Every student succeeding
State Schools Strategy 2014–2018
Mentoring Beginning Teachers

Guidelines for principals

What is mentoring?
Mentoring is a non-evaluative process by which a high-performing and experienced educator facilitates the development of a beginning teacher. It is a structured and sustained support process with a strong focus on improving instructional practices.

Why mentor beginning teachers?
Research suggests that beginning teachers and their students can benefit enormously from engaging with an experienced colleague in a structured way and on a regular basis.

The Mentoring Beginning Teachers (MBT) program seeks to improve teaching quality across Queensland by skilling mentors to support beginning teachers as they:
- transition to full registration with the Queensland College of Teachers
- work through induction in their local context.

What is a beginning teacher?
For the purposes of the MBT program, beginning teachers are defined as teachers with:
- provisional registration
- fewer than 200 days teaching experience
- permanently employed or on a term-long contract in a Queensland state school.

From 2015, all beginning teachers who fit this definition will be matched with a mentor during the first 12 months of their teaching careers.

Benefits for beginning teachers
A mentor will help beginning teachers feel:
- supported
- connected to their peers
- confident
- enthusiastic about their work
- valued as a professional teacher.

Benefits for mentors
For the mentor teacher benefits include:
- opportunities to reflect and learn from their own practice
- participation in professional sharing and discussions
- increased mentoring skills, knowledge and confidence
- improved communication and interpersonal skills
- a sense of professional contribution to the growth and development of others
- enhanced professional leadership skills.
### Roles and responsibilities

The following table sets out roles and responsibilities for principals, mentors and beginning teachers. You may wish to use this as a basis for your initial conversation to negotiate roles and responsibilities for the mentoring relationship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principals</th>
<th>Mentors</th>
<th>Beginning teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Ensure all beginning teachers have a mentor during the first 12 months of their teaching career</td>
<td>• Participate in mentor training</td>
<td>• Complete the mandatory induction program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promote the opportunities available to appropriate staff</td>
<td>• Commit to at least one year of mentoring beginning teachers</td>
<td>• Play an active role in the mentoring relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify suitable teachers to participate in the MBT program</td>
<td>• Network with other mentors and, where possible, provide support to other mentoring partnerships</td>
<td>• Remain open to giving and receiving feedback in order to develop as a professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ensure prospective mentors understand the expectations of the role</td>
<td>• Model best practice teaching and learning approaches</td>
<td>• Critically reflect on own practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ensure beginning teachers are effectively inducted (see Induction guidelines for state school-based employees and Induction planners for Queensland state school teachers)</td>
<td>• Meet regularly with beginning teachers, building a rapport and developing an ongoing professional relationship</td>
<td>• Observe mentor teachers in the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Continue to develop a collegial and supportive school culture and practical arrangements for mentoring relationships</td>
<td>• Be available and responsive to the needs of beginning teachers; supporting them to build their confidence in the classroom and to problem solve</td>
<td>• Complete the Teacher Induction and Development program, where appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Respect and support the relationship between the beginning teacher and the mentor</td>
<td>• Engage with the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers</td>
<td>• Complete appropriate online coaching modules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Manage the MBT program funding to maximise support for the beginning teacher and mentor</td>
<td>• Assist beginning teachers to identify their capability development needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Every student succeeding**  
*State Schools Strategy 2014–2018*  
**Mentoring Beginning Teachers**

**School approaches to mentoring**  
Each school will have the autonomy to decide how the mentoring program will work in their context. The following models may be used to meet your local needs.

**Release time**  
For the first time in our schools, the department will fund release time for mentors to work with beginning teachers and support their professional development.

- Schools will receive up to 18 hours of Teacher Relief Scheme (TRS) funding per term, per eligible beginning teacher (up to 72 hours of release time per year, per beginning teacher).
- TRS is available for all beginning teachers and will be paid through the School Appropriation and Budget Application (SABA) at the end of each term.
- Schools should invest in supporting beginning teachers from the commencement of their employment, knowing that the mentoring grants will follow.

**Suggestions for using the release time**  
The release time is to support the mentoring relationship. Principals will have the flexibility to decide how the mentoring arrangements will be managed to best suit the context and needs of their school.

Some options for using the release time may include:

- releasing both the mentor and beginning teacher to allow them to meet regularly to build rapport and develop an ongoing professional relationship
- releasing the mentor to observe the beginning teacher’s classroom practice
- releasing the beginning teacher to observe the mentor’s classroom practice
- releasing the beginning teacher to observe another staff member’s classroom practice, where appropriate.
Every student succeeding
State Schools Strategy 2014–2018
Mentoring Beginning Teachers

Accessing release staff
A range of mentoring models may apply in different parts of the state. These may include:

- Using an online mentor to work with your beginning teacher. These details can be accessed via the Teacher mentor database on MyHR corporate reporting.
- Approaching other schools in the area to pool their MBT funding to access a shared mentor.

For more information regarding the mentor release time, please contact the MBT team at mentoringbeginning.teachers@det.qld.gov.au.

Support for untrained mentors
Some mentors may support a beginning teacher prior to attending the next available mentor training workshop.

It is suggested that untrained mentors:

- view the OneChannel recordings giving an overview of the MBT training workshops
- self-register for the MBT online community via the Learning Place
- download the MBT resources from the online community – in particular the template tools and resources
- subscribe to the MBT discussion list
- access the suggested readings below.

Suggested related readings

- DET Induction Strategy
- Developing performance mentoring handbook