacher Reference Number (TRN) and Date of birth
4. Check and confirm details (if the name is wrong or spelt incorrectly, click No and make amendments)
5. Enter the ECT email address
6. Enter the ECT's start date at your school
7. Confirm whether the ECT will be Full time or Part time
8. Enter the details of your Appropriate Body
9. Confirm that you will be using a Provider-led training programme
10. Choose Ambition Institute from the list of Lead Providers
11. Check and confirm details
12. ECT receives notification of their registration



Ambition welcome email

The welcome email will be sent to the email address registered on the DfE Register early career teachers service and has all the information needed to create a MyECT account and complete the Steplab Access Form

Welcome to Ambition Institute's Early Career Teachers Programme! [Is this email not displaying correctly? View it in your browser.](#)

Getting ready for the Early Careers Teachers programme

- 1 Register**
Your school has already registered you
- 2 Create account**
Sign up to My Ambition and complete your Steplab access form
- 3 Explore Steplab**
Discover our tools to help you keep getting better
- 4 Final step**
Check you're ready for your induction events

{{Recipient.FirstName}}, welcome to the Early Careers Teachers programme! 🎉

Your school has signed up to our ECT programme, which has been designed to help teachers build expertise and the ability to develop their classroom practice right from the start of their career.

We have received your registration from the DfE, with the following details:

First name: {{Recipient.FirstName}}
Last name: {{Recipient.LastName}}
Preferred email: {{Recipient.Email}}
School: {{Recipient.Account_Name__c}}
School
URN: {{Recipient.Account.Unique_Reference_Number__c}}

Complete the following steps to finish setting up:

Step 1: Create your My Ambition account

- [Create your My Ambition account here.](#)

It is important that your account details match

Do you have questions like these?

- ? What is an Induction Tutor and what do they do?
- ? What is the difference between a Lead Provider and a Delivery Partner?
- ? What is Steplab? How and when do I use it?

Then email us at ectsupport@ambition.org.uk

I think my details are incorrect

We receive your registration information directly from the DfE registration portal.

If the details listed in this email are incorrect, please ask your school's Induction Tutor to update these on the DfE registration portal.

with the details your school has given the DfE, shown above.

- Please search for your school by its URN to make sure the correct one is selected:

What is the name of your school/academy? (please enter school ID number for eligibility reasons)

Once you start typing, you will start to see your school.

- If you already have a My Ambition account with a **different email address**, please contact us so that we can combine your accounts.

Step 2: Complete your Steplab Access form

- Once you have set up and logged into your account, please find your Steplab Access Form under the 'Onboarding & EDI' tab.

Steplab Onboarding & EDI My Support

Steplab Access Form
Steplab Access Form

- Please ensure that all fields are completed and that you have read and accepted the terms and conditions before submitting.
- You will be able to access Steplab, via the My Ambition homepage, *within 24 hours of submitting this form.*

Need a little help?

Our team are here to help if you run into any technical issues along the way. Please do not hesitate to get in touch

- Ask us anything at ectsupport@ambition.org.uk 📧
- Call us on [020 3846 5828](tel:02038465828) (9am - 5pm, Monday to Friday) ☎️

Make sure you don't miss out on our emails 📧

Please add our addresses to your safe senders list:

- @salesforce.com
- @ambition.org.uk
- @steplab.com
- @steplab.co.uk

Steplab Access Form

This **must** be completed by **all delegates** in order to be able to access Steplab.

Programme Information

What phase do you teach in?

--None--

What is your subject area?

--None--

Are you full time or part time employed?

--None--

Monitoring Information

While you're not obliged to disclose this data, doing so will support us in ensuring that our programmes are reaching a diverse range of educators. Our privacy policy outlines how we will look after your data but if you have any further questions, please email ECTsupport@ambition.org.uk

Although these questions are optional, if you prefer not to disclose any information you will need to select 'prefer not to say' from the drop-down list in order to submit your Steplab Access form.

You can view our policies document here: [Our policies | Ambition Institute](#)

Please note that these fields will no longer be visible once submitted, if you wish to make changes please contact ECT Support via the email address above.

What is your gender identity?

--None--

What is your sexual orientation?

--None--

What is your ethnicity?

--None--

Do you identify as transgender?

--None--

Terms and Conditions

Please read through the the document provided and confirm you understand and agree to the [terms and conditions](#).

I confirm I understand and agree to the terms and conditions ☐

Onboarding Survey

Considering the communications you have received from Ambition Institute during the registration process, to what extent would you say they were:

Clear

--None--

Timely

--None--

Helpful

--None--

Relevant

--None--

Could we have done anything differently

Submit Form

Registration – important actions

- Check your inbox (and junk folder) for emails from Ambition Institute (contact@ambition.org). Make sure this email address is not blocked by your server.
- MyECT account creation and the Steplab Access Form **must** be completed by the end of the second week in September
- Mentors must be 'assigned' to their ECT on the DfE [Register early career teachers](#) service

Let us know if you have any problems at ECT.Align@hants.gov.uk – Rachel is here to help

Questions?