Every student succeeding
State Schools Strategy 2014–2018

Mentoring Beginning Teachers program

Mentor handbook
The purpose of this document is to provide all trained and untrained mentors with an initial resource that can be used to guide the mentoring relationship and school-based program.

What is mentoring?

Mentoring is a non-evaluative process by which an 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. Mentoring relationships are confidential.

The Mentoring Beginning Teachers (MBT) program seeks to lift teaching standards 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.

Benefits for mentors

For the mentor teacher, benefits include:

- opportunities to reflect on 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
- opportunities to gain credit towards post-graduate study.
Roles and responsibilities

The following table sets out roles and responsibilities for principals, mentors and beginning teachers as described in the MBT guidelines for principals.

You may wish to use this as a basis for your initial conversation, negotiating your own roles and responsibilities, for your 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 Mentoring Beginning Teachers 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 their own practices</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 their 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 Mentoring Beginning Teachers program funding to maximise support for the beginning teacher and mentor</td>
<td>• Assist beginning teachers to identify their capability development needs</td>
<td>• Support beginning teachers as they transition to full registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide beginning teachers with feedback, facilitate their reflection on practice</td>
<td>• Support beginning teachers to grow effective practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Support beginning teachers as they transition to full registration</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mentoring Beginning Teachers program – Mentor handbook
Alignment of the MBT program and the Annual Performance Review Process for teachers

Although mentors are not responsible for conducting the beginning teacher’s annual performance review conversation, the mentoring program should align with the beginning teacher’s annual performance development plan.
# Suggestions to guide your mentoring plan

Please note these ideas were collated from the MBT mentor training workshops and have been aligned to the school terms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestions</th>
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</table>

## Prior to mentoring

### Stage 1: Self-awareness check and skill development for mentors

- Unpack the [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](http://aitsl.org.au) and investigate the resources on the AITSL and the QCT websites
- Visit the [DET Induction website](http://det.qld.gov.au), Teacher Induction and Development program, online coaching modules and PD calendars
- Use the MBT online community and MBT discussion lists
- Plan or update your school-based mentoring program, including liaising with your leadership team to clarify roles and expectation

## Term 1

### Stage 2: Building and maintaining the mentor-beginning teacher relationship

- Support the school-based induction by discussing:
  - planning and reporting requirements
  - school communication procedures, including parent-information night, class e-newsletter and parent teacher interviews
  - use of OneSchool, Learning Place, MIS email, OnePortal
  - mandatory induction program
  - school culture and community
  - how to access the department’s policy and procedures register
  - specialist support staff and services available
  - Code of School Behaviour and school-based behaviour management
  - classroom management strategies
  - probation – state school teachers requirements
  - transition to full registration requirements – download the [QCT evidence guide](http://qct.edu) and [QCT Code of Ethics for Teachers in Queensland](http://qct.edu)
  - mandatory induction program
  - school culture and community

### Stage 3: Establishing the needs of the beginning teacher

- Show the beginning teacher around the school
- Discuss the [Annual Performance Review process for teachers](http://awards.qld.gov.au) – phase 1: reflection and goal setting
- Commit to a mentoring agreement – meeting times, duration, frequency
- Schedule a time to have the beginning teacher observe your classroom practice
- Observe the beginning teacher’s classroom practice and provide feedback
- Encourage the beginning teacher to share their own innovative ideas and practices
- Work together to develop pedagogical knowledge and teaching strategies
- Be available and use active listening
- Be interested in your beginning teacher, both personally and professionally
- Be encouraging, non-judgmental, empathic and mindful
- Determine effective SMART goals
- Collect evidence along the way – i.e. emails, meeting notes, observations

## Term 2 & 3

### Stage 4: Developing a needs-based mentoring plan

- Use reflective thinking
- Use goals from the beginning teacher’s annual performance development plan to inform observations and meetings
- Identify the beginning teacher’s needs using observations, feedback and discussions
- Discuss school-based reporting and assessment protocols
- Discuss differentiation for students
- Discuss transitioning to full registration
- Discuss Annual Performance Review process for teachers – phase 2: professional practice and learning
- Use the Learning Place as a resource
- Participate in [OneChannel](http://onechannel.qld.gov.au) sessions
- Review mentoring evidence

### Stage 5: Implementing the mentoring plan

- Use observations, feedback and discussions to:
  - regularly revisit and readjust goals based on needs
  - Annual Performance Review process for teachers – phase 3: feedback and review
  - review annotated evidence for transition to full registration report
- Use self-reflection tools
- Actively seek feedback from the beginning teacher and principal regarding the effectiveness of the mentor plan
- Review the beginning teacher’s annual performance development plan to see if goals have been met
- Use the Classroom Practice Continuum to guide self-reflection in regards to the graduate and proficient career stage
- Complete further AITSL self-assessment tools to track progress
- Celebrate success!
Appendix

Please note – editable templates are available on the MBT website.

Appendix 1 – Mentor pre-meeting checklist

Purpose:
To help you plan and prepare requirements to facilitate a conversation with a beginning teacher.

I have:
✔ invited my beginning teacher to the meeting
✔ arranged a time and place (e.g. a quiet area for discussion)
✔ decided how ‘formal’ the relationship is going to be (decide whether you will use a mentor agreement contract or whether you will agree verbally to a number of key aspects governing the relationship. This can also be discussed in the first meeting.)
✔ considered carefully my role and responsibilities
✔ clarified my expectations and what I hope to achieve from the mentoring relationship.

My goals for this mentoring relationship

My expectations of myself for this mentoring relationship

Expectations I have of the beginning teacher for this mentoring relationship

Some ‘get to know you questions’ to develop the relationship (if you already know the person, you may not need too many of these)
Appendix 2 – Mentor meeting checklist

Purpose
- Get to know your beginning teachers.
- Share ideas about roles, responsibilities and expectations, and come to an agreement about these aspects of the mentoring relationship.
- Use the ORID (Objective, Reflective, Interpretive and Decisional) facilitation framework in posing questions to your beginning teacher.

During the meeting I have:
- Welcomed and thanked my beginning teacher for attending the meeting
- Reinforced the discussion will be kept confidential
- Introduced ourselves and got to know each other (e.g. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself? — objective question)
- Clarified the purpose of the meeting:
  - To establish a mentoring relationship
  - To discuss what we see as our roles, responsibilities and expectations
  - To determine whether we use a mentoring agreement to formalise the relationship. Some key questions may be:
    - Based on what I have said about my roles and responsibilities, what is your response to that? (reflective question)
    - Can you tell me what you see as your roles and responsibilities? (reflective question)
    - What do you hope to get out of the mentoring relationship? (interpretive question)
    - How can I best support you and your learning? (objective, reflective question)
- Closed the meeting, reflected on the meeting and asked my beginning teacher to provide some feedback on the session:
  - What worked well in this session?
  - Can you comment on my questioning and listening skills?
  - What do you think I could have done differently that would have made the conversation more beneficial to you?
  - Do you have any other comments?
- Set a time and date for the next session and asked my beginning teacher to identify a topic/focus for the next conversation.
Appendix 3 – Mentor pre-meeting preparation

In preparation for your mentoring conversation, which questions from the ORID framework might you use?

**Objective**

**Reflective**

**Interpretive**

**Decisional**
Example ORID questions for mentor meetings

Objective level — questions based on facts and seen as ‘what’ questions:
• Where are you up to?
• What work have you done since I saw you last?
• With whom have you been working?
• What have you achieved since we talked last?
• What are your observations?
• What words or phrases stood out for you?

Reflective level — questions that invite personal reaction to the data/facts presented:
• What has been the response of others to the work you have done?
• What have you enjoyed doing the most?
• What have you enjoyed doing the least?
• How are you feeling about things now?
• What surprised you?
• What is missing for you?
• What were you reminded of?

Interpretive level — questions that draw out meanings, values, beliefs and the significance of the issue:
• What have you learned about yourself, and others, so far?
• What are some issues you continue to worry about? Why?
• What alternatives are you thinking about for dealing with some of the ongoing challenges?
• What makes x important?
• What implications are there for you?
• What might be the impact of ...?

Decisional level — questions that elicit resolution, new directions and actions:
• What are you going to do next?
• What is your plan and how are you going to achieve it?
• Can I help and, if so, how?
• Are things moving in the right direction for you?
• What recommendations do you have?
• What can you do differently in the future?
• What have you learned from this?
Appendix 4 – Template for mentoring agreement

Mentoring agreement
We are voluntarily entering into a mutually beneficial relationship. It is intended this relationship will be a rewarding experience, and that our time together will be spent in personal and professional development activities. Features of our mentoring relationship, will include:

Commencement date: _______________________________________________________________________

Duration of the mentoring program: _______________________________________________________________________

Likely frequency of meetings: _______________________________________________________________________

Maximum length of each meeting: _______________________________________________________________________

Mentoring activities:
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________

We have discussed the basic principles underlying our mentoring relationship as a developmental opportunity. We agree to a no-fault conclusion of this relationship, if necessary.

Beginning teacher signature: _______________________________________________________________________

Mentor signature: _______________________________________________________________________

Date: _______________________________________________________________________

Date: _______________________________________________________________________
Appendix 5 – Mentor post-meeting 1 reflection template

Now that you have conducted your first conversation with your beginning teacher, reflect on that conversation and answer the following questions. To help you respond to these questions, consider the following points when formulating your ideas:

- your communication skills
- the dynamics of the relationship
- the role you played
- your beginning teacher’s interest and comments
- any other impressions.

What worked well?

What needed improvement?

What comments did your beginning teacher provide regarding your performance?
How can you use this feedback to improve next time?

What do you need to work on to enhance your mentoring skills?

What strategies are you going to use to help enhance your skills?
# Appendix 6 – Example template for keeping notes from meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Notes or actions from previous meeting:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Meeting notes:

## Actions to follow up:

## Questions I still have:

## Meeting duration: | Signature: |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Signature:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 7 – Ideas for building teacher resilience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Ideas</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Promote self-reflection</strong></td>
<td>• Reflect through discussions, forums, journals, blogs (e.g. Learning Place)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use self-reflection tools</td>
<td><strong>Promote collective</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Visit the Beginning and Establishing Teachers’ Association (BETA) website</td>
<td><strong>Ensure access to support, resources and learning opportunities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Network across schools</td>
<td>• Subscribe to relevant DET discussion lists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Include them in cluster meetings and workshops</td>
<td>• Join professional associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Model self-reflection and encourage beginning teacher to self-reflect</td>
<td>• Visit the Learning Place in particular the course catalogue and OneChannel calendar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Keep a teaching journal</td>
<td><strong>Promote a sense of wellbeing and social connectedness</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Participate in school social events</td>
<td><strong>Foster professional growth</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Check in with them regularly</td>
<td><strong>Provide induction processes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foster a sense of agency, efficacy and self-worth</strong></td>
<td><strong>Provide support to create engaging learning environments</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Include them in cluster meetings and workshops</td>
<td>• Share discussion lists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Model self-reflection and encourage beginning teacher to self-reflect</td>
<td>• Make them aware of professional development opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Keep a teaching journal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Resources

**Department of Education and Training (DET)**
- DET induction strategy
- DET induction for Queensland state schools
- Induction guidelines for school-based employees
- Mandatory induction
- Annual Performance Review process for teachers
- Mentoring beginning teachers
- Developing Performance Mentoring handbook
- Teacher Induction and Development program
- Online coaching modules
- Contemporary Practice Resource
- Caldwell and Sutton Report

**Queensland College of Teachers (QCT)**
- APST (extract) Graduate career stage
- APST (extract) Proficient career stage
- QCT web conferences

**Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL)**
- Teacher toolkit
- My Standards app
- Illustrations of practice
- Self-assessment tool
- Classroom practice continuum
- Learning from practice – workbooks