



An Ethic of Care

Effective Programmes for Beginning Teachers

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1. Introduction

Nothing prepares you for your first year.

(Teacher, Western Australia)

Concern about beginning teachers' transition from preservice training into the profession of teaching dates from the end of the Second World War (Tisher, 1979), and continues as a major issue into the 21st century. Writers persistently resort to the same metaphors - 'sink or swim', 'thrown in at the deep end', 'survival of the fittest' - to describe the ad hoc processes that characterise the induction experiences of many young teachers. These are images which teachers themselves readily adopt to describe their experience:

When I first started it felt like someone had taken me in a speedboat, dumped me in the ocean, and said now you have to swim to shore – and that's really what it felt like. I just didn't know who to turn to, or what to do in case I did need help ... I felt overwhelmed.

(Teacher, Western Australia)

The initial preparation and induction of beginning teachers is a heavily researched area, yet frustration at the lack of constructive change is a consistent theme in the literature:

Despite high levels of rhetoric ... there is considerable evidence that many beginning teachers receive little or inadequate support in their first years of teaching.

(Lyons, 1993)

Just as the problems of the beginning teacher are well known and documented, it is also widely acknowledged that very little is done to mitigate them.

(Dowding, 1998)

Ramsey (2000) maintains that 'no other profession expects so much from their new practitioners in their early years on the job.' Yet induction is widely seen as the 'weakest link in the professional development of teachers' (Mahony, 1996).

This report borrows its title from an Andy Hargreaves (1994) phrase. It reflects the fact that the teachers surveyed and interviewed for this project consistently attached highest priority to the need for personal support. They spoke openly and honestly about the stresses and difficulties of the first year, and were generous in their praise of the individuals who took the time to listen, and respond in supportive ways. Arguably, an 'ethic of care' at all levels, and on the part of all involved, is the single most significant factor in determining the success of a beginning teacher's transition from training to employment. Adopting an 'ethic of care', means embracing a commitment to look after new employees as an essential, non-negotiable responsibility, and to find the structures, strategies and resources to ensure that effective support is provided.

Ramsey (2000) argues that:

In most professions, responsibility for preparation and induction of new members is viewed as a significant professional responsibility; such a view does not strongly characterise teaching.

During the course of this research, many impressive and sometimes inspiring examples of effective support programmes were encountered. Several programmes are showcased in this report. However the weight of evidence suggests that nationally we can do more to meet better standards of support for beginning teachers.

In view of the current emphasis on maximising student learning outcomes by lifting the quality of teaching, there is clearly an urgent need to establish more systematic approaches to the management of support for beginning teachers. While 'real' induction must occur at the school level, systems and districts have a critical role to play in partnership with schools, to promote quality, consistency and equity in support processes for beginning teachers. The call for a national perspective on the issue through this project was timely.

The project

This project was commissioned in 2001 by the then Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, as part of the Quality Teacher component of the *Teachers for the 21st Century* initiative. The key purpose of the project was to improve the preparation and support of beginning teachers by identifying their needs, and by identifying principles and practices that are effective in assisting them to make the transition from initial training to teaching in schools.

Research undertaken for the project consisted of:

- a literature review
- written surveys of 697 first or second year teachers, and 380 supervisors of beginning teachers in each state and the ACT
- focus group discussions with beginning teachers and supervisors in Western Australia, Victoria, Queensland and Tasmania
- questionnaires/interviews with representatives of the Government Education system, the Catholic system and the Independent sector in each state and territory
- questionnaires for district/regional offices in each state and the ACT
- questionnaires to Deans of Education, Australian Education Union offices and Professional Associations in each state
- a workshop of key stakeholders to consider the research findings and assist in identifying the principles, which underpin effective practice.

The research canvassed:

- Key themes and issues in the literature of the last decade, focusing on:
 - the nature of teachers' entry into the profession
 - principles underpinning effective induction programmes
 - key strategies for induction
 - the relationship between processes of assessment and support.
- Involvement in induction by systems and districts, focusing on:
 - the policy context
 - level of direct involvement in induction processes
 - level of support for induction at the local level
 - teachers' initial appointments and teaching assignments
 - assessment of beginning teachers for probation
 - evaluation of induction programmes.
- School level induction, focusing on initial teaching assignments, support strategies and issues to be emphasised at three stages:
 - 'Orientation' (the initial introduction to the school environment)
 - 'Establishment' (the first few weeks of teaching – sometimes described as the 'survival' stage)
 - 'Development' (the remainder of the first year).
- Pre-service training, focusing on:
 - the effectiveness of pre-service teacher education
 - calls for a more practical emphasis
 - the role of the practicum
 - approaches to supporting graduates.

Section 2 of this report summarises the main findings from the research, and presents recommendations that were endorsed by the workshop of key stakeholders, which was held in March 2002.

Sections 3-6 address the major areas of the research in detail. Section 3 outlines the key themes and issues from the literature review. Section 4 considers the role of systems and districts within an integrated model of induction. Section 5 discusses the results of the teacher and supervisor surveys in relation to school level induction. Section 6 profiles a number of exemplary programmes. Section 7 considers the relationship between pre-service training and induction, drawing together findings from the literature review and the surveys.

Section 8 distils the research findings into a recommended model of induction for beginning teachers, summarises the main conclusions and presents key recommendations.

Two Appendices present the full data set from the Teacher and Supervisor surveys.

2. Summary of findings and recommendations

The major outcomes of this project are distilled in the principles and models for induction programmes outlined in Section 8. This section summarises the key findings from the research, and presents recommendations endorsed by a workshop of key stakeholders in March 2002.

Literature review

- Many young teachers find the transition from preservice training into professional employment difficult. ‘Reality shock’ is a major part of the transition experience, with several contributing factors, including:
 - the demands of the professional teaching role
 - overwhelming workload
 - physical and professional isolation
 - conflict between expectations and reality
 - difficult initial teaching assignments
 - inadequate induction.
- ‘Induction’ is the term most commonly used in the literature to denote support programmes for beginning teachers. In common usage it tends to be defined quite narrowly in terms of orientation to the workplace, and in practice, may often occur as an isolated process. This project adopted a longer-term view, in which ‘induction’ is seen as a critical phase within a continuum of professional learning, beginning with preservice education and extending throughout the teaching career. It is defined as an extended process which aims to provide beginning teachers with:
 - orientation to the profession and the organisation
 - personal and professional support
 - opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes essential for effective teaching.
- The literature reveals a number of attributes of effective support programmes. These can be summarised as a set of ten key characteristics:
 - Effective programmes serve several purposes, including orientation, personal and professional support, professional development and appraisal.
 - Effective programmes are multi-dimensional, addressing teachers’ personal, professional and pedagogical needs.
 - Effective programmes acknowledge the strengths and potential contribution of beginning teachers.
 - Effective programmes adopt a differentiated approach, focused on individual needs and goals, rather than standardised content.
 - Support is sequenced to match beginning teachers’ changing developmental needs.
 - Provision of the support programme is coordinated between different levels of jurisdiction.
 - Effective programmes combine a range of strategies to serve different purposes and needs.
 - Assessment is managed so that it does not overwhelm, undermine or conflict with the provision of support.
 - Teaching loads and other responsibilities are allocated appropriately to suit beginning teachers’ skills and experience.
 - Effective programmes depend on school (and district) cultures, which foster openness, collaboration and help-seeking.

- The literature documents a wide range of strategies to address teachers' orientation, support and development needs. Some of the strategies that feature in more recent induction literature include:
 - providing essential information in flexible ways
 - individual induction plans
 - induction support teams
 - mentoring
 - modelling good practice through observation
 - internal and external peer support
 - cluster groups
 - targeted professional development activities.
- The relationship between the supportive process of induction and the judgemental process of assessment for permanency is a hotly debated topic in the literature. The more common view is that the two processes should be separated because assessment is stressful, and promotes feelings of insecurity rather than trust. An alternative view emphasises the importance of critical feedback on performance, leading to review and improvement of practice. It is also argued that it is often not practicable to run separate processes; in any case, those who provide support to beginning teachers tend to be in the best position to provide valid assessments.
- Following the release of the National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning: Beginning Teacher Competency Framework in 1996, the role and potential uses of professional standards for teachers have received increasing attention throughout Australia. Their key function is to provide a framework to support a focused and coherent approach to professional development, but their use at school level is still in its infancy.

It would also seem that there is significant potential for using professional standards to build a bridge between the processes of support and assessment, at the very least by providing a common language for reflection about practice by teachers and mentors, and judgements about practice by administrators.

System and district involvement in induction

- Systems and districts make a significant contribution to beginning teacher induction. 39.7% of teachers said they had participated in systemic programmes, while 42.2% attended programmes organised by their district.
- There is significant variation between state and territory systems in relation to:
 - the articulation of policy on induction
 - the amount and method of resource allocation
 - the level of direct involvement in induction programmes
 - the provision of support materials
 - the approach to evaluation.
- Several states provide funding for induction by reducing teaching loads, or offering centralised induction activities such as conferences. Victoria is the only state (in both Government and Catholic systems) that directly funds local delivery of induction programmes.
- In most Government systems, transfer policies and the priority given to 'hard to staff' schools ensure that the majority of vacancies occur in rural or remote areas. In many cases there are also incentive schemes in place to attract new applicants to these areas.

Teachers entering the profession tend to be appointed to schools in non-metropolitan regions for a defined period in order to 'build up points'; in return they gain priority for

transfer to preferred areas. Victoria is the exception, where most new vacancies in 2001-2002 occurred in the growth corridors of the metropolitan regions.

One of the effects of these policies is that rural and remote schools tend to have a higher staff turnover, a higher proportion of beginning teachers, and fewer experienced staff.

- There is no evidence of Government systems using policy or guidelines to influence the nature of initial teaching assignments for beginning teachers. This is generally seen as a school responsibility.

In the majority of jurisdictions, new teachers begin with the same teaching allocation as their more experienced colleagues. However, beginning teachers in South Australia and Tasmania receive a legislated 0.1 Full Time Equivalent, (SA), 2 hours (Tas) per week reduction in teaching load for their first year. The reduction is 'paid' to the school in the form of additional staffing, or funding. Schools are given discretion to decide how the load reduction is applied.

- All Government systems have processes of probation for beginning teachers lasting from six to twelve months. There is considerable variation across the country, and in some cases within the same state, in the extent to which probationary assessment procedures incorporate professional standards, or common reporting formats. Most systems intend that professional standards should be used as part of performance management to inform the professional learning of beginning teachers, but at this stage there is limited evidence of this occurring 'on the ground'.
- Of 35 districts surveyed around Australia, all saw beginning teacher induction as primarily a school responsibility. However there was considerable variation, not only between states, but also between districts within the same state, in how districts viewed their role in the process. This covered a continuum from those who saw a very limited role for the District Office, leaving most of the activity to the schools, through to those who mounted comprehensive programmes, in support of school efforts.
- The most common strategy used by districts is a start-of-year induction workshop, which is designed to introduce teachers to the district, builds awareness of available support services, and how to access them. Where applicable, many district workshops include a specific focus on cultural awareness issues, to prepare teachers for working in schools with a large proportion of aboriginal students.

Districts with an active involvement in beginning teacher induction also commonly sponsor network meetings, and provide individual and small group support through curriculum service personnel.

- Interviews with personnel from Catholic Education Offices in each state revealed a marked concern to ensure appropriate placements for beginning teachers, and a preparedness to intervene in schools where necessary to safeguard the welfare of beginning teachers. Several of the interviewees spoke of the care taken to match the skills and preferences of teachers to school needs when determining school placements, and to check the support system and allocation of teaching assignments within the school.
- As in the Government sector, Victoria is the only state where the Catholic Education Office devolves funding for induction to the local level. Schools are required to outline their induction plans in order to receive a grant of \$800 per graduate.
- Each state Catholic system offers a funded, start-of-year, one-day seminar to introduce beginning teachers to the culture of Catholic schooling, and to canvass a range of general professional issues. In most cases, these are followed by a range of specific purpose professional development workshops.
- Most Catholic systems provide basic induction resources for principals, and in some cases, teachers.

- The generally held view is that 'the Independent sector is in no way a system' (Holden, 2000). The allocation of teaching assignments and support processes for beginning teachers are a school-by-school proposition. This view was confirmed in interviews with officers from the Association of Independent Schools in each state, although some of the larger offices, such as Queensland and NSW, play a more active professional development role than others.

School-based induction: summary of survey results

General findings

- In 1991 the Queensland Board of Teacher Registration published research that indicated that beginning teachers in that state had a less than 50:50 chance of accessing systematic support in their first year of teaching. This situation has only marginally improved a decade later, and applies Australia-wide.
- When asked in general terms about their level of satisfaction with the induction they had experienced, an average of 62.2% of teachers indicated they had received 'reasonable' or better support over their first year. However, more than one in three teachers were dissatisfied, with 37.8% claiming they had limited or no support.

A 62.2% satisfaction rate might be seen as a positive outcome, but the figure is somewhat misleading. When they were asked more specific questions about the areas in which they had received assistance, and the strategies employed, teachers' responses indicated a lower level of support than the satisfaction rate implies.

- In comparison to the teachers, an average of 87.8% of supervisors (mainly principals and deputies) felt their programmes provided 'reasonable' or better support to the beginning teachers. Only 12.2% felt their programmes offered limited or no support.
- The survey results consistently indicate a marked discrepancy between teachers' perceptions about the support they receive, and supervisors' perceptions about what is provided. In every case, except for opinions about pre-service training, supervisors expressed a more positive view than teachers.
- The survey results and responses in focus group discussions indicate that beginning teachers value support in almost any form. In particular, there is a strong preference for support strategies which address teachers' immediate, practical planning needs, and which provide avenues for personal support.

The least effective programmes were seen as those that assume that induction consists of little more than orientation to the school, and that this purpose is adequately served by providing information.

- Beginning teachers attending focus group discussions consistently underlined the fact that they appreciate year-long support. They indicated that they still require ongoing support even though they appeared to be 'coping' after the first few weeks.

However, it is clear from survey results that support is most intensive during the orientation phase of induction, where an average of 45.8% of teachers indicate they received particular forms of support, and declines markedly during the remainder of the beginning teacher's first year, where the average falls to 33.1%. Beyond orientation, a clear majority of beginning teachers feel they are left to cope on their own in most of the key areas of teaching performance.

- In general, according to survey results, the teachers who feel most supported:
 - are aged 20-24
 - work in primary schools
 - work in Victoria
 - work in the Catholic sector.

In addition, females consistently express a higher valuation of support than males.

'Orientation' phase

- The strategies most valued by teachers for orientation to the school at the outset of their first appointment are:
 - pre-commencement visits
 - identification of an initial support person
 - meetings with the principal or senior staff
 - use of an orientation booklet or resource package
 - telephone contact from the school.

Apart from meetings with the principal or senior staff, more than a third of beginning teachers suggest they do not experience these strategies.

- In the orientation phase, teachers most value information about:
 - availability of curriculum materials and teaching resources
 - school rules and policies
 - how to access school facilities and equipment (eg photocopying)
 - expectations about teaching role and responsibilities
 - the school curriculum.

Apart from school rules and policies, well over a third of beginning teachers feel they do not receive this information.

'Establishment' phase

- The strategies most valued by teachers during their first few weeks of teaching are:
 - access to curriculum resources
 - cooperative planning with a team of teachers
 - meetings with appointed mentor
 - meetings with senior members of staff
 - meetings with principal or deputy
 - observing other teachers' lessons
 - handbook for new teachers
 - peer support group meetings
 - reduced teaching load

According to teacher's perceptions of the support they receive, the most valued strategies – curriculum resources, cooperative planning, mentoring - are not those that are most commonly provided. Only two strategies - meetings with the principal, and with senior staff - are experienced by more than 50% of teachers.

- Although not reflected in survey results, participants in focus groups highlighted meeting beginning teachers from other schools as a particularly valuable strategy. The teachers saw such meetings as providing a therapeutic opportunity to share common experience, and find reassurance in the fact that they were not the only ones experiencing difficulties in their first year. The external setting provided a level of 'safety' often not available inside school.
- Being observed by other staff was also ranked comparatively low in the survey, because of the intimidatory nature of the experience, and its association with assessment for probation, rather than developmental support. However, participants in focus groups were emphatic

about the value of specific and constructive advice following observations, and very critical of half-hearted or perfunctory feedback.

- The issues which teachers felt were essential to emphasise in support programmes are:
 - managing student behaviour
 - catering for students with a range of learning needs
 - effective teaching and learning strategies
 - organising student learning
 - student assessment
 - communicating with parents
 - teaching strategies for particular content areas
 - inclusion of students with a disability
 - student motivation
 - record keeping
 - developing sequenced learning programmes
 - time management
 - lesson planning
 - managing stress

Behaviour management is the issue of greatest importance to beginning teachers, but only 50% indicated receiving support in this area. The figure drops to 30% or less for the other items on the list.

'Development' phase

- Teachers' ratings of the level of benefit of particular support strategies did not change substantially between the 'establishment' and 'development' phases. The key strategies for supporting beginning teachers are seen as beneficial at all stages of their first year.

Two strategies that fell substantially, in perceived benefit for the development phase, were the handbook for new teachers and a reduced teaching load. The one strategy that improved significantly in perceived benefit was attending professional conferences.

- As in the earlier stages, there is a significant mismatch between the strategies valued by teachers, and the strategies actually used. The most highly valued strategies – provision of curriculum resources and cooperative planning – are experienced by less than 50% of teachers. Other highly valued forms of support – observing other teachers' lessons and peer support group meetings – are experienced by only a quarter of teachers. In contrast, one of the least valued approaches - seminars organised by District Office – is the sixth most commonly experienced strategy by teachers.
- According to supervisor responses, 82.6% of schools claim to use mentoring. However, just 39.9% of teachers indicated it as a strategy they had experienced, despite valuing it very highly.
- Supervisors were asked to describe their view of the role of the mentor, and the basis on which they matched mentors with particular beginning teachers. Their responses point to a conservative interpretation of mentoring, in which there is a stronger focus on the experienced teacher passing on knowledge and teaching strategies, than facilitating critical enquiry and reflection. This conclusion is supported by two other findings: only 31.8% of supervisors provide training for their mentors, while just 28.4% indicated that mentors were given time release to perform their role.
- As they did for support strategies, teachers' ratings of the issues that may be emphasised in support programmes look very similar for the 'establishment' and 'development' phases. The same major items remain equally important at both stages. However, two items which

increased in perceived importance were student assessment and report writing. The only items to decline significantly in importance were organising student learning, and lesson planning.

There were only two areas – managing student behaviour and report writing – in which more than 50% of teachers indicated receiving support. On the majority of issues, an average of 31% of teachers indicated support.

Pre-service training

- A range of teacher satisfaction surveys conducted over the last decade point to continuing concerns about the quality of initial teacher training. Results from this project maintain the trend. Both teachers and supervisors were asked for a general assessment of how well teacher education courses prepare beginning teachers for their first year. In marked contrast to their respective answers on other parts of the survey where teachers were generally more negative, supervisors had a harsher opinion of pre-service training than teachers:
 - 29.6% of supervisors felt teachers were prepared ‘well’ or ‘very well’, compared to 44.6% of teachers.
 - 45.2% of supervisors felt teachers were ‘adequately’ prepared, compared to 36.1% of teachers.
 - 25.3% of supervisors felt teachers were ‘not very well’ or ‘poorly’ prepared, compared to 19.3% of teachers.
- When teachers and their supervisors were asked to rate the effectiveness of pre-service training in relation to a list of specific areas, the results were consistent with the most recent course satisfaction surveys undertaken in Victoria and Queensland.

Both groups felt that the strongest aspects of pre-service preparation related to the teaching process, reflected in items such as lesson planning, effective teaching and learning strategies, teaching strategies for particular content areas, and organising student learning.

Particular areas of concern for teachers included managing student behaviour, inclusion of students with a disability, communicating with parents and report writing. Catering for students with a range of learning needs appears to be less of a concern for teachers than in previous research, however it is a major concern for supervisors.

- The perennial demand for teacher education to become more practical in emphasis was strongly reflected in this project. When supervisors were asked to describe ways in which pre-service training could better prepare beginning teachers for the first year of teaching, 61.4% called for an extended practicum and/or internships, while 26.4% wanted a better link between theory and practice. The third most common suggestion (at 16.1%) was for a stronger emphasis on behaviour management.
- There is limited, but increasing evidence of growth in school-university partnerships, within the context of a professional learning continuum, uniting initial teacher training, induction and continuing professional development. This development was endorsed by survey respondents. While only 15.8% of teachers indicated that their Education faculties had contacted them during their first year, 61.6% of teachers and 57.0% of supervisors believed Education faculties should play a continuing role in the professional development of their graduates, through involvement in induction

Suggested roles included:

- following up to check satisfaction with the work environment
- organising beginning teacher support networks
- providing on-call assistance with specific teaching issues
- gathering feedback to evaluate the relevance of teacher education courses
- providing information about curriculum resources
- providing professional development on new teaching strategies
- offering counselling support - the chance to talk to someone outside the work environment.

Recommendations

The research findings were presented to a workshop of key stakeholders from every state and territory, in March 2002. Representing teachers, schools, districts, systems, all educational sectors, universities, professional associations and the Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training, the workshop participants discussed the implications of the research, and agreed that the Commonwealth give consideration to the following:

- 1 *The Commonwealth consider funding further research into the extent of beginning teacher attrition in Australia, and the factors driving beginning teachers' decisions to resign.*
- 2 *The Commonwealth consider funding a project, possibly through the Quality Teacher Programme, aimed at school leaders, focussing on the development and management of induction and support programmes for beginning teachers.*
- 3 *The Commonwealth consider funding further research into the use of professional standards at system, district and school level as frameworks for professional learning, performance management, and formative and summative appraisal.*
- 4 *The Commonwealth consider funding a range of pilot projects, managed by cross-sectoral committees at the state level, to trial and promote innovative partnership arrangements between universities and schools, aimed at supporting beginning teachers' transition into the profession.*
- 5 *This report be distributed to all jurisdictions and made generally available via the Quality Teacher Programme website.*
- 6 *This report be tabled with the MCEETYA Taskforce on Teacher Quality and Educational Leadership.*
- 7 *A condensed version of this report, highlighting the principles to inform effective practice in supporting beginning teachers, be developed for publication, and distributed to all systems, District Offices and schools.*

3. Key themes and issues

When you're on your practice rounds you always have someone in your room with you. But suddenly you're expected to be in your room as a professional from day one, acting as a professional with all these faces staring at you. It doesn't matter how well organised you are ... the first day of having no-one in that room ... it's exciting, but it's really daunting.

(Teacher, Victoria)

This section surveys key themes and issues in the literature of the last decade dealing with the preparation and induction of beginning teachers into Australian schools. It examines the nature of teachers' entry into the profession, highlights principles underpinning effective induction programmes, canvasses key strategies for induction, and examines the relationship between processes of assessment and support.

'Reality shock'

'Reality shock' is a term used frequently in the induction literature to describe the initial impact of professional teaching on beginning teachers. It applies both to the young teacher's classroom experience, and to the wider experience of socialisation into the school as an organisation (Khamis, 2000).

For many young teachers the transition from preservice training into professional employment is smooth and fulfilling, and 'reality shock' is merely an initial hiccup. However, an unsustainably high proportion of beginning teachers report significant difficulty. For them, 'reality shock' is very real, with results that may last from a few weeks to the whole of the first year, or longer. Its symptoms include stress, self-doubt and disillusionment (Khamis, 2000). In more extreme cases, this culminates in a severe crisis of morale and questioning of personal efficacy.

There is general agreement in the literature that the quality of beginning teachers' initial experiences has a significant effect on later career development. The first year is when teachers are most likely to decide whether or not to remain in the profession (Stephens and Moskowitz, 1997), with the quality of the first teaching experience being the most heavily weighted factor influencing teacher retention (Gold, 1996).

Attrition is a significant consequence of 'reality shock'. Stephens and Moskowitz (1997) report that attrition rates among new teachers in Pacific Rim countries are often five times higher than those of more experienced teachers. According to Darling-Hammond (1997), 30% of new teachers in the US leave the profession within five years of entry, while Gold (1996) suggests 25% do not teach more than two years.

Figures for 1995, 1996 and 1997 supplied by Education Queensland suggest that an average of 20% of Queensland graduates appointed to Government schools leave within the first five years of teaching. This figure may well apply nationally, however it is very difficult to obtain equivalent data for other Australian states.

To lose one in five new teachers is clearly a significant loss of investment. The true extent of beginning teacher attrition in Australia, and the factors driving teachers' decision to resign, are areas deserving further investigation.

The sources of 'reality shock'

Many factors contribute to 'reality shock'. Some are inherent in the experience of commencing working life in a school. Others arise from the way in which districts and schools manage beginning teachers' transition into the profession. Several of these factors are outlined in the

following table.

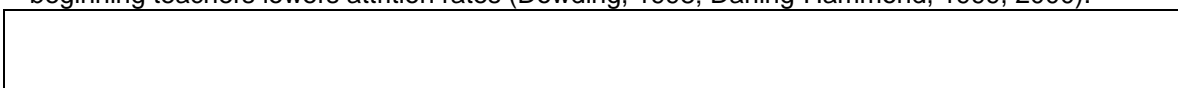
Factor	May lead to ...
<p>✳ <i>The demands of the professional teaching role</i></p> <p>Being a full-time member of staff in a school is fundamentally different from being a student on teaching practice. For most beginning teachers, their initial appointment will be the first time they have to work in a classroom as the sole person responsible for the education of 30 students, plan sequenced learning programmes, report on student progress, deal with parents, manage routine administrative tasks, and 'fit in' with professional colleagues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anxiety about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – meeting expectations – professional effectiveness – acceptance by peers
<p>✳ <i>Overwhelming workload</i></p> <p>Beginning teachers are generally surprised and overwhelmed by the workload they encounter in schools, even when they have fulfilled rigorous practicum requirements as part of their teacher-education programmes (Dinham, 1992, Khamis, 2000). A common symptom is difficulty coping with administrative paperwork.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical, mental and emotional exhaustion • Feelings of helplessness
<p>✳ <i>Physical and professional isolation</i></p> <p>The cellular organisation of schools means that isolation continues to be the prevailing reality of teaching. While privacy may protect a struggling teacher from exposure or criticism, 'isolated teachers get little adult feedback on their value, worth and competence' (Hargreaves, 1994). Beginners in this situation find it harder to develop the self-confidence that they need for professional growth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-doubt • Feelings of inadequacy • 'Crisis of professional identity' (Gold, 1996)
<p>✳ <i>Conflict between expectations and reality</i></p> <p>Beginning teachers are idealistic. They start their careers with high expectations - of themselves, their schools, and the children they are to teach. In contrast, 'what they too often find are bureaucratic impediments, administrative indifference, apathy from colleagues, and students who are disruptive and disrespectful' (Gold, 1996). Consequently, they must adjust their expectations (particularly of student motivation and behaviour), to reduce the gap between what they hope teaching will be, and what it is in reality. Most teachers succeed in doing this, but for many it is stressful.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disillusionment • The 'anguish of compromise' (Khamis, 2000)

Factor	May lead to ...
<p>✱ <i>Difficult initial teaching assignments</i></p> <p>There is evidence that within many schools, a 'survival of the fittest' philosophy applies to the allocation of teaching loads and other responsibilities. This refers to the practice of giving to beginning teachers the classes that more experienced teachers tend to avoid – those presenting the most difficult challenges in learning and behaviour management. Frequently this is compounded when they are asked to teach outside their area of formal preparation. In such circumstances, beginning teachers are being set up for failure (Ramsey, 2000).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on 'survival' rather than reflection on teaching practice • Discouragement • Loss of confidence
<p>✱ <i>Inadequate induction</i></p> <p>In too many cases, teachers are 'left to make their own way, without guidance, encouragement, counselling or active supervision' (Ramsey, 2000). Several states have system-level programmes, but at the school level, practice is highly variable, and largely dependent on the support of principals and the goodwill of staff. The 1998 report of the Senate Employment, Education and Training References Committee, noted that in Queensland, the 'chances of the beginning teacher receiving structured support during induction are about 50:50', while the situation elsewhere is 'even worse'.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress • Risk of attrition.

Table 1: The sources of reality shock

Teaching in the 21st century is not the routine occupation it may have been 40 years ago. As teaching increases in demand and complexity, transition into the profession for beginning teachers will become more and more difficult, and the imperative for effective support programmes will grow.

Effective induction programmes are a critical means of minimising 'reality shock' by addressing new teachers' personal support needs, as well as issues related to pedagogy and professional responsibilities. Significantly, the consensus in the literature is that high quality support for beginning teachers lowers attrition rates (Dowding, 1998; Darling-Hammond, 1999, 2000).



Recommendation

There is a lack of adequate data on attrition of beginning teachers in Australia.

It is recommended that the Commonwealth consider funding further research into the extent of beginning teacher attrition in Australia, and the factors driving beginning teachers' decisions to resign.

Better understanding of why some young teachers choose to leave the profession will assist systems and schools to provide more targeted and effective support during induction.

Defining 'induction'

'Induction' is the term most commonly used in the literature to denote support programmes for beginning teachers. However the way in which it is used varies considerably. As the following definitions show, there are diverging views about the fundamental goals and purposes of support programmes.

Definition	Focus on ...
<p><i>... the process of assisting the new teacher to become familiar with the environment of the school.</i></p> <p>(quoted in Kelly, 1998).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • orientation to the organisation
<p><i>... assisting staff new to the school to become effective and comfortable members of the institution ... [seeking] congruence with the new environment.</i></p> <p>(Kelly, 1998)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'fitting in' to organisational culture
<p><i>... the process whereby new staff are developing knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to carry out roles effectively.</i></p> <p>(quoted in De Nobile, 1995)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pedagogical skill development
<p><i>... a process by which newly qualified teachers receive developmental support in order to demonstrate competence during their first year of teaching.</i></p> <p>(quoted in Dowding, 1998)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • integration of induction and assessment for probation
<p><i>... a process of learning about becoming a teacher and about the profession of teaching, as well as a process of personal growth and social adjustment.</i></p> <p>(interview quote - NSW Department of Education and Training, 2001)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal and professional development

Table 2: Defining 'induction'

Definitions of 'induction' carry assumptions about its purpose, which in turn influence the design and emphasis of support programmes for beginning teachers. For example, a focus on orientation generally means that induction consists of little more than providing information about school procedures to the new teacher at the beginning of the appointment. On the other hand, programmes, which adopt a developmental focus, take a longer-term view of induction, and draw on a wider range of strategies.

In some literature, the use of the word 'induction' itself is criticised. Lyons (1993) believes that the term has an unhelpful connotation.

[It] creates the impression that there are ... two types of teachers in schools, the inducted and the inductees, and that after two years the inductees become the inducted, joining the ranks of the experienced teachers who know all the answers.

Martinez (1993) argues that 'induction' is a limited concept, implying a process of bringing newcomers into line with existing practice, in order to reproduce the status quo. It is a process of 'acritical occupational perpetuation', which is in conflict with a modern emphasis on critical, reflective practice. By focusing too much on helping new teachers 'fit in', we fail to capitalise on

their less established views of schooling, willingness to try new ideas, and recent engagement with theory and current research about teaching and learning. Nevertheless, 'induction' is the term most commonly used. Because of the danger that it may be interpreted quite narrowly as orientation to the workplace, and in practice, may often occur as an isolated process, the term needs careful definition.

This project adopted a long-term view, in which 'induction' is seen as a critical phase within a continuum of professional learning, beginning with preservice education and extending throughout the teaching career. It is defined as an extended process, which aims to provide beginning teachers¹ with:

- orientation to the profession and the organisation
- personal and professional support
- opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes essential for effective teaching.

Characteristics of effective induction

The majority of commentators agree that induction needs to be broadly conceived. It should not be limited to single, short-term purposes such as orientation or assessment for probation. Neither should it focus only on the development of pedagogical skills. Effective induction occurs through integrated programmes that address teachers' needs on three fronts: the personal, pedagogical and professional.

The literature reveals a number of attributes of effective support programmes. The following table outlines these characteristics in relation to ten key dimensions.

Aspect	Characteristics of effective support programmes
* Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Effective programmes serve several purposes, including orientation, personal and professional support, professional development and appraisal.</i> <p>A 1997 Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation study of induction in Pacific Rim countries identified a number of goals for support programmes. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – familiarising inductees with the responsibilities of teaching and the culture of the schools where they will teach (focus on <u>orientation</u>) – increasing the competency of the inductees, by improving their professional skills (focus on <u>professional development</u>) – assessing the inductees to ensure they can perform the duties of teaching and that they are an effective 'match' for their particular school (focus on <u>assessment</u>) – providing support and guidance to help smooth the inductees' transition from beginners to professionals (focus on <u>personal and professional needs</u>). <p>Programmes, which focus solely on orientation to the work environment, or on assessment for probation, are inherently limited. The more effective support programmes address a range of purposes in an integrated manner.</p>

¹ Experienced teachers who are new to a school also require induction. However they would generally need less emphasis on orientation to the profession, or pedagogical skill development.

Aspect	Characteristics of effective support programmes
<p>* Focus</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Effective programmes are multi-dimensional.</i> <p>Beginning teachers do not emerge from preservice training as fully competent professionals. They have a range of intersecting needs across three dimensions: the pedagogical, the professional and the personal.</p> <p>Developing as a teacher involves learning the technical skills of teaching, taking on the professional roles appropriate to the various contexts of classroom, school, system and community, and developing a concept of self as a teacher (McLeod, 1998). Effective support programmes recognise that professional behaviour and teaching performance are determined by individual self-concept (Kelly, 1998). They aim to address teachers' needs in a multi-dimensional way.</p>
<p>* View of the teacher</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Effective programmes acknowledge the strengths and potential contribution of beginning teachers.</i> <p>A large number of studies appear to adopt a deficit view of beginning teachers as having only needs, concerns or problems which must be addressed. In contrast, Martinez (1993) argues we should avoid focusing exclusively on what beginning teachers lack, and ask 'what do they bring to schools?' She sees beginning teachers as potential 'system rejuvenators', with less established views of schooling, willingness to try new ideas, and recent engagement with current research about teaching and learning.</p>
<p>* Content</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Effective programmes adopt a differentiated approach, focused on individual needs and goals, rather than standardised content.</i> <p>Much of the literature on support for beginning teachers draws on a range of studies of teacher needs. These have been remarkably consistent in their findings. Catering for individual differences, behaviour management, motivating students and assessment usually appear near the top of the list of most frequently mentioned difficulties .</p> <p>The value of such studies is that they highlight commonly held concerns. However, one of their limitations is that teachers' concerns are defined only in terms of practical teaching problems, ignoring personal or philosophical issues (Martinez, 1993). Another limitation is that it is too easy to extrapolate from statistical summaries and assume that all teachers share these concerns. Dinham (1992) argues strongly that teachers' needs vary from situation to situation, and between individuals. For support to be truly effective, needs must be individually assessed and catered for.</p>

Aspect	Characteristics of effective support programmes
<p>* Structure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Support is sequenced to match beginning teachers' changing developmental needs.</i> <p>Teachers' needs change over time. A number of writers suggest a framework of developmental stages as a way of conceptualising teachers' growth. These are described using terms such as 'Survival', 'Adaptation', 'Consolidation' and 'Development'.</p> <p>There are also implicit phases in a teacher's initial year in which different issues become prominent, and call for different responses. Initially teachers need information about school policies and procedures, and their first teaching assignment. They may also want to settle accommodation arrangements. During the first few weeks of teaching they are concerned with classroom management and preparation, while later there are issues related to assessment and reporting, and interviewing parents (Dinham, 1992).</p> <p>Effective support programmes sequence activities according to the demands of the school year, and teachers' readiness and stage of development.</p>
<p>* Coordination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Provision of the support programme is coordinated between different levels of jurisdiction.</i> <p>Some writers argue that induction should be site and context specific in order for the teacher to adjust to the ethos and culture of the individual school and its community (eg Dinham, 1992). However, not all needs can be met from within the school (particularly in the case of small or remote schools), and there are important benefits to be gained from outside resources. Participation in appropriate district or system-organised programmes allows beginning teachers to connect with peers and experienced teachers outside their own school context.</p> <p>The description of the Shanghai system in the next section illustrates the value of a programme where activity is coordinated between a school and its district, and informed by system-level policy. The coordinated approach ensures that the programme retains overall coherence.</p>
<p>* Strategies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Effective programmes combine a range of strategies to serve different purposes and needs.</i> <p>A 1991 Australian Council for Educational Research survey (Batten et al, 1991) of over 1000 teachers in three states found that the most valued forms of assistance (i.e. reduced teaching load, mentoring, observation of other teachers) were available to less than 43% of those surveyed.</p> <p>If a support programme is to achieve its varying purposes, and successfully address individual needs through each developmental stage, it is critical that a range of strategies are used, including those that teachers value. This may require innovative approaches to overcome organisational difficulties.</p>

Aspect	Characteristics of effective support programmes
<p>* <i>Assessment</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Assessment is managed so that it does not overwhelm, undermine or conflict with the provision of support.</i> <p>Most beginning teachers are initially on probation, and must be assessed during their first or second year. A consistent theme in the literature concerns the tension between the processes of assistance and assessment. The tension is heightened when the same personnel are involved in both functions. Some point out that new teachers may have difficulty disclosing problems to a mentor when that person's judgement may affect the new teacher's future employment (Britton et al, 2000).</p> <p>Dowding (1998), like many others, maintains that induction should be a positive, uplifting experience, and therefore must be kept separate from appraisal. On the other hand, Martinez (1993) argues that there are practical difficulties in running two separate systems (particularly in small schools). Moreover, those involved in supporting new teachers also tend to be in the best position to appraise them.</p> <p>Whatever approach is taken to assessment, it must be managed sensitively, so that the effort put into support is not undermined. A separate section on assessment later in this chapter considers models for integrating support and appraisal in more detail.</p>
<p>* <i>Teaching assignments</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Teaching loads and other responsibilities are allocated appropriately to suit beginning teachers' skills and experience.</i> <p>Unlike their counterparts in medicine and law, beginning teachers traditionally have been expected to commence their careers with the same responsibilities as their more experienced colleagues. In view of this, some jurisdictions quarantine beginning teachers from unreasonable pressure during their first year through measures such as a reduced teaching allocation, not assigning classes outside the areas for which they have trained, and not requiring extra-curricular involvements. Such arrangements have been formalised at a national level in the UK. Portwood (2001) suggests systems consider a 'bill of rights' for beginning teachers, which would guarantee equitable teaching assignments and access to appropriate support in the first year.</p> <p>Effective programmes recognise that losing teachers who may have performed effectively given appropriate support represents an enormous waste of investment. Such programmes adopt an 'ethic of care' (Hargreaves, 1994) when allocating teaching responsibilities.</p>

Aspect	Characteristics of effective support programmes
<p>* School culture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Effective programmes depend on school (and district) cultures, which foster openness, collaboration and help-seeking.</i> <p>The induction literature is consistent in recognising the importance of culture and context for the success of support programmes for beginning teachers. Programmes are seen as most effective when support is broadly recognised as a professional responsibility, when help-seeking and collaboration are seen as the norm (Martinez, 1993), when observation is an organic part of school life (Stephens and Moskowitz, 1997), and reflective practice is widely modelled.</p> <p>Significantly, these conditions are not seen as commonplace. Feiman-Nemser (1996), discussing mentoring, notes that mentor teachers have little experience with the core activities of mentoring – observing and discussing teaching with colleagues. She sees the norms of autonomy and non-interference as antithetical to the kind of climate required for effective support.</p> <p>Efforts need to be made to build an appropriate induction culture. This does not mean forced collegiality, but openness to feedback and criticism within a culture of shared responsibility and support.</p>

Table 3: Characteristics of effective support programmes

Strategies for induction programmes

A 1991 Australian Council for Educational Research survey researched the factors contributing most to the development of a repertoire of teaching approaches for beginning teachers. The top three factors related strongly to personal on-the-job experience. 85% of teachers identified practical experience in the classroom as a key influence. 68% referred to discussion with other teachers, while 47% indicated observation of other teachers. In contrast, formal in-service seminars and meetings rated comparatively poorly (Batten et al, 1991). These results are hardly surprising and are consistent across current professional development literature (McRae, 2001).

Findings like these account for the increasing prominence in recent years of work-based learning models, such as coaching, mentoring and action research. The key feature of these approaches is that they tie learning directly to workplace tasks and issues, and place control in the hands of teachers rather than external trainers or consultants. Because teachers set the agenda, determine the direction and do the planning, a high level of flexibility, relevance and practicality in professional learning can be achieved. As a result, teachers further develop the ability to manage their own learning and, in turn, enhance the learning culture in the school.

One of the pitfalls of work-based learning is that it depends in large part on the expertise of people available in the workplace. With skilled facilitators, who understand processes of critical reflection, and are able to recognise when external expertise is required, this may be ideal. However, in inexperienced or unskilled hands, work-based learning can lead to a narrowing of learning opportunities. At worst, it can be reduced to a frustrating process of pooling ignorance.

For this reason, effective induction programmes frequently maximise support options by mixing internal and external sources of expertise and assistance, and by combining work-based learning approaches with alternative professional development models.

The optimal timing and nature of support will vary for each beginning teacher, but it is likely that 'diversity in the support programme's personnel, structure and style is most likely to produce the greatest impact' (Martinez, 1993). It is also the case that different strategies will be required at different stages of an induction process (Kelly, 1998).

Lyons (1993) classifies the key induction strategies described in the literature as ‘orientation’ activities or ‘development’ activities, based on the objectives that each strategy is trying to achieve. Orientation focuses on welcoming new teachers, and familiarising them with the school system, and with the particular culture of the school.

Strategies include:

- letter of welcome, or phone call
- pre-commencement visit(s)
- social occasions
- induction booklets or resource packages
- appointment of contact teachers (eg for information or resource provision)
- orientation meeting(s) with the principal and/or supervisors
- district seminars and meetings

The development phase commences when beginning teachers have become orientated to the school culture and are ready to focus more reflectively and critically on their own classrooms.

Strategies at this stage include:

- structured release time
- lesson observations
- appointment of mentor
- team teaching
- cooperative planning
- external seminars or meetings
- beginning teacher conference
- visits to other schools
- provision of support materials.

Induction may also include a pre-orientation stage prior to commencement of teaching, when beginning teachers need time to travel to the school, meet the staff, secure accommodation, and make initial adjustments to the working and living environment (Dinham, 1992).

The following table highlights a number of the strategies that feature in more recent induction literature.

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Key points</i>
* <i>Flexible resources</i>	<p>In the early phase of induction beginning teachers need a great deal of information. However, providing it is time-consuming, and the problem of information overload means much of the detail is lost. This is why there is often a discrepancy between what administrators say they have provided for beginning teachers, and what the teachers say has been provided (Dinham, 1992).</p> <p>Print-based support resources (eg: orientation booklets or resource packs) can be more efficient for conveying information about school procedures, policies and resources. Electronic resources, such as school websites, or general Internet sites for beginning teachers, offer increased flexibility, particularly when new teachers start at staggered times throughout the school year.</p>

Strategy	Key points
* <i>Individual induction plans</i>	A documented induction plan makes the beginning teacher's individual needs the focus of the support programme. Plans are jointly devised (and revised) by the teacher and the mentor or supervisor. They include goals for development, strategies for achieving goals, and documentation of progress. Induction plans may refer to professional standards, and provide a means of integrating assessment with support. California's Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) programme is a well-known example (Britton et al, 2000).
* <i>Induction support teams</i>	Induction support teams represent another strategy for addressing the potential tension between assessment and assistance. Typically the team consists of beginning teacher, mentor and supervisor. One of the main functions of the team is to help the teacher prepare for appraisal, which is usually conducted by the school principal – thus allowing for separation of the processes of support and appraisal (Board of Teacher Registration, QLD, 1991). In some cases, the mentor's role is to validate assessments made by others, rather than play a primary or direct role in assessment (Lyons, 1993).
* <i>Mentoring</i>	<p>Mentoring - pairing experienced teachers with beginners - is one of the most widely used strategies for providing on-site, individualised guidance and support. By 1996 over 30 states in the US had mandated some form of mentoring for beginning teachers (Feiman-Nemser, 1996).</p> <p>In the more successful programmes, mentors are carefully selected, and given appropriate training and sufficient time to perform their role. Mentoring is also heavily dependent on a supportive school culture in which observation and critical discussion of practice are the norm.</p> <p>In some cases there are financial or career incentives for experienced teachers to become mentors. More often, it is seen simply as an 'expectation of the career structure of teaching, and an opportunity for the mentor's own professional development' (Stephens and Moskowitz, 1997).</p>
* <i>Modelling good practice</i>	<p>Beginning teachers report that observing other teachers is one of the most effective means of developing a repertoire of teaching strategies (Batten, et al 1991). In a 1997 Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation study of induction in Pacific Rim countries, the most supportive programmes were those in which observation was an organic part of school life: 'Movement between the new teacher's classroom and the experienced teacher's classroom is continual and expected by the new teacher, the experienced teacher, and the students. The observations are not disruptive, because they are commonplace' (Stephens and Moskowitz, 1997).</p> <p>Observation can be of teachers in the same area (to foster content-specific pedagogy), or teachers in different areas (to focus on generic teaching issues). It is equally important to be observed by others – the critical issue is that this is followed by feedback and discussion that takes account of the beginning teacher's intentions and beliefs (Martinez, 1993).</p>

Strategy	Key points
<p>* <i>Peer support - inside and outside the school</i></p>	<p>Peer support entails creating opportunities for new teachers to meet with each other. This usually occurs through face-to-face meetings, but can use other methods, such as email discussion lists. The most significant benefit is that beginning teachers can validate their experience, and discover that 'it's not just me.'</p> <p>Peer support occurs both formally and informally. Teachers in a 1991 Australian Council for Educational Research survey, (Batten et al 1991), repeatedly emphasised the value of informal support networks inside and outside the school in their induction year.</p> <p>In a more formal vein, Britton (2000) describes 'practice groups' in Switzerland, consisting of 4-5 new teachers from different schools who meet bi-weekly, with an experienced facilitator. Meeting with peers from other schools enables them to be more candid about difficulties at their own schools. By realising that their teaching difficulties are not necessarily a matter of individual failure, they achieve a more balanced perspective.</p>
<p>* <i>Cluster groups</i></p>	<p>Cluster groups are a variant of peer support teams. Used when there may be only one or two beginning teachers in a school, they bring together experienced and beginning teachers from a cluster of local schools, with the aim of furthering the professional development of all involved.</p> <p>As in Swiss 'practice groups', their value lies in removing beginning teachers from their school contexts to discuss and compare their experiences, and to have experienced teachers from outside their own schools share ideas and strategies. Some cluster groups may also involve university personnel.</p> <p>Using networks of experienced and beginning teachers can avoid the narrowness that may be associated with a reliance on in-school mentoring, and provide richer opportunities for cross-fertilisation, and feedback (Martinez, 1993, 1994).</p>
<p>* <i>Targeted professional development activities</i></p>	<p>Short-term, in-service workshops on specific topics or larger conferences for beginning teachers may be used as part of a pre-determined support 'curriculum'. These are typically conducted at regional or system levels, covering orientation matters, system policies, or generic teaching issues such as classroom management, or catering for diverse learning needs.</p> <p>On-the-spot, specific, individualised help is generally more productive than pre-packaged, event-driven offerings. However, enough is known about typical beginning teacher needs to warrant planning activities targeted at specific topics. The result can be highly effective, particularly when there is a match between an external perspective and individual needs.</p> <p>One pitfall raised by Darling-Hammond (1999) is that external workshops tend to focus on generic matters - eg coping strategies for classroom discipline. Because they are generic, they tend to only deal with surface issues. A more beneficial approach may be to work through professional associations, so that deeper concerns about curriculum appropriateness, and subject-specific pedagogy may be explored.</p>

Table 4: Strategies for induction programmes

A note on mentoring

Although there has been only limited empirical scrutiny of its supposed advantages (Feiman-Nemser, 1996), mentoring has gained prominence over the last 20 years as one of the key strategies for beginning teacher induction. Because it draws on a context of peer support and collegiality, there is a close fit between mentoring and the principles of work-based learning discussed earlier. Mentoring enables beginning teachers to obtain information or assistance in response to particular needs, as and when they arise, from a credible source, in a safe, individualised learning environment. This setting also enables the mentoring relationship to encompass personal support needs, as well as broader professional issues.

In its most effective form, mentoring is seen as offering a mutually beneficial professional development experience for both mentors and mentorees. For beginning teachers mentoring provides opportunities to 'reflect on their work, question their practices and challenge the assumptions that underpin schooling and approaches to education' (Carter, 2000). For mentors, the experience promotes the development of skills in listening, observing, counselling and facilitating learning. Mentors are reported to experience pride and satisfaction at helping to shape another teacher's development, and an increase in professional esteem through recognition of their own skills and experience. Moreover, there is a revitalising effect, as the process of encouraging beginning teachers to reflect on their practice stimulates mentors to critically appraise their own teaching knowledge, beliefs and practices (Murray, Mitchell and Dobbins, 1998).

Mentoring is not an automatic 'fix-all' for the induction of beginning teachers. Experience indicates it can be a powerful strategy; however it also raises a number of key issues that schools need to address. Some of these are summarised in the following table, together with indications from the literature of possible responses.

Issue	Responses
<p>✱ <i>Tension between the ethos of mentoring and the prevailing culture of teaching.</i></p> <p>Successful programmes occur in a collegial culture in which experienced teachers view mentoring as a professional responsibility. In such programmes mentoring is seen as 'authentic' and 'natural', with no sense of the forced learning or companionship that is often complained of in less developed teacher induction programmes. (Stephens and Moskowitz, 1997)</p> <p>However the core activities of mentoring – observation and critical discussion of practice – are not a common feature of everyday teaching. Feiman-Nemser (1996) argues that school culture is characterised by 'norms of autonomy and non-interference', and the 'persistence of privacy'. Such conditions limit 'what mentors can do, even when working with novices'.</p> <p>On the other hand, Carter (2000) argues that the practice of mentoring can itself influence school culture by promoting 'an ethos of enquiry and professional learning as a cultural norm in schools'.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purposes of mentoring, like induction, need to be defined and clearly articulated by schools and the individuals involved. • Schools devise a teaching development plan, which incorporates an induction policy. This ensures staff are aware of their responsibilities to new teachers, and of the outcomes they are expected to achieve (Dowding, 1998). • Although informal interaction is important, the practice of mentoring is formalised, to ensure it is not left to chance conversations over a cup of coffee (Dinham, 1992). • Mentors are selected on the basis of their ability to work collegially, and facilitate critical dialogue, which encourages beginning teachers to reflect on their teaching practice (Khamis, 2000).

Issue	Responses
<p>* <i>Reversion to an apprenticeship model in the mentor-mentoree relationship.</i></p> <p>As beginning teachers deal with issues of classroom survival, the mentor faces an understandable temptation to make things simple, and to provide quick fixes. This translates easily into a master-apprentice relationship in which there is a focus on the 'discourse of practicality' (Gale and Jackson, 1997), and the technical skills of teaching, rather than a more reflective approach. When the mentoring relationship is constrained by lack of time, combined with the natural deference of the beginner towards the more experienced, the problem can be compounded.</p> <p>Gale and Jackson (1997) argue that the essential limitation of an apprenticeship model is that it relies on simple imitation of technique –'do this because it works' - without a proper consideration of the underlying purpose or context. Such an approach is also inherently conservative.</p> <p>While McIntyre (quoted in Board of Teacher Registration, 1994) questions the significance of critical reflection for beginning teachers, seeing it as an 'over-used and under-theorised concept', most commentators agree that 'mentors should be genuinely concerned with advancing beginners' interest in, and ability to think through their own problems.' (Khamis, 2000).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While skill development is a primary focus during the 'establishment' stage of induction, the role of the mentor is broadly defined as encouraging the novice to move to critical reflection. This view of the role is openly discussed to ensure both partners have shared expectations of the relationship. • Mentors are trained for the role. As well as covering the role, skills and practices of mentoring, training also provides opportunities for mentors to analyse their own beliefs about learning to teach, and to articulate their practical knowledge of teaching (Feiman-Nemser, 1996). • Mentors receive ongoing support from other experienced mentors, consultants or teacher educators (Board of Teacher Registration, 1991). This may involve network arrangements, regular meetings and sharing of resources. • Both mentors and beginning teachers are given adequate release time to enable reflection and critical dialogue to occur. This includes opportunities for observation in each other's classrooms (Board of Teacher Registration, 1991).

Issue	Responses
<p>* <i>Matching of mentors and mentorees.</i></p> <p>Carter (2000) argues that personal compatibility of mentor and beginning teacher are central to the success of mentoring relationships. Particularly critical is the personality of the mentor and his/her ability to guide the relationship from an expert-novice arrangement (common at the outset) to a genuinely reflective learning partnership.</p> <p>Lyons (1993) asserts that mentoring relationships cannot be forced or contrived. Similarly, Feiman-Nemser (1996) asks: can something as personal as a mentoring relationship be formalised in a programme? Should mentors be chosen or assigned? The literature does not offer a definitive view on these issues.</p> <p>The difficulty of achieving optimal matches is exacerbated in small schools, or schools with a high staff turnover, where there may be a limited pool of experienced teachers, or those with appropriate skills.</p> <p>Feiman-Nemser (1996) therefore suggests it may be better to focus on creating optimal conditions for mentoring, rather than trying to make optimal matches.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of mentors emphasises personal qualities of openness, honesty, approachability, empathy and humility, as well as high level teaching and facilitation skills (Carter, 2000). • Beginning teachers need relevant and timely guidance. This implies that mentors should be in close proximity to their partners, should share the same staff room, teach in the same subject areas and have daily contact (Dowding, 1998). There are also strong arguments for matching of age and gender (Martinez, 1994). • Using multiple mentors can enhance the effectiveness of a mentoring programme – especially where their efforts are coordinated (Britton, et al, 2000). • External mentors can support on-site programmes. For example, the National Science Teachers' Association in the US is developing an Internet-based network to link volunteer science teachers with novice elementary school teachers who need help with science instruction (Britton, et al, 2000).

Table 5: Issues in mentoring

Schools and systems looking to implement a mentoring strategy may wish to explore the issues closely during the planning stage. While there is a wealth of literature available, the paper by Carter (2000) provides a useful and succinct summary of the key issues.

Induction and assessment

In most systems beginning teachers are initially appointed on a probationary basis, and must be assessed as competent by the end of their first or second year for employment to continue. This means that the induction period combines two potentially conflicting processes: the supportive process of induction and socialisation into the profession, and the judgemental process of monitoring and assessment for permanency.

The most consistent view in the literature is that the processes of support and assessment should be separated; in particular, that the roles of mentor and appraiser should be carried out by different people. The reasoning is that assessment is stressful, and promotes feelings of insecurity rather than trust. Involving mentors in judgements affecting teachers' future employment may inhibit their willingness to disclose the very problems for which they most need assistance (Britton, et al, 2000). Carter (2000) argues that

Conditions of trust and openness in professional dialogue require the tension created by appraisal to be removed from the relationship.

However not all commentators share this view. Martinez (1994) makes the important point that in small schools, or those with a high staff turnover, limited personnel and resources mean that it is not practicable to run separate processes. Further, there is the dilemma that those who provide support to new teachers tend to know them very well, and are therefore in the best position to provide valid assessments.

The challenge is for us to structure a system which genuinely accommodates the dual roles of support and appraisal.
(Martinez, 1994).

It is also important to distinguish between summative and formative purposes of assessment. If induction is to be a reflective process, it must incorporate critical feedback on performance, leading to review and improvement of practice. To argue for a total separation between support and appraisal therefore ignores the vital role of formative assessment in effective professional learning. Interestingly, the 1991 ACER survey of 1000 teachers in three states found that 45% felt that appraisal increased morale, compared to 16% who said it decreased morale.

A large proportion of this group of teachers conveyed the strong impression that ... teacher appraisal was helpful rather than harmful.
(Batten, et al, 1991).

The key issue is how summative assessment is managed, and how prominent a role it plays in the induction programme. The 1997 APEC study of induction in Pacific Rim countries found that the most successful programmes 'down-played' the role of assessment. This did not mean fewer assessments – in a number of programmes assessment was frequent, informal and performed by a range of personnel, but it was not the primary focus of the induction process. The New Zealand approach was highlighted as an example:

In New Zealand programmes assessment and assistance are so closely linked in actual operation, and assessment is sufficiently downplayed by mentors and administrators that the distinction that exists is illusory. These teachers have come to view the assessments as highly supportive.
(Stephens and Moskowitz, 1997)

In contrast,

Many induction programmes in the US ostensibly combine assistance and assessment, yet are so closely tied to requirements for teacher certification that teachers find little support.
(Stephens and Moskowitz, 1997)

Some programmes use the strategy of an 'induction support team', described earlier, to integrate the two functions, but separate the roles of key personnel; i.e.: mentors provide support, while others such as the principal or a supervisor make summative judgements through a probation report. For example, the Northern Territory and the ACT use a panel approach (eg: the principal, a line manager and a peer nominated by the teacher) for the assessment process and completion of probation reports. It is seen as a more supportive approach, less open to bias or superficiality, and more likely to ensure procedural fairness, than approaches where the principal is the sole assessor.

Other programmes involve the same people in support and assessment, but separate the two functions in terms of time. For example, the Connecticut Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) programme is a comprehensive two year process, in which support and professional learning for beginning teachers is emphasised in the first year, while assessment of their teaching through portfolio processes is emphasised in the second year (Britton, et al, 2000).

The role of professional standards

Professional standards may offer an alternative means of integrating the processes of support and assessment. Following the release of the National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning; Beginning Teacher Competency Framework in 1996, the role and potential uses of professional standards for teachers have received increasing attention throughout Australia.

For example, the West Australian department released a consultative draft 'Competency Framework For Teachers' in 2001 (Martin, 2001). Based on five 'dimensions of teachers' work', the West Australian framework features a fully developed set of competency standards, covering a continuum of three phases from beginning teaching through to exemplary classroom performance. The aim is for the competencies eventually to underpin preservice training, ongoing professional development, performance management and appraisal.

In the UK, where profiling schemes have a longer history of development and use, professional standards are seen as offering advantages on a range of fronts, but principally in relation to the formative process of professional learning. The benefits for various stakeholders are summarised in the following table:

Stakeholder	Benefits: professional standards can ...
* <i>Beginning teacher</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make explicit the skills, knowledge and understanding which underpin effective practice • help teachers articulate reasons for their teaching decisions • provide a focus for reflecting on, and evaluating teaching practice • help teachers identify strengths and professional learning needs, and set goals for future development • provide a means of monitoring and documenting progress • help teachers see learning to teach as a developmental process, and improvement of practice as a long-term concern.
* <i>Mentor</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide a framework to support a focused and coherent approach to professional development • help generate professional debate with beginning teachers about what models of good practice are being assumed • provide a shared language for discussion, feedback and critical review of practice.
* <i>Educational jurisdiction (eg whole system, district or school)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establish a common framework, which can act as a mechanism for quality control of the provision of induction.

(adapted from Mahony, 1996)

Table 6: Benefits of professional standards

Every Australian state currently uses some form of criteria for probationary assessment of beginning teachers (Home, 2000). In several cases these are derived from the 1996 Beginning Teacher competencies, but there is considerable variation across the country, and in some cases within the same state, in the extent to which assessment procedures incorporate professional standards, or common reporting formats.

At the same time, most systems intend that professional standards should be used as part of performance management to inform the professional learning of beginning teachers, but at this stage their use at school level is still in its infancy.

It would seem then that there is significant potential for using competency profiles to build a bridge between the processes of support and assessment, at the very least by providing a

common language for reflection about practice by teachers and mentors, and judgements about practice by administrators.

A number of UK writers warn of the difficulties of using a professional development model of competency-based profiling for purposes of providing a 'licence to teach' (Early, 1996; Mahony, 1996). And it would be important to avoid the trap represented by some US programmes described in the 1997 APEC study, where support during induction is dominated by efforts to clear the hurdle of teacher certification (Stephens and Moskowitz, 1997). Nevertheless, the school-based use of professional standards to integrate processes of support and assessment is an under-researched and under-developed area in Australia, and warrants further attention.

4. The role of systems and districts

Research undertaken for this project indicates that educational systems and districts in Australia make a significant contribution to beginner teacher induction. For example, results from the teacher survey show that 39.7% of teachers participated in systemic programmes, while 42.2% attended programmes organised by their district.

To gain an overview of system and district-level involvement in supporting beginning teachers, key personnel in the Government, Catholic and Independent sectors in each state and territory were interviewed or surveyed, and written questionnaires were sent to districts in each state. Three fundamental questions drove this phase of the research:

- What role should systems and districts play in the induction of beginning teachers?
- How can systems, districts and schools coordinate their efforts to improve beginning teachers' chances of being supported in more systematic ways?
- What practices at each level will provide the greatest benefit in support of beginning teachers?

The consistent view of the majority of system and district personnel surveyed was that 'real' induction and support must occur at the school level. At the same time, however, there are important benefits to be gained from coordinated approaches involving all levels of jurisdiction.

It was generally agreed that the centre has a critical role to play in partnership with the local level, to promote quality, consistency and equity in support processes for beginning teachers. However there is significant scope to improve coordination between the two levels, arguably by focusing on stronger arrangements in policy, infrastructure and accountability for induction.

Britton's (2000) account of the Shanghai regional induction system provides a useful example of a systemic model, in which clearly defined linkages have been put in place between the central bureau, districts and schools to promote a consistent approach.

Example: Shanghai

Shanghai's induction system involves different levels of jurisdiction -the municipal education bureau, education districts and individual schools – working together in a coordinated way. While each level has a separate function, activities are closely aligned.

Within the schools, new teachers receive intensive support from appointed mentors who are familiar with the new teacher's professional context. At the same time, districts offer an external programme of workshops and study groups. These allow new teachers to connect with other beginners, and to access resources and expertise unavailable in their own schools. The district programme also 'avoids dependence on the luck of the draw that so often happens in induction that involves only mentoring.'

The role of the municipal bureau is to set policy. This directs that all new teachers must receive a combination of school-based mentoring and district-level induction training. The districts are required to offer 100 hours of support to all new teachers, but decisions about the nature of the support are left to the districts. The effect of the municipal involvement is that induction in Shanghai is system-wide, rather than being limited to only those districts with sufficient resources or committed leaders.

Innovative approaches are used where special difficulties apply (such as scarcity of experienced teachers). For example, one district organises subject matter experts who offer hotline support to new teachers. Another assigns district mentors to new teachers to complement the school mentor.

(adapted from Britton et al, 2000)

System-level involvement in Australia

There is significant variation between Australian state and territory systems in relation to:

- articulation of policy on induction
- the amount and method of resource allocation
- the level of direct involvement in induction programmes
- the provision of support materials
- the approach to evaluation.

The Government Sector

Induction policy

State and territory systems generally do not have separate, formal policies on induction of new and beginning teachers. In some cases (such as Victoria and South Australia), performance management policies include reference to induction. In other cases, systems have an 'expectation' that schools and districts will provide induction, usually conveyed through support materials developed by professional development units within the central agency.

Some system personnel freely acknowledged that practice is highly variable, and in the absence of clear policy, supervisory structures are less than adequate:

Schools are meant to have their own induction policies, but no-one does unless you have a district director who goes around and checks. Some districts do a good job ... but there is no consistency.

Resourcing

Several states provide funding for induction by reducing teaching loads, or offering centralised induction activities such as conferences. Victoria is the only state (in both Government and Catholic systems) that directly funds local delivery of induction programmes.

Centrally provided programmes

Western Australia, South Australia and the ACT run induction days for all newly appointed teachers prior to the commencement of their appointment (usually in December or January). Described as 'corporate days' in South Australia, their main purpose is to welcome new teachers to the Government education system. A typical programme would cover areas such as system policies and priorities, departmental structures, conditions of employment, expectations of employees, and available sources of support.

Some states offer more substantial central programmes, with a stronger focus on classroom practice. For example, the Tasmanian Educational Leaders Institute (the professional development branch of the Tasmanian Department of Education) offers a workshop early in the year with participants returning six months later for a two-day follow up. Western Australia and the Northern Territory provide similar programmes.

Three states offer specific programmes focused on teaching in rural and remote communities. The New South Wales Department's 'Beyond the Line' programme provides opportunities for student teachers to experience life in rural communities during practicum and internships. Queensland's 'Partners for Success' is a departmental initiative focused on new teachers and others entering Indigenous communities in the Gulf and Cape areas. South Australia's 'Induction and Transition' programme is an 18 month initiative in which targeted graduates experience life and teaching in remote areas during their final year of training, and are then mentored by a central officer during their first year.

Induction materials

Most jurisdictions provide print and/or web-based orientation materials for teachers covering such matters as conditions of service, overview of the employing agency, advice about professional and legal responsibilities, procedures for probation, sources of support within the department, and practical suggestions about coming to terms with the school environment and beginning the school year.

Some states have developed guideline materials to support school-based induction programmes. For example, the NSW Department's Training and Development Directorate distributed a 24-module kit to all Government schools in 2001. Intended as a framework to allow for adaptation at the local school level, the NSW materials constitute a curriculum for induction, covering issues such as departmental policies, orientation to the school, the professional and legal responsibilities of teachers, classroom programming, behaviour management, communicating with parents, and working with students from various equity groups. The kit is designed to be used in a collegial context, where the principal, supervisors and mentors work in a coordinated way with the beginning teacher.

School postings

The states and territories vary considerably in how beginning teachers are employed, from central appointments in Western Australia and the ACT, to district-based appointments within state-wide protocols in Tasmania and Queensland, to school-based appointments in Victoria. None of the state systems have explicit guidelines governing the particular schools to which beginning teachers are posted. Forces of supply and demand generally limit the ability of systems or districts to be selective in the placement of beginning teachers, although there is some evidence of guidelines being applied within particular regions. For example, the ACT tries to avoid 'overly specialised' placements for initial appointments, and Longreach district in Queensland will not send beginners to one-teacher schools.

In most Government systems, transfer policies and the priority given to 'hard to staff' schools ensure that the majority of vacancies occur in rural or remote areas. In many cases there are also incentive schemes in place to attract new applicants to these areas. Teachers entering the profession tend to be appointed to schools in non-metropolitan regions for a defined period in order to 'build up points'; in return they gain priority for transfer to preferred areas. Victoria is an exception, where most new vacancies in 2001-2002 occurred in the growth corridors of the metropolitan regions, and appointments are made at the local school level.

One of the effects of these policies is that rural and remote schools tend to have a higher staff turnover, a higher proportion of beginning teachers, and fewer experienced staff.

In several states there is a move towards earlier appointment to schools, to allow teachers to participate in induction activities before the commencement of the school year. This will assist teachers make the transition to new working and living circumstances. It is an important consideration, particularly for those young people who may be leaving home, family and friends for the first time, and need time to adjust, and settle accommodation arrangements.

Teaching assignments

There is no evidence of Government systems using policy or guidelines to influence the nature of initial teaching assignments for beginning teachers. This is generally seen as a school responsibility.

In the majority of jurisdictions, new teachers begin with the same teaching allocation as their more experienced colleagues. However, beginning teachers in South Australia and Tasmania receive a legislated 1½-2 hour per week reduction in teaching load for their first year. The reduction is 'paid' to the school in the form of additional staffing, or funding. Schools are given discretion to decide how the load reduction is applied.

Teachers in other states may also receive load reductions, but this depends on the goodwill of individual principals.

Probation and assessment

All Government systems have processes of probation for beginning teachers lasting from six to twelve months. There is considerable variation across the country, and in some cases within the same state, in the extent to which probationary assessment procedures incorporate professional standards, or common reporting formats. Most systems intend that professional standards should be used as part of performance management to inform the professional learning of beginning teachers, but at this stage there is limited evidence of this occurring 'on the ground'.

The Catholic system

Interviews with personnel from Catholic Education Offices in each state revealed a marked concern to ensure appropriate placements for beginning teachers, and a preparedness to intervene in schools where necessary to safeguard their welfare. Several of the interviewees spoke of the care taken to match the skills and preferences of teachers to school needs when determining school placements, and to check the support system and allocation of teaching assignments within the school.

Generally those interviewed spoke of a pastoral care approach rather than explicit policy for induction. For example, an officer from one archdiocese described the:

... stewardship role of the Catholic Education Office to make sure the school's obligations to the young teacher are being carried out.

Each state Catholic system offers a funded, start-of-year, one-day seminar to introduce beginning teachers to the culture of Catholic schooling, and to canvass a range of general professional issues. In most cases, these are followed by a range of specific purpose professional development workshops. For example, the Catholic Education Office for the archdiocese of Melbourne offers two and a half days of fully funded professional development for all beginning teachers and their mentors. One day is conducted by central office, and three afternoons by regional offices.

The Catholic system in South Australia has run a comprehensive 'Beginning Teachers Project' since 1997. The project provides salary and travel for a full time project officer, who in turn can draw on the resources of other support teams within the Catholic system (such as behaviour management, faith formation, etc). The project officer works as a support person over a two-year period for school leaders, mentors and beginning teachers in all Catholic schools across the state. Each of the 75 schools with beginning teachers is visited annually, with about a third receiving follow up visits. All parties are contacted by letter and telephone, with particular attention paid to those seen as 'at risk'. In addition, the project officer assembles a register of beginning teachers each year, with full contact details, which is distributed throughout the system. This is done partly to promote networking between teachers. It is also used by professional development consultants within the system to target beginning teachers who are participating in general professional development activities.

As in the Government sector, Victoria is the only state where the Catholic Education Office devolves funding for induction to the local level. Schools are required to outline their school-based induction plans in order to receive \$800 per graduate. There is the expectation that schools would match this amount from their own budgets, and that the programme would be jointly devised by the beginning teacher and his/her 'advisor teacher'.

Most Catholic systems provide basic induction resources for principals, and in some cases, teachers. A typical example is the Brisbane Catholic Education Office, which provides an induction booklet for principals containing checklists of actions to take at various stages of the year. The booklet contains the 1996 Competency Framework for Beginning Teachers as an appendix, together with references to other available professional standards. The Catholic Education Office also gives beginning teachers a list of 'things to find out' when they sign their contract of employment, so they are prepared when they visit their schools.

As in Government systems, the majority of Catholic jurisdictions do not have reduced teaching loads for beginning teachers. The Catholic Sector, Victoria is funded to release graduates for approximately one hour per week. In South Australia a reduced teaching load, and exemption from extra-curricular duties for first year teachers is 'strongly recommended', but not mandatory.

The Independent sector

The generally held view is that 'the Independent sector is in no way a system' (Holden, 2000). The allocation of teaching assignments and support processes for beginning teachers are a school-by-school proposition. This view was confirmed in interviews with officers from the Association of Independent Schools (AIS) in each state, who tended to see their primary function as managing the award and industrial relations issues for Independent schools.

However, several officers maintained that the AIS plays a critical role in relation to beginning teachers:

We ensure schools are well aware that we consider they have an absolute duty to provide induction. So much of the induction a new teacher needs is school-specific, but we provide all kinds of assistance and advice to help them meet their responsibilities.

(Representative, AISNSW)

Some of the larger offices, such as Queensland and NSW, also play an active role in professional development for beginning teachers. For example, The Association of Independent Schools of Queensland (AISQ) has mounted a two-day beginning teachers seminar near the end of first term (one in Townsville and three in Brisbane) since 1985. The seminar covers much of the same ground as similar events in other jurisdictions, but also focuses on particular issues, such as availability of resources, where teachers in Independent schools cannot access systemic support. AISQ also maintains contact with newly appointed teachers in each school throughout their first year, and provides mentor training workshops for schools on demand.

Induction by districts

Education districts and regions in each state Government system were surveyed to gain an impression of district-level involvement in the induction of beginning teachers across Australia. 35 questionnaires were returned from all states and the ACT, plus a single return from NSW on behalf of its 40 districts.

Responses to the questionnaire revealed substantial diversity not only between states, but also between districts within the same state. All districts saw beginning teacher induction as primarily a school responsibility, but there was considerable variation in how districts viewed their role in the process. This covered a continuum from those who saw a very limited role for the District Office, leaving most of the activity to the schools, through to those who mounted comprehensive programmes, in support of school efforts.

At the lesser end of the continuum, some districts appeared to have a narrow, IR-based view of the function of District Office, believing they should intervene only when performance issues arise:

These programmes are the responsibility of school principals in conjunction with the completion of probationary assessments ... resolution of poor performance involves formalising support programmes as part of the diminished work performance policy.

Others argued that lack of resources restricts their level of involvement:

Schools have funds. The district doesn't, so they run their own programmes.

In contrast, some districts, such as Roma in Queensland, highlighted resource constraints, but also felt a strong duty of care towards beginning teachers:

Roma district is five times the size of Tasmania. The regularity and intensity of school support offered by District Office personnel is curtailed by the tyranny of distance ... [However] our young teachers are the backbone of the district's teaching force. We owe it to them and to the students in their care, to provide the learning and development opportunities so necessary to support them.

As a result, Roma sponsors a multi-faceted range of services, including orientation programmes, mentoring, teleconferencing networks and inter-school visits.

There were many examples of districts like Roma that adopted a proactive stance, and accepted that District Office may play an important coordinating role for beginning teachers. In many cases, these districts have established working parties for beginning teacher induction. Central Coast district in NSW for example has a committee consisting of two District Office personnel, including the Training and Development/Curriculum coordinator, school

administrators and classroom teachers. Isis Burnett district in Queensland facilitates a Beginning Teachers' Working Party that organises a two-day workshop, at which participants can choose to participate in an ongoing mentoring programme.

Some districts assign responsibility for beginning teachers to particular officers. South Burnett in Queensland has an 'Educational Adviser for Effective Learning and Teaching', who contacts all beginning teachers in the district, coordinates a district induction process in consultation with schools, provides in-service activities, and facilitates a Beginning Teacher Support Network.

The most common strategy used by districts is a start-of-year induction workshop, which is designed to introduce teachers to the district, raise awareness of available support services, and how to access them. This approach is used by Riverland in South Australia, Barrington and Arthur in Tasmania, and Albany, Pilbara, Kimberley and Goldfields in Western Australia, for example. In the case of the Western Australian districts, the workshops include a specific focus on cultural awareness issues, to prepare teachers for working in schools with a large proportion of aboriginal students.

Like many districts, Narrogin in Western Australia builds network and individual support services from an initial induction workshop. The Narrogin programme includes:

- a Graduate Induction Day, run by the District Office's Curriculum and Student Services teams
- a Graduate Network day each term, with agendas set by the teachers themselves
- learning area network days, during which beginning teachers can collaborate with more experienced teachers
- ongoing support on an individual or small group basis, provided by members of the Curriculum and Student Services teams.

A different approach is used by Arthur district in Tasmania. As well as providing an induction workshop and a comprehensive induction package, each beginning teacher is linked to a mentor from the District Support Service, with the aim of setting up an individualised, year-long support programme. The external mentors work in conjunction with school-based mentors to ensure the District programme complements school-level activities.

Evaluation

Just as districts' involvement in supporting beginning teachers covers a continuum from minimal to comprehensive, so does their approach to evaluation of induction programmes. When asked 'what processes do you use to evaluate the success of beginning teacher support programmes in your region, and/or within schools', one district answered:

None. This is not a role of the District Office. We are too busy just surviving on the staff allocated to the various tasks in the Human Resource function.

More commonly, districts gather participant feedback at the conclusion of workshops or similar activities. This was clearly the most frequently used strategy.

Other approaches included:

- 'reflective practice questionnaires' distributed 4-6 weeks after workshops to gauge any impact on classroom practice (Narrogin, Western Australia)
- needs analysis surveys used at the beginning of the year to identify specific issues for support programmes, and repeated at the end of the year to determine whether needs have been met (Barrington, Tasmania)
- focus groups to gather feedback about existing programmes, and to consult about future directions (Northern Metropolitan Region, Victoria)

District evaluation of school-based support programmes mainly appears to occur informally, using anecdotal feedback. There were only two examples given where districts adopt more formal approaches. Chinchilla in Queensland has monitored the number of successful and unsuccessful probations over a number of years. And in Tasmania, Arthur district uses focus groups to evaluate the implementation of the new teaching load reduction programme.

Summary

While the research reveals variation and inconsistency in the management of induction at system and district levels throughout Australia, it has also highlighted a number of guiding principles for effective systemic involvement in beginning teacher induction. These can be summarised as follows:

To establish an effective, coordinated model for beginning teacher induction, systems should:

- develop policy which clearly outlines broad requirements for induction at district and school levels
- assign responsibility for teacher induction to particular personnel or sections
- support policy through guidelines and resource materials which may be adapted to suit local contexts
- allocate resources for district and/or school level induction which are tied to particular performance measures (such as submission of induction plans)
- establish collaborative forums to promote the sharing of good practice
- establish processes for district-level accountability
- collaborate with districts in establishing evaluation processes to investigate the effectiveness of programmes

The clear message is the need for planned rather than piecemeal approaches, supported by adequate resources, and unambiguous allocation of responsibility. Currently, the Victorian Government system provides an impressive example of a coordinated and strategic approach.

Example: Victoria

Guidelines

The Victorian Department of Education and Training's Teacher Development Unit has developed 'Induction Resource Materials' which have been distributed to principals of all Government schools. This package contains advice about the management of school-based induction, with checklists and planning sheets of suggested induction activities covering five stages from pre-commencement, to the first two days, the first week, the first month, and the second and third months of a new teacher's appointment. The materials are intended as a framework within which schools can develop their own approaches. As well as guidelines for induction coordinators, the package also includes insertion materials to facilitate a process whereby schools are encouraged to develop their own handbooks for beginning teachers.

Personnel from The Victorian Teacher Development Unit indicated that the resource materials sent a 'strong suggestion' that schools ought to have a planned approach to induction, with someone carrying a designated responsibility:

To say it's a policy is overstating the case, but in the documentation we've provided, we've sent some pretty clear messages that this is what we believe is good practice..., we believe it's in schools' interests and in the interests of beginning teachers to do it.

Assessment and performance management

The Victorian Department's Performance and Development policy makes responsibility for induction explicit, and links probationary assessment to a performance management cycle. The recently released 'Performance and Development Handbook' includes professional standards for beginning teachers, based on five dimensions of teaching. These include nineteen professional standards which act as indicators of performance.

The standards are an integral part of a performance and development cycle. The cycle begins with discussion about the standards and expectations of performance, and is followed by a mid-cycle review. The process culminates with teachers completing a 'performance and development proforma' in which they must demonstrate 'that they are developing the skills and competencies needed to become an effective classroom practitioner.' This leads to a review by

the principal and an assessment against the five dimensions, each of which must be achieved for a satisfactory review outcome. There are matching standards for experienced teachers.

Funding

Victoria is the only state that directly funds local delivery of induction programmes. The Teacher Development Unit provided a total of \$150,000 in 2001 – about \$68 per beginning teacher - to Victoria's nine regions to conduct beginning and returning teacher programmes. Each region initially receives a flat amount of \$8000, which is topped up once actual beginning teacher numbers are known. Country regions are slightly advantaged in the funding model to accommodate the extra costs incurred because of distance from metropolitan centres.

The regions make their own decisions about how the funding is used, but are required to submit an annual plan to the Teacher Development Unit.

Collaborative network

The regions are supported through a collaborative reference group, convened by the manager of the Teacher Development Unit, in which the regional directors share ideas and experience. There is variety in the approaches used, but a degree of commonality in content, particularly in coverage of curriculum-related matters and major departmental priorities such as literacy, numeracy and science.

Accountability and evaluation

Because of the funding context, there are accountability requirements on the regions to provide activity and expenditure reports to the Teacher Development Unit. In 2002, a layer of qualitative evaluation will be added, in which regions will run evaluative focus groups to gauge the impact of their induction programmes on schools and on beginning teachers.

District-level induction

District level induction in Victoria operates in a different context from the other states. Victoria has a regional structure of nine 'super-districts' with around 180 schools in each. The five country regions employed an average of 123 new teachers per region in 2001, while the four metropolitan regions employed an average of 331 new teachers. The size of the regions allows for a level of infrastructure and personnel which smaller districts cannot achieve. Allied with the fact that Victoria's regions are specifically funded for induction, and supported by the Teacher Development Unit through strategic planning processes and a collaborative reference group, each region is able to mount an extensive support programme.

The Western Metropolitan Region's approach is a good example. The 2001 programme included:

- a series of four curriculum-focused seminars in terms 1 and 2 (organised in three parallel strands – for teachers in early, middle and later years of schooling)
- three professional development modules offered in term 4, based on needs identified by teachers in the first set of seminars, dealing with Teacher Health and Well-Being, School Ethos, and Personal and Professional Practice
- collegiate networks for primary and secondary teachers, operated on a cluster basis
- meetings, professional development, administrative support and time release for network leaders
- a graduate and returning teachers discussion group
- an email network.

Northern Metropolitan Region, which offers a similar programme of professional development, is currently negotiating with the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) University so that teachers who undertake an extended module programme will gain credit towards a Graduate Certificate in Education.

5. Induction in schools

We had one beginning teacher in 2001 who left us at the end of the year. She devastated us by saying that one of the reasons she was leaving was that she didn't feel she was getting enough support. Because we had three coming in this year, we really set about putting an effective programme in place.

(Supervisor, Victorian Catholic School)

Induction at the school level was investigated through two national surveys and a series of focus group discussions. Surveys were returned by 697 first and second year teachers, and 380 supervisors (54.0% of whom were principals, 27.0% Deputy Principals, 7.2% senior staff, and 3.9% mentors - 7.9% did not indicate positions).

Returns were received from:

- all states and the ACT²
- the Government, Catholic³ and Independent sectors
- primary, secondary, K-12 and special schools
- schools of all sizes in metropolitan, regional and remote areas.

Focus groups were held in Western Australia, Victoria, Queensland and Tasmania, involving 50 teachers and 30 supervisors. In most cases teachers and supervisors met separately.

The survey design for both teacher and supervisor surveys reflected the common view in the literature that teachers' development occurs in identifiable stages, often described using terms such as 'survival', 'adaptation', 'consolidation' and 'development'. In particular, it was assumed that teachers' support needs varied over the course of their first year. The surveys therefore contained sections that addressed three stages: the beginning teacher's introduction to the school environment, the first few weeks of teaching, and the remainder of the first year. In this report these periods are seen as three overlapping phases:

- Orientation
- Establishment
- Development.

The surveys also gathered information about initial teaching loads and contained a section on pre-service training.

While much of the earlier research into teacher induction has focused on the problems or difficulties faced by beginning teachers, the surveys for this project adopted a more positive stance. The overriding aim was to gather information about the forms of support that teachers are currently experiencing, and to seek recommendations about the approaches that teachers and supervisors find most effective.

Focus group discussions were used to explore and validate the trends emerging from the survey data, and to delve beneath the surface of the statistical information.

General impressions

The importance of support

Results from both teacher and supervisor surveys overwhelmingly confirm the importance of support for the beginning teacher. While there are strong indications of preferred approaches, all strategies and focus issues mentioned in the surveys were rated positively. In other words, teachers value support in almost any form. This was a view that was strongly reinforced in focus group discussions, and reflected in marginal comments on a large number of surveys. However, while all approaches were valued, there is a particular preference for support

² NB: the response rate from South Australia was quite low.

³ NB: the majority of returns from Catholic schools came from Victoria.

strategies which address teachers' immediate, practical planning needs, and which provide avenues for personal support.

Provision of induction

While support programmes are seen as essential by beginning teachers, the actual provision of effective induction can be described at best as patchy. In 1991 the Queensland Board of Teacher Registration published research that indicated that beginning teachers in the state had a less than 50:50 chance of accessing systematic support in their first year of teaching. Survey results from this project indicate that this situation has only marginally improved a decade later, and applies Australia-wide.

87.5% of teachers felt that schools should provide organised programmes of support for beginning teachers, however only 55.5% of teachers indicated that their schools had organised programmes.

When asked in general terms about their level of satisfaction with the induction they had experienced, an average of 62.2% of teachers indicated they had received 'reasonable' or better support over their first year. However, more than one in three teachers were dissatisfied, with 37.8% claiming they had limited or no support.

A 62.2% satisfaction rate might be seen as a positive outcome, but the figure is somewhat misleading. When they were asked more specific questions about the areas in which they had received assistance, and the strategies employed, teachers' responses point to a lower level of support than the satisfaction rate implies.

Discrepancy between teachers' and supervisors' views

In comparison to the teachers, 86.8% of supervisors claimed their schools provided organised programmes of support for beginning teachers. Similarly, an average of 87.8% of supervisors felt these programmes provided 'reasonable' or better support to the beginning teachers. Only 12.2% felt their programmes offered limited or no support.

The survey results consistently indicate a marked discrepancy between teachers' perceptions about the support they receive, and supervisors' perceptions about what is provided. In every case, except for opinions about pre-service training, supervisors express a rosier view than teachers.

Importance of year-long support

Beginning teachers attending focus group discussions consistently underlined the fact that they appreciate year-long support. They don't want to be abandoned simply because they appear to be 'coping' after the first few weeks, and were critical of approaches which assume that induction consists of little more than orientation to the school, or providing procedural information.

However, it is clear from survey results that support is most intensive during the orientation phase of induction, where an average of 45.8% of teachers indicate they received particular forms of support. Support declines markedly during the remainder of the beginning teacher's first year, where the average falls to 33.1%.

Demographic variables

The surveys gathered demographic information in relation to gender, age, state, sector, type, size and location of school. Not all factors were significant, but when the results are analysed in terms of the demographic variables, some broad trends emerge. In general, the teachers who feel most supported:

- are aged 20-24
- work in primary schools
- work in Victoria
- work in the Catholic sector.

In addition, females consistently express a higher valuation of support than males.

School size and location

Size and location of school was a significant factor on particular survey items, but there was no consistent pattern of significance. Nevertheless these factors were fertile topics for discussion in a number of focus groups.

Teachers who had been posted to regional and remote areas described a raft of issues related to the move, particularly the experience of loneliness and isolation from their normal support networks at a young age. Several spoke about the difficulty of coping at a personal level, and the added importance of support in the workplace:

I went straight from high school into Uni, and straight from Uni into teaching. I have moved out of the city and lived in the country for the first time, moved away from my family and my friends, moved to a place I'd never even heard of before, and then on top of that starting this big, scary job for the first time. I would have loved just once for someone to say, 'how are you going? Are you OK?' Not just, 'can you find the staff toilets, and can you find the books you need?'

(Teacher, Western Australia)

Some teachers posted to very large schools paradoxically described similar feelings of isolation and lack of identity:

I'm not going back to a large school in a hurry ... it was very much a school where particular grade teachers stuck together, and didn't mix much with other areas. It took me a long time to learn names of other staff.

(Teacher, Victoria)

One such school in Queensland made particular efforts to build a supportive ethos:

Because we are a big school we know people can get lost, so we try to have a deliberate emphasis on care. We have a philosophy of care, and we talk a lot about community-building. I get teachers in to talk about just that: what are good strategies for building communities in the classroom, and for having positive relationships.

(Supervisor, Queensland)

Schools with a large staff have a critical mass of resources and expertise available within the school to support beginning teachers. Small schools, lacking the same economies of scale, find their resources are much more stretched:

I was in a small school of 120 students and 8 staff. I was given a mentor but she ... had many extra responsibilities ... I felt I was on my own ... Eventually my friendship networks on the staff were the most important source of support.

(Teacher, Victoria)

For systems and districts, equity of support for beginning teachers across the range of schools is a significant and challenging issue.

Teaching assignments

If a graduate ends up with an excessively difficult class, or an inappropriate situation, it's often because the principal isn't strong enough with his or her staff ... It's a leadership issue. We actively try to avoid that practice of giving the young ones all the dirty work ... 99% of our principals have enough common sense not to do stupid things like that.

(Manager, Employee Development, Brisbane Catholic Education Office)

A continuing theme in the literature concerns the 'survival of the fittest' approach to staffing – the practice of giving to beginning teachers the classes that more experienced teachers prefer to avoid. It is the clearest indication of whether or not an 'ethic of care' is present in a particular school. There is little doubt that the initial teaching assignment can have a major impact on how successfully a beginning teacher manages the first year.

The following results from the teacher survey give some insight into the nature of teaching assignments received by beginning teachers:

- 49.6% of teachers claimed they were consulted about their class teaching preferences prior to commencing at the school.
- 30.6% of teachers said they had a reduced teaching load in their first year.
- 17.1% of teachers were given a reduction in non-teaching duties.
- 7% were given a reduced range of subjects and/or levels within their teaching allocation.

It is important to note that the equivalent results from the supervisor survey present a more positive picture (see Appendix B). It may be that the supervisors' view is more accurate, but there is no way of telling from these results. In any case, the real point is that a significant proportion of teachers perceive that they are not helped, and in some cases feel exploited, by their teaching assignments. This was certainly emphasised in focus groups, where a disconcertingly large number of participants described what

would seem by any criteria to be unreasonable teaching allocations:

They said 'sorry we have to do this to you, but there's no other way' ... I felt a bit ripped off ... I had the largest class in the school, with a big range of abilities in the class.

(Teacher, Tasmania)

One of the things that was really hard for me was that they loaded me up with all different subjects; they didn't double up on any classes ... I was teaching six classes, with five different work programmes, and four different syllabuses – in a couple of those I had to write all my own assessments ... It almost killed me. It was incredibly tough and really full on.

(Teacher, Queensland)

I was given the most difficult class in the school because nobody else wanted it. I had people tell me that 'you're braver than I am, because I refused to take that class'. Next year I get to choose what I want ...

(Teacher, Western Australia)

It would seem that the 'survival of the fittest' mentality is alive and well. Certainly, many of the teachers in focus groups who were continuing at their current school felt they would have an advantage in their second year by being involved in the planning process, and therefore being able to negotiate their teaching allocation:

Going in to your second year, you get more of a choice. But when you're a new graduate, you just get what's left over, what no-one else wants.

(Teacher, Western Australia)

Teaching out of area

I'm a Drama/History teacher, but they got me to teach Geography and PE. Not knowing anything about those two subjects, I found it really difficult ... I was reading the book and then teaching it the next day.

(Teacher, Queensland)

45.3% of teachers indicated that in their first year they taught entirely in the areas for which they had trained, leaving 54.7% with some component of their load outside their area of teaching expertise. Significantly, 22.1% of teachers - one in five - taught only 'partly' or 'not at all' in their area. These figures were supported by results in the Supervisor survey, and are consistent with research reported a decade ago by the Queensland Board of Teacher Registration (1991).

Adopting an attitude that ‘beggars can’t be choosers’ in a competitive market, a number of teachers explained that in their desperation to find a job, they are prepared to say they’ll teach anything. Their dilemma is that the more they add to their Curriculum Vitae, the more likely they are to be teaching out of area. Principals understandably prefer young teachers who are multi-skilled, and are swayed in employment decisions by applicants who list a range of skills derived from hobbies or recreational pursuits. It is to be hoped that these would be seen as a potential basis for teaching in a particular area in the future, rather than for immediate deployment.

As one supervisor noted:

While being multi-skilled is important, it’s also very important to be on top of your major subject area. Students very quickly detect if the teacher is struggling with the material, and then their management problems will escalate very quickly. One of the things that students want is a teacher who knows what they’re talking about.

(Supervisor, Tasmania)

Extra-curricular responsibilities

As well as being willing to teach in unfamiliar areas, there was also evidence presented in focus groups that teachers feel tempted to volunteer for a range of extra-curricular responsibilities in order to secure their position. Some supervisors actively dissuade their first year teachers from this view:

We actually formalise some of these expectations ... We tell them, ‘no you are not expected to do this ... no, we won’t think any worse of you if you’re not involved in these things ... we don’t want you to do that ... we want you to focus on developing your teaching skills throughout this first year.

(Supervisor, Tasmania)

Teachers were certainly very appreciative of this approach:

Our school has the rule that first year teachers don’t take on any extra responsibilities. The first year is purely to find your feet. I think that’s really important.

(Teacher, Victoria)

Nevertheless, it is a concern that only 17.1% of beginning teachers indicated they were given a reduction in non-teaching duties.

The ‘orientation’ phase

Newly appointed teachers require orientation to the profession, the employing agency and the workplace. Systemic and district induction programmes generally address the broader orientation agenda, which includes learning about the teachers’ role within the education system, the policies and priorities that impact on the teacher’s job, and conditions of service.

At the school level, orientation refers to a new teacher’s introduction to the school environment. It involves learning about the tasks that form part of the teacher’s role in the school, and developing an understanding of the organisation and culture of the school. Orientation generally begins with the teacher’s appointment, and extends some weeks past the commencement of teaching.

It is worth noting that a number of systems are currently exploring ways of incorporating some aspects of orientation into pre-service training; eg: through internships.

To explore current practice in the orientation phase, the teacher and supervisor surveys included a section, which focused on strategies for orientation, and teachers’ information needs at the beginning of their appointment.

Strategies for orientation

Respondents were given a list of 11 common orientation strategies, and asked:

- to identify the strategies experienced (in the case of teachers), or used (in the case of supervisors), as part of orientation
- to rate how beneficial (teacher survey), or how effective (supervisor survey), these strategies are for orientation of newly appointed teachers.

A 5-point rating scale was used for the second part. Teachers were asked to rate each strategy as 'essential' (1), 'very beneficial' (2), 'reasonably beneficial' (3), 'not very beneficial' (4) or 'no benefit' (5). Supervisors were asked to rate the strategies they had used as 'extremely effective' (1), 'very effective' (2), 'reasonably effective' (3), 'not very effective' (4) or 'ineffective' (5).

Teachers regarded each of the 11 strategies listed in the survey as beneficial for orientation. However there was a clear distinction between the five most highly rated items and the remainder. These are shown in the following table in order of average ratings (from the teacher survey), and the percentage of teachers who saw them as 'essential'. Significantly, supervisors rated the same items, in the same order, as the most effective.

Strategy	Average rating	Percentage of teachers who rated item as 'essential'
* Pre-commencement visits	1.40	71.0%
* Identification of an initial support person	1.46	68.3%
* Meetings with the principal or senior staff	1.52	62.5%
* Use of an orientation booklet or resource package	1.74	51.9%
* Telephone contact from the school	1.83	47.9%

Table 7: Most beneficial strategies for orientation

The preference for these approaches is not surprising. They address key needs at the outset of a teacher's initial appointment:

- familiarisation with the school environment
- access to personal support
- feeling welcomed by the organisation
- gaining basic information about the school.

The need to feel supported, particularly at a personal level, is emphasised by the high rating given to the initial support person. This was confirmed in a follow-up question, where a clear majority of teachers (25.4%) identified 'initial support person' as the most valuable component of their orientation programme. As one teacher commented in a focus group discussion:

I think it gives you an anchor, like a place of reference for everything else that happens in the school ... it's so important to have one person who's been identified to answer all your dumb questions ... it just makes your life so hard if you don't have the answers.

(Teacher, Tasmania)

Interestingly, one person argued that support needs to be provided in a measured way. He believed that an overly supportive programme may in fact be disempowering, and undermine the important principle that beginning teachers should be seen as having much to offer schools:

It's also important to remember that beginning teachers have had a significant professional preparation and are in a responsible position. We should expect some initiative from them. It's not as though we're going to spoon-feed them, and we should expect them to accept some responsibility themselves. They're not going to be given the answer to every

question, and some things (like how does the photocopier work) they can find out for themselves.

(District Officer, Queensland)

Reassuringly, the five strategies listed in Table 7 were also identified by both teachers and supervisors as the most commonly employed forms of support. This indicates there is a close match between what teachers see as most beneficial, and what is actually occurring.

However the survey results also indicate that an unacceptably large proportion of teachers do not receive these forms of support. The following table shows both the percentage of teachers who experienced the top five strategies, and the percentage of supervisors who said the strategies were used in their schools.

<i>Strategies Experienced ('Top 5' in order of perceived benefit)</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>Supervisors</i>
* Pre-commencement visit(s)	64.8%	81.1%
* Initial support person identified	58.0%	81.1%
* Meeting(s) with principal/senior staff	68.8%	91.6%
* Orientation booklet/resource package	61.9%	79.2%
* Telephone contact from the school	56.0%	79.5%

Table 8: Orientation strategies experienced by teachers

First, it is of concern that as many as 44% of teachers do not receive telephone contact from the school before commencing duties; 42% do not have an initial support person nominated; 38% are not given information about the school in the form of an orientation package; and 35% do not visit the school before commencement.

Second, the discrepancy in Table 8 between teachers' perceptions about the support they receive, and supervisors' perceptions about what is provided is striking. It is tempting to speculate about whose view is more accurate. However, the more important implication is the fact that a substantial proportion of teachers are indicating that they feel unsupported. This is a recurring theme throughout the survey results, and was confirmed time and again in focus group discussions:

I had no support. I was just doing what I thought and hoping for the best.

(Teacher, Queensland)

The following table shows the remaining strategies listed for this question. All were seen as valuable, as the average ratings indicate, but they received significantly less support than the 'top five'.

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Average rating</i>	<i>Percentage of teachers who rated item as 'essential'</i>
* Organised social function(s) to meet the staff	2.26	27.1%
* Meetings with beginning teachers from other schools	2.27	30.3%
* Letter of welcome	2.45	26.9%
* Seminars/meetings organised by District Office	2.49	20.5%
* Contact details (eg email addresses) of beginning teachers in other schools	2.76	19.4%
* School website address	2.92	14.3%

Table 9: Less preferred strategies for orientation

Information needs

A subsequent question addressed the information needs of teachers at orientation. Respondents were given a list of 27 items of information, and asked:

- a) to identify any information provided in a formal, deliberate way (such as in writing, in a meeting, or from a staff member specifically assigned to assist beginning teachers)
- b) to rate how important it is that newly appointed teachers receive the information listed (teacher survey), or how useful newly appointed teachers find the information (supervisor survey).

Once again, a 5-point rating scale was used for the second part.

As in the strategies question, teachers felt it was important to receive all of the listed items of information. However these can be separated into three levels of priority.

The following table shows the information clearly seen as essential by teachers at orientation.

<i>Information</i>	<i>Average rating</i>	<i>Percentage of teachers who rated item as 'essential'</i>
* Availability of curriculum materials and teaching resources	1.29	76.7%
* School rules and policies	1.31	76.0%
* How to access school facilities and equipment (eg photocopying)	1.33	73.2%
* Expectations about teaching role and responsibilities	1.34	73.6%
* The school curriculum	1.36	72.1%

Table 10: Essential information at orientation

Understandably, the top five items focus on the immediate and practical concerns of teachers as they take up their first appointment. They answer the question: 'what do I have to do in my classroom, and where do I find the resources to support me?'

When you first start, that's all you're thinking about, finding your resources, getting your planning done ... Those are the things that are in the forefront of your mind. You just want to think about your own classroom.

(Teacher, Queensland)

As a Home Economics teacher, I have to order clothing, food, needles, a whole lot of stuff. But I had no idea how much money had been allocated to my area, or how to order things, or where do you order from. Am I allowed to order stuff from shops in town? Where do you find things in the school? Where do you get mats from? Where do you get paper from? Knowing that you can borrow overhead projectors from the library, you can get videos, you are allowed to take these whiteboard markers, this is where things are kept, all that stuff. No-one told me, I had to find out myself.

(Teacher, Western Australia)

The following table shows a second tier of information, also highly valued by teachers, but not seen as having the same immediate level of importance as the items above. These are items which could be staged over the first days and weeks of the teacher's appointment, or in some cases, provided through district or system-level induction programmes (eg: conditions of employment, teachers' rights and legal obligations, information about procedures for probation and/or registration)

<i>Information</i>	<i>Average rating</i>	<i>Percentage of teachers who rated item as 'essential'</i>
* Availability of computers, Internet and email	1.50	61.7%
* Teachers' rights and legal obligations	1.51	62.8%
* Conditions of employment (eg salary details)	1.57	61.3%
* Library facilities	1.57	57.5%
* Availability of support and specialist staff	1.67	49.7%
* Information about support programmes available to beginning teachers	1.68	54.0%
* Social/cultural background of students	1.68	52.2%
* Administrative procedures	1.72	49.3%
* Information about procedures for probation and/or registration	1.76	52.1%
* The school's philosophy/ mission	1.81	48.1%
* Profile of the school community	1.81	43.4%
* External specialist services available to the school (eg guidance services)	1.84	41.8%
* School decision-making processes	1.91	39.3%
* Expectations about extra-curricular duties	1.92	37.1%
* Roles of senior staff	1.94	33.1%

Table 11: Less important information at orientation

A number of teachers in focus groups warned about the dangers of information overload at the beginning of the year, and strongly advocated a staged approach:

I noticed the graduates this year ... they were handed a pile of information on their first day, and you could see what they were thinking: 'What do I do? What is all this?' Things that we now take for granted like the roll or the cash book ... Watching them I'm more aware of what they go through, and how overwhelming it all is.

(Teacher, Victoria)

Other teachers were initially surprised at the lower rating given to 'availability of support and specialist staff', feeling that this was a critical ingredient in their planning. To explain it, they suggested that beginning teachers are so focused on their own responsibilities during the first days and weeks of teaching that they do not realise the importance of aides and other support staff until later. Nevertheless they argued strongly that this information should be provided from the outset.

The remaining items, clearly representing a third level of priority, are listed in Table 12.

<i>Information</i>	<i>Average rating</i>	<i>Percentage of teachers who rated item as 'essential'</i>
* Policies about EEO and harassment	2.01	37.5%
* Information about the union and/or professional associations	2.01	37.1%
* Teacher grievance procedures	2.16	30.2%
* School committees and how to be involved	2.16	28.5%
* Role of parent groups	2.35	22.4%
* The role of District Office	2.50	20.2%
* Advice/support regarding accommodation	2.76	27.5%

Table 12: Least important information at orientation

The following table shows the percentage of teachers who say they had received information about the five items rated as most important, compared with the percentage of supervisors who say this information had been provided. As in the strategies question, there appear to be substantial numbers of teachers not receiving key information, as well as marked discrepancies between teachers' perceptions about the information they receive, and supervisors' perceptions about what is provided.

<i>Information provided ('Top 5' in order of perceived importance)</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>Supervisors</i>
Availability of curriculum materials and teaching resources	51.7%	86.6%
School rules and policies	82.0%	95.3%
How to access school facilities and equipment (eg photocopying)	63.9%	90.0%
Expectations about teaching role and responsibilities	43.5%	85.8%
The school curriculum	59.5%	89.2%

Table 13: Information provided to teachers at orientation

Nearly half of the teachers surveyed indicated that they did not receive information about curriculum materials and teaching resources; information they feel is most vital. Similarly, nearly 60% of teachers feel they were not given clear expectations about their teaching role and responsibilities, the fourth most valued item.

A group of Victorian teachers explained the importance of clear expectations:

I think all beginning teachers want to do really well. It's important to have clear expectations because then you can start to fulfil some of them. If you're required to do (a), (b) and (c) as a part of your role, then you can focus on them and put the rest aside. It's important to know what you need to do from the start, instead of a huge pile of things.

(Teacher, Victoria)

I appreciated being told what I was not expected to do. My principal said I didn't have to take on a lot of extra roles just to impress him. He said the first year is purely to find your feet in the classroom. If I did that well, he'd be happy.

(Teacher, Victoria)

Other items which were perceived as important, but had a low level of provision, included:

- teachers' rights and legal obligations (received by 38.2% of teachers)
- availability of support and specialist staff (received by 35.8% of teachers)
- information about support programmes available to beginning teachers (received by 30.6% of teachers)
- information about procedures for probation and/or registration (received by 29.7% of teachers)
- external specialist services available to the school (received by 26.6% of teachers).

Once again the supervisors' results provide a striking contrast. This holds for nearly all the items in the information question. As before, the key issue is not which group have the more accurate view, but the fact that a substantial proportion of teachers feel they are not getting the information they need. Supervisors may feel they are in fact providing this information; however, for many teachers, the message is not getting through.

General satisfaction

Figure 1 shows the comparison between teachers' and supervisors' general satisfaction with their schools' orientation programmes. Teachers were asked to what extent the school's orientation programme assisted them to make the transition into their initial appointments, while supervisors were asked how satisfied they were that their programmes met the orientation needs of beginning teachers.

Clearly supervisors were much more confident about the effectiveness of their programmes than teachers were, with 87.3% indicating that their teachers' orientation needs had been met to a reasonable or great extent. A majority of teachers (62.9%) indicated satisfaction with the orientation they had experienced, however it is significant that as many as 37.2% of them felt that orientation had been of limited or no assistance.

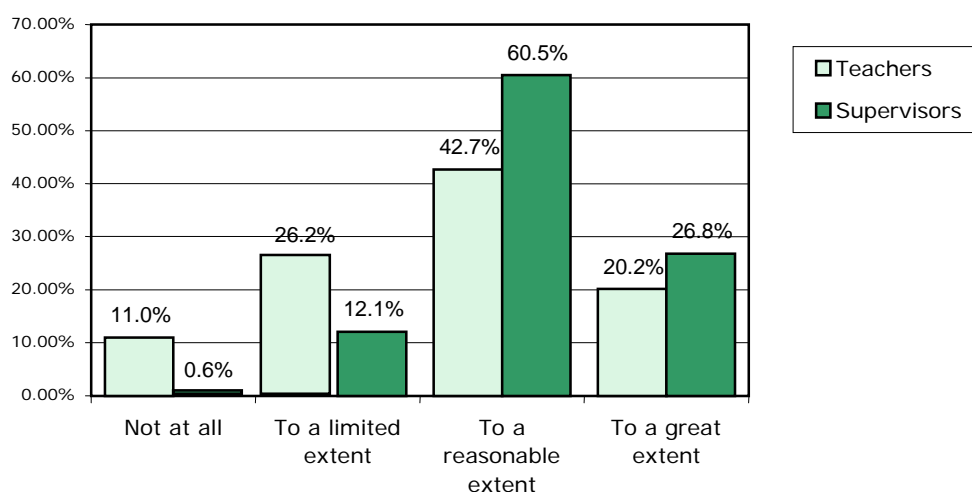


Figure 1: Satisfaction with orientation programmes

It is worth noting that age was a significant variable on this question. Teachers aged 20-24 felt more supported than more mature beginners. They also valued pre-commencement visits, telephone contact from the school, and organised social functions to meet the staff more than older age groups.

Teachers in Catholic schools felt they received more effective support than their state system colleagues. And there are indications that teachers in Victoria feel more positive about orientation than those in other states – however statistical significance is difficult to identify accurately because of the variation in survey response rate between states.

More than one in three teachers feel dissatisfied with schools' efforts at orientation. This was strongly reflected in focus group discussions. Inadequate information, unstructured approaches, and lack of personal support were common complaints:

My induction programme was basically just one session to show where the photocopier and the toilets are. What a supervisor thinks an induction should consist of, and what a beginning teacher feels they need to succeed in the classroom may be quite different.

(Teacher, Victoria)

Personal support

The focus on personal support was a strong theme in focus groups. This was also reflected in survey results when teachers were asked in an open question to list the two most valuable components of the orientation programme they had experienced. The top six items are shown in the following table:

Most valuable components of the orientation programme	
* Initial support person identified	25.4%
* Meeting(s) with principal/senior staff	17.4%
* School rules and policies	15.3%
* Pre-commencement visit(s)	12.6%
* Meetings with beginning teachers from other schools	11.1%
* Organised social function(s) to meet the staff	10.9%

Table 14: Most valuable components of orientation programme

It is significant that five of the six items involve making personal contact with teachers or senior staff, both inside and outside the school. The clear priority given to identification of an initial support person is striking. Conversely, appointing an initial support person was also cited second (at 10.3%) on the list of least valuable components of the orientation programme.

This sends a critical message to schools. On the one hand, it is important to set up effective systems for induction, as indicated, systems alone seem not to be enough. As the following comments show, care needs to be taken to ensure that the 'right' people, with the 'right' skills are used in key support roles:

It can be the most effective thing, but it can worth absolutely nothing if the person assigned to you is hopeless.

(Teacher, Tasmania)

I think often the principal will say to a teacher, so-and-so will be a mentor for you ... The principal thinks they've done their job, but they don't follow through with that other person ... they've just been selected because they teach the same subject, not because they've got any real expertise or special skills ...

(Teacher, Tasmania)

On the other hand, a number of teachers felt that simply being a supportive person, without a systematic approach, was also inadequate:

I had to find out a lot of information for myself ... People were really supportive but there was nothing in place.

(Teacher, Tasmania)

To say 'my door's always open' doesn't really work if they're not there ... From their perspective they are being really open and providing a lot of support, but from our perspective, they're not there when we need them.

(Teacher, Queensland)

Orientation booklet

Although identified as one of the most beneficial components of an induction programme, the orientation booklet headed the list of least valuable forms of support actually received (at 12.5%). Discussions in focus groups revealed a spectrum of quality in orientation packages, from purpose-designed packages of information for beginning teachers, to little more than the school policy folder. It is also likely that an orientation booklet will be perceived negatively if it is the only form of assistance offered:

At the start I received a new graduate package from the District Office, and I was given a big file to read by the school. That was alright, but I got the impression that they thought 'we've done it; we've given it to you; you go and do your job now'.

(Teacher, Western Australia)

This highlights the most common characteristic of ineffective induction programmes: the assumption that induction consists of little more than orientation to the school, and that this purpose is adequately served by providing information. Orientation is a critical part of supporting new teachers, but it is not the whole of induction. Neither is it sufficient to assume that a beginning teacher simply needs information. As a Western Australian teacher commented:

It's not enough to hand out an induction booklet at the start of the year and think that that's it.

The 'establishment' phase

A number of writers conceptualise teachers' growth in terms of developmental stages, using terms such as 'Survival', 'Adaptation', 'Consolidation' and 'Development'. There are also implicit phases in a teacher's initial year in which different issues become prominent. In this report, the term 'establishment' refers to the first few weeks of teaching when new teachers are 'finding their feet', and are mainly concerned with issues of classroom management, and planning. The establishment stage overlaps with, but is distinct from orientation.

Using a similar approach to the Orientation section, the teacher and supervisor surveys included a series of questions focused on strategies for support during the first few weeks of teaching, and the areas that should be emphasised in support programmes.

Strategies

In the first question, respondents were given a list of 18 common support strategies, and asked:

- a) to identify the kinds of support provided during the first few weeks
- b) to rate how beneficial (teacher survey), or how effective (supervisor survey), these strategies are for beginning teachers.

As in the orientation section, a 5-point rating scale was used for the second part.

Once again, teachers saw all strategies as beneficial, but there were two levels of preference. Teachers' top nine strategies – clearly identified as essential - are shown in the following table:

Strategy	Average rating	Percentage of teachers who rated item as 'essential'
* Curriculum resources	1.44	67.6%
* Cooperative planning with a team of teachers	1.55	60.9%
* Meetings with appointed mentor	1.60	62.0%
* Meetings with senior members of staff	1.60	58.1%
* Meetings with principal or deputy	1.67	56.1%
* Observing other teachers' lessons	1.83	51.5%
* Handbook for new teachers	1.87	49.5%
* Peer support group meetings	1.95	42.4%
* Reduced teaching load	1.96	50.9%

Table 15: Most beneficial strategies during the first few weeks

These strategies have the same 'flavour' as the preferred strategies for orientation. They focus on teachers' immediate, practical planning needs, they provide essential information, and set up avenues for personal support.

Supervisors' opinions about the most effective strategies for the establishment stage broadly matched the teachers' list, but there were some important differences.

Teachers attached more value than supervisors to:

- curriculum resources (ranked 5th by supervisors, and seen as 'extremely effective' by 53.7%)
- meetings with the principal or deputy (ranked 7th by supervisors, seen as 'extremely effective' by 41.8%)
- observing other teachers' lessons (ranked 8th by supervisors, also seen as 'extremely effective' by 41.8%).

On the other hand, supervisors saw more value than teachers in:

- peer support group meetings (ranked 5th by supervisors, and seen as 'extremely effective' by 51.9%)
- team teaching (ranked 10th by supervisors, and seen as 'extremely effective' by 43.7% - ranked 13th by teachers)

Cooperative planning

It is significant that both teachers and supervisors rated cooperative planning very highly. Its value is twofold. On the one hand it allows beginning teachers to gain contextualised support from more experienced colleagues:

I'm in a team at school for four core subjects ... we all get together for the last period on a Wednesday afternoon, and we have a team meeting, and it's been fantastic. You don't feel like it's just you. The same kids are playing up across the board, you don't feel they're playing up just in my class, and you get strategies for how to deal with those kids.

(Teacher, Western Australia)

On the other hand it offers a means for beginning teachers to show that they too have a contribution to make. Importantly, some teachers in focus groups warned that cooperative

planning needs to be managed carefully, to ensure the beginning teacher's involvement is not tokenistic:

As long as your ideas are listened to ... as long as it's a team that works as a team, and your ideas are valued as much as everyone else's, and you're not shot down on the first day, then working within a team is a really positive thing. It helps you understand expected levels ... and they have a background with your children that you don't.
Teacher, Victoria)

The following table shows the percentage of teachers who experienced the top nine strategies, and the percentage of supervisors who said the strategies were used in their schools.

Strategies Experienced ('Top 9' in order of perceived benefit)	Teachers	Supervisors
* Curriculum resources	49.4%	77.4%
* Cooperative planning with a team of teachers	42.1%	72.4%
* Meetings with appointed mentor	42.5%	66.6%
* Meetings with senior members of staff	58.2%	70.0%
* Meetings with principal or deputy	67.2%	89.5%
* Observing other teachers' lessons	23.3%	34.2%
* Handbook for new teachers	48.4%	66.6%
* Peer support group meetings	23.9%	46.6%
* Reduced teaching load	26.1%	38.2%

Table 16: Strategies experienced by teachers during the first few weeks

A comparison between this table and the equivalent results for the orientation stage (Table 8) highlights the narrow interpretation of induction as orientation that applies in some schools. There is a notable difference between the level of assistance experienced by teachers during orientation, where an average of 45.8% of teachers indicate they received particular forms of support, and support received during the first few weeks, where the average falls to 31.9%. Significantly, the average figure for the whole year rises only slightly to 33.1%.

The reduction in support beyond orientation is also reflected in the supervisor results. An average of 59.6% of supervisors say they provide particular forms of support at orientation. This falls to 45.4% for the first few weeks, and rises to 48.4% for the whole year.

To repeat the words of a teacher already quoted:

It's not enough to hand out an induction booklet at the start of the year and think that that's it.

A second conclusion to be drawn from this table is that the most valued strategies for support – curriculum resources, cooperative planning, mentoring - are not those that are most commonly provided, according to teacher's perceptions of the support they receive. From the list of nine strategies seen as essential by teachers, only two - meetings with the principal, and with senior staff - are experienced by more than 50% of teachers. In contrast, cooperative planning and meeting with a mentor were experienced by just 42%.

Another striking result is the fact that half of all teachers rated observing other teachers' lessons as an essential strategy, yet it is experienced by less than a quarter. Many teachers in focus groups spoke of the value of observation and modelling, not least because they put particular teaching ideas in the broader and more realistic context of classroom management:

I had tried a couple of things in literacy which just weren't working, so I asked the deputy for some ideas. She said she'd come in and model a language lesson for me. That was really good. To see not just the literacy stuff, but also the behaviour management strategies that went with it.

(Teacher, Western Australia)

Some supervisors described the strategies they use to promote peer observation:

We emphasise developing reflective practice through focused peer observation. We release our teachers on a regular basis to observe their colleagues working. We get them to do it in a focused way by asking them to identify something they want to look out for, and then we discuss it later in a learning circle meeting.

(Supervisor, Catholic Sector, Victoria)

Such approaches seem to be rare.

Discrepancies between teacher and supervisor surveys

Once again this table highlights differences between teachers' perceptions about the support they receive, and supervisors' perceptions about what is provided. When this issue was discussed in focus groups, a range of explanations was offered.

On the one hand, some teachers felt that many schools have a narrow view of the range of support required, and the possible ways in which it might be delivered – *'my induction programme was basically just one session to show where the photocopier and the toilets are.'* Others argued that some supervisors make the mistake of assuming that being a supportive person (eg: *'my door is always open'*) is the same as implementing a systematic support programme.

Some supervisors felt that often teachers are unaware of the support that they are getting: *'They might not realise that they are getting twice as much of your time as anyone else.'* Similarly, because they experience information overload at the start of the year, much of the assistance they have been given is forgotten. Others argued that:

Under the pressure of the workload, it's often easy for beginning teachers to feel jaded and to focus more on the negative things that have worried or concerned them, rather than the positive things they've achieved.

(Supervisor, Victoria)

The more common view however was that experienced teachers may easily overestimate beginning teachers' level of confidence and make wrong assumptions about the support that may or may not be needed:

More experienced teachers assume a lot about what they need to know, or what they think they know already and how they will perform in the classroom (especially if the beginning teacher seems a bit gung ho) ... That whole need for some sort of real professional and personal support –someone they can talk to - is not necessarily acknowledged by more experienced people in schools.

(Supervisor, Victoria)

Many of us more experienced people in schools just don't have an understanding (or we forget about) just what stresses out the beginning teachers. Often it's really minor stuff like not knowing where the photocopy paper is kept. We make assumptions that we've given beginning teachers plenty of support, without really understanding the range of (often minor) things that make them feel unsupported.

(Supervisor, Queensland)

Once again, the key point here is that perception is reality. If teachers feel unsupported, morale and teaching performance will decline. The message for schools and supervisors is that support needs to be more systematic and explicit than it currently seems to be, and greater efforts need to be made to identify beginning teachers' real needs.

Meetings with the principal and senior members of staff

Beginning teachers set great store by the willingness of principals in particular, and senior staff generally, to notice them and take time to discuss their needs. A number of supervisors noted

that this does not necessarily require a great deal of effort of principals, but it has a significant impact on young teachers:

I had an excellent relationship with my principal ... He would occasionally visit my classroom, just hang around for a little while ... then he'd come up and give me instant feedback. I felt really valued that he took time out to come and see my class ... I panicked the first couple of times he did it ... but it was excellent for him to do that ... It gave me confidence that if I had a problem with a student or anything else and I couldn't get to my mentor ... I could go and knock on his door because I felt valued by him.

(Teacher, Tasmania)

That initial meeting with senior staff is really important because it helps you feel that you're a valued part of the school ... they're so busy, but if you can have a bit of contact with them on a regular basis, then later you have no hesitation in going to talk to them about any issues that come up ...

(Teacher, Tasmania)

By the same token, a number of teachers were critical of principals who promised, but failed to deliver various forms of support:

It was there on paper, but it never actually eventuated.

(Teacher, Catholic Sector, Victoria)

Their comments highlighted the fact that there is a strong link between the quality of support and induction in a school, and the quality of the leadership.

The following table shows the remaining strategies listed for this question. All were seen as valuable, as the average ratings indicate, but they received significantly less support than the 'top nine'.

Strategy	Average rating	Percentage of teachers who rated item as 'essential'
* Meetings with other beginning teachers	2.02	41.0%
* List of Internet resources for beginning teachers	2.04	40.6%
* Attending professional conferences	2.16	38.3%
* Team teaching	2.17	38.7%
* Other staff observing lessons, and providing feedback	2.24	38.4%
* Access to confidential counselling	2.33	31.8%
* Seminars/meetings organised by District Office	2.62	22.4%
* Visits to other schools	2.71	24.1%
* Contact (eg email) with beginning teachers in other schools	2.75	20.0%

Table 17: Less preferred strategies during the first few weeks

External peer support

Meeting other beginning teachers fell into the second rank of strategies, but it is worth noting that many teachers in focus groups saw particular value in meeting beginning teachers from other schools. For several, the focus group discussion was their first chance to do this. While it was not seen as an essential support strategy, the teachers saw such meetings as providing a therapeutic opportunity to share common experience, and find reassurance in the fact that they were not the only ones experiencing difficulties in their first year.

It's very good to be able to come here and talk about these issues. This is what we needed

as graduates. It's great to hear that other people have faced the same sort of things.

(Teacher, Western Australia)

There are times when things happen and you wonder if anyone else in their first year is going through the same thing ... it was a relief for us that we could express some of these things ... I went back to the classroom feeling better that I wasn't the only one going through some of the horrible ordeals.

(Teacher, Catholic Sector Victoria)

Confidentiality and trust were seen as important components of the exercise. A number of teachers commented on the fact that such a forum allows them to reveal things that they wouldn't feel comfortable discussing within their schools:

Having organised sessions with other beginning teachers where you can discuss how things are going is really good. You can't do it in a lunchtime session in the staffroom where 20 other teachers might be listening in.

(Teacher, Victoria)

There are a lot of things you don't say to your mentor. You don't discuss every single thing with them because you don't want to appear like you're not knowing what you're doing ...

(Teacher, Catholic Sector, Victoria)

... because you work with people in the school, and it's so easy to be made feel a failure ... you need to be able to talk to someone away from the school, so that you don't feel you're being judged by other people as a failure.

(Teacher, Western Australia)

Internal peer support

Some teachers appreciated the value of regularly scheduled in-school meetings with other beginning teachers. They saw these meetings as quite different in purpose and approach from 'lunchtime sessions in the staffroom where you don't want 20 other teachers listening in.' They represent a structure put in place to monitor the beginning teachers' progress in a systematic way, and to probe particular issues in greater depth than more ad hoc arrangements would allow. Such meetings provide a bridge from the establishment phase to a more developmental focus later in the year.

It's vital that there are regular meetings, in which the graduates feel comfortable enough to have a good bitch session, where they feel comfortable enough to say 'I hate the way this is going', knowing that what they say is going to make a difference. Where whoever is running the meeting will go back and say this is what the graduates are saying, and you know that admin are listening.

(Teacher, Victoria)

Last year I saw the deputy weekly, just to talk things over with the other graduate teacher ... to sit down and nut things out ...

(Teacher, Catholic Sector, Victoria)

At the same time support needs to be carefully judged, and sensitively managed in view of the demanding nature of first year teaching. Well-intentioned support can miss the mark because it doesn't take sufficient account of the individual and personal nature of how a beginning teacher copes:

Our school really does put in a lot of effort to support the graduates. We had a two-hour meeting for beginning teachers every Wednesday, which was a great idea. But having a full-on week, being there from seven in the morning to six at night ... and having to go to the Wednesday meeting when I was so tired I'd be half asleep. Even when they had great things on, I didn't hear it anyway.

(Teacher, Western Australia)

Equally, formal support structures will be ineffective if those responsible only pay lip service to the exercise:

We had beginning teachers meetings with the Deputy Principal. There were three other teachers at the same school that were also in their first year. I was the only one that ever turned up, even though it wasn't an option. The meetings took about 10 minutes – 'is there anything you want to know? OK, see you later.' She was really busy.

(Teacher, Queensland)

Being observed by other staff

Being observed by other staff was recognised as a powerful strategy, but rated lower (in comparison to observing other teachers' lessons) because of the intimidatory nature of the exercise, and its association with assessment for probation, rather than developmental support:

It's much safer, and more comfortable to watch other people teaching than have someone watch you.

(Teacher, Tasmania)

I had people come and sit in on my classes. They thought they were doing the right thing, but it made me feel like I was a student teacher again. In your first year out you don't need that.

(Teacher, Queensland)

It's so intimidating having someone watching you, because you don't feel confident yet. You're just thinking criticism all the time.

(Teacher, Victoria)

One teacher noted that unless observation is built into the culture of the school, it could actually undermine a beginning teacher's credibility in the eyes of students:

We need to set up a culture of teachers frequently coming into the classroom, so that kids don't ask, 'Why are you being appraised? Aren't you a real teacher?' It needs to be something that happens with all teachers, not just new teachers, so that students become used to it happening. It allows us to learn from each other without students questioning why it's happening.

(Teacher, Western Australia)

The importance of feedback

Although wary of being observed by others, teachers in focus groups spoke at length about the value of specific and constructive advice.

I had reports after each observation. The teacher doing the observation would write a reflection on my lesson, and we'd have a conference afterwards. It was great. I knew exactly where I stood.

(Teacher, Queensland)

Detailed feedback means that they're actually listening to the lesson ... I got some feedback about my questioning technique ... they actually tracked which kids I was asking questions to ... they gave me something tangible which really opened my eyes.

(Teacher, Queensland)

The most useful feedback is an honest critique ... not just saying 'you did that wrong', but providing an alternative ... if you struggled, then here's a way out ... Rather than just saying 'you could have done better', actually giving a suggestion about how to do it better ... or to say, 'maybe if you tried this ...

(Teacher, Queensland)

A number of supervisors spoke of the purpose of feedback as being to build confidence and reassure the beginning teacher.

It's important to constantly tell them they're going OK.

(Supervisor, Victoria)

This was certainly appreciated by some teachers:

You're always so critical about yourself ... it's important to get affirmation from other, more experienced teachers.

(Teacher, Catholic Sector, Victoria)

Reassurance and positive feedback is an essential contributor to a young teacher's confidence and self esteem, but there is also a real danger of superficiality. Teachers in focus groups indicated they were very quick to pick up on insincere praise:

They say, 'you're going well.' What does that mean?

(Teacher, Tasmania)

Others were critical of perfunctory feedback, particularly when it reinforced a view that survival is all that matters:

By week seven I went to our principal and said nobody's been into my classroom, nobody's checked my planning. This could be a problem if I'm not doing the right thing. I need some reassurance that I'm on the right track. And he said, 'Don't worry, if you weren't going to cope you would have gone by now.' I went into the toilets and I just sobbed.

(Teacher, Queensland)

This teacher noted that the longstanding practice of feedback only being provided when things go wrong is still very current: 'if you haven't heard anything, you're doing OK'. Others were critical of excessively negative feedback:

I cried because I received two pages listing all the things I did wrong. The only positive feedback was a sentence saying 'thank you for letting me watch your lesson.' I needed much more balanced feedback.

(Teacher, Western Australia)

They were also wary about feedback that takes no account of their intentions or beliefs, and stems from the value system of the observer. Several of the teachers recounted examples of critical feedback which they felt was unfair for this reason:

On my teaching round I was given a page of negative comments, and I was devastated by it because I thought it was a really good lesson. Observers need to be prepared to accept that this may not be their preferred teaching style, but if they can see that learning is taking place and the students are enjoying what they are doing ... it's OK.

(Teacher, Victoria)

I've had a bit of a battle to insist that this is the way I teach, this is what I believe in, this is how it's going to be. You talk to teachers who have been teaching for ten years who disagree with you and insist on their way, so you go back into your classroom feeling a failure, and thinking, 'I'm not cut out to do this' ... It's so confusing that you really do doubt yourself too much. One of the hardest things is having confidence in yourself and believing in what you're doing when you haven't got much support around you.

(Teacher, Western Australia)

In comparison to many experienced teachers who take feedback as criticism, a number of the beginning teachers in focus groups spoke about how much they welcomed specific, constructive feedback, couched in a positive context. It is clearly important that this initial openness to feedback is built upon, and seen as a cornerstone of ongoing professional learning. Several teachers emphasised the importance of positive leadership in the school to

set an appropriate climate for observation, feedback and support, and some supervisors described their efforts to create such a culture.

We get the second year teachers to tape themselves, and that is used in what we call a 'critical friends circle' so that they are critiquing themselves and each other. They develop a culture of feeling comfortable with being observed and receiving and providing constructive feedback.

(Supervisor, Queensland)

Issues

The second question in this section addressed the issues that may be emphasised in support programmes during the first few weeks. Respondents were given a list of 19 issues, and asked:

- a) to identify any areas in which support was provided
- b) to rate how important it is that beginning teachers receive support in the areas listed (teacher survey), or how useful beginning teachers find the support offered (supervisor survey).

As in the previous questions, teachers felt it was important to receive support in all areas listed. But in this case a much wider range of issues was identified as 'essential'. These are shown in the following table:

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Average rating</i>	<i>Percentage of teachers who rated item as 'essential'</i>
* Managing student behaviour	1.31	76.3%
* Catering for students with a range of learning needs	1.53	61.5%
* Effective teaching and learning strategies	1.55	59.7%
* Organising student learning	1.61	56.3%
* Student assessment	1.69	57.6%
* Communicating with parents	1.74	55.6%
* Teaching strategies for particular content areas	1.74	47.8%
* Inclusion of students with a disability	1.77	51.3%
* Student motivation	1.78	49.4%
* Record keeping	1.81	49.7%
* Developing sequenced learning programmes	1.82	46.1%
* Time management	1.84	48.5%
* Lesson planning	1.88	48.9%
* Managing stress	1.91	48.9%

Table 18: Essential issues during the first few weeks

Supervisors' ratings were broadly consistent with teachers', but there were some differences. Teachers attached more importance than supervisors to:

- Catering for students with a range of learning needs (ranked 5th by supervisors, and seen as 'extremely useful' by 47.5%)
- Student assessment (ranked 9th by supervisors, and seen as 'extremely useful' by 39.4%).

On the other hand, supervisors saw more value than teachers in:

- Lesson planning (ranked 2nd by supervisors, and seen as 'extremely useful' by 47.6%)
- Developing sequenced learning programmes (ranked 8th by supervisors, and seen as 'extremely useful' by 39.9%)

Behaviour management

Not surprisingly, behaviour management tops both teachers' and supervisors' lists. Many teachers explained that competence in behaviour management comes to the heart of being a successful teacher, and carries implications for their identity and self-esteem as teachers, and how they are perceived by colleagues. Several described the way in which their teaching repertoire narrowed during their first year, as they focused on strategies that were safe and robust, and would help them survive the day. This was something they were conscious of, but not at all happy about:

You come out with so many good ideas, but then you get a hard class, and you say to yourself 'I can't do this; I can't do that.' You go back to really structured things.

(Teacher, Catholic Sector, Victoria)

My approach is fairly group-orientated, but I've gone back to writing notes on the board and doing bookwork, because it's a classroom management issue for me. I feel like I'm a really boring teacher, but it calms them down and gives them a bit of security ... I see other teachers doing all sorts of interesting things ... but my kids just don't seem to be ready for that.

(Teacher, Western Australia)

Other teachers explained their successful use of the 'ogre' strategy, and appeared to wear it as a badge of pride:

I had to be dead firm. I wasn't nice to anybody.

(Teacher, Victoria)

In other cases however, success in behaviour management using an authoritarian approach caused a significant degree of inner conflict and self-doubt:

Out of instinct I was pretty mean and harsh to the kids until second term. I don't know why I decided to do that. I think I just clicked into some sort of survival mode. I see some of the other new teachers who didn't really know what to do, and still have problems now. I've seen a lot of teachers who are 'nice', and the kids walk all over them. It actually made me really sad at the time, because I'm not a mean person by nature. In other aspects of my life I'm not as forthright or as demanding. But from 8.30 to 3.00 I don't smile, I'm a complete bitch. It's like I'm an actor playing a role. Obviously it's in me somewhere, but it's not really me at all. I thought I don't want to be a teacher because I don't want to be that sort of person. It's not who I expected I was going to be. I thought I was going to be a helper. So initially I felt what am I doing here? I'm not making myself happy.

(Teacher, Western Australia)

The problem is we have a severe perception of failure ... we're our own worst enemies because we set such high expectations for ourselves and for the students. When we can't achieve them, we just agonise about it ... especially with the behaviour management ... you think, often just because of one child, 'oh my god, here I am in my first year, I'm falling in a heap, and I'm not coping.'

(Teacher, Tasmania)

In contrast, a number of teachers mentioned the value of being given alternatives to the authoritarian model - practical strategies for positive discipline, based on real scenarios. Teachers and supervisors in focus groups spoke highly of the value of very specific coaching sessions related to behaviour management strategies, usually run by consultants with specific expertise and plenty of experience in the area:

We have a behaviour management teacher in our school who specialises in that issue. She comes to every beginning teacher workshop. She has a 15 minute segment in which she invites the teachers to give her a scenario or outline something that's happened in their

class, and she'll give them strategies to address those. She'll focus on particular skills, and she'll give them some scenarios, and do some role-plays. Then she'll invite them to try it over the next week, and they'll review it in the following meeting.
(Supervisor, Queensland)

Communicating with parents

Communicating with parents was another highly rated issue singled out for particular comment during focus groups. Beginning teachers who are young, inexperienced and possibly struggling for classroom control, are particularly vulnerable to demanding or aggressive parents who expect the best for their children, and define that in terms of experience and order in the classroom. Many teachers pointed out that communicating with parents was something they had had no experience of during teaching rounds, and, given their age, a particular source of anxiety:

I had issues with parents who didn't like me because I was too young, and knew I was first year out.

(Teacher, Victoria)

I actually had one parent who came along and abused me ... He kept on saying, 'it's a problem with you, [my child] gets on well in every other class.' It was scary ... he just sat there and abused me. So you end up thinking, 'well I suck, I can't teach.'

(Teacher, Queensland)

I think it's a real test – to put a first year graduate with a bunch of parents who have had five years experience of the school system already, and who know what they want. It's not something that's covered in their training at all.

(Supervisor, Queensland)

A number of teachers emphasised the fact that they had had no preparation for parent-teacher meetings, and were highly appreciative of efforts by Deputy Principals or other staff to warn them about what to expect:

I don't know what I would have done in my first parent-teacher interview if we hadn't role-played it at school beforehand.

(Teacher, Queensland)

The remaining, 'less essential' issues are listed below.

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Average rating</i>	<i>Percentage of teachers who rated item as 'essential'</i>
* Programme evaluation	2.01	41.0%
* Report writing	2.06	48.9%
* Using computers as tools for teaching and learning	2.08	37.6%
* Handling administrative responsibilities	2.15	36.5%
* Extra-curricular duties	2.43	26.3%

Table 19: Less essential issues during the first few weeks

The following table shows the areas in which support was actually provided during the first few weeks, according to the teacher and supervisor surveys. These are listed in order of perceived importance from the previous tables.

<i>Issues Emphasised</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>Supervisors</i>
* Managing student behaviour	53.6%	80.8%
* Catering for students with a range of learning needs	33.2%	66.6%
* Effective teaching and learning strategies	33.0%	60.0%
* Organising student learning	29.6%	62.4%
* Student assessment	30.9%	53.9%
* Communicating with parents	26.7%	48.9%
* Teaching strategies for particular content areas	23.0%	39.2%
* Inclusion of students with a disability	19.7%	42.6%
* Student motivation	16.5%	35.5%
* Record keeping	21.7%	47.6%
* Developing sequenced learning programmes	18.2%	40.3%
* Time management	13.8%	32.2%
* Lesson planning	26.3%	58.4%
* Managing stress	13.8%	26.3%
* Programme evaluation	17.2%	35.8%
* Report writing	27.9%	35.8%
* Using computers as tools for teaching and learning	23.3%	46.6%
* Handling administrative responsibilities	20.5%	38.9%
* Extra-curricular duties	20.1%	27.4%

Table 20: Issues emphasised during the first few weeks

In comparison to the results for the support strategies question, there is a somewhat closer match between the rank orders of the issues that are viewed as essential (Tables 12 and 13), and the areas in which support is actually provided. The main discrepancies can be briefly summarised. Teachers would prefer more emphasis in the first few weeks on inclusion of students with a disability, student motivation, time and stress management; and less emphasis on report writing, lesson planning, using computers, and administrative and extra-curricular responsibilities.

However, the more striking result from this question is the percentage of teachers reporting no support in the areas viewed as essential. In only one area – predictably, managing student behaviour – are roughly 50% of teachers receiving support. For all other items, nearly 70% or more of teachers feel they are not supported. In other words, beyond the orientation stage of induction, a clear majority of beginning teachers feel they are left to cope on their own in most of the key areas of teaching performance.

This impression is confirmed even by the supervisors' perceptions about the support that is provided. The supervisors indicate a more positive view than the teachers but their responses also indicate significant gaps, and a range of areas in which at least 40% of teachers are not receiving support.

As noted earlier under 'Strategies', the figures in this table (compared to those for orientation in Table 7) also indicate a marked difference between the level of support provided at orientation and that provided in the first few weeks.

Demographic factors

A number of demographic factors were apparent in this section:

- Younger beginning teachers (those aged 20-24) felt more supported than their older counterparts (significant difference compared to the over 40's), and saw more benefit in cooperative planning, and meetings with the principal, mentors and other beginning teachers.
- Teachers in primary schools felt more supported than their colleagues in other sectors (significant difference compared to K-12 schools), and saw greater benefit in meetings with the principal, and visits to other schools.
- Teachers in Catholic schools felt more supported than those in other sectors (significant difference compared to Government schools). Supervisors in Catholic schools value a reduced teaching load more than in Government schools.
- Teachers in Victorian schools seem to feel more supported than those in other states (a consistent trend across a number of questions, but statistical significance is unclear).
- Teachers in secondary schools valued a reduced teaching load more than primary teachers.

In focus groups, a number of mature age beginners commented on the advantages of beginning later in life (such as greater assertiveness and life experience), but also pointed out that others may form unreasonable expectations about their competence as teachers because of their maturity:

Being mature aged puts you in a difficult position ... because you've got the maturity, and yet you don't have the skills, and they expect you to have the skills.

(Teacher, Queensland)

One of my biggest problems was that senior staff and other staff didn't always see me as a beginning teacher, and that caused difficulties for me ... they gave me more responsibility than would have been appropriate for a beginning teacher.

(Teacher, Tasmania)

General satisfaction

Figure 2 shows the comparison between teachers' and supervisors' general satisfaction with their schools' support programmes during the first few weeks of teaching. Teachers were asked to what extent the school's support programme assisted them, while supervisors were asked to what extent the school's support programme helps beginning teachers 'survive' the first few weeks.

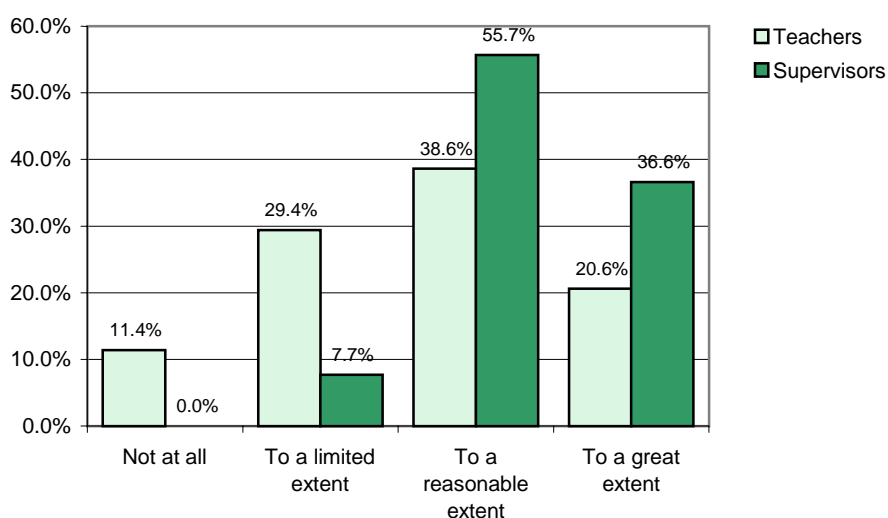


Figure 2: Satisfaction with support programmes in the first few weeks

Once again, supervisors were much more confident about the effectiveness of their programmes than teachers were. What is surprising is that supervisors were more satisfied with their efforts during the first few weeks than they were for orientation. 94.3% felt teachers' needs had been met to a reasonable or great extent, compared to 87.3% earlier. This seems at odds with the fact that their responses on more specific questions in this section of the survey were less positive than they were in the previous section.

In contrast, teachers' satisfaction levels for the first few weeks are marginally lower than for orientation – 59.2% indicate satisfaction with the support they had received, compared to the earlier result of 62.9%. However, like the supervisors, the satisfaction level for teachers seems surprisingly high, given their results on the more specific questions. For example, it is difficult to understand why 59.2% of teachers feel positive about their school's support programme, when only 50% indicated receiving support with behaviour management, the issue of greatest importance to them. As we have seen, other key issues received much lower percentages.

These results aside, it is significant that, 40.8% felt that the school's support programme had been of limited or no assistance to them during the first few weeks.

As in the orientation section, the importance of individualised, personal support was a continuing theme. When teachers were asked to identify the two most valuable components of their support programme, the following six items were clearly preferred:

Most valuable forms of support received during the first few weeks	
* Meetings with appointed mentor	25.7%
* Peer support group meetings	16.9%
* Meetings with senior members of staff (eg year level coordinator)	16.0%
* Meetings with principal or deputy	15.6%
* Managing student behaviour	13.2%
* Meetings with other beginning teachers	9.2%

Table 21: Most valuable forms of support during the first few weeks

The clear priority given to meetings with a mentor matched the preference for an initial contact person in the orientation stage. However, as in the orientation section, the mentor also appeared high on the list of least valuable forms of support (ranked 6th at 8.6%). This reinforces the point made earlier that personal support is critical, but depends for its success on the commitment and skills of the individuals involved, and the quality of the relationships formed. The point is illustrated by the following experience described by a Western Australian teacher:

Someone came up to me and said, 'I'm Bob, I'm your mentor. Come and see me if you want me'. But that was the only contact I had.

The 'development' phase

For some teachers the establishment period lasts for the whole of the first year, sometimes longer. More commonly, teachers find their feet in the classroom during the first few weeks or months on the job, and move to a phase where support is still important, but there is an increased focus on professional development.

The teacher and supervisor surveys explored this phase using the same question items as in the Establishment section, but focusing on strategies for support throughout the first year (following the initial weeks), and the areas that should be emphasised in support programmes over this time.

Strategies

With three exceptions, results for the 'development' phase paralleled those for 'establishment'. Teachers' ratings of the level of benefit for 18 strategies look essentially the same for both stages. However, two items which fell substantially in perceived benefit were:

- handbook for new teachers (in the Establishment section: ranked 7th, with an average rating of 1.87, and 49.5% seeing it as 'essential'; in the Development section: ranked 15th, with average rating of 2.32, and 35.6% seeing it as 'essential')
- reduced teaching load (Establishment: ranked 9th, with average rating of 1.96, and 50.9% seeing it as 'essential'; Development: ranked 13th, with average rating of 2.17, and 44.2% seeing it as 'essential')

The one item which improved significantly in perceived benefit was:

- attending professional conferences (Establishment: ranked 12th, with average rating of 2.16, and 38.3% seeing it as 'essential'; Development: ranked 5th, with average rating of 1.78, and 47.8% seeing it as 'essential').

Results on the supervisor's survey followed essentially the same pattern, although supervisors' views about reduced teaching load and professional conferences did not substantially change. One item which improved in perceived benefit for supervisors was team teaching (Establishment: ranked 10th, with average rating of 1.81, and 43.7% seeing it as 'extremely effective'; Development: ranked 4th, with average rating of 1.60, and 51.2% seeing it as 'extremely effective')

Interestingly, team teaching did not attract the same support from teachers (Development: ranked 11th, with an average rating of 2.17, and 38.7% seeing it as 'essential'). Teachers in focus groups clearly explained why. Beginners very much appreciate opportunities to observe effective teachers in action. But they also value the autonomy of their own classroom where they can make their own way, including making their own mistakes, without the constant scrutiny that team teaching involves:

The first day ... having no-one else in the room ... it's great because you can make mistakes without anyone knowing.

(Teacher, Victoria)

Although ranked low, team teaching was nevertheless seen as a powerful avenue of support.

There are two messages from these results. First, the key strategies for supporting beginning teachers are seen as beneficial at all stages. Second, beginning teachers appreciate year-long support. They have indicated that they don't want to be abandoned simply because they appear to be 'coping' after the first few weeks.

A number of teachers in focus groups wanted particular forms of support (such as their relationship with a mentor) to continue beyond their first year. Others warned about the 'short-sightedness' of prematurely withdrawing support. For them it was more about being helped to develop teaching excellence, not simply survival skills.

I had the chance to observe a really good science teacher who was just brilliant. The behaviour management was excellent, and everything was just so interesting. I thought to myself, I'd love to be like that, and have the kids respond to me in the way they did for him. But I know that my classes are nothing like that. It often seems boring. But I don't know how to get to where he was, from where I am now. That's what I want in my feedback.

(Teacher, WA)

The results for teachers actually experiencing the strategies they recommend for the 'development' phase, and supervisors' perceptions about what is provided, follow the same pattern revealed in previous sections.

These results are shown in the following table:

<i>Strategies Experienced</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>Supervisors</i>
* Attending professional conferences	60.3%	69.2%
* Meetings with principal or deputy	58.5%	69.2%
* Meetings with senior members of staff	52.7%	58.7%
* Cooperative planning with a team of teachers	48.6%	77.4%
* Curriculum resources	46.1%	70.8%
* Seminars/meetings organised by District Office	43.5%	57.2%
* Meetings with appointed mentor	39.9%	60.0%
* Meetings with other beginning teachers	36.4%	47.4%
* Other staff observing teaching, and providing feedback	36.2%	51.8%
* Team teaching	28.2%	43.2%
* Observing other teachers' lessons	27.2%	56.3%
* Peer support group meetings	25.0%	43.2%
* Reduced teaching load	22.8%	37.2%
* Handbook for new teachers	21.0%	31.8%
* Visits to other schools	16.4%	32.6%
* Access to confidential counselling	11.6%	33.2%
* Contact (eg email) with beginning teachers in other schools	10.8%	14.7%
* List of Internet resources for beginning teachers	9.9%	17.1%

Table 22: Strategies experienced over the first year

There is a marginal rise in support compared to the 'establishment' period, but this is probably because the question deals with a longer period of time (i.e. the whole year, compared to the first few weeks). In comparison to orientation there is a marked decline in support (an average of 33.1% of teachers indicating they received particular forms of support, compared to 45.8%).

Once again, there is a significant discrepancy between the strategies valued by teachers, and the strategies actually used:

- The most highly valued items – provision of curriculum resources and cooperative planning – are experienced by less than 50% of teachers.
- Other highly valued forms of support – observing other teachers' lessons and peer support group meetings – are experienced by only a quarter of teachers.
- One of the least valued items - seminars organised by District Office – is the sixth most commonly experienced item by teachers.

Particularly striking in the above table is the fact that mentoring ranks 7th, with a percentage as low as 39.9%. This is a decline from the establishment stage, where at 42.5% it was the 5th ranked strategy used. Given the emphasis on mentoring in the literature, and the importance attached to it by teachers (consistently identified as the most valuable component of support programmes), it warrants particular attention here.

A note on mentoring

The supervisor survey included a specific section on mentoring which was only to be answered by those using it as a strategy in their school. According to the number of responses, 82.6% of schools claim to use mentoring, a figure which seems at odds with the results above, but which tallies with the 81% of supervisors who say they appoint an initial contact person for orientation purposes.

Respondents were asked to describe the role performed by the mentor, with the following results:

Mentor role	
* To provide curriculum and/or teaching support	53.5%
* To provide general professional support	51.5%
* To act as a critical friend and provide feedback	45.2%
* To provide personal support – a shoulder to cry on	40.2%
* To act as an experienced role model	11.6%
* To act as an advocate within the school	9.1%

Table 23: Mentor roles

They were also asked to describe the basis on which mentors are assigned to particular beginning teachers:

Matching mentors to beginning teachers	
* Same year level	46.6%
* Same curriculum area	30.0%
* Skills and interpersonal qualities necessary for the role	25.4%
* Senior teacher / year level coordinator	13.8%
* Similar personalities or interests	7.8%
* Physical proximity (eg same office, neighbouring classroom)	6.4%
* Those who express willingness or interest	5.3%
* Chosen by beginning teacher	4.6%
* Same age group	2.8%
* Same gender	0.7%

Table 24: Matching mentors to beginning teachers

Interestingly, only 31.8% of supervisors indicated that mentors in their school receive training for the role⁴. This may partly be an issue about the availability of relevant training, but it could also be explained in terms of supervisors' attitude to mentoring.

Role of the mentor

The most common view in the literature of the purpose of mentoring is that it provides opportunities for beginning teachers to 'reflect on their work, question their practices and challenge the assumptions that underpin schooling and approaches to education' (Carter, 2000). However, the preferred description of the mentor role in Table 23 is 'to provide curriculum and/or teaching support', rather than 'act as a critical friend'. This matches the fact that the main bases in Table 24 for matching mentors and beginning teachers are the same year level or curriculum area, rather than choosing someone with the necessary skills or interest

⁴ These were more likely to be in NSW and Victoria than other states. They were also more likely to be in Catholic schools than Independent or Government schools respectively.

in the role. This points to a conservative interpretation of mentoring, in which there is a stronger focus on the experienced teacher passing on knowledge and teaching strategies, than facilitating critical enquiry and reflection.

If this is the prevalent view, it is understandable that most schools might not see training for the mentor role as necessary. Interestingly, one teacher who is participating in a mentor training course through Monash University, commented:

I wonder if supervisors and mentors have the training to perform their role effectively. I wonder if they really understand what's required in a mentoring process, as well as just providing the nuts and bolts information. I don't think beginning teachers necessarily understand it either.

(Teacher, Victoria)

It is also worth mentioning that some supervisors in focus groups believed that an emphasis on critical reflection is inappropriate in the first half of the year. They felt it becomes more suitable once the beginning teacher has found his/her feet.

Mentors and 'buddies'

Participants in focus groups frequently used the terms 'mentor' and 'buddy', sometimes interchangeably. However several people distinguished between the two roles. They saw the purpose of the buddy as providing friendship and personal support, particularly a shoulder to cry on when things don't go well. In contrast, the mentor's role is more professional - a critical friend focusing on reflective practice. In this sense, 'getting along' with the mentor is not as important.

My support person was not necessarily my mentor; in fact I had quite a few support people in different roles.

(Teacher, Tasmania)

A buddy is someone you can go to for a whinge, like the teacher next door; a mentor is someone who can take away a lot of the emotion, and help you reflect on what's happened.

(Teacher, Victoria)

It's good when your mentor is not too close to you, and they're not your best buddy. Your buddy's role is to say don't worry about it, you're doing really well, whereas your mentor should be someone who says, I can see where you're coming from, have you thought about this, you might like to try this ...Have a go at that, and come back and see me next week. It's better if it's not your best buddy, or someone who's too close to you in personality. They need to be far enough away that you can go and chat about things objectively.

(Teacher, Victoria)

Others felt the mentor could play both roles, and that the regular, supportive aspect is critical:

You should have a person who can be both buddy and mentor; who can help you out with the 'silly things', but who can also help you critically analyse things. It doesn't necessarily have to be someone in your area.

(Teacher, Victoria)

A number of supervisors preferred a separation of the roles, and in some cases argued that the skills and experience required of the mentor role are usually found in senior staff:

It's quite difficult for close colleagues to be mentors. It really needs someone who's a bit removed from the beginning teacher to be in that role. The expectations we have of a buddy teacher are really quite different from the way we think about someone in a mentoring relationship.

(Supervisor, Catholic Sector, Victoria)

I think you find your buddies within your teaching team. But mentoring will come from people like us [i.e. Deputy Principals] because we're better placed to adopt that developmental perspective, and to use some of the techniques of peer appraisal.

(Supervisor, Catholic Sector, Victoria)

Expectations of mentoring

The focus group interviews clearly confirmed the weight of opinion in the literature that there is much more to mentoring than simply asking an experienced teacher to advise a beginner. Schools where mentoring is successful and seen as a core part of the support programme, explicitly value it as a strategy and take steps to ensure that all parties are clear about the expectations that go with it. According to many of the focus group participants, mentoring is doomed to be ineffective when schools adopt it as a flavour of the month strategy, and pay lip service to the skills and processes involved.

It is clear that many schools make the fatal assumption that because mentoring is a commonly used word, the processes are simply a matter of common sense, or are widely understood. As the survey results indicate, many schools claim to use mentoring, but fail to:

- set up appropriate structures
- address the skills needed
- ensure that all involved have common expectations about the intended outcomes of the programme, or
- ensure that mentors are appropriately committed.

Supervisors in some schools were very conscious of the issue, arguing that it is essential that expectations for the role are made explicit, and that everyone involved has a common understanding of the purpose of the relationship:

We take time to induct the mentors ... into what is required of them, because there are requirements ... and also to teach them how to observe and how to give feedback, because a lot of them don't know. I also make sure I get some sort of idea about what the beginning teachers would expect from the programme ...

(Supervisor, Queensland)

Effectiveness of mentors

While there is a generally strong endorsement of mentoring from teachers in the quantitative results, those who attended focus groups were more equivocal. Some expressed glowing praise of their mentors:

I can't speak highly enough of our mentoring system ... I don't think I could have survived without my mentor.

(Teacher, Tasmania)

I found it really hard to get time with my AST3; but I had designated time with my mentor, and I was so fortunate to have that.

(Teacher, Tasmania)

However one of the common complaints was that mentors were assigned, but were too busy to fulfil their role:

My mentor said, 'the principal's asked me to be your mentor', but she had her own classroom issues to worry about, so I didn't get any support from her. It was done officially, but not really.

(Teacher, Western Australia)

In the end, having individual mentors was thrown out because you could never grab them for long enough to ask 'how do I do this?' This year the focus has changed to the notion of the beginning teacher being mentored by a whole team of people.

(Supervisor, Catholic Sector, Victoria)

I'm in a team teaching situation, but I don't get any DOTT time with the person I work with. It's a real bugbear. Why can't they arrange it so that, if you've got a mentor, you're given half an hour DOTT time together once a week. It's not always easy for them to do it - I acknowledge that - but it's not as hard as they're making out.

(Teacher, Western Australia)

A number of teachers identified the dilemma that those with the appropriate skills for a mentoring role, also tend to have a range of other responsibilities in the school:

I was given a mentor who was so busy with extra roles and tasks that I just couldn't get access to her. I ended up forming a relationship with another Grade 1/2 teacher who was experienced and very open and sharing with resources. She ended up being my mentor by default.

(Teacher, Victoria)

Significantly, only 28.4% of supervisors indicated that mentors in their school were given time release to perform their role.⁵ When asked in a later survey question how they would like to improve the support provided to beginning teachers, 26.7% of supervisors highlighted the need to find a common time for mentors and teachers to meet.

Selection of mentors and matching with partners

A number of teachers questioned the commitment of mentors to the role:

I had a mentor appointed, but he didn't do anything.

(Teacher, Western Australia)

I think mine found it something very useful to put on their resume, but they didn't actually do anything ... it was something to put in their next application that they'd mentored a new grad student.

(Teacher, Western Australia)

It is impossible to judge from survey results the extent to which this is a common issue. But it may reflect the fact that competence for the role was only ranked third as a basis for choosing mentors, mentioned by only 25% of supervisors. More concerning, interest or willingness to perform the role was cited by only 5.3%.

Results from the supervisor survey indicate that the pragmatic reasons for choosing mentors (the same year level, the same learning area) are the most commonly used, reflecting a view that mentoring is about helping the beginner with the content of teaching. Some teachers emphasised the importance of the mentor being a skilled practitioner:

I think it's good if you can have some sort of admiration for the person who's your mentor ... when my mentor comes into my room and I see him work with the kids, I realise he knows what he's talking about, and that makes me feel really comfortable that I can talk to him.

(Teacher, Catholic Sector, Victoria)

Others focused on more generic qualities:

It can be important that your mentor teaches the same subject, but I think it's more important that you can relate to them on a personal level ... because the problems are usually generic.

(Teacher, Queensland)

The people who have been selected to do the mentoring may not be the most appropriate personality type ... they've been chosen for the wrong reasons ... maybe because they teach the same subject or grade ... and they think the mentoring is based on a lot of housekeeping things ... and they think they've done their job when they've given that information. New teachers do need that stuff but they also need ... to be given the confidence to try out all these new things that they've got in their head that they want to experiment with. They're bursting with lesson plans and ideas, and they need to be told that it's all right to try something different ... you don't have to be like the other teachers on the staff.

(Teacher, Tasmania)

⁵ These were more likely to be in primary schools. They were extremely unlikely to be in secondary schools. They were also more likely to be in Catholic schools than Government or Independent schools.

There was some support in focus groups for similar age partnerships; beginning teachers may be intimidated by very skilled and experienced mentors:

Sometimes the people who are chosen as mentors are the wrong people. They're really experienced ... but they're the people who just want to make clones of themselves. And that's a really big mistake.

(Teacher, Tasmania)

Others highlighted the fact that the most effective partnerships tend to be where the mentor recognises it as a learning process as well, rather than approaching the task with an exclusive focus on the needs and problems of the beginner:

It's good when you can not only go to them with problems, but for it to be a mutual thing ... like, 'I've come across this really good thing, what do you think of it, why don't you try it as well?' rather than, 'Please tell me everything.'

(Teacher, Queensland)

It's nice to be able to contribute, and not to feel that you're the one that's always taking and not being able to give back ... you feel worthwhile when you're able to contribute to someone who's been teaching for twenty years ... when you give some advice and they've taken it on board.

(Teacher, Catholic Sector, Victoria)

Some supervisors argued that the skills and attitudes of the mentor are so critical, that selection of the appropriate people cannot be left to chance:

We find that the mentoring process is worked through more effectively, or less effectively, depending on the staff involved. It really does need to be supervised from above to ensure the process works effectively ... In almost all cases our mentors are dobbed in ... It's up to the managers to choose staff pairings that they think will work

(Supervisor, Queensland)

In contrast, responding to the problem of lack of commitment, some teachers argued for a say in choosing the mentor:

I think the new teacher needs to be heavily involved in deciding who that mentor is. I don't think the school should just appoint someone, because if you don't get along with them ... and there will always be clashes of personality. If that's the person you've got to ask questions to, and you don't like them, you just won't ask ... The school could appoint an initial contact person for you for the day you come in. They could show you around, and if you didn't think you could get on with them, a different arrangement could be made for your mentor.

(Teacher, Victoria)

This was the view adopted by a Tasmanian district:

With our induction package, one of the key points in the information for principals is the dual concept of an initial support person and a mentor ... the initial support person is appointed to the beginning teacher as someone you go to ask 'where's this, how do I do that?' But as you develop relationships with people in the school you should be thinking about someone you could have as your mentor ...

(District Superintendent, Tasmania)

The clear message from the surveys and focus groups is that although mentoring has acquired a significant profile in business and education over the last decade, it is not an automatic 'fix-all' for the induction of beginning teachers. Mentors need to be carefully selected, and supported by training and appropriate allocation of time. And all parties need to have a clear understanding of the role and its expectations.

Issues

As in the strategies question, teachers' ratings of 19 issues that may be emphasised in support programmes look very similar for the 'establishment' and 'development' stages. The same major items remain equally important at both stages:

- managing student behaviour
- student assessment
- catering for students with a range of learning needs
- effective teaching and learning strategies
- communicating with parents
- organising student learning
- developing sequenced learning programmes
- teaching strategies for particular content areas
- record keeping
- student motivation.

Not surprisingly, two items that increased in perceived importance were:

- student assessment (in the Establishment section: ranked 5th, with an average rating of 1.69, and 57.6% seeing it as 'essential'; in the Development section: ranked 2nd, with average rating of 1.45, and 65.3% seeing it as 'essential')
- report writing (Establishment: ranked 16th, with an average rating of 2.06, and 48.9% seeing it as 'essential'; Development: ranked 5th, with average rating of 1.57, and 63.1% seeing it as 'essential')

Student assessment emerged as an issue of particular concern in several focus groups:

We've got assessment for the curriculum, we've got assessment for the school data collection, we've got assessment for the different year levels for the Government testing, we've got assessment for our running reports for parents ... it's just a really, really big part of your job ... and we had no experience of assessing students on prac.

(Teacher, Queensland)

The only items to decline in importance to any significant degree were:

- organising student learning (Establishment: ranked 4th, with an average rating of 1.61, and 56.3% seeing it as 'essential'; Development: ranked 7th, with average rating of 1.70, and 51.5% seeing it as 'essential')
- lesson planning (Establishment: ranked 13th, with an average rating of 1.88, and 48.9% seeing it as 'essential'; Development: ranked 17th, with average rating of 2.05, and 42.8% seeing it as 'essential')

Results on the supervisor's survey followed exactly the same pattern, although two points should be made:

- student assessment increased in importance for supervisors (from 9th to 4th ranked item), but they still see it as less of a concern than teachers
- lesson planning declined in importance for supervisors (from 2nd to 8th ranked item), but they still disagree with teachers about its importance compared to other items.

The following table shows the areas in which support was actually provided throughout the year, according to the teacher and supervisor surveys. Items are listed in order of perceived importance to teachers, for the whole year.

<i>Issues Emphasised</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>Supervisors</i>
* Managing student behaviour	60.6%	80.5%
* Student assessment	43.0%	80.5%
* Catering for students with a range of learning needs	40.2%	79.2%
* Effective teaching and learning strategies	37.8%	73.4%
* Report writing	50.7%	72.1%
* Communicating with parents	37.2%	68.7%
* Organising student learning	30.6%	65.8%
* Developing sequenced learning programmes	23.1%	55.5%
* Teaching strategies for particular content areas	30.3%	56.8%
* Record keeping	25.7%	65.8%
* Student motivation	21.0%	46.6%
* Inclusion of students with a disability	22.3%	51.6%
* Programme evaluation	24.9%	66.8%
* Managing stress	18.4%	43.4%
* Time management	15.4%	48.5%
* Using computers as tools for teaching and learning	36.2%	68.2%
* Lesson planning	24.6%	59.2%
* Handling administrative responsibilities	25.3%	54.5%
* Extra-curricular duties	22.6%	43.2%

Table 25: Issues emphasised over the first year

Not surprisingly, given the longer time frame, teachers indicate increased support in these areas (particularly student assessment and report writing) compared to the 'establishment' phase. However there are only two items – managing student behaviour and report writing – in which more than 50% received support. Once again, on the majority of items 60% or more of teachers feel unsupported, with the average level being 31.0%.

As in the establishment phase, there are similar discrepancies between what is viewed as essential and what is actually provided. Teachers would prefer more emphasis on developing sequenced learning programmes, inclusion of students with a disability and student motivation; and less emphasis on lesson planning, using computers, and administrative and extra-curricular responsibilities.

Demographic factors

Results for the 'development' section continue the trends noted earlier in relation to:

- younger beginning teachers
- teachers in primary schools
- teachers in Catholic schools
- teachers in Victorian schools.

Particular mention needs to be made about a consistent gender-based trend in the results for each section. Females tended to score lower (i.e.: attribute higher value) on a majority of items in each of the 'Strategies' and 'Issues' questions in the teacher survey. This holds true for each of the orientation, establishment and development sections.

When this was discussed in focus groups, both teachers and supervisors were wary of blundering into crude gender-based stereotypes. Some suggested that 'males are more reluctant to admit they need help'. A female Victorian teacher argued that:

We talk more. Females want to talk things over, whereas males tend to say 'everything's fine'. They tend to think, 'I'm a male; I should be able to handle this. They are less willing to admit that they may be having problems and may need help.

Another suggested it was a reflection of cultural stereotyping:

I guess that sort of thing is out there because females are told they need more support than males do. And I guess males are still told to stand on their own two feet.

(Teacher, Victoria)

A young male teacher, describing the traumatic effect of a violent playground incident which he was called on to resolve in his first year, argued that the corollary to this type of cultural stereotyping may be unfair expectations that male teachers are naturally able to cope, particularly in behaviour management, and don't need help:

If you're a bloke you're just expected to deal with it. When there's a fight, who do they come and get? And no-one talked to me afterwards, or thought I might need some counselling.

(Teacher, Western Australia)

The larger significance of these gender differences is to highlight the fact that teachers will have different preferences for the areas in which they need support, and the ways in which support is offered. It is critical that support programmes are flexible enough to accommodate individual differences, and avoid recipe approaches:

We know from the way we respond to boys and girls in the classroom that we have to be aware of different learning styles and preferences. We have to be aware of that in the way we construct staff programmes too, that people will want to do it in different ways. We also have to remember that individuals are different – we have to be very careful about stereotypes.

(Supervisor, Catholic Sector, Victoria)

Flexible versus planned approaches

Both the teacher and supervisor surveys included questions that gauged the flexibility of support programmes. 83.7% of supervisors responded that their programmes could be tailored to individual needs to a great or reasonable extent. Just 53.1% of teachers responded in the same way.

Teachers in focus groups appreciated the willingness and capacity of management to operate flexibly. One teacher spoke about how much she valued an offer by the deputy to provide on-call support and instant release whenever she felt overwhelmed:

Our Deputy Principal told us that if we felt it was too overwhelming ... we could ring the office and he would release us to come out of the classroom ... he emphasised that it was OK to do that ... it wouldn't be seen as a reflection on us, because he understood that there was just so much going on in the classroom.

(Teacher, Catholic Sector, Victoria)

In another school, teachers found that group meetings with a deputy who had the power to adjust timetables, allocate resources, and find time, were more effective and flexible than working with busy classroom teachers as mentors.

As a Deputy Principal I had a timetable that included something called 'Induction' on Thursday mornings from 9.00-10.00am. That was what was written on paper, but the reality was completely different. If they come to me with an issue, or they wanted to have a look at what was happening in another class, or another school, that's when we went out of our way to try to shuffle the timetable to accommodate them.

(Supervisor, Catholic Sector, Victoria)

At the same time, others spoke about the importance of a planned approach during the 'development' phase, rather than simply reacting to teachers' daily issues:

I have a weekly meeting of 1½ or 2 hours after school from 3.30 with the group of beginning teachers. I ask them to come with something they want to talk about, and that will often lead to identifying relevant in-service opportunities. So it's reactive, but out of the reactive mode comes a developmental agenda.

(Supervisor, Catholic Sector, Victoria)

The key message is that support needs to be both reactive and proactive; in other words, responsive to specific needs and problems, as well as developmental and strategic.

General satisfaction

Figure 3 shows the comparison between teachers' and supervisors' general satisfaction with their schools' support programmes. Both groups were asked to rate the level of assistance provided by the school's support programme over the course of the beginning teacher's first year.

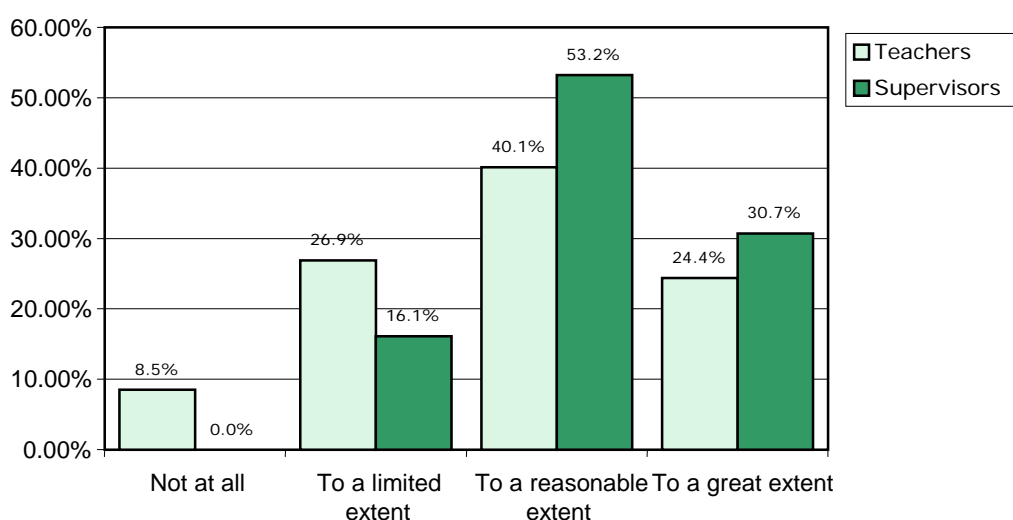


Figure 3: Satisfaction with support programmes over the first year

In comparison to the satisfaction results for the 'establishment' phase, teachers are slightly more positive, with 64.5% indicating satisfaction with the support they had received. Once again, this seems at odds with the message about lack of support coming through the more specific questions in the 'development' section. On the other hand, supervisors are slightly less positive than they were for the 'establishment' section, with 83.9% indicating satisfaction with the support provided (compared to 94.3% previously).

Recommendation

The consistent discrepancies between the teacher and supervisor surveys highlight the need to improve school leaders' understanding of the realities faced by beginning teachers.

To promote better understanding of the needs of beginning teachers, and the subsequent translation into more effective support programmes, it is recommended that the Commonwealth consider funding a project, possibly through the Quality Teacher Programme, aimed at school leaders, focussing on the development and management of induction and support programmes for beginning teachers.

Assessment and probation

Section 4 (Key themes and issues) raised concerns about the potential tension between the processes of assistance and assessment, and suggested the principle that assessment should be managed so that it does not overwhelm, undermine or conflict with the provision of support. The discussion in Section 4 described the debate between those who maintain that induction should be kept separate from appraisal, and those who believe a more integrated approach should be pursued.

Both the teacher and supervisor surveys included a question on assessment that asked respondents to choose from a list of phrases describing the relationship between the processes of assessment and support in their school. The results suggest a generally positive picture, and that an integrated model is most common:

<i>Relationship between assessment and support</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>Supervisors</i>
* Not applicable to my school	23.3%	11.9%
* Completely separate	23.2%	10.8%
* Integrated and mutually supportive	43.9%	73.0%
* Integrated but conflicting	6.2%	3.2%
* Other	3.4%	1.1%

Table 26: Relationship between assessment and support

The debates in the literature were strongly reflected in focus group discussions. A number of participants felt teachers could not be open with mentors whose assessments might contribute to employment decisions:

I'm really nervous about admitting that I'm having difficulties because I think it will put me behind the 8-ball.

(Teacher, Queensland)

You can't have the mentor who's someone who's going to be writing a report on them to assess whether you're going to keep them at the end of the year or not, because no-one is going to open up and say I'm having difficulty teaching this area ... you're not going to identify your weaknesses or expose yourself.

(Teacher, Tasmania)

You have to make sure that the mentor is not in the teacher's chain of command ... or involved in assessing their suitability ... as soon as you introduce that, they're dead as a mentor.

(Supervisor, Tasmania)

In contrast, teachers from one Queensland High School saw the mentor's involvement in assessment as an advantage:

With my mentor, if I didn't know anything they would be my first port of call ... and knowing that they were going to write something about me sort of made it easier, because I knew that that person had seen where I was at the beginning of the year, and had followed me all the way through, so at the end she could say this is how much I had developed.

(Teacher, Queensland)

The Deputy Principal recognised that the dual role can be a significant hurdle:

You've got to be really on the ball, and make a particular effort to break the ice. The relationship is really important. It's essential that they respect you and feel that you're approachable, because if they think that you're going to judge them and wipe them out, they

won't come near you. In every situation where I've sensed that there's a problem, I've had to make the first move.

However, she rejected the commonplace advice that mentoring and assessment should be kept separate. This was partly for practical reasons:

I observe them at least once a term, but I can't do any more than that. I have to rely on what people like the mentor tell me. In any case, it's not fair to base a probation decision on only one opinion ... When it comes to appraisal reports I get the beginning teacher, the mentor and the Head of Department to fill out a form, which is combined with my view.

but also because:

... in a way, that's what teaching's about. You've got to be able to accept feedback, and not feel bad about it, as long as you learn from it.

(Supervisor, Queensland)

Other supervisors agreed that separation of the assessment and mentoring roles might be desirable, but it was often not realistic, particularly in smaller schools:

Everyone knows that you're either having problems or you're not.

(Supervisor, Victoria)

The extent to which the assessment/probation process is made explicit, and integrated into professional learning clearly varies between schools. Teachers in a number of focus groups regarded the process as something of a mystery, and suggested that their supervisors saw it as a bureaucratic process from which they should be protected:

Probation was just an undercurrent. It wasn't really mentioned. They basically said it's not a problem, don't worry about it. For most of us it wasn't an issue.

(Teacher, Queensland)

However a number of unsolicited marginal comments on survey forms indicated that many teachers feel very angry about being kept in the dark:

Irrelevant, biased and unsupported – not observed.

Not based on observation.

Didn't learn of it until the week before assessment.

I wasn't really aware of the probation report until it was being written.

The Deputy and the Principal observed a lesson in September and I finally received some feedback.

In other cases, the process is carefully planned, and seen as a critical component of the beginning teacher's professional development:

We had an eight-month appraisal process which was actually very helpful. The principal and the two deputies would come into the class at various times and make notes, and afterwards we'd have a discussion about it. They were very supportive so it became more of a collaboration than an examination. You could knock on their door at any time and say, 'could you come and watch this?'

(Teacher, Queensland)

We ask the teachers to write up formal lesson plans for anything new they're doing, and to invite someone from admin in to watch ... We have a weekly booking sheet, and they have to book in every week with one of us. So they are observed once a week for the whole of term 2. We take notes and then go through them with the teachers afterwards. And that information is used as a basis for their assessment. Particular teachers are allocated to one

or the other of the principal or deputies, but they also rotate to ensure that all teachers are observed by all of them. Notes are also shared.

(Supervisor, Queensland)

Discussion in Section 3 also considered the role of professional standards, both within induction programmes, and as part of assessment for probation. The potential of professional standards to integrate the two processes by establishing a common language for reflection and for appraisal was suggested.

Significantly, professional standards or competencies were rarely mentioned in any of the focus groups, underlining the fact that the practical application of standards as reflective tools within a professional learning process is still very much an embryonic development. One supervisor described the way support is negotiated in her school, using the 1996 Beginning Teacher Competencies as an underpinning framework, however she was a lone voice:

We collaboratively negotiate the content for our learning circle meetings ... we look to match together the things that the teachers feel they need, and the things that we want them to have ... We use the beginning teacher competencies to point out the things that we as a school find are necessary to help their development as beginning teachers ... we deliberately put it up front as a negotiation process in which we try to make the connections together.

(Supervisor, Catholic Sector, Victoria)

The extent to which standards are seen within a learning or assessment paradigm, or within an integrated context, varies from state to state. Yet the significant level of development and consultation in every state indicates that professional standards are firmly on the national agenda. However there remains a significant gulf of awareness and ownership between those promoting a standards-based approach, and the 'grass roots' – a groundswell of support has yet to emerge. More work needs to be done at system and district levels to promote their use and value.

Recommendation

The Commonwealth consider funding further research into the use of professional standards at system, district and school level as frameworks for professional learning, performance management, and formative and summative appraisal.

6. Examples from the field

a) A Rural Primary School, Victoria

This rural primary school is situated in a mid-size regional town with a population of approximately 10,500, about 200 km from Melbourne. This school has approximately 300 students, 20% of whom are Indigenous students.

Like many schools around Australia, the school has a stable and experienced staff, but with several approaching retirement age. Conscious of its aging staff profile, the school decided to recruit three beginning teachers in 2001 - the first graduates employed by the school for many years. Two of the teachers had grown up in the country, while the third came from a larger regional city, but all were moving to this rural region for the first time.

Because of his own experiences as a young teacher moving around country Victoria, the Deputy Principal, indicated that he 'knew what it was like to come into a place cold'. He was aware of the challenges the new teachers would face, as well as the consequences for the school of not supporting them when they arrived:

Because of the nature of our student population, which can include difficult students who can cause stress and heartache, we decided to be proactive in supporting our teachers. We certainly didn't want to throw them to the wolves and let them be devoured ... we just can't afford to let that happen. We wanted to give them as much support as possible because that cuts down on the workload at the other end in the welfare area.

The induction programme

It was the Deputy Principal's initiative to develop an induction policy for the school, and to set up a comprehensive support programme. The key components of the programme include:

- Orientation to the town
 - escorted tour of the town by the Deputy Principal
 - introductions to local real estate agents, and local sporting organisations.
- Employment as relief teachers
 - 2-3 days of relief teaching in late November/December prior to commencement, designed to 'give them a feel for the school and the town'
- Holiday access to the school
 - allowing familiarisation with the school environment, and time to set up classrooms.
- Initial contact people
 - teachers introduced to one or two current staff members
 - given contact details to enable holiday access to the school
 - social contact encouraged 'so they could have a yarn or come around for a drink or a swim'.
- Information folio
 - covering basic school policies and administrative procedures, such as use of attendance rolls and cash books, as well as expectations associated with children 'on integration'
 - discussed with teachers in the first two days before students arrive.
- Teaching load reduction
 - 1½ hours load reduction allocated to the teachers as their own planning time.
- Professional development in behaviour management
 - compulsory professional development programme on behaviour management for all incoming staff (all current staff have completed the programme)

- group session conducted by Deputy Principal and other experienced staff members, beginning in second week and running for four weeks (one hour after school per week)
 - focus on strategies for dealing with a range of behaviour management issues, using Lee Canter videos and discussion
 - supports whole school approach to behaviour management, based on consistent expectations throughout the school.
- Further professional development
 - graduate teachers involved in follow-up professional development during the year, such as programmes dealing with development of social skills, and handling difficult students.
- Appointment of a mentor
 - each new graduate assigned an experienced ‘leading teacher’ (senior staff member) as a mentor
 - mentors and partners identified on the basis of a common year group, and given adjacent classrooms
 - suitability for the role (in terms of personality and work ethic) also a factor
 - time scheduled in common to allow for cooperative planning
 - expectations about the role of mentor discussed with all parties at the beginning.
- Team teaching
 - where circumstances allow (eg common teaching space), and partners are willing, team teaching has been introduced as an extension of the mentoring partnership.
- Deputy Principal as ‘secondary’ mentor
 - the primary focus for the leading teacher as mentor is on cooperative planning, and classroom teaching and learning issues
 - the Deputy Principal also plays a mentoring role, but focuses more on student and teacher welfare issues.
- Evaluation
 - the programme is informally, but deliberately evaluated at the end of the year.

Mentoring

The mentoring relationship is the core of this school’s approach to induction. One Leading Teacher assigned to a beginning teacher in 2001 decided to continue the partnership in 2002. The teacher indicated that she had little idea initially about what mentoring the teacher would involve, but has since developed strong opinions about the mentor’s role:

I don’t want him to become me. I would hate to think that he lost any of the brilliant skills he’s got ... so it’s really all about encouragement: building up their confidence in the skills that they have, so that they feel confident enough to make choices about how they’ll teach and what they’ll do.

Now in his second year, the teacher is presenting as a confident and self-assured young teacher, but admits he struggled in his first year. At one point, doubting whether he would continue in teaching, he attributes his success to the induction programme, and particularly to the practical support and affirmation provided by his mentor:

I was terrified at the start. It was pretty hard, there were some pretty tough kids. It was hard for me to understand, because I’m thinking that all kids want to learn. You get this picture of what it’s going to be like, but the real world is different, and you have to deal with that somehow, and keep them happy and on task. I found that pretty difficult ... It was

excellent to have the induction programme. I don't know how I would have coped without it. Just to give you guidance and support, and to have someone say you're doing a good job.

(Beginning Teacher)

There were marked stages in the development of the relationship between the two. Initially, the beginning teacher needed basic information:

A lot of it was what experienced teachers take for granted such as how to fill out the rolls, or use the cashbook; what to do if you want something photocopied, or notes sent home, or how you should write notes to parents, what you should put in communication books for kids.

(Mentor)

Very quickly the focus shifted to cooperative planning, to address the persistent question: 'what do I do now?'

The first couple of weeks were full on, with lots of hours spent planning exactly what he would do the next day, because as much as they may have had a wonderful university experience, I really think they find a full day of teaching as soon as they walk in quite difficult ... At the start he didn't have that ability to pull things out of your head that the rest of us have after 30 years of teaching.

(Mentor)

Even to help you out with planning. You don't have all the ideas straight up ... From planning together I now know how to run things properly. The main thing was time management; knowing how long something will go for, and how to deal with the smart kid who finishes early, and the other kids who take much longer.

(Beginning Teacher)

Soon behaviour management became a key issue:

Very quickly the discipline came to the fore. We had quite a difficult year with the grade 6's last year. He was finding the discipline quite difficult. The assertive discipline programme was excellent; it helps you know what to do, but it's quite a jump from there to put it into practice.

(Mentor)

Team teaching

The beginning teacher acknowledges that the mentoring relationship was a significant source of support in confronting behaviour management issues:

Any problems you have with the kids, instead of keeping them to yourself and second-guessing what you should have done, you can talk to your mentor; it's good to get it off your chest.

(Beginning Teacher)

However when a staffing change allowed them to move to a common space at the end of first term, creating an opportunity for team teaching; both felt that their partnership moved to a new level. Team teaching was not an approach that would have worked easily from the outset; it needed the initial development of trust and mutual confidence that the mentoring relationship provided. However for both the teacher and his mentor, team teaching was not only a natural extension of mentoring, but also solved a fundamental limitation in the cooperative planning arrangement:

I felt that mentoring in that way was just so much better. In the first half of the year we had time release together, which was good because it meant that we could plan together. But the disadvantage was that I couldn't go into his room to work with him, and he couldn't come into my room to see how I approached the kids. So the second half of the year was brilliant. Even though we had our own rooms, we had the dividing doors half open, so he could see the approaches I use ...

(Mentor)

The new arrangement also worked well from the school's perspective. The Deputy Principal comments:

The growth in the graduate teacher from the team teaching role was unbelievable. Just as a result of growing in self-confidence and feeling good about themselves. It was one of the best decisions we made. The key benefit was that the beginning teacher didn't feel isolated, and they didn't have to cope with every situation on their own. There were always two teachers around.

One of the often-reported bonuses of mentoring, particularly when it extends to team teaching, is the fact that it brings benefits for the mentor as well as the beginner. This was strongly endorsed by the mentor:

Personally for me it's been fantastic. Many of the ideas which he brings up ... we take on board, and they work really well. My practice has certainly modified as a result. And having another adult in the room, you play up to each other, and throw things off each other. It's a much more relaxed atmosphere than with either of us working on our own.

This awareness of the value both were gaining partly accounts for their decision to continue the partnership into a second year:

At the end of last year I had the opportunity to take on a different teacher to mentor, but I feel strongly that the mentoring doesn't finish after 12 months. It's something that's ongoing. I really think it's got to be more than a twelve-month programme because there are still skills that both of us can learn. Saying after twelve months, 'you're on your own; you're now an experienced teacher' is just as bad as not having a mentoring programme at all and just dropping them in the deep end.

(Mentor)

The beginning teacher was initially employed for six months, and was then required to reapply for a subsequent 18-month contract (until the end of 2002). His job was to be advertised as a permanent position during the year. Employment decisions at this school are made by the Principal and Deputy Principal, while the mentors are available to assist beginning teachers with job applications and preparing for interviews.

When asked whether he saw any conflict between his role as a second-level mentor and his involvement in judging teachers for employment, the Deputy Principal felt that the two functions could work together. Comments from both mentor and teacher indicated that this was not just wishful thinking. The mentor agreed that separation of the assessment and mentoring roles might be desirable, but it was not realistic in a school of this size: 'everyone knows that you're either having problems or you're not.' Like the Deputy Principal, she emphasised the role of a supportive school culture, and the interpersonal skills of the people working with the beginning teachers:

Ours is a naturally cooperative and supportive staff ... Luckily we've got a staff where if they see people down, they'll go to the Deputy Principal and say 'so-and-so's having a bad week; can you just pop in and help them out?' He is actively supportive. He helps in practical ways with particular students, and takes demonstration lessons ... With him [having to make judgements about employment] doesn't affect his role. With others it might.

Conclusions

Mentoring is not a fail-safe recipe for the induction of beginning teachers. Teachers interviewed for this project have reported many instances of inadequate or abortive mentoring arrangements. However the above example illustrates that mentoring can be a powerful strategy in supporting beginning teachers, particularly when the following factors are in place:

- supporting colleagues is an organic part of the school culture
- the mentoring strategy is embedded in a larger, multi-faceted support programme
- teachers selected as mentors are committed to the role, and have the necessary interpersonal skills
- expectations about the mentor's role are clearly defined for all parties
- time is formally organised for mentors and their partners to meet
- there is a support structure for the mentors themselves.

b) A Large Catholic Primary School, Victoria

This large Catholic Primary School is situated in a suburb on the outskirts of Melbourne. With 660 students, its community profile largely includes second-generation migrant families from central and Eastern Europe. The school has a staff of 35, with 8-10 first or second year teachers, having employed an average of four beginning teachers each year for the last four years.

The Acting Deputy Principal has been responsible for new and beginning teachers during the last three years and feels that the significant number of beginning teachers on staff has provided several advantages:

The more we have, the more flexibility there is in terms of the kinds of things we can do ... and it's an investment for us in the culture of the school ... they all bring qualities that enliven the school community.

(A/Deputy Principal)

The school developed an induction policy in 2000, which rests on the principle that everyone in the school is responsible for induction. With resource support from the Catholic Education Office, the programme is multi-faceted and flexible with an emphasis on negotiation and inquiry/action learning.

According to the school, the support process begins by:

asking the beginning teachers to list the concerns and questions that are engaging and relevant to them at this stage of their careers. They put those up, to see what's common among all of them ... Ultimately it's a process of helping them understand who they are as individuals, but there's also a very significant 'me too' factor around the table.

The issues identified by teachers for 2002 included a familiar list of items:

- acceptable practices for dealing with students' behaviour
- conflict resolution
- dealing with parents on a daily basis
- developing effective relationships with the students and their parents
- developing motivating and purposeful lessons
- catering for individual needs
- planning, and developing work programmes
- authentic assessment practices, and school assessment requirements
- record keeping and reporting.

The issues identified by the teachers provide the agenda for the support programme which has four main strands:

Learning circle

Learning circle meetings are facilitated by the Acting Deputy Principal and involve the beginning teachers coming together for an hour each fortnight. While the main focus is on orientation to the school in Term 1, the emphasis shifts to pedagogical and professional issues for the remainder of the year.

The content of the meetings is determined from needs identified by the beginning teachers, as well as the Beginning Teacher Competencies published in 1996 by the Australian Teaching Council. The teachers are asked to prioritise their own list of issues, but at the same time this is matched against the Beginning Teacher Competencies in a two way negotiation process. The Acting Deputy Principal explains the importance of this approach:

We collaboratively negotiate the content for our learning circle meetings ... we look to match together the things that the teachers feel they need, and the things that we want them to have ... We use the beginning teacher competencies to point out the things that we

as a school find are necessary to help their development as beginning teachers ... we deliberately put it up front as a negotiation process in which we try to make the connections together.

The point of the exercise is to develop a negotiated curriculum for induction. Once the programme is agreed, a range of strategies are used to address the various topics, such as using the expertise of people within the school, video presentations, sharing sessions, focusing on work programmes. Second year teachers have also been invited to share reflections on their first year with the beginning teachers.

Focused peer observation

The induction programme deliberately focuses on the development of reflective practice. To promote this, the Acting Deputy Principal coordinates opportunities once or twice each term for the beginning teachers to observe a colleague working.

The observations are focused on particular issues or practices. The teachers are asked to identify 'something they want to look out for', given time release, and are matched with an experienced teacher with expertise in the area identified. Proformas are provided to ensure that observations occur systematically, and the teachers are encouraged to discuss what they observed afterwards, either with their mentors, or in learning circle meetings.

Self-selected mentors

The teachers are asked to select their own mentors after a month at the school. Generally they choose someone at the same year level, in order to focus on support with the 'nuts and bolts' issues of classroom practice. Teachers are encouraged to work informally with their mentors on a daily basis, but are also given time— an hour and a half, twice each term – for more extended meetings.

We like them to identify someone that they can go to on a day-to-day basis, and go through nitty gritty stuff related to their year level. For us, the emphasis is on developing a relationship first ... if they feel comfortable with someone, they're more likely to go to them with those day-to-day issues. The bigger picture, developmental issues I think are my responsibility.

(The A/Deputy Principal)

For the Acting Deputy Principal the policy of allowing teachers to choose their own mentors is consistent with the school's belief in democratic approaches to education, and a philosophy of trusting the teachers to make important decisions for themselves.

As much as possible we try to give people choice about what they do, rather than telling them what they have to do. Imposing things on people doesn't work. If they have a say in choosing someone that they might learn from, then they're more likely to learn.

The same philosophy applies to the mentors, who are invited rather than directed to accept the responsibility of supporting the beginning teachers. Future plans include giving more emphasis to the development of a common understanding and expectations among mentors about the nature of the role.

Skill development sessions

The final strand in the induction programme involves targeted professional development activities, based on the needs and issues identified by the teachers.

The Acting Deputy Principal identifies three factors which contribute to the effectiveness of this school's programme:

- The pastoral care ethos of the Catholic system:

... inclusion and relationship building are explicit values of our system. They may also be values that the Government system wishes to promote. But for us they are explicit. We

work on them and put them up front. Its something about nurturing the individual, and encouraging them to feel they're part of a community.

- A focus on two-way negotiation, and invitation rather than imposition:

It's not so much what we think is important for these people; but more, it's what they think is important for themselves; a marriage of the two.

- Resource support from the Catholic Education Office.

In 2001 the Catholic Education Office provided \$800 per graduate, in addition to centralised professional development activities, to enable schools to mount their own support programmes. Schools were required to outline their induction plans in order to receive the funding, and there was an expectation that schools would match this amount from their own budgets. The Acting Vice Principal saw the requirement that the programme should be jointly devised with the beginning teachers as a key advantage:

Having to fill in the form together with the beginning teacher for the Catholic Education Office to get the money is a really useful process. It puts the support process up front for the teachers.

The Acting Deputy Principal admits that the school would like to run the programme regardless of external support, but...

The reality is it costs money to release teachers from their classrooms ... If you can think creatively about the money and what you could do with it, it provides lots of opportunities to do different things.

c) A School District Model, Tasmania

This district is geographically the largest and most remote educational district in Tasmania. Each year it takes the highest proportion of beginning teachers appointed in Tasmania (30-40 teachers per year), with up to 20% of teachers in the district being in their first or second year of schooling.

Induction package

The District Office provides an extensive induction programme checklist for principals, outlining a sequenced schedule of key induction tasks and information for the pre-commencement stage, the beginning teacher's introductory visit, the first day of appointment, the first month, and the first, second and third terms, as well as guidelines for school handbooks.

In addition, the District Office provides an 'Information and Induction Package' to new teachers before they commence duty in their schools. The core of the teachers' booklet is a simple, five-page checklist of key information. The checklist is in two parts, headed 'Getting Started in Your School' and 'Getting Started in Your Classroom'. As the following sample shows, the checklist does not provide the information directly, but points the teacher to the things they should find out for themselves, and indicates when particular issues will be important.

	<i>Before term begins</i>	<i>Before students arrive</i>	<i>Later</i>
<i>Policies and Documents</i>			
Ensure you are familiar with behaviour management procedures and playground rules.	✓		
Find out about protocols for staff sickness.		✓	
Ask about reporting and assessment processes.			✓

Responsibility is placed on the teachers to find out what they need to know, but the use of the checklists and a timeframe mean there is a clear framework, and teachers are not overwhelmed by feeling they need to learn everything at once.

External mentoring

Attached to the District Office is the District Support Service, which includes a special education centre, as well as a team of eight curriculum officers who support teachers throughout the district. One of the functions of the Support Service is to provide a mentoring programme for beginning teachers that is coordinated at the district level, and intended to complement school induction processes. The programme extends throughout the beginning teacher's first year, and in some cases runs into a second year.

The programme begins in the first week. Each beginning teacher is assigned to an external mentor from the District Support Service, who makes contact within days of commencing their appointment. The partnership is initiated formally at a District Induction workshop held in February, where the mentors and beginning teachers meet and discuss professional learning needs. By the end of the workshop, the teachers and mentors have discussed their relationship, negotiated initial learning goals and made a commitment to meet in the near future. The support teachers later make contact with senior staff from the various schools involved to coordinate with school-based processes. Another group meeting is held in March to monitor progress, while the programme formally concludes with a celebration dinner and evaluation at the end of the year.

The Acting District Superintendent, explained the origins of the mentoring programme:

We'd never been satisfied with the whole group, generic workshops we'd run in the past, because everybody's needs are so different. We wanted to have a structure that individualised the support that we offered. We'd been exploring mentoring as a strategy in other contexts, so we thought it would work well in addressing the needs of the beginning teachers.

(A/District Superintendent)

A beginning teacher appointed to this district in 2001 describes the support programme as she experienced it:

I had my in-school mentor. I had my out-of-school mentor. We also had time release ... Having the gatherings that we had like the induction day was really good because it was an opportunity to see who else was in the district, and to know you're not alone ... The booklet they gave us was excellent, and I still use it, because it tells you who to call for what problem ...

In term 1 the District mentor and I would meet every couple of weeks, and in second term once a month, and in third term, we decided I would call her if I wanted to meet ... Basically it was driven by me and what I wanted to talk about. To begin with in Term 1 it was about helping me with resources ... but mainly it's about helping with general issues rather than specific content stuff, and it's about helping with specific kids ... Near the end of the year she helped me apply for permanent positions.

(Beginning Teacher)

The teacher also used her mentor for support in managing relationships within the school:

There are times when I'd go to my mentor and say, 'this guy's a jerk. How do I deal with him?' She would suggest strategies ... but she's always been objective which is really important ... She's never been patronising or saying, 'you're wrong, that's not right' ... she's just really supportive.

As an external service, both the District Office and the Support Service are conscious of the need to work in cooperation with school-based programmes, and to avoid forcing their assistance on either the schools or the teachers themselves. Like the example of the larger Catholic Primary School, the principles of voluntary participation and invitation are seen as vital to their approach:

All the processes are voluntary in the sense that if you've got somebody who doesn't want to engage in it, there's no point forcing it on them. We're not heavy-handed with anyone,

but we try to put in place all the elements that will make it pretty compelling for them to be involved.

(A/District Superintendent)

If they didn't want support from us we didn't give up on them. We kept in touch with their schools and their principals to see how they were going ... in some cases we can work through senior staff. If they said this person really has a problem we can suggest ways for them to address it, while being careful not to seem like we're telling them what they should be doing. Initially some schools felt we were imposing on what they were doing ... that took a little while to break down ... Our support is not meant to be separate from the school's support ... we've meant to be in there with the school supporting them.

(District Mentor)

While a collaborative approach with schools is essential, a critical feature of this district's programme is the provision of support and networks that are external to the school:

We've found that having the opportunity to debrief at a distance from the school is really important for those young teachers ... they can't necessarily be as free in that environment to express their doubts and their fears in the way they can when they've got a trusting relationship with someone who isn't actually a member of their senior staff team, or isn't the teacher who works next door.

(A/District Superintendent)

Confidentiality is a critical thing ... the fact that beginning teachers can have someone out of school that they can turn to and talk about issues that are in the school, knowing it's not going to go any further ... a lot of them feel that if they go with issues to senior staff they might be seen as if they are not coping ... some feel that it might affect their career if they asked too many questions or sought help too often.

(A/Manager, District Support Service)

The value of external support and confidentiality was also strongly reinforced from the beginning teacher's point of view:

We would actually leave school for our meetings because I didn't feel comfortable ... you never know who's listening, and there were times when I just needed to download ... I trust my mentor to maintain confidentiality. I know of another teacher who mentioned something to his in-school mentor and he went straight to the principal ... he thought he was doing the right thing, but he'd been asked not to ...

(Beginning Teacher)

Another benefit of a dedicated external support service is that it can counter-balance inadequacies in a school-based programme. For example, one beginning teacher was critical of the organisation of internal mentoring at her current school:

A problem in my school was that my in-school mentor had never actually been told she was my mentor ... it wasn't until second term that she said, 'why are you telling me all this?' I said, 'because you're my mentor.' And she said, 'am I?' ... I don't think the mentors in the school are really getting the support they need to do the job ...

(Beginning Teacher)

Paradoxically, external mentors may be more accessible than people within the school. Where school-based mentors often find it difficult to perform their role because of competing responsibilities, the primary task of the external mentors in this district model is to support beginning teachers. As a result they can be more flexible with their time.

In addition to providing direct assistance, the external mentors are also better positioned to coordinate other avenues of support:

We really emphasised with the support teachers that they weren't to see themselves as the experts, and they shouldn't try to provide everything ... Their role is facilitator for that person as well as mentor ... they make connections for the beginning teacher.

(A/District Superintendent)

Sometimes ... we would find another school for them to visit and have a look at a really good teacher in action ... We have a list of teachers that we think are pretty outstanding ... We would also try and go there with them, so we can point out things that the other teacher is doing, that otherwise they might not pick up because they're not used to looking out for that sort of thing.

(A/Manager District Support Service)

When we have meetings with them we often talk about what issues they may have, and how we might best help them ... We look out for PD offerings in those areas, and pass that information on ... we have some funding to provide release for them as well.

(District Mentor)

Other forms of support are interwoven with the mentoring programme depending on needs that arise during the year. The team of support teachers meets regularly so they can identify where there are common needs, and provide additional assistance or link to other services. For example, six beginning secondary music teachers met regularly in 2001 as a network group, drawing on external expertise to provide subject-specific assistance. The district however is conscious that the mentoring team is a finite resource, so any additional support is targeted at the areas of greatest need:

We found that our English/SOSE people were very well served by a web-based programme run out of Hobart, but our Maths/Science people didn't seem to have a network that was available to them elsewhere. So we needed to be mindful of that ... There are other groups that work with specific subject areas that do provide a whole range of networks that people link in to. Because our resource base is limited we've got to be careful that we know what's out there and provide support where it's needed, and not just provide it for the sake of providing it.

(A/District Superintendent)

The external mentoring service is now in its third year, and is widely acknowledged as a highly successful programme. In a competitive recruiting environment, this district actively promotes the mentoring service to exiting graduates. The feedback received indicates the effectiveness of their approach:

The feedback from the beginning teachers has been overwhelmingly supportive each year. We've actually heard from the university that a lot of young teachers are making the decision to apply for this district because of the support they know they'll get.

(A/District Superintendent)

d) Grass roots Initiatives in Queensland

Systemic approaches to the induction of beginning teachers are not prominent in Queensland, yet there are numerous examples of effective grass roots initiatives, fired by the enthusiasm and goodwill of particular individuals. This case study describes two such programmes - the 'Spirit of Learning' conference, and the 'Establishing Teachers Network' - in which teachers find support by meeting in settings external to the school.

* 'Spirit of Learning' Conference

The inaugural 'Spirit of Learning' conference took place in May 2001, involving 180 'establishing' teachers from the Gold Coast to the Torres Strait. The conference was the initiative of a classroom teacher with 11 years experience and recently appointed as Deputy Principal to a school in Brisbane.

Having worked in 'cooperative teaching partnerships' with many beginners over a ten year period, this teacher was conscious that '*across districts and across the state it's just a matter of luck whether you have a good induction or not.*' The lack of consistency in induction processes for beginning teachers, sometimes even within the same school, was a serious concern. Quite simply, she wanted to do something about it.

Using the Education Queensland intranet, she called for expressions of interest from others who wanted to be involved in organising a residential conference targeted at 'beginning, establishing and returning teachers' throughout the state. There was an immediate response from a wide range of groups, including Education Queensland's Learning and Development Foundation, Universities, Principal and Professional Associations. This led to the formation of a steering committee which undertook the task of designing, preparing and managing what was to be a significant and – judging by participant feedback - hugely successful conference.

Most importantly, the committee included several beginning teachers from a number of schools. With their guidance, the committee undertook a process of needs analysis and consultation through a variety of forums to define the conference agenda. The teacher explained their critical role:

It was vital to have those people on our committee because they are the experts on being beginning teachers. They know what they need.

Not surprisingly the key focus points for the conference matched research findings about the areas of most concern to beginning teachers. At the same time, the steering committee wanted the conference to have a practical emphasis. As a result the majority of presenters were well-regarded practising teachers. In addition to keynote sessions, which addressed issues related to the profession of teaching at the start of the 21st century, the conference workshops covered a wide range of classroom issues, including:

- behaviour management
- working with challenging students
- effective teaching and learning
- monitoring literacy development
- using technology
- student assessment
- teaching thinking skills
- record keeping
- the rights and obligations of beginning teachers on probation.

There was also a presentation from members of the 'Establishing Teachers' Network' to underline one of the key messages of the conference: 'you can make your own networks; you don't have to wait for someone to start something for you.'

Significantly, much of the available feedback about the reasons for the success of the conference focuses on how much participants valued the opportunity to share their experience, either within or between workshop sessions. The teacher explains that for many this was an emotional event:

There were plenty of tears: people sharing behaviour management issues, things that had happened during the year, and finally having people they could share that kind of thing with ... The crying and the talking that happened at the conference showed us just how much these people really need to meet with people who are in similar situations, and to see that they're not alone in what they're going through. It became quite an emotional, cathartic experience for them.

At the same time the conference offered beginning teachers a reaffirming opportunity to meet with others who shared their enthusiasm and energy:

Often older teachers need a bit of what these beginning teachers have got in the form of enthusiasm and fresh ideas. It's sad that a lot of beginning teachers don't feel they've got a lot to offer, that they are the learners in partnerships, that their ideas won't be valued. But they have a wealth of enthusiasm. They need to be empowered to know that they can make a difference.

(Teacher)

Future plans

A second conference has been planned for May 2002, using the same steering committee. An email network and website will be established to promote networking and continuing dialogue following the conference.

Education Queensland's Learning and Development Foundation will play a more substantial supporting role for the 2002 event by taking over the background tasks of financial coordination, venue and catering management, 'so that we can focus on the content of the workshops.' For the teacher this arrangement represents an excellent model of how 'the system' and local initiatives can work together'. She sees the partnership with Education Queensland as being critical to the success of the enterprise, and not just because of the practical support provided:

It definitely needs departmental support, even if only in word, to give it credibility. We also need to sustain our partnerships with the other educational bodies that have been involved, because that gives us a much broader outlook.

A further initiative being discussed with a number of universities is a bridging conference, for graduates at the end of their training. This would deliberately signal a shift from university study into professional development, and would involve beginning teachers as presenters. The aim would be to heighten students' awareness of the 'things they need to look out for' as they begin their teaching careers:

It's a situation of 'you don't know what you don't know'. This would give them some pointers to information they need to gather.

(Teacher)

The 'Spirit of Learning Conference' and the proposed graduate conference are timely reminders of the importance of external avenues of support for beginning teachers, and the value for systems of supporting initiatives from the 'coalface'.

It took me eight years before I understood the value of professional development. I just hope these young teachers can go to these kinds of workshops from the start of their career and find out how valuable they can be. Hopefully, then they'll be proactive as part of their own lifelong learning in education.

(Teacher)

* Establishing Teachers Network

The 'New Teachers Network' was originally coordinated in 1996 by an 'Effective Learning and Teaching Advisor' for a Queensland's School Region. The Network grew out of her regional role in supporting beginning teachers, as well as a teacher mentoring project set up in partnership with a local university. Significantly, this connection has remained as a key ingredient in the ongoing life of the Network. In 1998 the Network broadened its role to become the 'Establishing Teachers Network'.

By 2001, Queensland's regional structure had been replaced by districts, and the teacher had taken up a deputy's position at a local primary school. Believing that 'it's far more powerful that the young teachers run it for themselves', she passed over management of the network in 2001 to a committee of four teachers from the school, in their first, second, third and fourth years of teaching. The new committee shared the view that new teachers should manage their own network:

We're all part of the committee because we believe in the effect that it had on us, and we'd like to transfer it to others, because we found it so useful. Eventually we'll have to pass it on to others with the passion and vision to carry it on.

(Teacher – Committee Member)

The 'Establishing Teachers Network' defines its client group in a similar way to the 'Spirit of Learning' conference. Serving a cluster of ten primary schools within one school district, the network is aimed at beginning teachers (in their first, second or third years), as well as teachers who are 'establishing' themselves in a new context (such as those returning from a significant

period of leave, or transferring from interstate or overseas). There are also moves currently to widen the network to include final year students from the local university.

The network meets once each month, with an average meeting attendance of around 12, representing about a third of beginning teachers in the cluster. Sessions are generally held from 3.30pm to 5.00pm in different members' classrooms, so that there is an opportunity for participants to see a range of teaching environments.

The agenda for network meetings derives from needs identified by participants in the first meeting of the year, and which are subsequently prioritised. Typical sessions are built around a guest speaker who has been invited to deal with a particular issue, such as behaviour management, catering for students with learning difficulties, or relationships with parents. Meetings also include structured opportunities for collegial interaction and sharing of experience and resources.

The involvement from the university remains a key feature, with an Education Faculty member assisting with management processes, arranging guest speakers, and attending meetings by invitation. The university has promoted the network internally, and actively supports the new initiative of opening network meetings to final year student teachers.

Like the teachers at the 'Spirit of Learning' conference, participants in the 'Establishing Teachers Network' find value in meeting outside the school with peers who are not day-to-day colleagues. One teacher explains that the availability of peer support in a safe, non-judgemental setting is critical to the success of the 'Establishing Teachers Network':

Because of the smallness, and the fact that we have a social time at the start – it's not a big formal situation- it becomes a safe environment. We all feel safe to share things that we wouldn't share otherwise, because we're all first year teachers or thereabouts. You end up talking about things that you probably wouldn't mention to anyone else at your school.

Other committee members emphasised the importance of a trusting, confidential environment, in which experience can be shared openly, and problems disclosed. One teacher described the network meetings as providing 'an informal sanctuary in which I feel comfortable expressing my needs, fears and shortcomings.' (*Professionally Speaking*, No.5, July 2000)

Meeting on an equal footing with peers who are facing similar issues is an important component of the 'Establishing Teachers Network' approach. To illustrate another committee member described the impact on the atmosphere of one meeting when a number of more experienced teachers were invited:

They were so outspoken and dominating; we found that all the beginning teachers just sat back and didn't say a word ... We learned a lot from that. It's so important for it to be a safe environment, where you feel you can admit things that went wrong, and you can say 'I don't know what to do now.'

Interestingly, committee members found the same limitation in school-based mentoring arrangements. While positive about the value of mentoring, they saw it as more suited to the 'safe', practical issues of teaching, such as help with a lesson plan, or learning how to use the photocopier, rather than 'the things that you struggle with as a first year'. Because mentoring generally involves a partnership with a more experienced person...

... it doesn't necessarily feel safe enough to share those things that you would share with someone who is in the same situation.

(Beginning teacher)

Significantly, teachers also found that the collaborative nature of the network reaffirmed their sense that although young, they have important contributions to make. A number spoke about what they can contribute, as well as what they gain from network meetings:

Being able to help another teacher with an idea, or just a comment – it builds you up as well, because you're giving as well as getting.

(Beginning teacher).

When asked how the network meetings differed from the informal peer support available within the school, committee members pointed out that even as a group of friends they didn't share in the same way as they did through the network. Because network meetings use a facilitator and guest speakers, and involve people who are not day-to-day colleagues, there is a certain level of formality and structure which.

... creates a professional context in which teachers take the time to talk through issues which they wouldn't do in school ... It's great to hear someone else say the things that you're feeling in your head, but you don't necessarily have the chance to talk about.

(Beginning Teacher – Committee Member)

The original initiator of the 'Establishing Teachers Network' is confident about its long-term sustainability:

If I dropped dead tomorrow, it would continue. It now has a life of its own.

However, reflecting on the history of the network, and the role played by the initiator in its inception and early years, the committee agreed that it is very difficult for networks to self-generate. In the initial stages it is important that there is an experienced and influential person to drive the development. Handing over the reins before the network is mature enough to manage its own affairs would be fatal. It is also critical to pay careful attention to the issue of succession planning. The committee also agreed that the long-term health of the network would benefit if a body such as a district office, or a university, played an arms-length sponsoring role, monitoring activities, and lending support if required.

Conclusions

The 'Establishing Teachers Network' and the 'Spirit of Learning' conference are thriving grass roots initiatives which depend to a great extent on the voluntary energy and commitment of their sponsors and participants. Both programmes highlight issues about long-term sustainability, and raise critical questions about the role of central systems in supporting school-based initiatives, and the role of districts as the interface between the centre and the local context.

Both programmes illustrate possible answers to these questions through the notion of layered networks and strategic partnerships. In both cases there is a visible network of beginning teachers; but there is also another underpinning network of stakeholders who provide resources and essential support. These include principals, universities and Education Queensland's Learning and Development Foundation.

The two programmes, like the district approach in Tasmania, also highlight the importance of peer support, through avenues external to the school. Both the 'Establishing Teachers Network' and the 'Spirit of Learning' conference illustrate the paradox often reported by beginning teachers, that it is sometimes easier, and more emotionally rewarding, for teachers to share their experiences with people from outside their workplace, rather than with colleagues.

7. Pre-service training

I don't think beginning teachers know what to expect. Having spoken recently to a group of exiting students ... they had little idea of the things that might or could happen when they got a position ... They don't know whether or not they'll be contacted during the holidays before they start, or whether they'll get any information beforehand, or what might happen on the first day.

(Supervisor, Tasmania)

The primary focus of this project was on beginning teachers' transition into professional life, with a major emphasis on the impact of induction programmes following the teacher's appointment to a school. However, because induction should be seen as part of a larger continuum of professional learning, it is also important to consider the role of preservice training in the transition process.

Preservice education is a heavily reviewed and researched area of the literature. The Ramsey review of teacher education in NSW is the most recent substantial contribution to the field (November, 2000), while Queensland's Board of Teacher Registration is currently completing a major review, with a particular focus on internship models and their linkages to induction and continuing professional development (Cunningham and Hall, 2000).

Opinions about the quality of preservice teacher education

A range of beginning teacher satisfaction surveys conducted over the last decade point to continuing concerns about the quality of initial teacher training:

- A 1991 Australian Council for Educational Research survey of 1172 teachers in Government, Catholic and Independent schools in Victoria, Queensland and ACT

Nearly half of these teachers did not find this recent preparatory experience of much continuing value to them.

(Batten et al, 1991)

Just under half expressed satisfaction with their course; the other half had neutral or negative attitudes. The processes of learning and development, and student motivation were judged to have been very well covered. Student management was less positive but still strong. Dealing with students' learning disabilities was noted positively by less than half of the teachers overall.

- 1992 interviews with 102 beginning teachers in Sydney Catholic schools

Catering for individual differences in student learning needs was rated as the highest area of concern among teachers interviewed. 75% felt they had set their expectations of children too high because preservice training centred too much on the 'average' child without sufficient attention to the broad range of needs.

While education courses frequently alluded to individual differences, curriculum programmes gave insufficient advice or practice in how to cope with these differences.

(Martin, 1992)

- 1996 *Teacher 2000 Project*

A survey of New South Wales primary and secondary teachers found that only 38% of respondents thought their teacher training adequately prepared them for teaching.

Many considered teacher training courses too theoretical and lecturers 'out of touch' with the demands of modern teaching. (cited by Dinham and Scott, in Senate Employment, Education and Training References Committee, 1998)

- 1999 Course Satisfaction Survey of 784 graduates for the Victorian Standards Council of the Teaching Profession

The graph shows a generally poor appraisal of the quality of teacher education courses as judged by first-year graduate teachers ... There were many aspects of the teacher education courses that first-year graduates considered to be poorly handled ... The overwhelming impression is that first-year teachers are less than happy with the overall quality of their teacher education training.

(Holmes-Smith et al, 1999)

The strongest areas included classroom management, the teaching process, skills to foster appropriate classroom behaviour, awareness of gender differences in relation to learning, and approaches to reflective teaching.

Nearly 30% of teachers said they were poorly prepared in management of individual student discipline. 55% voiced concerns about preparation for teaching students with disabilities. Over 60% believed they were poorly prepared in reporting student progress, while 50% were concerned about their ability to discuss children's progress with parents.

- 2000 survey of 1027 beginning teachers for Education Queensland (using an adapted version of the 1999 Victorian survey instrument)

Beginning teachers in this survey felt their preservice courses generally provided an acceptable preparation for teaching. In particular, a large proportion indicated adequate grounding in the 'pedagogical aspect of teaching'.

In contrast, 40% considered felt they were less than adequately prepared for the management of individual student behaviour. Over a third felt ill-prepared to accommodate the diversity of backgrounds found amongst the student population, while more than half indicated they were less than adequately prepared for teaching students with learning difficulties within an inclusive setting. Over 70% felt less than adequately prepared for reporting student progress, while a majority indicated that their courses did not equip them well for dealing effectively with parents.

There is no simple formula for determining what contributes most to a beginning teacher's effectiveness. The quality of initial training is just one factor among many, including the personal background and capabilities of the teacher, the context of the school and the nature of particular teaching assignments. It is tempting to blame teacher education for many of the difficulties faced by beginning teachers. However, Kyriacou (1993) sounds an important cautionary note. Research on initial teacher training shows a complex and mixed picture. Demands by the various stakeholders make successful initial teacher training a major challenge, and the perception will always be that it could be better. It is important to bear in mind that it is clearly impossible for beginning teachers to have the same expertise as their more experienced colleagues.

Nevertheless, there are consistent trends in the survey literature. Prominent among these is concern about managing a diversity of learning needs within the same classroom. This concern of beginning teachers is consistent with the rise of a new 'mission for teaching' (Darling-Hammond, 1999), brought about by increased student retention and the shift to policies of inclusion.

In defining national standards for initial teacher training, the 1998 report of the Australian Council of Deans of Education reinforced a commonplace view about recent educational change:

The change of the past two decades could be broadly summarised as the increasing tendency for the teaching workforce to become teachers of all rather than instructors of the able.

(Schools Council, 1990, quoted in Australian Council of Deans of Education report, 1998)

Beginning teachers consistently report that they feel inadequately prepared in what is recognised as the key focus of educational change over the last 30 years.

Survey results for this project

Both of the surveys for this project included a section on pre-service training. The first question asked teachers and supervisors for a general assessment of how well teacher education courses prepare beginning teachers for their first year. In marked contrast to their respective answers on other parts of the survey where teachers were generally more negative, supervisors had a harsher opinion of pre-service training than teachers:

- 29.6% of supervisors felt teachers were prepared 'well' or 'very well', compared to 44.6% of teachers.
- 45.2% of supervisors felt teachers were 'adequately' prepared, compared to 36.1% of teachers.
- 25.3% of supervisors felt teachers were 'not very well' or 'poorly' prepared, compared to 19.3% of teachers.

A subsequent question asked both groups to rate the effectiveness of pre-service training in relation to a list of specific areas. Teachers' results are shown in the following table.

<i>Effectiveness of pre-service training</i>	<i>Very effective / Reasonably effective</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Not very effective / Ineffective</i>
* Lesson planning	74.7%	16.5%	8.7%
* Effective teaching and learning strategies	64.2%	25.5%	10.4%
* Teaching strategies for particular content areas	56.6%	26.7%	16.8%
* Organising student learning	54.6%	28.5%	16.9%
* Catering for students with a range of learning needs	49.2%	27.7%	23.1%
* Developing sequenced learning programmes	46.6%	28.5%	24.8%
* Student motivation	41.1%	34.9%	23.9%
* Programme evaluation	41.8%	31.8%	26.5%
* Student assessment	40.7%	28.7%	30.6%
* Using computers as tools for teaching and learning	38.2%	28.9%	32.8%
* Managing student behaviour	36.0%	28.0%	35.9%
* Inclusion of students with a disability	33.1%	29.3%	37.6%
* Time management	27.6%	30.1%	42.2%
* Record keeping	24.0%	28.4%	47.7%
* Communicating with parents	11.6%	23.2%	65.1%
* Report writing	11.7%	21.9%	66.4%
* Managing stress	12.0%	21.1%	66.9%
* Extra-curricular duties	10.9%	22.3%	66.8%
* Handling administrative responsibilities	8.2%	22.7%	69.1%

Table 27: Effectiveness of pre-service training

Supervisor ratings were significantly lower than the teachers, although the items were ranked in

roughly the same order. The major discrepancies related to:

- using computers as tools for teaching and learning (ranked 1st by supervisors, and 10th by teachers)
- catering for students with a range of learning needs (ranked 13th by supervisors, and 5th by teachers)
- record keeping (ranked 10th by supervisors, and 14th by teachers).

The immediate conclusion to be drawn from these results is that they are consistent with the most recent course satisfaction surveys undertaken in Victoria and Queensland. The strongest aspects of preparation relate to the teaching process, reflected in items such as lesson planning, effective teaching and learning strategies, teaching strategies for particular content areas, and organising student learning.

Teachers in focus groups were not surprised by this, and echoed the survey findings that these areas are handled well at University. Some however complained that their preparation had not kept pace with current system initiatives:

Ours is a 'New Basics' school, so everything I had done at Uni was of almost no use at all – it was all completely different. We weren't working off any of the normal syllabuses, or the normal curriculum, or the normal teaching style, or the normal behaviour management ... so it was a very fast learning curve. Everything I had done at Uni either didn't apply to the 'New Basics' or didn't mesh very well.

(Teacher, Queensland)

Particular areas of concern for teachers which echo the earlier surveys include managing student behaviour, inclusion of students with a disability, communicating with parents and report writing. Catering for students with a range of learning needs appears to be less of a concern for teachers than in previous research, however it remains a major concern for supervisors.

Behaviour management was a key topic in focus groups, with teachers calling for it to be given a higher priority in University training. Their comments reinforced the survey result that indicated only a neutral level of satisfaction with the way in which it was handled at University.

When I went through University we were given an enormous smorgasbord of options in the last year, and we could choose two things. Behaviour management was one of them, but it could have been disability, or a whole range of things ... It should have been a core subject. It shouldn't have been an option.

(Teacher, Tasmania)

We had very little behaviour management training ... lots of sheets being handed out about this theory or that theory, but very little practice like how to deal with a student who's aggressive and swearing at you ... The theories are great but you still need the skills to put the theories into practice.

(Teacher, Victoria)

Focus groups were dubious about the capacity of University-based personnel to deliver behaviour management training effectively. While they wanted it to be given more prominence at University, they felt it was essential that school-based practitioners be brought in to deal with it, and that theory should be balanced with practice through scenarios, role-plays and micro-teaching sessions.

One of the best sessions I had on managing student behaviour was the principal from X Primary School. He came in for one lecture on one day in fourth year, but he was just brilliant, and so practical. I learned more from that one lecture than I did in my whole course, and it's certainly helped me in my job now.

(Teacher, Tasmania)

Other teacher concerns related to broader professional issues, such as report writing, communicating with parents and administrative procedures. Many accepted that some matters, such as school administrative procedures and managing budgets are more appropriately dealt with through school induction programmes than by universities. However others called for more exposure to areas such as student assessment, report writing and parent-teacher interaction. A

number of teachers argued strongly that the lack of any preparation in these areas added to the reality shock that hampered their transition into employment.

We just don't get anything on the broader professional issues at Uni; how to deal with parents ... the first parent-teacher interview I had I was thinking, 'what do I tell them?'

(Teacher, Catholic Sector, Victoria)

There's a huge discrepancy between what we do at university and the real world. Some of the most important things have been left out of the degree, like how to interact with parents. As a beginning teacher, if you've got a parent coming in and saying I'm not happy, that can be a really overwhelming thing and you don't know how to deal with it.

(Teacher, Queensland)

I think we need more exposure to it before it becomes our responsibility, before it impacts on what we do professionally. You don't get that exposure in the limited pracs you get in our system here. And the exposure you do get depends on the supervising teacher you happen to be with. Everyone gets a different experience – there isn't any consistency. For example, I came out of Uni not having been exposed to any of the testing procedures for children, and making assessment decisions, or whatever. I don't see that as necessarily being the fault of the prac teachers I had, because I had good ones and I learned lots from all of them. So I don't see that as being their role or their fault that I didn't learn that, but I came out of Uni not knowing that, and I've had to learn it as I've gone along in my first year.

(Teacher, Tasmania)

Many teachers spoke positively about a range of intermediate steps that might ease their transition into employment. These included internships, and early appointment, combined with opportunities for paid casual employment in the school prior to commencement.

Interestingly, some argued that pre-service programmes had an important role to play in preparing graduates to deal with schools with inadequate approaches to induction. Arguing that final year students ought to be shown material such as the Victorian guidelines on induction programmes for schools, their view was that universities should encourage beginning teachers to be assertive in demanding more extensive forms of support when induction is poorly delivered:

Beginning teachers don't really know what an induction programme should involve. Maybe we should be given guidelines about the things we should ask about, so we know what we're entitled to ask for in our first year.

(Teacher, Victoria)

Theory and practice

Another perennial call in the satisfaction surveys is for teacher education to become more practical in emphasis. This concern was clearly reflected in the supervisor survey. Supervisors were asked to describe ways in which pre-service training could better prepare beginning teachers for the first year of teaching, with the following results:

Area for improvement	
* Extended practicum / internships	61.4%
* Better link between theory and practice	26.4%
Area for Improvement	
* More emphasis on behaviour management / teaching skills	16.1%
* Stronger focus on current education system policies / priorities	11.1%
* Focus on broader professional responsibilities, such as dealing with parents	8.6%
* Focus on sequenced learning programmes	6.1%
* Better screening procedures to determine suitability for the profession	1.1%

Table 28: Areas for improvement in pre-service training

It is no surprise that supervisors make such a strong call to increase the role of the practicum in pre-service training. Gale and Jackson (1997) point out that:

Student teachers and their supervisors often imply that the practical is relevant, useful and intrinsically valuable, while the theoretical is distant, irrelevant and inaccessible.

This valuing of practical experience over theoretical studies reflects a fundamental debate in the literature and in policy about the appropriate balance between theory and practice in preservice education. It is a debate played out not only in terms of the content and structure of preservice courses, but also in terms of the balance between the locations for initial training - the university (with its emphasis on the theoretical) and the school (with its concern for competent practice).

The response in the UK has been a politically driven, 'traumatic and profound' shift during the 1990's to a school-based model, in which 66% of teacher training must occur in schools (Board of Teacher Registration, 1994). While there have been calls in Australia for a pendulum swing towards a stronger school focus, the literature has tended to reject the UK approach as a return to a discredited apprenticeship model which may in fact have a deskilling and de-professionalising impact (Senate Employment, Education and Training References Committee, 1998). In contrast, the Ramsey report (2000) calls for fundamental and dramatic reform to the provision of teacher education in New South Wales, but significantly describes the need for a *reconnection*, rather than a divorce between universities and schools. In other words, the call for a stronger practical element is generally supported, but the role of theory continues to be valued:

Perhaps the solution lies not in a lessening of the theoretical component of a teacher education course, but in helping students to make stronger links between theory and practice.

(Batten et al, 1991)

The aim should be informed practice with a sound theoretical base.

(Gale and Jackson, 1997)

Kennedy (1999) summarises research which suggests that teachers are highly likely to teach in the way they were taught as children. Having spent their entire childhoods observing teaching, they tend to revert to earlier frames of reference, particularly when confronted with classroom challenges. Therefore, one of the key roles of university-based preservice education is to challenge initial frames of reference. Martinez (1993) points out that this role has been reinforced by the increasing emphasis on strategies of critical reflection in teacher education courses. She cites case studies of beginning teachers whose classroom practices had been strongly influenced by the curriculum studies they had undertaken, and were often in direct contrast with those of their own student years.

Gale and Jackson (1997) argue that the concept of the reflective practitioner helps overcome some of the dilemmas associated with the theory/practice dichotomy. They link this in turn to the notion of professionalism. While student teachers tend to loosely define being 'professional' as a synonym for being dedicated, committed, sincere or efficient, Gale and Jackson see a professional as a critically reflective practitioner, referring to theory in order to understand practice, seeking underlying patterns and proposing tentative explanations to inform and improve future practice. The integration of theory and practice is therefore a key characteristic of teacher professionalism.

In the face of calls to shift teacher education out of universities and into schools, the general thrust of the Australian literature has been to value an appropriate (but more effective) balance between theory and practice, and to re-assert (but also enhance) the respective roles of school and university (Senate Employment, Education and Training References Committee, 1998; Ramsey, 2000). There is some evidence in the satisfaction surveys that a balance between theory and practice is appreciated by beginning teachers, to the extent that they describe themselves as reflective practitioners (eg Education Queensland, 2000).

These views are clearly reflected in the results from the supervisor survey, where a quarter of the respondents called for a better link between theory and practice. However the continuing calls for a more practical emphasis (by beginning teachers and their supervisors, and in current reviews of teacher education) indicate that we are still a long way from striking the appropriate balance in practice.

The practicum and the role of supervisors

Issues about the purpose, structure, length, timing and management of the practicum are central to the theory-practice debate. The practicum is the critical opportunity for student teachers to connect theory and practice. It is also the major opportunity for student teachers to prepare themselves for transition into employment. It is widely regarded as the most important part of teacher education, particularly by teachers and education students - 61.4% of supervisors surveyed in this project recommended the introduction of internships or a more extended practicum - yet the literature sees it as problematic, and its value as questionable:

The bulk of the literature suggests that the traditional teaching practice paradigm has serious flaws that patching will not repair ... As currently implemented, [it] retains little international credibility as the major means of providing field experience for student teachers.

(Board of Teacher Registration, QLD, 1994)

There is a wealth of literature dealing with the inadequacies of the practicum model, and debating how it might be reformed. A number of the key issues, and common recommendations for change are summarised in the following table.

Criticisms of the Practicum	Common recommendations for change
<p>* <u><i>Insufficient time and status</i></u></p> <p>Practicums are not given sufficient time, status or priority by universities. Limited funds (to pay school supervisors) are usually cited as a major contributing factor.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The terminology and emphasis to change from 'practice' to 'professional experience' - workplace learning which is integrated with academic studies. • Professional experience seen as central, rather than peripheral, to teacher education programmes. • Practical experience be incorporated over the whole preservice programme. • The final placement be substantial (generally from 10 weeks to a full term); sufficient to enable students to plan, implement and evaluate a significant teaching assignment. • The 1998 report for the Australian Council of Deans of Education recommended a minimum of 80 days supervised in-school experience.
<p>* <u><i>Unclear expectations</i></u></p> <p>The intended outcomes of the practicum are ill defined. It lacks an explicit knowledge base or curriculum. Lack of clarity is exacerbated by inadequate liaison between universities and schools. Supervisors are unsure about what the practicum should cover, and how student teachers should be assessed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of genuine partnerships between universities and schools for joint planning, implementation and evaluation of professional experience programmes.

<i>Criticisms of the Practicum</i>	<i>Common recommendations for change</i>
<p>* <u><i>Narrow range of experiences</i></u></p> <p>Practicums can be targeted at a limited range of unrepresentative schools. As a result students are quarantined from experiencing realistic classroom management problems and teaching challenges.</p> <p>The timing of practicums often means that students do not experience issues related to assessment, reporting or dealing with parents. Nor are they involved in the roles and responsibilities teachers perform outside the classroom.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practicums to occur in a diverse range of settings, so that students encounter demands of teaching in schools in both advantaged and disadvantaged communities. • Students' final placement to occur in a setting which is similar to their likely school of first appointment. • Practicums be long enough to enable 'sustained immersion in the craft of the profession' (Ramsey, 2000). • Practicum activities be carefully sequenced to give students opportunity to experience all dimensions of a teacher's work, in and out of school.
<p><u><i>Limited commitment by schools</i></u></p> <p>Schools do not see preservice training as part of their core responsibility. Supervisors are overloaded, and reluctant to take on a demanding role for token payment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools' input into the professional experience programme to be strengthened. • Participating supervisors use their mentoring role as a basis for credit towards appropriate tertiary qualifications.
<p>* <u><i>Uneven quality of supervision</i></u></p> <p>Supervisors are sometimes chosen on the basis of convenience to the organisation, rather than fitness for the role. Some supervisors are uncertain of their responsibilities, and have limited opportunities for preparation or training for the role.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisors to be carefully selected on the basis of interest, commitment, skill and understanding of the role. In turn, they are supported by university mentors. • Supervisors be trained for their role. • Students be assigned to a team of teachers, rather than individuals.
<p>* <u><i>Inappropriate apprenticeship model</i></u></p> <p>Supervision predominantly operates according to an apprenticeship model which is widely regarded as limited and inappropriate. Many supervisors are pressured by lack of time, and revert to the master-apprentice mode as an efficient way of providing quick solutions. Others naturally adopt the apprenticeship model because they are unfamiliar with, or don't understand the alternative reflective practitioner model.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles and responsibilities of participants clearly specified. • Supervisor training be available, with an emphasis on establishment of mentor relationships with students, using strategies of critical reflection. • Supervising teachers encouraged to expose their own beliefs and practices to public scrutiny, and recognise that this is valuable not only for themselves but also for their student teachers.

Criticisms of the Practicum	Common recommendations for change
<p>* <u>Inadequate assessment</u></p> <p>Supervisors lack clear guidelines for assessment of student teachers. In many cases they are reluctant to assess harshly. Students have complained that over-generous assessments give them false expectations of how they will cope in their first appointment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment procedures and expectations be discussed between supervisors and teacher educators. Where they don't already exist, explicit criteria for assessment be developed collaboratively.
<p>* <u>Inadequate liaison</u></p> <p>Teacher educators are not sufficiently involved in the practicum, or in the schools in which it occurs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of high level of practical partnership between supervising teachers and university lecturers. • The practicum be functionally related to all other parts of teacher education programmes.
<p>* <u>Limited opportunity for reflection</u></p> <p>Because of the low status accorded to practicums, students are given limited opportunities for formalised reflection and evaluation at the completion of the teaching round.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher educators to view the completion of the practicum as a critical opportunity for students to make connections between their practical experiences and theory, and for teacher educators to model strategies for critical reflection. • Following each practicum experience, structured reflection to be built in as the starting point for the ongoing learning programme.

Table 29: Criticisms of the practicum

(Adapted from Australian Council of Deans of Education, 1998; Board of Teacher Registration, QLD, 1994; Gale and Jackson, 1997; Holmes-Smith et al, 1999; Senate Employment, Education and Training References Committee, 1998; Stephens and Moskowitz, 1997; Ramsey, 2000)

Participants in focus groups commented at length on the issues of the practicum. Many highlighted the inconsistency inherent in practicums:

The exposure [to particular issues] you ... get depends on the supervising teacher you happen to be with. Everyone gets a different experience – there isn't any consistency. For example, I came out of Uni not having been exposed to any of the testing procedures for children, and making assessment decisions ...

(Teacher, Tasmania)

It all depends on what schools you have on your teaching rounds ... Other schools were really good but they still didn't want to hand you their class, so you couldn't really get any practical experience. It depends on what schools you have as to what experiences you have on teaching rounds. And that strongly affects how you will cope when you actually have a class on your own.

(Teacher, Victoria)

Same with parents – I didn't strike one in all my pracs, but I know that a lot of other people did. It was just that the schools I went to didn't have parent-teacher when I was there.

(Teacher, Tasmania)

Other teachers focused on the length and timing of the practicum, pointing out that they had had no prior opportunity to observe teachers establishing classroom routines and relationships at

the start of the year, or to experience any of the administrative responsibilities that play such a significant part in school life.

At the beginning of the year there were so many interruptions that I just couldn't get a structure or routines going. I found it really hard to get behaviour management under control. This is something that you don't come across on teacher practice.

(Teacher, Western Australia)

There's all that other stuff that goes with it that you don't realise. Because we're so small we all have to run a cost centre, and all the other admin stuff, all the paperwork, all the testing that you just don't come across in the pracs that you do at Uni.

(Teacher, Western Australia)

We've got assessment for the curriculum, we've got assessment for the school data collection, we've got assessment for the different year levels for the Government testing, we've got assessment for our running reports for parents ... it's just a really, really big part of your job ... and we had no experience of assessing students on prac.

(Teacher, Queensland)

The biggest learning curve was in the short pracs that we got. That was where you learned the most. And yet that's the smallest part of the whole Uni process. They don't teach you how a school works ... in any employment; you have to know how the system works.

(Teacher, Tasmania)

Teachers and supervisors in focus groups were highly critical of many aspects of the practicum, but at the same time re-asserted its centrality to an effective pre-service preparation. The clear consensus was that the practicum should be reformed along the lines suggested in Table 29, and extended in scope, but without sacrificing an appropriate balance between theory and practice.

Profitable directions for reform were usefully summarised in a set of questions devised by Queensland's Board of Teacher Registration to assist organisations to evaluate their approach to the practicum:

- *Is there effective collaboration amongst all interested groups in the planning, development and evaluation of teacher education programmes?*
- *Does practice teaching occupy a central position in preservice courses?*
- *Are all other studies functionally related to it?*
- *Is there careful selection of supervisors, systematic training for them, and a variety of incentives provided to encourage involvement?*
- *Is there a real partnership of all participants where roles and responsibilities are clearly defined?*
- *Is the practice used for a form of critical reflection that is fully understood by all participating?*
- *Are programmes based on sound research outcomes?*
- *Are the environments for field experience consistently leading to professional development?*

(Board of Teacher Registration, QLD, 1994)

Universities consulted as part of this project generally endorsed the recommendations for change outlined in Table 29, and in these questions, but highlighted the difficulties they face in an environment of constrained resources.

Yet the Ramsey report, in its comprehensive review of teacher education in New South Wales, and its call for fundamental and dramatic reform, still finds several examples of praiseworthy practice. These include Charles Sturt University's Practicum Reference Committee, and the University of Sydney's Master of Teaching degree programme –described as initiatives with a significant commitment to improving the professional experience component of initial teacher training, and the preparedness to adjust priorities so that change is possible.

A further example of positive change comes from Queensland. In March 2002, Education Queensland sponsored a 'Teacher Induction Summit', which brought together personnel from the department, the Queensland Board of Teacher Registration and the Universities in a strategic, cooperative venture. The summit was seen as an early step towards a longer-term aim of developing formalised and coordinated partnerships between the department and the Queensland universities, together with the University of New England and Southern Cross University in NSW.

Initial proposals around the theme of teacher induction and the role of the Universities were presented. Specific projects are yet to be finalised, but some of the possibilities include:

- a one-semester, university-accredited Year 12 course in educational theory to engage potential teachers
- on-going mentorships from pre-service to in-service for continued professional development of graduates through the beginning teacher stages
- review and extension of pre-service practicums, and promotion of internships in the final year of university
- recognition and credit for school-based professional development activities which support pre-service students
- tri-partnerships between Education Queensland, the universities and industry.

Partnerships

Much of the preceding discussion assumes the value of more intensive and systematic development of school-university partnerships. This notion was partly explored in the teacher and supervisor surveys for this project. Teachers were asked whether their Education faculties had contacted them during their first year of teaching. Only 15.8% answered 'yes'. However, 61.6% of teachers and 57.0% of supervisors believed Education faculties should play a continuing role in supporting beginning teachers during the first year of teaching. When asked to describe the kinds of support that Education faculties could provide, the following results were obtained:

<i>Continuing support roles for Education faculties</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>Supervisors</i>
* Follow up to check satisfaction with the work environment	33.2%	17.7%
* Organise beginning teacher support networks	25.3%	25.1%
* Provide on-call assistance (via telephone or website) to help with specific teaching issues	20.3%	24.6%
* Gather feedback to evaluate and improve relevance of teacher education courses	19.0%	37.1%
* Provide information about curriculum resources	17.0%	9.7%
* Provide professional development on new teaching strategies	14.6%	24.6%
* Offer counselling support - the chance to talk to someone outside the work environment	11.3%	8.0%

Table 30: Continuing support roles for Education faculties

Although critical of some aspects of teacher education, respondents to this survey nonetheless saw value in maintaining a partnership, within the context of a professional learning continuum, uniting initial teacher training, induction and continuing professional development.

Just as schools have a key role to play in supporting more effective practicum experiences as part of initial teacher education, so universities may play a continuing role in the professional

development of their graduates through involvement in induction. At the very least, this would provide valuable opportunities for market research into the effectiveness of teacher education. Britton describes two international examples where universities are partners in induction programmes. The Taiwan Government recently mandated that all teacher preparation institutions provide professional development to their graduates (often using technology to reach distant teachers). In Switzerland, the Zurich institution for elementary teacher preparation brings all graduates back for a three-week institute at the end of their second year of teaching. The teachers themselves are involved in designing the institute which is seen as the culmination of their induction period. (Britton et al, 2000).

The New Zealand Government funds teacher training institutions to provide support services to beginning teachers and supervising teachers. These are provided through teacher support centres at the pre-service institutions (Stephens and Moskowitz, 1997). 'Professional Development Schools' in the US are another example of school-university partnerships. Through collaboration between school districts and local faculties of education, these are schools which function in a similar manner to teaching hospitals, combining preparation of beginning teachers, professional development for experienced teachers and university research (Darling-Hammond, 1999).

Beck and Humphries (2000) note that the concept of school-university partnerships is receiving growing attention in Australia. For example, several universities in NSW and Queensland currently offer mentor training courses for teachers (in some cases offered online) which carry credit towards other qualifications.

However, while there is general agreement about the need for greater continuity between pre-service and in-service education, existing connections between teacher induction programmes and pre-service training institutions are few (Stephens and Moskowitz, 1997). In Australia, the functions of initial preparation and induction of beginning teachers generally exist as independent processes. This represents a significant loss of opportunity, one which was recognised by the Senate Employment, Education and Training References Committee in 1998:

A further criticism of many existing induction programmes is that they are developed and implemented in isolation from university educators. The links developed by beginning teachers with university staff during pre-service are not continued through to the induction year. Established teachers, beginning teachers and university educators alike thus miss a valuable opportunity for integrating educational theory and practice ... The opportunity to link pre-service, induction and continued professional development as part of a seamless process is also weakened.

As Ramsey (2000) argues, what is needed is reform which *reconnects* teacher education and schools. Fittingly, he envisages a 'reform agenda' which includes the goal of:

Establishing greater continuity between preservice teacher education and induction within a first teaching appointment, both of which should be conceptualised in a holistic way as constituting initial teacher education.

The following case study provides an excellent model for the reconnection of teacher education and schools.

Example: A transition partnership in South Australia

In South Australia, a Principal has been seconded to work as a Project Officer for the Human Resources, Recruitment and Country Training division of the state Department of Education, Training and Employment. The state department pays his salary, and each of South Australia's three universities provides office space, administrative support and access to all student files.

In conjunction with the Human Resources Office, the Project Officer co-manages a Graduate Recruitment Programme, which has a particular focus on attracting graduates into country teaching. Part of his university role involves delivering a course on 'Teaching in Rural and Regional Communities', where the aim is to demystify the country, as well as address issues associated with teaching Indigenous students. The course includes a field trip to a regional district where students are billeted out, and given an opportunity to live and teach in the country

for a week. Ninety-seven of South Australia's 620 Education graduates in 2001 participated in the course.

As a second component of the focus on country teaching, the Graduate Recruitment Programme includes a targeted graduate employment scheme. Described by the Project Officer as a 'pro-active, affirmative programme, offering solutions to long-standing problems', the scheme targeted 20 outstanding student teachers in 2001 for several well-known 'black spots' in departmental staffing:

- hard-to-staff schools in areas such as Oodnadatta, Coober Pedy, Mt Gambier and Port Lincoln
- hard-to-staff subjects such as Senior Maths and Sciences, English, Technical Studies, Home Economics and Agricultural Science
- honours graduates for primary and middle schooling.

As well as headhunting high quality recruits, the project also focuses on supporting and retaining outstanding teachers in regional areas. To achieve this, in August 2001, the officer began an eighteen-month 'Induction and Transition Programme' for the targeted graduates, designed to provide support and collegial identity as they moved from training to employment in country schools.

The programme consists of:

- four two-hour workshops over the final six months of teacher training, dealing with:
 - processes for the Induction and Transition programme
 - departmental policies, structures and culture
 - strategic directions at system, district and school level
 - expectations of employees
 - conditions of employment
 - probation procedures
 - myths and issues associated with country teaching
- transition support, including:
 - assistance with relocation issues, such as accommodation, housing, travel and furniture removal
 - advice about effective ways to use South Australia's 0.1 FTE load reduction for beginning teachers
- pre-commencement visits to the school of appointment
- a structured in-school mentoring programme, with an emphasis on fitting in to the wider community as well as the school
- support for mentors and their principals, in the form of carefully selected readings and resource materials
- ongoing monitoring and communication, through telephone contact, visits, a group email network and chat room
- two debrief and review workshops at the end of terms one and four of the first year of teaching.

The major focus of the induction programme is to ensure the easiest possible transition into employment for the new recruits, and to maximise the chances of retaining them. Early preparation and ongoing support are the key strategies. In the Project Officer's words:

Instead of finding out they've got a job on January 20 and turning up on January 22, students know in July that they will have full time employment with the department. Six months beforehand they've already visited their schools, they know where they're going, they've all got houses, they've all met the teachers they're replacing, they've got their curriculum, they know where they're going to teach, they've got offices ...they're all feeling quite relaxed.

During 2002, the 20 graduates will maintain their identity as a group through face-to-face and electronic networking. A closed chat room has been set up on the university network, and members of the group have planned to contribute stories about their first week, first term and first year. Email addresses have also been shared.

This officer is playing a continuing mentoring role, liaising with principals and monitoring the graduates' progress, as well as encouraging personal contact and links between group members. There is also a deliberate emphasis on fostering reflective practice, through the use of professional reading lists, journals and personal development plans. This is seen as a process in which the graduates will map their own progress, culminating in the two debrief workshops.

The key purpose of the first workshop will be to share experiences and investigate any needs or concerns. The second workshop will celebrate the successes and acknowledge the difficulties faced by the graduates, as well as allowing for a final review of the whole programme.

The Project Officer is passionate about the project, seeing his role as 'part of a solution, rather than a problem.' It is an excellent example of a strategic partnership between universities and an education system that supports graduates in the difficult transition to employment by bridging the final six months of training and the first year of teaching. If it achieves little else, the Induction and Transition programme will be a powerful avenue for informing DETE about the needs of beginning teachers.

Recommendation

While there are only a handful of examples in Australia of effective connections between teacher induction programmes and pre-service training, there seems to be widespread agreement about the desirability of developing greater continuity between the two stages of beginning teacher education.

To encourage further development in this area, it is recommended that the Commonwealth consider funding a range of pilot projects, managed by cross-sectoral committees at the state level, to trial and promote innovative partnership arrangements between universities and schools, aimed at supporting beginning teachers' transition into the profession.

8. Principles, models and recommendations

The major research findings from this project were presented to a workshop of key stakeholders from every state and territory, in March 2002. Participants included representatives from Government schools, districts and systems, the Catholic and Independent sectors, Universities, Professional Associations and the Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training. The purpose of the workshop was to discuss the implications of the research, assist the research team in defining principles and models for effective induction programmes, and provide advice about final project recommendations.

Drawing on the research findings, workshop participants provided expert advice about the key purposes of induction for beginning teachers. The following statements synthesise their views and conclusions from the research.

Purposes of induction

Induction programmes for beginning teachers should:

- bridge the gap between pre-service preparation and employment, and ease beginning teachers' transition into the profession
- assist beginning teachers to appreciate the ethical dimension of teaching, and understand the scope of their professional role
- help beginning teachers understand the classroom, school, system and community contexts within which they work
- promote a commitment to continual improvement in teaching practice at a formative stage in the teacher's career
- establish beginning teachers' personal responsibility for professional development
- encourage the profession to recognise its responsibility to nurture the development of new teachers
- build community confidence in the teaching profession
- optimise the retention of beginning teachers.

Principles for effective induction

Participants felt that the chances of achieving these purposes would be greatest in programmes whose design and implementation complied with generally agreed principles for effective induction.

The following set of principles has been derived from discussion at the workshop, previous statements of principles in the literature (eg: Dinham, 1992; Queensland Board of Teacher Registration, 1997), and the characteristics of effective programmes identified through research for this project (see Section 3).

1. Induction should be seen as a critical phase within a continuum of professional learning, which begins with preservice education and extends throughout the teaching career.
2. Induction must be a planned and systematic transition into the profession, informed by an 'ethic of care'.
3. The responsibility for induction should be shared between training institutions, employing agencies, districts and schools.
4. Systemic plans for improving the quality of teaching should include a commitment to effective induction programmes.
5. System leaders, and particularly school principals, should demonstrate visible support of teacher induction programmes, including direct involvement as much as possible.

6. Allocation of teaching loads and other responsibilities within schools should support rather than undermine beginning teachers' chances of a successful transition into the profession.
7. Induction should be seen as an extended and multi-faceted process, which provides beginning teachers with orientation to the profession and the organisation, personal and professional support, and opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes essential for effective teaching.
8. Induction programmes should value, recognise and build on the personal and professional qualities beginning teachers bring to the profession.
9. Induction programmes should be negotiated on the basis of individual needs and goals, rather than standardised content, and should recognise that teachers' needs change over time.
10. The induction process should be informed by a recognised set of standards for effective professional practice.
11. Induction programmes should utilise a range of strategies, and people, to deal with the varying purposes, and needs of those involved.
12. Appraisal should be managed so that it does not overwhelm, undermine or conflict with the provision of support. It should be a systematic, positive and collaborative process.
13. Effective induction programmes depend on school (and district) cultures which foster openness, collaboration and help-seeking.
14. Induction programmes should be systematically evaluated, taking account of the views of those affected by the process.

Implied actions

The research undertaken for this project has highlighted many instances of exemplary practice in induction, however the evidence generally is that we still have much to do in the provision of acceptable standards of support for beginning teachers. To achieve the purposes and principles outlined above, there is a range of actions that Australian educational systems should consider. Significantly, some of these actions are echoed in the recommendations of the recent NSW review of teacher education (Ramsey, 2000).

- The respective responsibilities of training institutions, employing agencies, districts and schools in supporting beginning teachers' transition into the profession need to be clearly defined by the parties involved.
- Innovative partnership arrangements between universities, employing agencies and schools need to be encouraged.
- Models for greater coordination between systems, districts and schools in the management of induction should be developed (see below).
- Consideration should be given to developing guidelines for schools regarding the equitable allocation of teaching loads and other responsibilities to first year teachers.
- Model programmes should be developed which encourage schools to see induction as an extended and multi-faceted process, rather than simply orientation to the workplace (see below).
- A range of professional development and/or action research programmes should be established for those involved in the management and delivery of induction programmes.
- Support processes (such as networks and collaborative forums) should be put in place to assist those involved in the management and delivery of induction programmes.
- Systems should develop guidelines for the management of beginning teacher appraisal, aimed at encouraging more systematic, positive and collaborative approaches.
- Systems should develop evaluation models to assist districts and schools adopt more systematic approaches to the monitoring and evaluation of induction programmes.

Management of induction

The principles for effective induction call for more planned and systematic approaches, with a greater degree of coordination between systems, districts and schools. Ultimately, quality in induction is determined by local practice and commitment, no matter what the systemic context. However systems and districts are important, not only because of any direct involvement they may have in induction, but also, and more importantly, because they have a capacity to influence local action.

With this in mind, the workshop considered the following global model for management of induction programmes. By asking systems, districts and schools to address the key dimensions of policy, responsibility, delivery, resourcing, accountability, implementation and evaluation, the model proposes a simple framework of action, informed by a common 'ethic of care', that would be replicated in different ways at each level of jurisdiction. The model rests on the basic assumption that if each of the seven implementation steps were followed by systems, districts and schools, the outcome would be greater equity and consistency in the level of support provided to beginning teachers.

Of course, in the Independent sector, the model would apply at the level of individual schools.

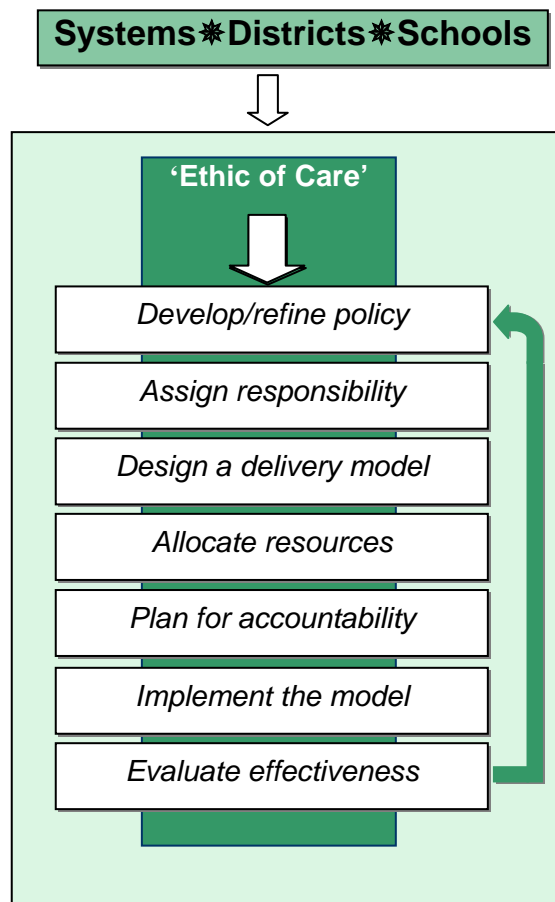


Figure 4: Model for the management of induction programmes

The following table illustrates how this model might be implemented at each level using a series of strategic questions:

	System	District	School
Policy	<i>Is there policy which clearly outlines the broad requirements for induction at district and school levels?</i>	<i>Are there local guidelines, consistent with system requirements, which outline schools' responsibility for supporting beginning teachers?</i>	<i>Is there an in-house policy, (consistent with district requirements, where appropriate), which outlines processes and responsibilities for supporting beginning teachers?</i>
Responsibility	<i>Has responsibility for teacher induction been assigned to particular personnel or sections?</i>	<i>Has responsibility for teacher induction programmes been assigned to particular personnel?</i>	<i>Has someone been given responsibility for coordinating teacher induction processes?</i>
Delivery	<i>Have guidelines or resource materials been developed to support policy which may be adapted to suit local contexts?</i>	<i>Have system guidelines been interpreted and adapted to establish locally relevant programmes?</i>	<i>Have system and district guidelines been used to establish in-house and inter-school programmes?</i>
Resources	<i>Have resources been allocated to central units, districts and/or schools?</i>	<i>Have resources been identified and allocated for district and/or school programmes?</i>	<i>Have people been given the time, PD and materials needed to support induction of individual teachers?</i>
Accountability	<i>Are there processes and performance measures to promote district-level accountability?</i>	<i>Are there processes and performance measures to promote school-level accountability?</i>	<i>Are there processes and performance measures to promote individual accountability?</i>
Implementation	<i>Have collaborative forums been established to promote the sharing of good practice?</i>	<i>Have programmes been established to support school efforts? Are there collaborative forums to promote sharing of good practice among schools?</i>	<i>Are there processes in place to support individual teachers? Are there forums to promote sharing of good practice, and common expectations among those responsible for supporting beginning teachers?</i>
Evaluation	<i>Have evaluation processes been established in collaboration with districts to investigate the effectiveness of programmes?</i>	<i>Have evaluation processes been put in place to investigate the effectiveness of district and school programmes?</i>	<i>Have processes been put in place to evaluate the school programme? Has the school contributed to system and district evaluation processes?</i>

Table 31: Implementation of model for managing induction programmes

Designing school-based induction programmes

The principles for effective induction also call for more systematic approaches within schools. There are a number of useful resources available to guide school-based induction programmes such as the Victorian and NSW materials referred to in Section 4. The following model builds on the principles outlined above, and summarises the recommendations of teachers gathered from the survey and focus groups. It locates the induction of beginning teachers within a larger continuum of professional preparation and continuing development, and provides an overview of support strategies and issues for the orientation, establishment and development stages of

induction. It is important to emphasise that this model is not a recipe. Implementation must take account of individual school circumstances and resources. It is also assumed that any programme would be negotiated with teachers in light of their specific needs, and formalised through professional learning plans.

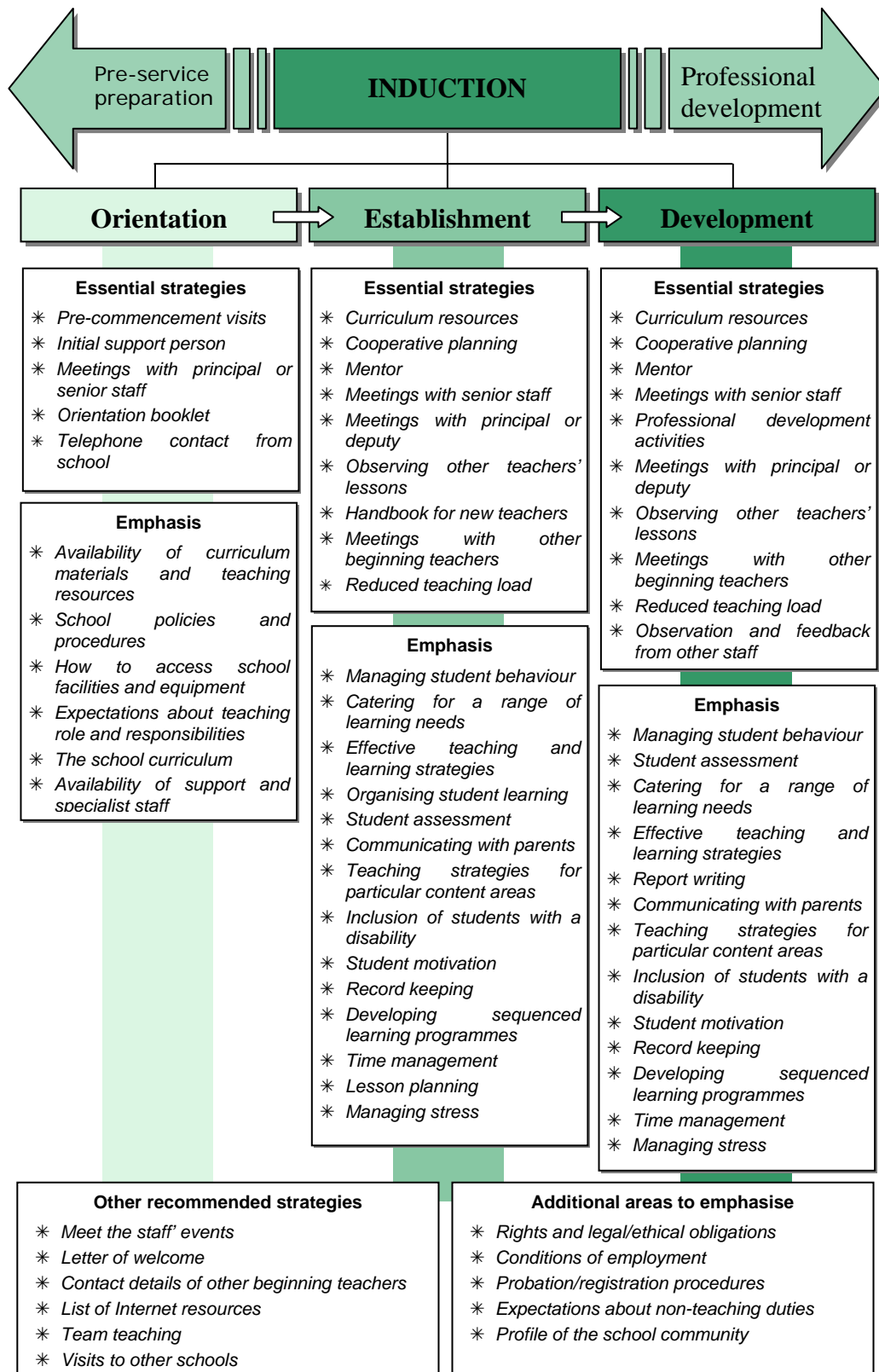


Figure 5: Model for designing school-based induction programmes

Recommendations

The Ramsey report (2000) noted that:

Teaching is the most reviewed profession in Australia ... since 1980 there have been 20 significant national and state reviews of teacher education. The most common characteristic of these reviews has been the lack of action on their recommendations. This situation contrasts markedly with other professions.

As key stakeholders from all state and territory jurisdictions, workshop participants were particularly conscious of the 'wreckage that litters the road' to educational reform in Australia. They were aware that genuine reform in induction for beginning teachers entails a major cultural shift – a much more difficult target than mere structural change. Equally they were aware that the real onus for change in this area belongs to state jurisdictions.

For these reasons, the recommendations to the Commonwealth, supported by workshop participants, are modest but achievable. They represent steps which the Commonwealth could take to support the actions identified earlier in this section which state jurisdictions may want to consider.

The recommendations are:

- 1 *The Commonwealth consider funding further research into the extent of beginning teacher attrition in Australia, and the factors driving beginning teachers' decisions to resign.*
- 2 *The Commonwealth consider funding a project, possibly through the Quality Teacher Programme, aimed at school leaders, focussing on the development and management of induction and support programmes for beginning teachers.*
- 3 *The Commonwealth consider funding further research into the use of professional standards at system, district and school level as frameworks for professional learning, performance management, and formative and summative appraisal.*
- 4 *The Commonwealth consider funding a range of pilot projects, managed by cross-sectoral committees at the state level, to trial and promote innovative partnership arrangements between universities and schools, aimed at supporting beginning teachers' transition into the profession.*
- 5 *This report be distributed to all jurisdictions and made generally available via the Quality Teacher Programme website.*
- 6 *This report be tabled with the MCEETYA Taskforce on Teacher Quality and Educational Leadership.*
- 7 *A condensed version of this report, highlighting the principles to inform effective practice in supporting beginning teachers, be developed for publication, and distributed to the Minister for Education, Science and Training, all systems, District Offices and schools.*

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Appendix A: Teacher Survey

DEMOGRAPHICS

Sample size: 696

State

NSW	19.9%
VIC	37.7%
QLD	23.5%
TAS	8.1%
SA	1.0%
WA	6.3%
ACT	3.6%

Gender

Male:	24.4%
Female:	75.6%

Age

20 – 24 yrs:	46.6%
25 – 29 yrs:	24.6%
30 – 39 yrs:	14.4%
Over 40 yrs:	14.4%

Type of employment in first year of teaching

Temporary:	17.3%
Permanent:	82.7%
Full time:	91.8%
Part time:	8.2%
On probation:	61.1%

Total length of pre-service teacher preparation course

1 yr:	19.6%
2 yrs:	12.7%
3 yrs:	5.4%
4 yrs:	58.5%
5 yrs:	3.8%

School Sector

Government:	77.7%
Catholic:	16.0%
Independent:	6.3%

Type of school

Primary	49.0%
Secondary	38.2%
K/P/R -12	11.5%
Special	1.3%

Size of school

Less than 5 staff	1.7%
6-10 staff	4.5%
11-20 staff	17.7%
21-30 staff	24.1%
31-50 staff	21.5%
More than 50 staff	30.5%

Location of school:

Capital city	34.6%
Regional city (pop. more than 25,000)	29.1%
Regional town (pop. 1000-25,000)	28.0%
Other country area	8.3%

TEACHING ASSIGNMENTS

Prior to commencing at the school, were you asked about your class teaching preferences?

Yes	49.6%
No	50.4%

To what extent are/were you teaching in the areas for which you trained at university?

Entirely (1)	45.3%
Mostly (2)	32.6%
Partly (3)	17.3%
Not at all (4)	4.8%
Average rating:	1.82

Compared to more experienced teachers in the school, were you given any reductions in:

Teaching hours?	30.6%
Range of subjects or levels?	7.0%
Class size(s)?	3.4%
Non-teaching duties?	17.1%
Other?	5.5%

SUPPORT PROGRAMMES FOR BEGINNING TEACHERS

Have you participated in beginning teacher support programmes organised by:

Your system?	39.7%
Your district?	42.2%
Other organisations (eg professional associations)?	13.1%

Does the school have an organised programme of support for beginning teachers?

Yes	55.4%
No	44.6%

If yes, is participation in the programme:

Compulsory?	73.4%
Voluntary?	26.6%

If no, do you think the school should have an organised programme of support for beginning teachers?

Yes	87.5%
No	12.5%

Do/did you have a documented professional learning plan for your first year of teaching?

Yes	36.8%
No	63.2%

ORIENTATION

Strategies Experienced at Orientation

Meeting(s) with principal/senior staff	68.8%
Pre-commencement visit(s)	64.8%
Orientation booklet/ resource package	61.9%
Initial support person identified	58.0%
Telephone contact from the school	56.0%
Letter of welcome	50.1%
Seminars/meetings organised by District Office	40.9%
Meetings with beginning teachers from other schools	38.8%
Organised social function(s) to meet the staff	32.5%
School website address	24.4%
Contact details (eg email addresses) of beginning teachers in other schools	8.0%
Other	3.4%

<u>Perceived Benefit of Strategies</u>	Average rating	Standard Deviation	Essential (1)	Very beneficial (2)	Reasonably beneficial (3)	Not very beneficial (4)	No benefit (5)
Pre-commencement visit(s)	1.40	0.74	71.0%	21.6%	4.9%	1.5%	1.0%
Initial support person identified	1.46	0.81	68.3%	22.2%	5.5%	3.0%	1.0%
Meeting(s) with principal/senior staff	1.52	0.78	62.5%	25.7%	9.5%	1.6%	0.6%
Orientation booklet/ resource package	1.74	0.93	51.9%	29.2%	13.3%	4.4%	1.1%
Telephone contact from the school	1.83	0.98	47.9%	28.8%	17.3%	4.7%	1.7%
Organised social function(s) to meet the staff	2.26	1.02	27.1%	32.1%	30.2%	8.5%	2.1%
Meetings with beginning teachers from other schools	2.27	1.11	30.3%	29.7%	26.1%	10.2%	3.6%
Letter of welcome	2.45	1.08	26.9%	25.0%	31.0%	10.4%	6.8%
Seminars/meetings organised by District Office	2.49	1.09	20.5%	31.1%	31.5%	12.4%	4.5%
Contact details (eg email addresses) of beginning teachers in other schools	2.76	1.25	19.4%	23.7%	28.8%	17.3%	10.8%
School website address	2.92	1.14	14.3%	17.3%	39.4%	20.1%	8.9%

Information provided at orientation

School rules and policies	82.0%
The school's philosophy/ mission	67.1%
How to access school facilities and equipment (eg photocopying)	63.9%
The school curriculum	59.5%
Conditions of employment (eg salary details)	55.6%
Availability of computers, Internet and email	55.0%
Availability of curriculum materials and teaching resources	51.7%
Information about the union and/or professional associations	50.9%
Library facilities	49.7%
Expectations about your teaching role and responsibilities	43.5%
Profile of the school community	42.7%
Administrative procedures	40.8%
Teachers' rights and legal obligations	38.2%
Social/cultural background of students	37.2%
Availability of support and specialist staff	35.8%
School committees and how you can be involved	34.6%
Roles of senior staff	33.8%
Policies about EEO and harassment	32.5%
Expectations about extra-curricular duties	30.7%
Information about support programmes available to beginning teachers	30.6%
Information about procedures for probation and/or registration	29.7%
External specialist services available to the school (eg guidance services)	26.6%
School decision-making processes	26.0%
The role of District Office	23.7%
Teacher grievance procedures	20.8%
Advice/support regarding accommodation	17.2%
Role of parent groups	14.4%
Other	1.0%

<u>Perceived importance of information</u>	Average rating	Standard Deviation	Essential (1)	Very important (2)	Reasonably important (3)	Not very important (4)	Unimportant (5)
Availability of curriculum materials and teaching resources	1.29	0.60	76.7%	18.5%	3.8%	0.9%	0.2%
School rules and policies	1.31	0.61	76.0%	18.5%	4.6%	0.8%	0.2%
How to access school facilities and equipment (eg photocopying)	1.33	0.61	73.2%	21.1%	4.9%	0.8%	0%
Expectations about your teaching role and responsibilities	1.34	0.64	73.6%	19.9%	5.4%	1.2%	0%
The school curriculum	1.36	0.64	72.1%	21.6%	5.0%	1.3%	0%
Availability of computers, Internet and email	1.50	0.73	61.7%	28.2%	8.6%	1.2%	0.3%
Teachers' rights and legal obligations	1.51	0.77	62.8%	25.4%	9.8%	1.7%	0.4%
Conditions of employment (eg salary details)	1.57	0.83	61.3%	24.2%	11.9%	1.8%	0.9%
Library facilities	1.57	0.78	57.5%	31.5%	8.4%	2.1%	0.5%
Availability of support and specialist staff	1.67	0.78	49.7%	35.9%	12.7%	1.3%	0.4%
Information about support programmes available to beginning teachers	1.68	0.88	54.0%	29.5%	12.0%	3.7%	0.8%
Social/cultural background of students	1.68	0.85	52.2%	31.4%	13.2%	2.4%	0.7%
Administrative procedures	1.72	0.84	49.3%	32.8%	15.2%	2.1%	0.5%
Information about procedures for probation and/or registration	1.76	0.96	52.1%	26.4%	15.8%	4.5%	1.2%
The school's philosophy/ mission	1.81	0.94	48.1%	28.7%	17.9%	4.4%	1.0%
Profile of the school community	1.81	0.86	43.4%	36.2%	17.5%	2.0%	0.9%
External specialist services available to the school (eg guidance services)	1.84	0.89	41.8%	37.1%	17.4%	2.3%	1.4%
School decision-making processes	1.91	0.90	39.3%	35.8%	20.6%	3.3%	1.0%
Expectations about extra-curricular duties	1.92	0.89	37.1%	38.9%	19.7%	3.1%	1.2%
Roles of senior staff	1.94	0.83	33.1%	43.4%	20.4%	2.3%	0.8%
Policies about EEO and harassment	2.01	0.98	37.5%	32.4%	23.7%	4.7%	1.7%
Information about the union and/or professional associations	2.01	0.96	37.1%	32.3%	23.9%	5.8%	0.9%
Teacher grievance procedures	2.16	0.98	30.2%	33.4%	27.9%	7.3%	1.2%
School committees and how you can be involved	2.16	0.95	28.5%	34.8%	30.0%	5.4%	1.3%
Role of parent groups	2.35	0.99	22.4%	33.0%	33.0%	10.0%	1.6%
The role of District Office	2.50	1.09	20.2%	30.7%	32.7%	11.3%	5.1%
Advice/support regarding accommodation	2.76	1.44	27.5%	17.9%	22.5%	14.8%	17.2%

Most valuable components of the orientation programme

Initial support person identified	25.4%
Meeting(s) with principal/senior staff	17.4%
School rules and policies	15.3%
Pre-commencement visit(s)	12.6%
Meetings with beginning teachers from other schools	11.1%
Organised social function(s) to meet the staff	10.9%
The school curriculum	9.2%
Expectations about your teaching role and responsibilities	9.2%
Orientation booklet/ resource package	9.0%
Availability of curriculum materials and teaching resources	7.5%
Administrative procedures	5.9%
The school's philosophy/ mission	4.4%
Profile of the school community	3.4%

How to access school facilities and equipment	3.1%
Seminars/meetings organised by District Office	2.9%
Roles of senior staff	2.3%
Social/cultural background of students	1.9%
Teachers' rights and legal obligations	1.9%
Availability of support and specialist staff	1.5%
Information about support programmes available to beginning teachers	1.5%
Information about procedures for probation and/or registration	1.3%
Library facilities	1.0%
Conditions of employment (eg salary details)	1.0%
Telephone contact from the school	0.8%
The role of District Office	0.8%
School decision-making processes	0.6%
Availability of computers, Internet and email	0.6%
Advice/support regarding accommodation	0.6%
Information about the union and/or professional associations	0.4%
Letter of welcome	0.2%
Contact details (eg email addresses) of beginning teachers in other schools	0.2%
Teacher grievance procedures	0.2%

Least valuable components of the orientation programme

Orientation booklet/ resource package	12.5
Initial support person identified	10.3%
Seminars/meetings organised by District Office	9.4%
Administrative procedures	9.4%
Meeting(s) with principal/senior staff	6.7%
Information about the union and/or professional associations	6.7%
The school's philosophy/ mission	6.3%
Letter of welcome	5.4%
The role of District Office	5.4%
Meetings with beginning teachers from other schools	4.9%
The school curriculum	4.0%
Expectations about your teaching role and responsibilities	4.0%
Role of parent groups	3.6%
How to access school facilities and equipment	3.6%
Roles of senior staff	3.6%
School website address	3.1%
School rules and policies	3.1%
School committees and how you can be involved	3.1%
Availability of curriculum materials and teaching resources	3.1%
Expectations about extra-curricular duties	3.1%
Organised social function(s) to meet the staff	2.7%
Policies about EEO and harassment	2.7%
School decision-making processes	2.7%
Conditions of employment (eg salary details)	2.7%
Profile of the school community	2.2%
Teacher grievance procedures	2.2%
External specialist services available to the school	2.2%
Teachers' rights and legal obligations	2.2%
Social/cultural background of students	1.8%
Library facilities	1.8%

Advice/support regarding accommodation	1.8%
Information about support programmes available to beginning teachers	1.8%
Telephone contact from the school	0.9%
Pre-commencement visit(s)	0.9%
Availability of computers, Internet and email	0.9%
Information about procedures for probation and/or registration	0.9%
Availability of support and specialist staff	0.4%

To what extent did the school's orientation programme assist you make the transition into your initial appointment?

To a great extent (1)	20.2%
To a reasonable extent (2)	42.7%
To a limited extent (3)	26.2%
Not at all (4)	11.0%
Average rating:	2.28
Standard deviation	0.91

SUPPORT PROGRAMMES - IN THE FIRST FEW WEEKS, AND THROUGHOUT THE FIRST YEAR

<u>Strategies experienced</u>	First few weeks	Throughout first year
Meetings with principal or deputy	67.2%	58.5%
Meetings with senior members of staff (eg year level coordinator)	58.2%	52.7%
Curriculum resources	49.4%	46.1%
Handbook for new teachers	48.4%	21.0%
Meetings with appointed mentor	42.5%	39.9%
Cooperative planning with a team of teachers	42.1%	48.6%
Attending professional conferences	37.8%	60.3%
Meetings with other beginning teachers	37.6%	36.4%
Seminars / meetings organised by District Office	36.1%	43.5%
Other staff observing you teach, and providing feedback	26.6%	36.2%
Reduced teaching load	26.1%	22.8%
Peer support group meetings	23.9%	25.0%
Observing other teachers' lessons	23.3%	27.2%
Team teaching	20.8%	28.2%
Access to confidential counselling	9.2%	11.6%
List of Internet resources for beginning teachers	9.1%	9.9%
Visits to other schools	8.8%	16.4%
Contact (eg email) with beginning teachers in other schools	7.6%	10.8%
Other	1.6%	1.4%

<u>Perceived benefit of strategies in the first few weeks</u>	Average rating	Standard Deviation	Essential (1)	Very beneficial (2)	Reasonably beneficial (3)	Not very beneficial (4)	No benefit (5)
Curriculum resources	1.44	0.72	67.6%	22.6%	7.8%	2.0%	0.0%
Cooperative planning with a team of teachers	1.55	0.80	60.9%	26.9%	9.1%	2.7%	0.4%
Meetings with appointed mentor	1.60	0.93	62.0%	22.8%	10.2%	3.0%	2.1%
Meetings with senior members of staff (eg year level coordinator)	1.60	0.83	58.1%	28.2%	11.0%	1.4%	1.2%
Meetings with principal or deputy	1.67	0.91	56.1%	26.9%	12.5%	3.2%	1.3%
Observing other teachers' lessons	1.83	1.07	51.5%	26.5%	13.5%	4.8%	3.8%
Handbook for new teachers	1.87	1.06	49.5%	26.1%	15.4%	6.3%	2.7%
Peer support group meetings	1.95	1.02	42.4%	30.8%	18.4%	6.2%	2.1%
Reduced teaching load	1.96	1.23	50.9%	22.6%	12.9%	7.0%	6.6%
Meetings with other beginning teachers	2.02	1.08	41.0%	28.6%	20.7%	6.6%	3.2%
List of Internet resources for beginning teachers	2.04	1.07	40.6%	27.1%	22.2%	7.8%	2.3%
Attending professional conferences	2.16	1.20	38.3%	28.3%	18.3%	9.3%	5.8%
Team teaching	2.17	1.20	38.7%	26.0%	21.7%	7.4%	6.3%
Other staff observing you teach, and providing feedback	2.24	1.29	38.4%	25.5%	18.4%	8.8%	9.0%
Access to confidential counselling	2.33	1.17	31.8%	24.3%	28.3%	10.6%	5.0%
Seminars / meetings organised by District Office	2.62	1.20	22.4%	23.9%	31.0%	15.3%	7.5%
Visits to other schools	2.71	1.33	24.1%	21.5%	26.6%	15.0%	12.9%
Contact (eg email) with beginning teachers in other schools	2.75	1.23	20.0%	21.2%	32.3%	16.5%	9.9%

Most valuable forms of support received during the first few weeks

Meetings with appointed mentor	25.7%
Peer support group meetings	16.9%
Meetings with senior members of staff (eg year level coordinator)	16.0%
Meetings with principal or deputy	15.6%
Managing student behaviour	13.2%
Meetings with other beginning teachers	9.2%
Curriculum resources	7.7%
Cooperative planning with a team of teachers	6.4%
Developing sequenced learning programmes	5.0%
Handbook for new teachers	4.8%
Team teaching	4.4%
Handling administrative responsibilities	4.2%
Seminars / meetings organised by District Office	3.9%
Other staff observing you teach, and providing feedback	3.9%
Lesson planning	3.3%
Reduced teaching load	2.9%
Attending professional conferences	2.0%
Catering for students with a range of learning needs	1.5%
Observing other teachers' lessons	1.3%
Organising student learning	1.3%
Communicating with parents	1.3%
Effective teaching and learning strategies	0.7%
Report writing	0.7%

Time management	0.7%
Student motivation	0.4%
Inclusion of students with a disability	0.4%
Teaching strategies for particular content areas	0.4%
Student assessment	0.4%
Record keeping	0.4%
Visits to other schools	0.2%
Access to confidential counselling	0.2%
Managing stress	0.2%

Least valuable forms of support received during the first few weeks

Seminars / meetings organised by District Office	15.4%
Handbook for new teachers	12.0%
Handling administrative responsibilities	9.7%
Meetings with other beginning teachers	9.1%
Meetings with principal or deputy	8.6%
Meetings with appointed mentor	8.6%
Curriculum resources	7.4%
Meetings with senior members of staff	5.7%
Attending professional conferences	5.1%
Developing sequenced learning programmes	5.1%
Extra-curricular duties	4.6%
Other staff observing you teach, and providing feedback	4.0%
Managing student behaviour	4.0%
Lesson planning	4.0%
Team teaching	3.4%
Catering for students with a range of learning needs	2.9%
Student assessment	2.9%
Peer support group meetings	2.3%
Using computers as tools for teaching and learning	2.3%
Record keeping	2.3%
Report writing	2.3%
Observing other teachers' lessons	1.7%
Access to confidential counselling	1.7%
Reduced teaching load	1.7%
Communicating with parents	1.7%
Time management	1.7%
Contact (eg email) with beginning teachers in other schools	1.1%
Cooperative planning with a team of teachers	1.1%
Student motivation	1.1%
Effective teaching and learning strategies	1.1%
Programme evaluation	1.1%
Visits to other schools	0.6%
Organising student learning	0.6%
Managing stress	0.6%

<u>Perceived benefit of strategies throughout the first year</u>	Average rating	Standard Deviation	Essential (1)	Very beneficial (2)	Reasonably beneficial (3)	Not very beneficial (4)	No benefit (5)
Curriculum resources	1.39	0.66	69.1%	24.0%	5.7%	1.0%	0.2%
Cooperative planning with a team of teachers	1.51	0.76	63.0%	25.6%	9.5%	1.5%	0.4%
Meetings with senior members of staff (eg year level coordinator)	1.71	0.89	51.4%	31.9%	12.9%	2.3%	1.5%
Meetings with appointed mentor	1.74	1.02	55.3%	25.6%	11.3%	5.2%	2.6%
Attending professional conferences	1.78	0.93	47.8%	32.9%	14.2%	3.4%	1.6%
Meetings with principal or deputy	1.82	1.02	50.8%	25.0%	17.5%	4.6%	2.2%
Observing other teachers' lessons	1.84	1.03	49.9%	26.1%	16.6%	4.8%	2.5%
Peer support group meetings	1.96	1.01	41.1%	31.3%	19.2%	6.8%	1.5%
Meetings with other beginning teachers	2.06	1.15	41.9%	27.0%	18.4%	8.6%	4.1%
List of Internet resources for beginning teachers	2.08	1.12	38.7%	29.2%	21.5%	6.1%	4.5%
Team teaching	2.10	1.17	40.7%	26.3%	20.5%	7.1%	5.4%
Other staff observing you teach, and providing feedback	2.16	1.21	38.6%	27.6%	19.2%	8.4%	6.3%
Reduced teaching load	2.17	1.32	44.2%	21.4%	16.9%	8.7%	8.9%
Access to confidential counselling	2.19	1.13	36.3%	25.0%	25.5%	9.9%	3.3%
Handbook for new teachers	2.32	1.25	35.6%	21.8%	23.9%	12.0%	6.7%
Visits to other schools	2.40	1.22	28.4%	28.6%	25.6%	9.4%	8.0%
Seminars / meetings organised by District Office	2.43	1.13	24.8%	28.9%	30.5%	10.5%	5.3%
Contact (eg email) with beginning teachers in other schools	2.75	1.23	19.3%	23.2%	30.2%	17.8%	9.5%

<u>Issues emphasised</u>	First few weeks	Throughout first year
Managing student behaviour	53.6%	60.6%
Catering for students with a range of learning needs	33.2%	40.2%
Effective teaching and learning strategies	33.0%	37.8%
Student assessment	30.9%	43.0%
Organising student learning	29.6%	30.6%
Report writing	27.9%	50.7%
Communicating with parents	26.7%	37.2%
Lesson planning	26.3%	24.6%
Using computers as tools for teaching and learning	23.3%	36.2%
Teaching strategies for particular content areas	23.0%	30.3%
Record keeping	21.7%	25.7%
Handling administrative responsibilities	20.5%	25.3%
Extra-curricular duties	20.1%	22.6%
Inclusion of students with a disability	19.7%	22.3%
Developing sequenced learning programmes	18.2%	23.1%
Programme evaluation	17.2%	24.9%
Student motivation	16.5%	21.0%
Managing stress	13.8%	18.4%
Time management	13.8%	15.4%
Other	0.9%	1.0%

<u>Perceived importance of issues in the first few weeks</u>	Average rating	Standard Deviation	Essential (1)	Very important (2)	Reasonably important (3)	Not very important (4)	Unimportant (5)
Managing student behaviour	1.31	0.63	76.3%	17.5%	5.0%	1.1%	0.2%
Catering for students with a range of learning needs	1.53	0.79	61.5%	27.4%	7.8%	2.9%	0.4%
Effective teaching and learning strategies	1.55	0.79	59.7%	29.0%	8.9%	1.4%	1.0%
Organising student learning	1.61	0.84	56.3%	31.0%	9.1%	2.4%	1.2%
Student assessment	1.69	0.97	57.6%	24.0%	12.2%	4.5%	1.8%
Communicating with parents	1.74	1.00	55.6%	22.8%	15.8%	3.3%	2.5%
Teaching strategies for particular content areas	1.74	0.86	47.8%	34.7%	13.6%	3.3%	0.6%
Inclusion of students with a disability	1.77	0.99	51.3%	28.7%	14.3%	3.0%	2.8%
Student motivation	1.78	0.94	49.4%	29.1%	17.0%	2.8%	1.7%
Record keeping	1.81	0.97	49.7%	27.7%	16.4%	4.8%	1.4%
Developing sequenced learning programmes	1.82	0.94	46.1%	32.3%	15.9%	4.3%	1.3%
Time management	1.84	1.00	48.5%	27.6%	17.6%	3.9%	2.4%
Lesson planning	1.88	1.07	48.9%	26.0%	17.1%	4.4%	3.6%
Managing stress	1.91	1.08	48.9%	22.5%	20.5%	5.3%	2.9%
Programme evaluation	2.01	1.06	41.0%	28.2%	22.4%	5.3%	3.0%
Report writing	2.06	1.29	48.9%	19.6%	15.9%	7.8%	7.8%
Using computers as tools for teaching and learning	2.08	1.05	37.6%	29.2%	23.4%	7.7%	2.1%
Handling administrative responsibilities	2.15	1.10	36.5%	26.6%	25.1%	8.9%	3.0%
Extra-curricular duties	2.43	1.12	26.3%	23.8%	34.0%	11.8%	4.1%

<u>Perceived importance of issues throughout the first year</u>	Average rating	Standard Deviation	Essential (1)	Very important (2)	Reasonably important (3)	Not very important (4)	Unimportant (5)
Managing student behaviour	1.41	0.72	69.2%	23.2%	5.6%	1.2%	0.7%
Student assessment	1.45	0.71	65.3%	26.1%	6.8%	1.3%	0.4%
Catering for students with a range of learning needs	1.50	0.76	63.0%	26.1%	6.8%	1.3%	0.4%
Effective teaching and learning strategies	1.56	0.76	58.2%	29.7%	10.5%	1.2%	0.4%
Report writing	1.57	0.90	63.1%	23.0%	9.0%	3.3%	1.6%
Communicating with parents	1.62	0.86	58.2%	25.8%	13.1%	1.8%	1.2%
Organising student learning	1.70	0.87	51.5%	32.0%	13.0%	2.5%	1.0%
Developing sequenced learning programmes	1.74	0.90	50.2%	31.0%	14.5%	3.2%	1.1%
Teaching strategies for particular content areas	1.74	0.87	48.3%	34.3%	13.0%	3.7%	0.6%
Record keeping	1.75	0.94	51.5%	28.9%	14.9%	2.9%	1.9%
Student motivation	1.75	0.92	50.3%	30.9%	14.2%	3.1%	1.5%
Inclusion of students with a disability	1.80	0.97	48.9%	29.7%	17.0%	1.5%	2.8%
Programme evaluation	1.82	0.97	47.9%	29.8%	17.4%	2.5%	2.5%
Managing stress	1.85	1.04	50.9%	22.1%	20.1%	4.8%	2.2%
Time management	1.90	1.07	48.6%	24.0%	18.7%	6.4%	2.4%
Using computers as tools for teaching and learning	1.92	0.99	42.2%	32.0%	18.9%	4.9%	2.0%
Lesson planning	2.05	1.16	42.8%	25.6%	19.9%	6.9%	4.8%
Handling administrative responsibilities	2.05	1.02	38.0%	29.2%	24.3%	6.8%	1.7%
Extra-curricular duties	2.38	1.09	26.7%	26.3%	33.5%	9.7%	3.8%

Most valuable forms of support received during the first year

Meetings with appointed mentor	25.2%
Peer support group meetings	15.4%
Meetings with senior members of staff	11.3%
Meetings with principal or deputy	11.1%
Attending professional conferences	11.1%
Managing student behaviour	11.1%
Meetings with other beginning teachers	10.2%
Cooperative planning with a team of teachers	7.3%
Other staff observing you teach, and providing feedback	6.1%
Report writing	5.4%
Seminars / meetings organised by District Office	4.5%
Curriculum resources	4.5%
Observing other teachers' lessons	3.6%
Reduced teaching load	3.6%
Team teaching	3.2%
Lesson planning	3.2%
Developing sequenced learning programmes	2.9%
Handling administrative responsibilities	2.9%
Communicating with parents	2.5%
Student assessment	2.3%
Catering for students with a range of learning needs	2.0%
Handbook for new teachers	1.4%
Visits to other schools	1.1%
Effective teaching and learning strategies	1.1%
Teaching strategies for particular content areas	1.1%
Organising student learning	0.9%
Record keeping	0.9%
Programme evaluation	0.7%
Managing stress	0.7%
List of Internet resources for beginning teachers	0.5%
Student motivation	0.5%
Using computers as tools for teaching and learning	0.5%
Time management	0.5%
Inclusion of students with a disability	0.2%
Extra-curricular duties	0.2%

Least valuable forms of support received during the first year

Seminars / meetings organised by District Office	14.4%
Meetings with principal or deputy	13.4%
Meetings with appointed mentor	12.4%
Meetings with senior members of staff	10.4%
Meetings with other beginning teachers	9.9%
Attending professional conferences	9.9%
Handling administrative responsibilities	6.9%
Using computers as tools for teaching and learning	5.0%
Report writing	5.0%
Handbook for new teachers	4.5%
Lesson planning	4.5%
Managing student behaviour	4.0%
Curriculum resources	3.5%

Time management	3.5%
Other staff observing you teach, and providing feedback	3.0%
Extra-curricular duties	3.0%
Peer support group meetings	2.5%
Communicating with parents	2.5%
Observing other teachers' lessons	2.0%
Team teaching	2.0%
Cooperative planning with a team of teachers	1.5%
Organising student learning	1.5%
Record keeping	1.5%
Reduced teaching load	1.0%
Effective teaching and learning strategies	1.0%
Developing sequenced learning programmes	1.0%
Managing stress	1.0%
Contact (eg email) with beginning teachers in other schools	0.5%
Visits to other schools	0.5%
List of Internet resources for beginning teachers	0.5%
Catering for students with a range of learning needs	0.5%
Inclusion of students with a disability	0.5%
Teaching strategies for particular content areas	0.5%
Programme evaluation	0.5%
Student assessment	0.5%

OVERVIEW

To what extent did the school's support programme for beginning teachers assist you during the first few weeks?

To a great extent (1)	20.6%
To a reasonable extent (2)	38.6%
To a limited extent (3)	29.4%
Not at all (4)	11.4%
Average rating:	2.31

To what extent has the school's support programme for beginning teachers assisted you during your first year?

To a great extent (1)	24.4%
To a reasonable extent (2)	40.1%
To a limited extent (3)	26.9%
Not at all (4)	8.5%
Average rating:	2.20

To what extent has the support offered by the school during your first year been specifically tailored to your individual needs?

To a great extent (1)	16.6%
To a reasonable extent (2)	36.5%
To a limited extent (3)	29.2%
Not at all (4)	17.7%
Average rating:	2.48

ASSESSMENT

In your experience, which of the following phrases best describes the relationship between the processes of assessment and support:

Not applicable to my situation	23.3%
Completely separate	23.2%
Integrated and mutually supportive	43.9%
Integrated but conflicting	6.2%
Other	3.4%

PRE-SERVICE TRAINING

In general, how well did your pre-service teacher education course prepare you for the first year of teaching?

Very well (1)	12.9%
Well (2)	31.7%
Adequately (3)	36.1%
Not very well (4)	15.0%
Poorly (5)	4.3%
Average rating:	2.66

<u>Effectiveness of pre-service training</u>	Average rating	Standard Deviation	Very effective (1)	Reasonably effective (2)	Neutral (3)	Not very effective (4)	Ineffective (5)
Lesson planning	1.98	1.04	39.2%	35.5%	16.5%	5.3%	3.4%
Effective teaching and learning strategies	2.25	0.98	23.4%	40.8%	25.5%	8.0%	2.4%
Teaching strategies for particular content areas	2.46	1.11	20.5%	36.1%	26.7%	10.6%	6.2%
Organising student learning	2.50	1.01	15.6%	39.0%	28.5%	13.8%	3.1%
Catering for students with a range of learning needs	2.62	1.13	17.4%	31.8%	27.7%	17.4%	5.7%
Developing sequenced learning programmes	2.69	1.17	17.1%	29.5%	28.5%	17.3%	7.5%
Student motivation	2.77	1.10	12.8%	28.3%	34.9%	16.7%	7.2%
Programme evaluation	2.78	1.13	13.9%	27.9%	31.8%	18.8%	7.7%
Student assessment	2.90	1.18	11.8%	28.9%	28.7%	19.1%	11.5%
Using computers as tools for teaching and learning	2.94	1.26	15.3%	22.9%	28.9%	18.6%	14.2%
Managing student behaviour	3.01	1.21	11.4%	24.6%	28.0%	23.0%	12.9%
Inclusion of students with a disability	3.08	1.23	11.6%	21.5%	29.3%	22.0%	15.6%
Time management	3.26	1.25	9.7%	17.9%	30.1%	21.3%	20.9%
Record keeping	3.36	1.17	7.0%	17.0%	28.4%	28.3%	19.4%
Communicating with parents	3.87	1.13	4.1%	7.5%	23.2%	26.9%	38.2%
Report writing	3.88	1.13	4.6%	7.1%	21.9%	28.1%	38.3%
Managing stress	3.91	1.12	3.4%	8.6%	21.1%	27.3%	39.6%
Extra-curricular duties	3.91	1.09	2.8%	8.1%	22.3%	28.6%	38.2%
Handling administrative responsibilities	4.01	1.06	2.8%	5.4%	22.7%	25.9%	43.2%

Did your Education faculty contact you during your first year of teaching?

Yes	15.8%
No	84.2%

Do you think university Education faculties should play a continuing role in supporting beginning teachers during the first year of teaching?

Yes	61.6%
No	38.4%

If yes, what kinds of support should they provide?

Follow up to check satisfaction with the work environment	33.2%
Organise beginning teacher support networks	25.3%
Provide on-call assistance (via telephone or website) to help with specific teaching issues	20.3%
Gather feedback to evaluate and improve relevance of teacher education courses	19.0%
Provide information about curriculum resources	17.0%
Provide professional development on new teaching strategies	14.6%
Offer counselling support - the chance to talk to someone outside the work environment	11.3%
Follow up to see if we've got a job.	1.9%

Appendix B: Supervisor Survey

DEMOGRAPHICS

<i>Sample size:</i>	380
<u>State</u>	
NSW	16.3%
VIC	42.1%
QLD	19.5%
TAS	6.8%
SA	3.4%
WA	8.9%
ACT	2.9%
 <u>Position in relation to beginning teachers:</u>	
Principal:	54.0%
Deputy Principal:	27.0%
Supervisor:	7.2%
Appointed mentor:	3.9%
Other:	7.8%
 <u>School Sector</u>	
Government:	75.1%
Catholic:	19.6%
Independent:	5.2%
 <u>Type of school</u>	
Primary	59.8%
Secondary	27.3%
K/P/R -12	11.3%
Special	1.6%
 <u>Size of school</u>	
Less than 5 staff	4.3%
6-10 staff	4.5%
11-20 staff	18.1%
21-30 staff	24.7%
31-50 staff	20.5%
More than 50 staff	27.9%
 <u>Location of school:</u>	
Capital city	42.9%
Regional city (pop. more than 25,000)	19.7%
Regional town (pop. 1000-25,000)	25.6%
Other country area	11.9%

TEACHING ASSIGNMENTS

Are beginning teachers asked about their class teaching preferences prior to allocating teaching loads?

Yes	79.7%
No	20.3%

Are beginning teachers ever asked to teach in areas for which they have not been trained at university?

Frequently (1)	2.1%
Sometimes (2)	19.2%
Rarely (3)	41.9%
Never (4)	38.8%
Average rating:	3.12

Compared to more experienced teachers, are beginning teachers given any reductions in:

Teaching hours?	45.8%
Range of subjects or levels?	16.3%
Class size(s)?	12.1%
Non-teaching duties?	32.1%
Other?	2.4%

To what extent are beginning teachers shielded from 'difficult' classes in their first year?

Always (1)	2.7%
As much as possible (2)	59.5%
Sometimes (3)	31.1%
Never (4)	6.7%

SUPPORT PROGRAMMES FOR BEGINNING TEACHERS

Do beginning teachers participate in support programmes organised by:

Your system?	72.4%
Your district?	60.3%
Other organisations (eg professional associations)?	26.6%

Does the school have an organised programme of support for beginning teachers?

Yes	86.8%
No	13.2%

If yes, is participation in the programme:

Compulsory?	78.4%
Voluntary?	21.6%

Do beginning teachers have a documented professional learning plan for their first year of teaching?

Yes	56.0%
No	44.0%

Number of schools using mentoring as a formal strategy: 314 (82.6%)

Do mentors in your school receive training for their role?

Yes	31.8%
No	68.2%

Are mentors given time release to perform their role?

Yes	28.4%
No	71.6%

On what basis are mentors assigned to particular beginning teachers?

Same year level	46.6%
Same curriculum area	30.0%
Skills and interpersonal qualities necessary for the role	25.4%
Senior teacher / year level coordinator	13.8%
Similar personalities or interests	7.8%
Physical proximity (eg same office, neighbouring classroom)	6.4%
Those who express willingness or interest	5.3%
Chosen by beginning teacher / mutual choice	4.6%
Same age group	2.8%
Same gender	0.7%

How would you describe the role performed by the mentor?

To provide curriculum and/or teaching support	53.5%
To provide general professional support	51.5%
To act as a critical friend and provide feedback	45.2%
To provide personal support - a shoulder to cry on	40.2%
To act as an experienced role model	11.6%
To act as an advocate within the school	9.1%

ORIENTATION

Strategies Used for Orientation

Meeting(s) with principal/senior staff	91.6%
Pre-commencement visit(s)	81.1%
Initial support person identified	81.1%
Telephone contact from the school	79.5%
Orientation booklet/ resource package	79.2%
Seminars/meetings organised by District Office	53.7%
Organised social function(s) to meet the staff	52.6%
Letter of welcome	47.6%
Meetings with beginning teachers from other schools	46.3%
School website address	34.5%
Contact details (eg email addresses) of beginning teachers in other schools	7.9%
Other	6.6%

<u>Effectiveness of strategies used</u>	Average rating	Standard deviation	Extremely effective (1)	Very effective (2)	Reasonably effective (3)	Not very effective (4)	Ineffective (5)
Pre-commencement visit(s)	1.52	0.75	60.7%	29.4%	8.4%	0.6%	0.9%
Initial support person identified	1.60	0.74	53.3%	35.3%	9.9%	1.2%	0.3%
Meeting(s) with principal/senior staff	1.71	0.76	45.2%	40.4%	12.4%	2.0%	0.0%
Orientation booklet/ resource package	1.93	0.84	34.8%	41.5%	20.1%	3.2%	0.3%
Telephone contact from the school	1.97	0.88	34.2%	39.7%	21.3%	4.5%	0.3%
Organised social function(s) to meet the staff	1.99	0.89	34.0%	38.8%	21.5%	5.7%	0.0%
Letter of welcome	2.18	1.04	31.6%	31.6%	26.4%	8.3%	2.1%
Meetings with beginning teachers from other schools	2.22	1.01	25.9%	39.4%	24.4%	7.3%	3.1%
Seminars/meetings organised by District Office	2.46	1.05	19.1%	35.5%	30.0%	11.4%	4.1%
Contact details (eg email addresses) of beginning teachers in other schools	2.52	1.06	19.2%	28.8%	36.5%	11.5%	3.8%
School website address	2.97	1.04	7.4%	24.3%	39.9%	20.3%	8.1%

Information provided at orientation

School rules and policies	95.3%
How to access school facilities and equipment (eg photocopying)	90.0%
The school's philosophy/ mission	89.5%
The school curriculum	89.2%
Administrative procedures	87.4%
Availability of curriculum materials and teaching resources	86.6%
Availability of computers, Internet and email	85.8%
Expectations about their teaching role and responsibilities	85.8%
Library facilities	82.6%
Availability of support and specialist staff	78.4%
Profile of the school community	76.3%
School decision-making processes	72.6%
Roles of senior staff	69.2%
External specialist services available to the school (eg guidance services)	63.2%
School committees and how to get involved	63.2%
Social/cultural background of students	62.9%
Information about the union and/or professional associations	62.6%
Information about support programmes available to beginning teachers	60.3%
Teachers' rights and legal obligations	60.0%
Policies about EEO and harassment	57.9%
Conditions of employment (eg salary details)	56.6%
Expectations about extra-curricular duties	56.1%
Information about procedures for probation and/or registration	55.8%
Role of parent groups	48.4%
Teacher grievance procedures	43.9%
The role of District Office	36.6%
Advice/support regarding accommodation	31.1%
Other	2.4%

<u>Usefulness of information</u>	Average rating	Standard deviation	Essential (1)	Very useful (2)	Reasonably useful (3)	Not very useful (4)	Not at all useful (5)
How to access school facilities and equipment (eg photocopying)	1.44	0.72	65.6%	27.7%	4.6%	1.2%	0.9%
Availability of curriculum materials and teaching resources	1.45	0.67	63.9%	28.7%	6.6%	0.6%	0.3%
The school curriculum	1.52	0.72	59.2%	31.6%	7.5%	1.4%	0.3%
Availability of computers, Internet and email	1.56	0.74	57.7%	30.2%	10.6%	1.5%	0.0%
School rules and policies	1.60	0.74	52.2%	38.0%	7.9%	1.4%	0.5%
Expectations about their teaching role and responsibilities	1.62	0.75	52.5%	34.3%	11.6%	1.5%	0.0%
Library facilities	1.68	0.78	49.2%	35.3%	13.9%	1.3%	0.3%
Administrative procedures	1.85	0.82	39.1%	39.7%	17.9%	3.2%	0.0%
Information about procedures for probation and/or registration	1.92	0.91	39.9%	34.4%	19.7%	6.0%	0.0%
Conditions of employment (eg salary details)	1.95	1.01	42.6%	29.1%	21.1%	5.4%	1.8%
Availability of support and specialist staff	1.98	0.90	34.4%	38.0%	23.7%	2.6%	1.3%
Information about support programmes available to beginning teachers	1.99	0.84	31.4%	42.7%	21.8%	4.2%	0.0%
Social/cultural background of students	2.01	0.86	30.2%	43.9%	20.8%	4.7%	0.4%

Profile of the school community	2.03	0.80	27.0%	46.7%	23.0%	3.3%	0.0%
School decision-making processes	2.03	0.82	28.2%	44.3%	23.6%	3.9%	0.0%
Teachers' rights and legal obligations	2.08	0.88	28.9%	40.6%	25.1%	5.0%	0.5%
Roles of senior staff	2.09	0.97	27.6%	39.7%	28.7%	4.0%	0.4%
The school's philosophy/ mission	2.10	0.90	29.2%	38.2%	26.9%	5.2%	0.6%
Expectations about extra-curricular duties	2.15	0.93	24.2%	46.2%	22.0%	5.4%	2.2%
School committees and how to get involved	2.20	0.88	22.7%	42.6%	27.3%	7.0%	0.4%
Advice/support regarding accommodation	2.27	1.18	28.2%	39.7%	16.8%	7.6%	7.6%
External specialist services available to the school (eg guidance services)	2.28	0.74	25.2%	31.5%	34.3%	7.9%	1.2%
Policies about EEO and harassment	2.43	0.93	17.3%	34.6%	37.2%	9.5%	1.3%
Information about the union and/or professional associations	2.45	0.88	14.7%	36.7%	38.4%	9.4%	0.8%
Role of parent groups	2.51	0.83	12.5%	33.3%	44.8%	9.4%	0.0%
Teacher grievance procedures	2.62	0.94	12.8%	29.4%	42.8%	12.8%	2.2%
The role of District Office	2.94	0.99	7.3%	23.8%	43.0%	19.2%	6.6%

To what extent are you satisfied that the school's programme meets the orientation needs of beginning teachers?

To a great extent (1)	26.8%
To a reasonable extent (2)	60.5%
To a limited extent (3)	12.1%
Not at all (4)	0.6%
Average rating:	1.87

Are there any aspects of your school's orientation programme which could be improved?

More professional / structured / formalised / better planned approach	28.8%
Provide release time for mentors / common time for mentors and teachers to meet / time for collaborative planning	27.0%
Develop handbook / resource package / better documentation	20.9%
Provide reduced teaching load / more DOTT time / more release time for beginning teachers	16.0%
Provide more personal support	10.4%
Provide more individualized / classroom support	8.6%
Arrange time to observe experienced teachers	6.1%
Arrange contact with other first year teachers	4.9%
Involve greater range of staff	4.3%
Arrange training for mentors	3.7%
Arrange time to visit other schools	0.6%

SUPPORT PROGRAMMES - IN THE FIRST FEW WEEKS AND THROUGHOUT THE FIRST YEAR

<u>Strategies used</u>	First few weeks	Throughout first year
Meetings with principal or deputy	89.5%	69.2%
Curriculum resources	77.4%	70.8%
Cooperative planning with a team of teachers	72.4%	77.4%
Meetings with senior members of staff (eg year level coordinator)	70.0%	58.7%
Meetings with appointed mentor	66.6%	60.0%
Handbook for new teachers	66.6%	31.8%
Meetings with other beginning teachers	48.7%	47.4%
Peer support group meetings	46.6%	43.2%
Attending professional conferences	40.5%	69.2%
Seminars / meetings organised by District Office	40.3%	57.2%
Reduced teaching load	38.2%	37.2%
Observing other teachers' lessons	34.2%	56.3%
Team teaching	33.9%	43.2%
Other staff observing them teach, and providing feedback	30.3%	51.8%
Access to confidential counselling	25.3%	33.2%
Visits to other schools	16.1%	32.6%
List of Internet resources for beginning teachers	13.4%	17.1%
Contact (eg email) with beginning teachers in other schools	6.8%	14.7%
Other	2.9%	3.4%

<u>Effectiveness of strategies in the first few weeks</u>	Average rating	Standard deviation	Extremely effective (1)	Very effective (2)	Reasonably effective (3)	Not very effective (4)	Ineffective (5)
Cooperative planning with a team of teachers	1.44	0.73	66.8%	25.8%	5.2%	1.5%	0.7%
Meetings with appointed mentor	1.52	0.74	59.8%	30.7%	7.5%	1.6%	0.4%
Meetings with senior members of staff (eg year level coordinator)	1.60	0.75	52.6%	37.4%	8.1%	1.1%	0.7%
Curriculum resources	1.61	0.75	53.7%	32.4%	12.5%	1.54%	0.0%
Peer support group meetings	1.61	0.73	51.9%	36.5%	9.9%	1.7%	0.0%
Handbook for new teachers	1.75	0.84	46.2%	36.4%	14.6%	2.0%	0.8%
Meetings with principal or deputy	1.79	0.79	41.8%	39.7%	16.5%	2.1%	0.0%
Observing other teachers' lessons	1.79	0.86	41.8%	42.6%	11.3%	2.8%	1.4%
Reduced teaching load	1.81	0.94	47.7%	30.5%	16.6%	4.0%	1.3%
Team teaching	1.81	0.95	43.7%	40.0%	10.4%	3.0%	3.0%
Meetings with other beginning teachers	1.88	0.87	40.4%	34.7%	21.8%	2.6%	0.5%
Other staff observing them teach, and providing feedback	1.94	0.95	38.3%	38.3%	16.4%	5.5%	1.6%
Access to confidential counselling	2.13	1.14	36.9%	30.1%	22.3%	4.9%	5.8%
Attending professional conferences	2.29	1.06	25.9%	34.5%	28.8%	6.5%	4.3%
List of Internet resources for beginning teachers	2.31	1.01	23.4%	34.4%	32.8%	6.3%	3.1%
Visits to other schools	2.44	1.28	27.8%	29.2%	25.0%	6.9%	11.1%
Seminars / meetings organised by District Office	2.54	1.07	19.4%	28.1%	35.6%	12.5%	4.4%
Contact (eg email) with beginning teachers in other schools	2.63	1.05	20.0%	17.5%	45.0%	15.0%	2.5%

<u>Effectiveness of strategies throughout the first year</u>	Average rating	Standard deviation	Extremely effective (1)	Very effective (2)	Reasonably effective (3)	Not very effective (4)	Ineffective (5)
Cooperative planning with a team of teachers	1.38	0.65	69.0%	24.8%	5.1%	0.7%	0.3%
Curriculum resources	1.51	0.67	57.8%	33.3%	8.5%	0.4%	0.0%
Meetings with appointed mentor	1.60	0.73	53.6%	34.2%	11.0%	1.3%	0.0%
Team teaching	1.60	0.73	51.2%	40.6%	5.9%	1.8%	0.6%
Meetings with senior members of staff (eg year level coordinator)	1.62	0.73	51.1%	37.1%	10.9%	0.4%	0.4%
Peer support group meetings	1.63	0.71	49.7%	37.9%	11.8%	0.6%	0.0%
Observing other teachers' lessons	1.70	0.78	47.5%	38.1%	11.7%	2.7%	0.0%
Meetings with other beginning teachers	1.81	0.77	39.8%	41.4%	17.2%	1.6%	0.0%
Other staff observing them teach, and providing feedback	1.81	0.79	38.8%	43.7%	15.0%	1.9%	0.5%
Meetings with principal or deputy	1.81	0.75	37.9%	43.9%	17.0%	1.1%	0.0%
Reduced teaching load	1.89	0.96	43.9%	31.1%	18.2%	6.1%	0.7%
Attending professional conferences	1.91	0.81	34.2%	43.2%	19.5%	3.0%	0.0%
Visits to other schools	2.01	0.78	26.2%	50.0%	21.5%	1.5%	0.8%
Access to confidential counselling	2.10	1.00	33.3%	34.1%	23.5%	7.6%	1.5%
Handbook for new teachers	2.14	0.98	29.7%	36.7%	25.0%	7.0%	1.6%
List of Internet resources for beginning teachers	2.22	0.86	21.6%	40.5%	33.8%	2.7%	1.4%
Seminars / meetings organised by District Office	2.28	0.98	25.7%	31.7%	33.9%	6.9%	1.8%
Contact (eg email) with beginning teachers in other schools	2.55	0.88	12.1%	34.8%	39.4%	13.6%	0.0%

<u>Issues emphasised</u>	First few weeks	Throughout first year
Managing student behaviour	80.8%	80.5%
Catering for students with a range of learning needs	66.6%	79.2%
Organising student learning	62.4%	65.8%
Effective teaching and learning strategies	60.0%	73.4%
Lesson planning	58.4%	59.2%
Student assessment	53.9%	80.5%
Communicating with parents	48.9%	68.7%
Record keeping	47.6%	65.8%
Using computers as tools for teaching and learning	46.6%	68.2%
Inclusion of students with a disability	42.6%	51.6%
Developing sequenced learning programmes	40.3%	55.5%
Teaching strategies for particular content areas	39.2%	56.8%
Handling administrative responsibilities	38.9%	54.5%
Report writing	35.8%	72.1%
Programme evaluation	35.8%	66.8%
Student motivation	35.5%	46.6%
Time management	32.2%	48.5%
Extra-curricular duties	27.4%	43.2%
Managing stress	26.3%	43.4%
Other	1.2%	1.5%

<u>Usefulness of support offered in the first few weeks</u>	Average rating	Standard deviation	Extremely useful (1)	Very useful (2)	Reasonably useful (3)	Not very useful (4)	Not at all useful (5)
Managing student behaviour	1.53	0.74	59.7%	29.4%	9.7%	1.0%	0.3%
Lesson planning	1.70	0.81	47.6%	37.9%	11.5%	2.6%	0.4%
Organising student learning	1.70	0.79	47.9%	36.3%	13.3%	2.5%	0.0%
Effective teaching and learning strategies	1.76	0.89	48.5%	31.8%	15.0%	4.3%	0.4%
Catering for students with a range of learning needs	1.76	0.86	47.5%	32.2%	16.9%	3.5%	0.0%
Teaching strategies for particular content areas	1.80	0.79	41.1%	49.7%	17.2%	2.0%	0.0%
Communicating with parents	1.84	0.84	40.6%	37.5%	18.8%	3.1%	0.0%
Developing sequenced learning programmes	1.89	0.90	39.9%	38.0%	16.5%	5.1%	0.6%
Student assessment	1.89	0.89	39.4%	38.0%	17.8%	3.8%	0.9%
Inclusion of students with a disability	1.90	0.91	40.7%	33.5%	22.2%	2.4%	1.2%
Student motivation	1.90	0.88	39.7%	34.0%	23.4%	2.1%	0.7%
Record keeping	1.95	0.87	35.0%	39.9%	20.8%	3.8%	0.5%
Time management	2.00	1.04	43.1%	21.6%	28.4%	5.2%	1.7%
Using computers as tools for teaching and learning	2.00	0.86	32.6%	38.7%	24.9%	3.9%	0.0%
Programme evaluation	2.07	0.97	32.4%	37.2%	22.3%	6.8%	1.4%
Managing stress	2.08	1.04	36.8%	30.2%	23.6%	7.5%	1.9%
Handling administrative responsibilities	2.18	1.07	31.6%	32.9%	24.5%	7.7%	3.2%
Extra-curricular duties	2.32	1.07	25.2%	34.2%	28.8%	7.2%	4.5%
Report writing	2.41	1.24	26.1%	34.6%	22.9%	5.2%	11.1%

<u>Usefulness of support offered throughout the first year</u>	Average rating	Standard deviation	Extremely useful (1)	Very useful (2)	Reasonably useful (3)	Not very useful (4)	Not at all useful (5)
Managing student behaviour	1.54	0.72	56.7%	33.7%	8.3%	1.0%	0.3%
Effective teaching and learning strategies	1.61	0.72	51.2%	38.8%	8.2%	1.8%	0.0%
Catering for students with a range of learning needs	1.65	0.79	51.8%	33.6%	12.7%	1.6%	0.3%
Student assessment	1.67	0.73	47.6%	39.4%	11.7%	1.3%	0.0%
Report writing	1.68	0.71	44.1%	44.8%	9.7%	1.4%	0.0%
Organising student learning	1.69	0.73	45.6%	40.9%	12.3%	1.2%	0.0%
Communicating with parents	1.73	0.75	43.2%	41.7%	13.9%	0.8%	0.4%
Lesson planning	1.74	0.76	44.1%	38.4%	16.6%	0.9%	0.0%
Developing sequenced learning programmes	1.76	0.74	41.2%	42.6%	15.3%	0.9%	0.0%
Teaching strategies for particular content areas	1.76	0.82	45.2%	36.2%	16.3%	1.8%	0.5%
Record keeping	1.78	0.80	43.7%	36.6%	18.1%	1.6%	0.0%
Student motivation	1.82	0.81	40.9%	39.2%	17.1%	2.8%	0.0%
Using computers as tools for teaching and learning	1.82	0.80	39.8%	41.0%	16.9%	1.9%	0.4%
Inclusion of students with a disability	1.83	0.85	41.9%	36.4%	18.2%	3.5%	0.0%
Programme evaluation	1.84	0.75	34.9%	47.8%	15.3%	2.0%	0.0%
Time management	1.91	0.87	38.4%	36.5%	21.8%	2.8%	0.5%
Managing stress	2.01	0.90	33.5%	38.9%	21.0%	6.6%	0.0%
Handling administrative responsibilities	2.17	0.93	28.8%	32.2%	32.7%	5.8%	0.5%
Extra-curricular duties	2.17	0.99	29.9%	32.3%	29.9%	6.0%	1.8%

OVERVIEW

To what extent does the school's support programme help beginning teachers 'survive' the first few weeks of teaching?

To a great extent (1)	36.6%
To a reasonable extent (2)	55.7%
To a limited extent (3)	7.7%
Not at all (4)	0.0%
Average rating:	1.71

Are there any areas in which you would like to improve the support provided to beginning teachers during their first few weeks of teaching?

Provide reduced teaching load / more DOTT time / more release time for beginning teachers	30.4%
Provide release time for mentors / common time for mentors and teachers to meet / time for collaborative planning	26.7%
Provide more individualized / classroom support	17.8%
More professional / structured / formalised / better planned approach	14.1%
Develop handbook / resource package / better documentation	8.9%
Provide more personal support	6.7%
Involve greater range of staff	5.2%
Arrange contact with other first year teachers	3.7%
Arrange time to observe experienced teachers	3.7%
Arrange time to visit other schools	1.5%
Arrange training for mentors	0.7%

To what extent does the school's support programme assist beginning teachers over the course of their first year?

To a great extent (1)	30.7%
To a reasonable extent (2)	53.2%
To a limited extent (3)	16.1%
Not at all (4)	0.0%
Average rating:	1.85

To what extent can the school's support programme be tailored to beginning teachers' individual needs?

To a great extent (1)	29.5%
To a reasonable extent (2)	54.2%
To a limited extent (3)	13.9%
Not at all (4)	2.1%
Average rating:	1.88

What processes have you used to evaluate the effectiveness of your support programme?

Professional conversations / oral feedback / regular meeting	66.5%
Observation	15.2%
Survey / checklist	12.3%
Feedback from mentors	11.9%
Informal feedback	11.5%
Performance management interviews / reviews for probation report	8.2%
Interviews / Meetings with principal	3.0%
Use beginning teacher competency framework	0.4%

Are there any areas in which you would like to improve the support provided to beginning teachers over the course of their first year?

Provide more individualized / classroom support	24.8%
Provide release time for mentors / common time for mentors and teachers to meet / time for collaborative planning	21.9%
Provide reduced teaching load / more DOTT time / more release time for beginning teachers	21.2%
More professional / structured / formalised / better planned approach	11.7%
Provide more personal support	10.2%
Involve greater range of staff	8.8%
Arrange contact with other first year teachers	5.8%
Develop handbook / resource package / better documentation	4.4%
Arrange time to observe experienced teachers	4.4%
Arrange training for mentors	2.9%
Arrange time to visit other schools	1.5%

ASSESSMENT

In your school, which of the following phrases best describes the relationship between the processes of assessment and support:

Not applicable to my school	11.9%
Completely separate	10.8%
Integrated and mutually supportive	73.0%
Integrated but conflicting	3.2%
Other	1.1%

PRE-SERVICE TRAINING

In general, how well do pre-service teacher education courses prepare beginning teachers for the first year of teaching?

Very well (1)	4.3%
Well (2)	25.3%
Adequately (3)	45.2%
Not very well (4)	21.5%
Poorly (5)	3.8%
Average rating:	2.96

<u>Effectiveness of pre-service training</u>	Average rating	Standard deviation	Very effective (1)	Reasonably effective (2)	Neutral (3)	Not very effective (4)	Ineffective (5)
Using computers as tools for teaching and learning	2.55	0.91	11.5%	38.8%	34.2%	14.4%	1.1%
Lesson planning	2.58	0.95	9.0%	44.7%	27.7%	16.2%	2.4%
Teaching strategies for particular content areas	2.61	0.90	8.4%	40.6%	34.3%	14.7%	1.9%
Effective teaching and learning strategies	2.66	0.83	4.8%	41.5%	38.3%	13.8%	1.6%
Organising student learning	2.82	0.85	2.7%	35.7%	42.6%	15.5%	3.5%
Developing sequenced learning programmes	2.87	0.88	4.1%	30.0%	44.1%	18.3%	3.5%
Student motivation	2.98	0.96	3.6%	29.8%	38.0%	22.1%	6.6%
Programme evaluation	3.15	0.90	2.7%	19.9%	43.5%	28.0%	5.9%
Student assessment	3.18	0.92	3.2%	19.0%	40.8%	30.8%	6.2%
Record keeping	3.23	0.92	2.4%	18.6%	40.2%	31.3%	7.5%
Time management	3.24	1.10	1.3%	9.4%	44.1%	29.4%	15.9%
Managing student behaviour	3.30	1.01	2.4%	18.2%	40.6%	24.3%	14.4%
Catering for students with a range of learning needs	3.34	0.94	1.3%	17.7%	37.5%	32.4%	11.0%
Inclusion of students with a disability	3.43	1.02	3.3%	15.2%	31.7%	35.0%	14.9%
Extra-curricular duties	3.48	0.95	0.8%	13.8%	38.0%	31.3%	16.1%
Report writing	3.57	0.95	2.2%	9.5%	34.1%	37.7%	16.5%
Communicating with parents	3.60	0.87	1.3%	8.1%	33.4%	43.9%	13.2%
Handling administrative responsibilities	3.65	0.88	0.5%	8.4%	33.2%	40.6%	17.2%
Managing stress	3.72	0.93	0.6%	8.0%	32.7%	35.8%	22.8%

In what ways, if any, could tertiary Education courses better prepare beginning teachers for the first year of teaching?

Extended practicum / internships	61.4%
Better link between theory and practice	26.4%
More emphasis on behaviour management / teaching skills	16.1%
Stronger focus on current education system policies / priorities	11.1%
Focus on broader professional responsibilities such as dealing with parents	8.6%
Focus on sequenced learning programmes	6.1%
Better screening procedures to determine suitability for the profession	1.1%

Do you think university Education faculties should play a continuing role in supporting beginning teachers during the first year of teaching?

Yes	57.0%
No	43.0%

What kinds of support should university Education faculties provide to beginning teachers during the first year of teaching?

Gather feedback to evaluate and improve relevance of teacher education	37.1%
Organise beginning teacher support networks	25.1%
Provide professional development on new teaching strategies	24.6%
Provide on-call assistance (via telephone or website) to help with specific teaching issues	24.6%
Follow up to check satisfaction with the work environment	17.7%
Provide information about curriculum resources	9.7%
Offer counselling support - the chance to talk to someone outside the work environment	8.0%