



PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Supporting Pre-service Teachers

This course will address the following Professional Teaching Standards.

Element 6: Teachers continually improve their professional knowledge and practice
6.2.4; 6.2.6

Element 7: Teachers are actively engaged members of their profession and the wider community
7.2.4

AGENDA

1. Professional Experience in Today's Setting
2. The Evolving Role of the Professional Experience Coordinator
3. Critical Reflection on Current Practices
4. Planning for an Effective Professional Experience
5. A model – The Beverly Hills Girls High School Experience



1. Professional Experience in Today's Setting

'You've either got it or you haven't'.

Professional Experience in Today's Setting	
Current thinking	Comments
Many teacher educators argue that supervisors need to relinquish the role of critic or judge, to 'let go of their power and control' (Dobbins 1996).	
Where institutions value professional learning communities student teachers have time and space structured into their professional experiences to engage in collegial learning relationships with a range of colleagues, including their peers, mentors, other school-based colleagues and university liaison staff.	
Exploration of the nature of reflective practice has led to the encouragement of student teachers to work collaboratively with each other and engage with each other as critical friends and peer mentors.	
The term 'teacher mentor' is deliberately being used by universities to replace the term 'supervisor' or 'cooperating teacher'. The adoption of the term reflects the concepts of collegiality and reciprocity, emphasising the changing role of the teacher mentor who is an active participant in the learning that is occurring.	

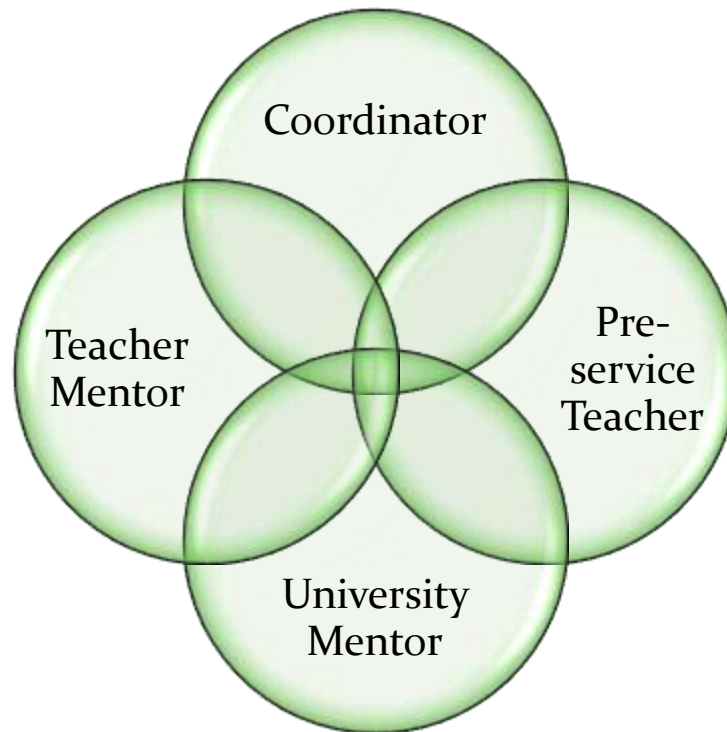
Reflections ...



From Prac Teaching to Professional Experience; from prac student to pre-service teacher; from supervisor to teacher mentor – what does it mean for us?

The change in nomenclature suggests the need for some rethinking about the nature of the professional experience that we offer to our pre-service teachers and the roles and expectations of each of the key participants.

What expectations do you have of each role?



Supervisor

An educational professional, by virtue of his/her previous expertise and experiences, assists a less experienced or knowledgeable colleague in acquiring new professional knowledge/skills or to improve existing ones.

Ralph, 2000

Teacher Mentor

Mentoring is a sustained, dynamic relationship that allows effective practitioners to share their professional and personal expertise and experiences. This reflection with colleagues benefits both parties. The aim of mentoring is to accelerate the learning process for colleagues while not depriving them of their independence or responsibility. It is especially relevant in periods of career transition.

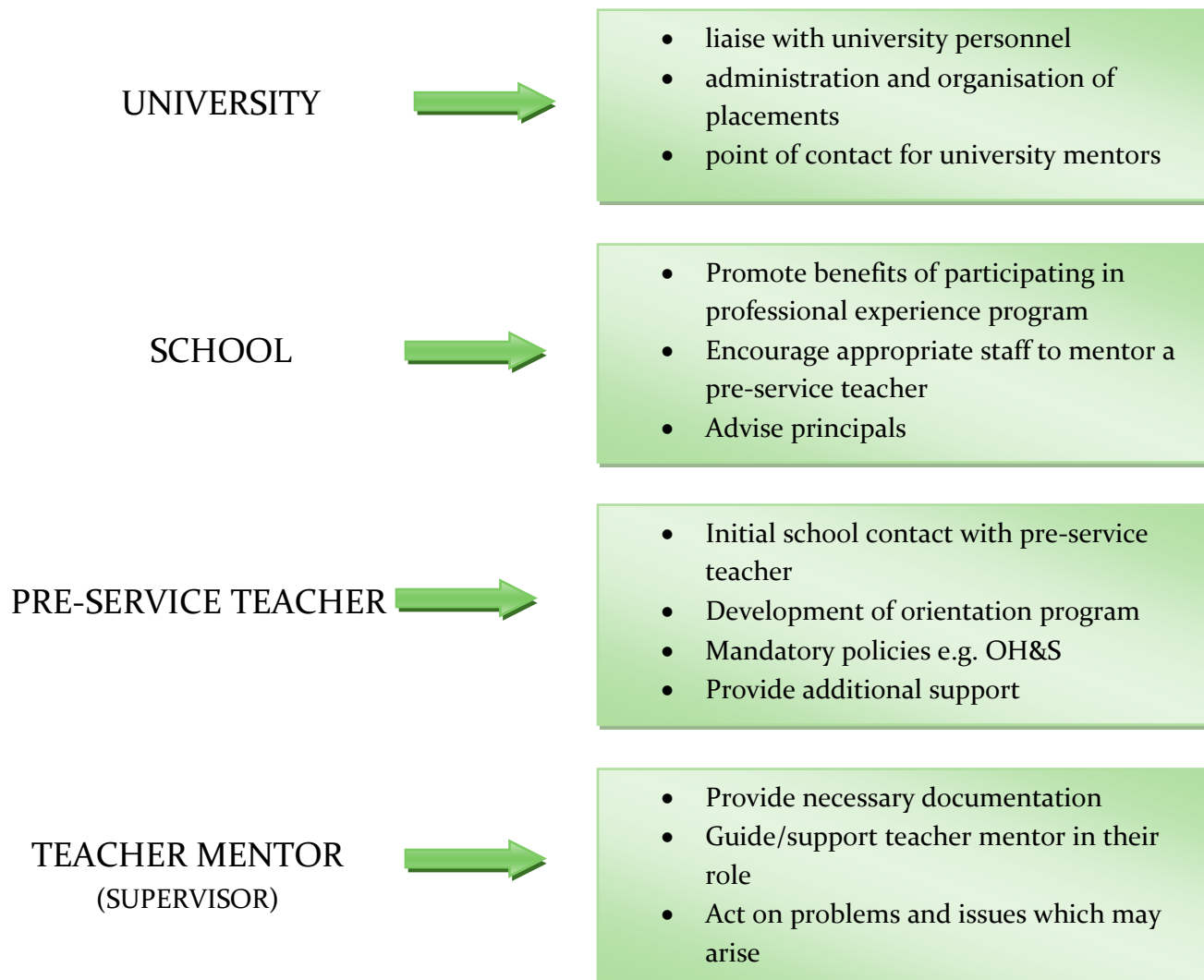
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2. The Evolving Role of the Professional Experience Coordinator

The role of the professional experience coordinator is also changing. Today, professional experience coordinators are expected to take on the responsibility for creating and sustaining a school-based learning community that involves a partnership with universities. The concept of a purely administrative role has been superseded by a more participatory role in which you can be called upon to act as mentor to the pre-service teacher, as well as a support for the teacher mentor. Consider the following roles.



Reflections ...





3. Critical Reflection on Current Practices

Consider the following statements as they apply to your school. To what extent do you agree with each of the statements?				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. Our school has strong links with universities/tertiary institutions.				
2. There are processes in place to organise the placement of the pre-service teachers.				
3. The school has experienced staff who are willing to supervise pre-service teachers.				
4. The school can easily accommodate pre-service teachers.				
5. Supervising teachers are familiar with the Professional Teaching Standards.				
6. Processes are in place to support the supervising teachers in their role.				
7. The orientation program includes information about the school context.				
8. The orientation program includes information about the school's daily routines and policies.				
9. The orientation program includes regular contact with the pre-service teachers.				
10. The role of the professional experience coordinator attracts an allowance.				

What do you see as the inhibitors and enablers to being able to introduce and sustain an effective professional experience program in your school?	
Inhibitors	Enablers



4. Planning for a Manageable and Effective Professional Experience Program

1. What does the pre-service teacher need to know about the school context? E.g. NESB numbers

2. What documents do they need? How should these be delivered?

3. What are your expectations of the pre-service teacher?



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4. What format could an induction program take in your school?

5. How can we best equip the pre-service teacher for their professional teaching experience?

6. What support can be offered to the supervising teachers?



5. A model – The Beverly Hills Girls High School Experience



a. Preparations

- All contact with the universities is expected to come through the coordinator.
- Staff are surveyed for expressions of interest and results are collated to help with the placement of the pre-service teachers
- Confirmation letters are given to teachers accompanied by a support document and a copy of the Teacher Graduate Professional Teaching Standards
- A template is used to record details about the pre-service teachers and their placement

b. The Initial Contact

- The pre-services teachers are met on arrival and IDs are organised
- They are provided with an orientation package and an initial meeting time is organised
- If the pre-service teacher has not been in the school for an observation day, introductions to their supervising teacher are made

c. The orientation program

Aspects of the orientation program include:-

- The school context – policies; routines; communication within the school
- Expectations, values and public education
- Access to information about the school – school website, intranet and Centre for Excellence website
- Pedagogy – Quality Teaching Framework; Professional Teaching Standards; effective teaching strategies including ESL
- Peer mentoring is organised – observations; team teaching
- Wider school experiences (this may include a visit to the IEC)
- Self-reflection
- An orientation package
- Sign-on form is located in my office. This creates opportunity for daily contact and communication.
- Regular meetings or ‘learning circles’ where pre-service teachers are able to share their experiences and raise issues

d. Professional Learning

As well as the regular ‘learning circles’, a series of focused professional learning workshops are run. This varies from one group to the next and is often dependent of their needs or what is happening at the school at that time. The following have been offered.



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- Teaching the ESL learner
- The Quality Teaching Framework
- ICT as an effective teaching tool
- Report writing for parents
- Classroom management strategies
- Annotating evidence for accreditation
- Resume writing for casual positions
- Applying for a job at DEC
- My School conducted by the principal

e. Evaluation

- Pre-service teachers are asked to complete a zoomerang survey of their experiences. The feedback is used to evaluate the orientation program and make appropriate changes.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

What are your priorities to developing a manageable and effective professional experience program?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.



*Thank you for your participation in today's professional development workshop.
I look forward to being able to work with you again in the future.*

*Warm regards
Lorraine*