ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

TEACHER MENTORS

As highly performing teachers, the prime expectations are about pedagogy:

- Quality teaching in the provision of education for all students
- Improving student outcomes
- Integrating ICTs into classroom practices
- Data driven differentiated instruction
- A mindset of being united in pursuit of excellence
- Demonstrating effective teaching
- High level pedagogical content knowledge relating to curriculum area(s)

Recognising that mentors are leaders, there are expectations around relationships:

- Welcoming the preservice teacher as a valued colleague with fresh and special knowledge and skills to offer as a basis for developing a genuine mentoring relationship based on trust, respect and confidentiality
- Devoting the time needed to develop the skills required of an outstanding teacher applicant and providing quality mentoring to the preservice teacher
- Providing support to the preservice teacher in their new role as practitioner with responsibility for student learning by listening to and helping the preservice teacher to solve problems and serving as a role model and leading by example
- Facilitating conversations that challenge and support the preservice teacher to use evidence to develop teaching strengths and assisting the preservice teacher to gather and analyse learner data in order to inform differentiation in approaches to teaching
- Promoting the profession and public education through expressing positive feelings about teaching and helping the preservice teacher attain the same feelings

Other expectations include:

- Reflecting on how you can develop your existing skills and knowledge further to become an effective, educative mentor to the preservice teacher
- Participating in fully funded mentoring and coaching PD, and PD regarding improving pedagogy, differentiation of instruction and evidence driven practice
- Being rewarded with funding for educational purposes (PERT) and regular reporting of PERT as required by the HOM
- Allocating the time needed for mentoring activities
- Providing the HOM with advice and feedback on the Centre program
- Providing formal assessment of the preservice teacher's progress in relation to the Professional Standards for Teachers
- Suggesting suitable professional development for the preservice teacher
Specifically, teacher mentors will

- Model good teaching practice and be prepared to discuss own teaching beliefs, strengths and knowledge of how students learn, provide opportunities for classroom visits and encourage visits to other classrooms
- Observe the preservice teacher and provide feedback against specific criteria and facilitate the preservice teacher’s ability to reflect on that feedback. This feedback should be clear, specific and constructive, with suggestions for further development and offers of suitable support. It will be focussed on the teaching observed, and on progress relating to the Professional Standards for Teachers
- Willingly arrange regular meeting times with the preservice teacher to structure conversations around samples of student work and other achievement data, so that you can assist the preservice teacher to see what this work or data shows about student understanding and learning and what future learning and teaching is needed
- Keep notes of key areas of development discussed, planning and action taken
- Assist the preservice teacher and the HOM in the development of a learning plan for the preservice teacher
- Help the preservice teacher cope with the practical details of becoming and being a teacher, assisting with their understanding and management of the school and classroom environment, and serving as a source of ideas

Benefits for the Teacher Mentor

There are a range of financial and professional benefits for Teacher Mentors who participate in this program. These include:

- incentives to access Professional Development through PERT. PERT may also be used for the purchase of resources or payment towards professional associations or payment of fees for university or other study. This will be paid into the PD account each term and will be calculated through a record of the time the mentor has spent with the preservice teacher
- Griffith University Field Experience payments when students complete any Field Experience

Sources of Evidence for Evaluating a preservice teacher’s progress may include:

- observations of teaching and feedback to the preservice teachers
- discussions with the preservice teacher including structured mentoring conversations and appraisal meetings. These may show professional values and professional relationships demonstrated by the preservice teacher
- documentation of the preservice teacher’s reflections on data from their teaching and the students’ learning
- commentaries by the preservice teacher on how professional development and other professional learning has impacted on the learning of students
- systematic feedback to the preservice teacher on progress towards meeting each of the Professional Standards for Teachers, perhaps through an ‘assessment log’
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- participation in TEDD:MET training which make the Teacher Mentors qualified facilitators of this training as well as 10 hours towards their Queensland College of Teachers Continuing Professional Development. Further CPD hours can be claimed throughout the program
- the opportunity to work with a high achieving preservice teacher who has been accepted into the program through a rigorous application and interview process
- evidence towards Senior Teacher and Experienced Senior Teacher pay points and the potential for teacher mentors to access benefits in line with the National Professional Standards after these have been announced e.g. Highly Achieving Teacher and Lead Teacher
- Incorporation of your mentor teacher role into your own continuing professional development, for example through participation in professional development organised for mentor teachers
- Influencing the training of exceptional preservice teachers – making a difference to the future of the profession