MENTORING, REFLECTION
AND LEARNING PORTFOLIOS.
AN INVESTIGATION INTO PRACTICES THAT
CONTRIBUTE TO PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

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UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY
MENTORING, REFLECTION
AND LEARNING PORTFOLIOS.
AN INVESTIGATION INTO PRACTICES THAT
CONTRIBUTE TO PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

A portfolio submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of
Doctor of Education
from the University of Western Sydney

By Margaret Kathleen Ann Clarke B. Ed., M.Ed (Admin).
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My appreciation is expressed to Professor Neil Baumgart who started me on my own journey of professional learning.

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A deep sense of love and gratitude is given to my mother Margaret, father John and sister Deb who always encouraged me to further my education and continue with my professional learning.

I thank my darling husband Garry Pursehouse who I love very dearly and who has continually supported me to complete this doctorate.
STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICATION

No part of this portfolio has been submitted previously for a higher degree or similar award to any other university or institution.

..............................................................

(Signature)

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(Date)
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ABSTRACT

This portfolio provides evidence of sustained activity, research and publications related to the broad area of professional learning. This research examined the construct of professional learning and the ways in which a number of factors can contribute to and assist this learning. The fundamental purpose of this body of work was to challenge current understandings of factors that contribute to professional learning and this research specifically argues that professional learning can be contributed to by a number of factors.

The overall research focus for the studies was to explore the nature of the interrelationship between the factors of mentoring, reflection and portfolio development as key aspects of professional learning. Investigation into the practices of mentoring, reflection and portfolio development which underpinned the whole of this research led to the evolution of a conceptual framework. This framework captured the essence of professional learning and the processes that could assist beginning teachers in their learning.

The research was set in authentic settings including the Bachelor of Education Primary Program at the University of Western Sydney, Nepean, the New South Wales Department of Education School Leadership Preparation Program and primary schools in Western Sydney.
A number of data collection methods were utilised in the studies including document analysis, semi-structured interviews, focus questions, focus group meetings, self-reflection and reflective writing and narratives.

This portfolio also presents a record of my scholarly work and research achievements. These are recorded as evidence of my professional learning and have taken the form of participation in conferences, invited presentation, workshops and publications. As well, the New South Wales Department of Education School Leadership Preparation Program Module also is presented as evidence of active working partnerships with this educational organisation. Published and unpublished research papers written individually by the author and with co-authors are also included.

The contribution of this research to the field of professional learning and the recognition of this research in the profession is highlighted in this portfolio. This research breaks ground by providing a conceptual framework that shows not only the relationship within and between the investigated practices but also the imperative interrelatedness of these practices in developing a sound and resonant professional learning process.
STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

In this portfolio there are some papers that are written individually by the author and some that are co-authored. The process of writing co-authored papers proved the impact that mentoring can have on professional learning at a personal level. The process of thinking, researching and writing in a collegial manner enhanced my skills in academic presentations and my writing ability. First hand experience of being mentored by two more experienced colleagues demonstrated the power of the mentoring relationship in developing professional learning. This mentoring experience provided me with the ability and confidence to personally research, write individually authored papers and present them at international and national conferences.
The following table summarises the papers and training materials individually written.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publication Type and Date</th>
<th>Presentation Venue</th>
<th>Title of Article</th>
<th>Publication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unpublished paper 1992</td>
<td>University of Western Sydney Ed. D Conference, Kingswood, NSW</td>
<td>Teachers’ Work: Teacher competencies and their role in the professional development of teachers</td>
<td>Unpublished paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CO-AUTHORSHIP

I have made a range of contributions in the co-authored papers including initiating discussions with co-authors to respond to call for papers; initiating the main ideas for papers; developing the research design; collecting, collating and analyzing data; drafting plans for papers; drafting conceptual models; writing sections of papers; editing papers; presenting individually and with co-authors at international and national conferences; and incorporating reviewer comments into papers. The ability to write and present arguments in a cohesive whole has been achieved in the co-authored articles. My contribution to each of the co-authored papers is outlined in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Presented/Published</th>
<th>Title of Article</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Publication</th>
<th>Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001 Feb 6–9</td>
<td>The Internship: An Innovative Practice in Quality Teaching</td>
<td>First author: M. Clarke</td>
<td>Paper presented at the Practical Experiences in Professional Education 5th International Conference, Melbourne</td>
<td>Respond to call for papers–M. Clarke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Other authors: A. Power A. Hine</td>
<td></td>
<td>Main ideas for paper–M. Clarke, A. Power, A. Hine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Draft plan and abstract–M. Clarke, A. Power, A. Hine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Background knowledge and literature base–M. Clarke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Designing research, data collection, collation and analysis–M. Clarke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Model development–M. Clarke, A. Power, A. Hine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Main responsibility for writing paper–M. Clarke, A. Power, A. Hine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Presented at conference by three authors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Authors</td>
<td>Role</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Month</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Authors</td>
<td>Details</td>
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</table>
This Portfolio is divided into two parts:

(i) the overarching statement and

(ii) the published and unpublished papers that construct the research that is core to this doctorate.

PART ONE

OVERARCHING STATEMENT

The overarching statement contains two main sections.

SECTION 1

Section one explains a personal history of research development, the theoretical underpinnings of the research, the contribution of this research to the field of professional learning, recognition of this research in the profession including conference presentations, invited presentations, grant successes and the research method and process.
SECTION 2

The second section discusses the literature pertaining to professional learning and the critical literature related to mentoring, reflection and portfolio development.

A summary of the findings of the research and conclusions are discussed and future directions for the research and the researcher are projected.

A reference list for sections one and two is included.

PART TWO

PUBLISHED AND UNPUBLISHED PAPERS

Part two of this portfolio provides evidence of my professional learning in the form of work published in international journals, refereed conference proceedings, unpublished papers and New South Wales Department of Education Training and Development Module on School Leadership.

Each of the papers is grouped according to the main factor that is discussed as part of the research. A brief introduction to each of the papers is given to show their interconnectedness to my other studies and the development of the ideas throughout the research.
PART ONE

OVERARCHING STATEMENT
PART ONE

The overall research focus for this doctorate was to explore the nature of the interrelationship between the factors of mentoring, reflection and portfolio development as key aspects of professional learning. The research focus arose from the identification of the purpose of the research which was to identify and interrogate factors that can contribute to and enhance professional learning.

SECTION ONE

PERSONAL HISTORY OF RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT

As in most qualitative research journeys the focus of the research is developed over time. This research was initiated from a study that investigated teachers’ work. The study began in 1992 with content analyses of research of teachers’ work being conducted in the different states of Australia at that time. Documents describing teachers’ work were examined from all the states in Australia. A synthesis of common themes was developed from the content analyses and a framework of domains which described teachers’ work was developed.

The domains identified from this research consequently led to the development of a model that incorporated three factors (constituting a portfolio development model) that contributed to teachers’ professional learning. This portfolio development model was subsequently used by the New South Wales Department of Education in their
School Leadership Preparation Program as a strategy to examine personal professional learning.

These three factors, mentoring, reflection and portfolio development, were later to form my hypothesis on the factors that contribute to professional learning. The paper *Teachers’ Work: Teacher competencies and their role in the professional development of teachers* resulted from this initial study.

This first paper on Teachers’ Work involved the foundation for work on more specific areas to be studied later. At this stage of my professional learning I was a Leading Teacher in a New South Wales Department of Education secondary school and my role was primarily the identification, development and implementation of professional development programs for teachers. The broad area of teachers’ work was relevant to the environment in which I was working and assisted me in my understandings of the nature of teachers’ work. During this stage of my research I was engaged in library research, literature reviews and analysis of documents. An overview of the literature of teachers’ work, to develop a framework of teaching domains, led to the identification of directions for future research. Later papers became more focussed as a result of issues that arose in the first papers.

In 1996 I changed my employment from teaching in schools to a lecturer in the Faculty of Education at the University of Western Sydney, Nepean. In this role as an academic I was specifically involved in the professional experiences of student teachers in both primary and secondary school settings during their school placements. The research undertaken during this stage of my doctoral study examined
issues and developments arising on site with the students at the university. Data for these studies were collected from students involved in the Bachelor of Education Primary Program and from primary teachers in schools. These data were collected from a number of programs within the Bachelor of Education degree including the first year program in 1999 in the subject “Children and Teaching”. This subject introduced the student teachers to a range of issues which were critical to effective teaching and learning. In this subject the students were asked to draw upon their observations during their practicum and to reflect on their experiences. The students then provided evidence of their professional learning through the development of a portfolio. Interviews were conducted with the students and as a result of this experience the paper *Teacher Portfolios: Documenting and Reflecting on Teaching Practice. An Initial Report of the First Year Bachelor of Education Program and the Practicum at the University of Western Sydney* was written. It was subsequently presented at the International Practical Experiences in Professional Education Conference in 1999 in Christchurch, New Zealand and published in the International Journal of Practical Experiences in Professional Education.

The next phase of my research included the design and implementation of an innovative professional development program published in the New South Wales Department of Education School Leadership Preparation Program and secondly in the Department of Education and Training Aboriginal School Leadership Preparation Program. I was invited by the New South Wales Department of Education to contribute to their School Leadership Preparation Program where the requirements included writing the professional development module for school leaders that focussed on the framework for portfolio development. The module was piloted with
the first cohort of Department of Education Aboriginal leaders undertaking the Aboriginal School Leadership Preparation program. The participants of the pilot group positively evaluated the module and it was then fully implemented into the School Leadership Program.

Through deeper understandings gained from my reading and research my focus changed to research that investigated professional learning, incorporating not only portfolio development, but also mentoring and reflection as factors that could contribute to and enhance professional learning. These three factors became the new focus of my research. Over the past few years each of these factors have been researched by investigating how they contribute to professional learning. This research resulted in the following seven published papers (five individually written and two co-authored) in refereed international journals and conference proceedings:


THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF THIS RESEARCH

This research brings a new interpretation to the singular factors of mentoring, reflection and learning portfolios by combining them to indicate their interrelationships to each other and how each of the factors contributes to professional learning. As Phillips and Pugh (1994) state, in practice, research should “bring new evidence to bear on an old issue…[and] adding to knowledge in a way that hasn’t been done before” (p. 61).

This doctoral research examined the critical literature of not only the factors of mentoring, reflection and portfolio development but also their interrelationship to each other and to professional learning. Professional learning is a complex issue. This research is viewed through a new lens that sharpens the focus on the factors of mentoring, reflection and portfolio development that contribute to professional learning and hence has brought new understandings about these factors and how they relate to each other and to professional learning.

Professional learning provided the overarching focus for this research to examine the factors of mentoring, reflection and portfolio development. Initial investigation began with the literature pertaining to learning in general and then focussed on professional learning. In particular, the professional learning cycles proposed by Boud (1993), Dietz (1998) and Kolb (1984) were examined. These three researchers all identified learning as a cyclic model where learning occurred through experience and through reflection. From the general area of professional learning, literature that concentrated
on the factors of mentoring, reflection and portfolio development was explored.
Examination of the individual factors then allowed me to begin to make connections
between these factors to advance my hypothesis that these factors contributed to
professional learning.

This research has been influenced by the work of some seminal theorists including,
initially, Darling-Hammond and Millman (1990) and their work related to teachers’
work. Following the initial study on teachers’ work a review of the literature led to
the research conducted by Shulman (1988) and Zeichner and Wray (2000) in the
United States and Retallick and Groundwater-Smith (1999) in Australia with their
ground-breaking work on portfolio development. From ideas presented in the studies
of these researchers the three factors of mentoring, reflection and learning portfolios
and their contribution to professional learning were then examined.

These three factors were not necessarily discussed together in the literature as
contributing to professional learning. Shulman (1988), and others for example,
Bartell, Kaye and Morin (1998) and Freidus (1998) linked mentoring to portfolio
development while Retallick and Groundwater-Smith (1999) and Klenowski (2000)
indicated in their research how reflection was integral to the portfolio process.
Snyder, Lippincoot and Bower (1998) supported the view that portfolio development
provided opportunities for student teachers and teachers to engage in reflection on
their practice. The cautionary words of Retallick (1999) and Zeichner and Wray
(2000) indicated that any future studies of learning portfolios in teacher education
should delve deeper into the nature and quality of the reflection that occurs through
portfolio development. As a result of this cautionary note, studies undertaken on
portfolios and reflection in the Bachelor of Education Primary Internship Program at the University of Western Sydney reported on the types and nature of reflection students were involved in during their internship (The University Of Western Sydney, Nepean Internship Program: A Model of Reflective Practice And Professional Learning) and the levels and depth of reflection that were attained during and after the internship (The Internship: A Journey Of Professional Learning Through Reflection).

The initial studies undertaken on teachers’ work and portfolio development were influenced by the ideas presented by (Bartell, Kaye and Morin, 1998; Freidus, 1998; Klenowski, 2000; Retallick and Groundwater-Smith, 1999; Shulman, 1988; Zeichner and Wray, 2000). From a synthesis of these ideas, a learning portfolio model was developed which showed that for the portfolio process to be successful reflection and involvement of a mentor were also necessary. The learning portfolio model was presented in the papers Teacher Portfolios: Documenting and Reflecting on Teaching Practice. An Initial Report of the First Year Bachelor of Education Program and the Practicum at the University of Western Sydney and Portfolios: A strategy for professional learning.

The definition of a portfolio provided by Shulman (1992) provided the cornerstone for the study that I undertook on portfolio development. He stated that the “portfolio is a structured, documented history of carefully selected set of coached or mentored accomplishments substantiated by samples of work and fully realised only through reflective writing, deliberation and serious conversation” (1992, p.111).
Shulman’s definition emphasised mentoring as core to the development of a portfolio. Other writers such as Bartell, Kaye and Morin (1998) and Freidus (1998) supported this view that mentoring was an integral part of the portfolio development process. Clandinin and Connelly (1988); Furlong and Maynard (1995); Scandura (1998) and Shulman (1998) and their studies on mentoring were also examined. Clandinin and Connelly’s research on the use of narratives and conversations in mentoring was highly significant in the development of ideas for the paper *Reconceptualising Mentoring: Reflections by an early career researcher*. While mentoring was seen, by these researchers, as integral to professional learning and contributed significantly to the ideas in the paper, Jipson and Paley (2000), Kochan and Trimble (2000) and Mullen’s (2000) research on co-mentoring provided a turning point in the development of the layered model of mentoring. The study reported in the above paper examined the mentoring relationship of three academics at the University of Western Sydney and considered how the relationship developed into a layered relationship. The data source was by email conversations and the data analysis led to the development of a layered model of mentoring, a significantly innovative way of perceiving the development of mentoring relationships. Other researchers including Branch, Graefelman and Hurelbrink (1998) and Reiman and Thies-Sprinthall (1998) asserted that self-reflection enhanced a person’s ability to assess, monitor and improve their thinking and hence promote deeper learning. According to Vygotsky (1978) learning with new understanding is more likely when one is required to “explain, elaborate or defend one’s position to others as well as to oneself” (p. 158). It would seem from Vygotsky’s assertions that social interaction appears to be essential to assist self-reflection.
The studies reported in the papers *The University of Western Sydney, Education Internship: An evolving model* and *The Internship: An Innovative Practice in Quality Teaching* found that fundamental to reflective practice was the support provided by a mentor. The work of Furlong and Maynard (1995) provided understandings about mentoring and the role a mentor can play in assisting and developing reflective practice in a protégé. Of particular interest in these two studies was that the associate teachers (student teachers in the internship program) reported that they had improved as “teachers” as a result of the reflective process and the support they had received from their mentors.

A model of reflection and professional learning was developed from Vygotsky’s views that learning is framed through reflecting on experiences. The model reported in the paper *The University of Western Sydney, Nepean Internship Program: A Model of Reflective Practice and Professional Learning* was related to the premise that reflective practices could contribute to professional learning. Key Vygotskian elements of critical self-reflection (with self as audience) and shared reflection in a collegial environment were embedded in the model developed by myself and my co-authors.

Deeper and more complex understanding of reflective practices emerged through van Manen’s work (1977) and in particular his explanations of stages of reflection. Van Manen proposed a three-stage model of reflection. The first stage, “Technical Rationality” focused on what works in classroom practice, with analysis of learning at this stage being on the success or failure of strategies used in the classroom. At this stage the experience is personal. The second stage of reflection “Reflection as
Practical Action” focused on the learning experience of the student. At this stage the consequences of educational practices were considered. The third level “Critical Reflection” focused on what knowledge is of value and to whom. This stage of reflection according to van Manen considered the moral and social implications of classroom practice.

The paper *The Internship: A Journey of Professional Learning Through Reflection* reported on a study undertaken with student cohorts (1995, 2000, and 2001) of the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) primary internship program. It investigated the identification of stages of reflection that could be distinguished with pre-service and full-service teachers. Based on van Manen’s (1977) stages of reflection this study revealed that associate teachers (student teachers) in the internship and full-service teachers showed changes in the stages of reflection that they used. One of the features of reflection in this study was that reflection changed according to the level of experience of the person. It was found that reflections at the pre-service level of teaching experience tended to occur at the technical and practical levels of reflection with only a few associate teachers beginning to reach the level of critical reflection. Transition between the technical and practical levels was apparent in most of the reflections of the associate teachers as they sought to modify their teaching practice in light of their reflections. The act of reflecting on practice enabled the associate teachers to interrogate their teaching. It allowed them to question their professional learning and the learning of their students.

Related also to van Manen’s levels of reflection was the study undertaken and reported on in the paper *Internship learning connects the dots: The theory and*
practice of reflection. This paper reported on a study conducted in 2002 that examined the reflections of pre-service teachers according to van Manen’s levels of reflection as a tool to assist the associate teachers in the internship with their professional learning. Further theories of reflective practice proposed by Dewey (1933) and Schön (1983, 1990) were also examined. The theoretical framework of reflection that Dewey discussed was based on lived experience where sense was made on reflection of that experience. Rodgers (2002) distilled four criteria from Dewey’s research to explain his meaning of reflection. These criteria included the following:

1. Reflection is a meaning-making process that moves a learner from one experience into the next with deeper understanding.
2. Reflection is a systematic, rigorous, disciplined way of thinking.
3. Reflection needs to happen in community, in interaction with others.
4. Reflection requires attitudes that value the personal and intellectual growth of one-self and of others. (p. 845)

Schön’s (1983) model involving three levels of reflective practice: “reflection-on-action”; “reflection-in-action” and “reflection-for-action” also influenced my thinking and my understanding of the process. The findings reported in the paper Reflection: Journals and reflective questions. A strategy for professional learning revealed that reflection implemented through a variety of strategies provided evidence of professional learning. Reflection was viewed as a strategy to assist in raising the awareness of student teachers’ learning.

It became evident through the literature that there were several common characteristics in the reflective process that were integral to the theoretical
frameworks of the discussed researchers. A synthesis of the literature showed that reflection was a process that manifested itself in a series of stages (levels, phases etc). It also was indicative of the level of experience of the person. The studies undertaken in this research supported this view and that reflection was achieved through reflecting on experience.

Dewey’s theory of reflection (1933) related reflection to learning and it emphasised the importance of learning being conducted with the involvement of others such as a mentor. The hypothesis proposed for this research that professional learning involved a number of contributing factors for it to be effective takes account of Dewey’s views that learning is effective when there is reflection on an experience and it is supported by the involvement and interaction with others. It is, therefore, to be noted that reflection is both personal and communal, and both rigorous and experiential.

The theoretical frameworks examined, provided the scaffolding for the particular outcomes that were achieved in each of the studies undertaken as part of this research (Table 3). This table indicates how each study and resulting paper was influenced by a specific theorist or researcher and the outcomes achieved through the study.
Table 3
Theoretical frameworks researched in this portfolio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Paper</th>
<th>Theorist/Researcher</th>
<th>Theory discussed</th>
<th>Outcome achieved from the study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ Work: Teacher competencies and their role in the professional learning of teachers</td>
<td>Darling-Hammond &amp; Millman (1990) Finn/Mayer (1991/1992)</td>
<td>• Teachers’ work • Teacher competence</td>
<td>• Schema of teachers’ work • Broad categories of teachers’ work identified for inclusion in a learning portfolio • Training module on learning portfolio developed for New South Wales Department of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Portfolios: Documenting and Reflecting on Teaching Practice. An Initial Report of the First Year Bachelor of Education Program and the Practicum at the University of Western Sydney</td>
<td>Shulman (1988) Retallick &amp; Groundwater-Smith (1996)</td>
<td>• Mentor should be included in portfolio development process • Components to include in a portfolio</td>
<td>• Portfolio model developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Western Sydney, Nepean Internship Program: A Model of Reflective Practice and Professional Learning</td>
<td>Vygotsky (1978)</td>
<td>• Learning is framed through reflective practice</td>
<td>• Reflection and Professional Learning Model developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Internship: An Innovative Practice in Quality Teaching</td>
<td>Ramsey (2000) Hatton &amp; Harman (1997)</td>
<td>• Mentoring and reflective practice and their interrelationship to an extended period of learning in the workplace provided by the</td>
<td>• Mentoring and reflective practices essential components to include in pre-service professional experience programs to facilitate quality teaching, knowledge and skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internship Model</td>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>Mentoring Models</td>
<td>Relationship between reflection and role of a mentor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Western Sydney, Education Internship: An evolving model</td>
<td>Furlong &amp; Maynard (1995)</td>
<td>- Mentoring models</td>
<td>- Relationship between reflection and role of a mentor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Internship: A Journey of Professional Learning Through Reflection</td>
<td>van Manen (1977)</td>
<td>- Levels of Reflection</td>
<td>- van Manen’s levels of reflection evident in associate teachers reflective journals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internship learning connect the dots: The theory and practice of reflection</td>
<td>Dewey (1933) van Manen (1977)</td>
<td>- Models of reflection, Sequences in the development of reflection, Levels of reflection, Three phase model of reflection</td>
<td>- Associate teachers were able to articulate the changes on what they were reflecting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring for Effective Educational Futures (Symposium)</td>
<td>Vygotsky (1978)</td>
<td>- Learning is enhanced when explained to and assisted by others</td>
<td>- Reflection and Professional Learning Framework developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring conversations and narratives from the tertiary experience</td>
<td>Zeichner &amp; Gore (1990)</td>
<td>- Mentoring and its impact on professional learning</td>
<td>- Mentoring projects implemented in schools for UWS student teachers during their professional experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconceptualising mentoring: Reflections</td>
<td>Jipson &amp; Paley</td>
<td>- Different forms of mentoring and</td>
<td>- Layered relationship model of mentoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As previously explained some of the theorists’ discussions indicated that one or more factors contributed to professional learning. While the initial research focus was to investigate the interrelationship of the three factors of mentoring, reflection and learning portfolios and how they contribute to professional learning it became evident through the literature that there was also an interdependency between one or more of the three factors in order for professional learning to occur.

The theoretical frameworks discussed by the above theorists provided the basis for the development of some conceptual frameworks in this research and the design of models related to mentoring, reflection and portfolio development. The overarching outcome of this research was the construction of a professional learning framework which showed the interrelationship of the factors to each other.

An overview of the three factors, mentoring, reflection and portfolio development and their contribution to professional learning in each of the papers reported in this portfolio is represented in Table 4. A strong pattern emerged from the studies that indicated that either independently or interrelatedly these three factors contributed to professional learning.
Table 4
Factors identified in each of the studies as they relate to each other and to professional learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Paper</th>
<th>Mentoring</th>
<th>Reflection</th>
<th>Portfolio Development</th>
<th>Professional Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ Work: Teacher competencies and their role in the professional development of teachers</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Portfolios: Documenting and Reflecting on Teaching Practice. An Initial Report of the First Year Bachelor of Education Program and The Practicum at the University of Western Sydney</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolios: A strategy for professional learning</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Western Sydney, Education Internship: A Model of Reflective Practice and Professional Learning</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Internship: An Innovative Practice in Quality Teaching</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Western Sydney, Education Internship: An evolving model</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Internship: A Journey of Professional Learning Through Reflection</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internship learning connects the dots: The theory and practice of reflection</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection: Journals and reflective questions. A strategy for professional learning</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring for Effective Educational Futures (Symposium)</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
<td></td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring Skills: Implications for Portfolio Development and Professional Learning</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
<td></td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring conversations and narratives from the tertiary experience</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring in Initial Teacher Education. A Pilot Project at the University of Western Sydney</td>
<td>☑ *</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher engagement in professional experience. Sustaining learning for our future teachers</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconceptualising mentoring: Reflections by an early career researcher</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* This factor was the main focus for the particular paper.
CONTRIBUTION OF THIS RESEARCH TO THE FIELD OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

This research has contributed to the field of professional learning in a number of ways.

1. Portfolio development was conceptualised by using categories that were derived from the Australian study of teachers’ work.

2. Reflective learning was identified as occurring through a number of phases which have been articulated in teacher education programs at the University of Western Sydney to enhance professional learning.

3. Mentoring was conceptualised using a layered model. This approach of observing mentoring from a layered viewpoint is a new way of conceptualising the process of mentoring.

4. A model of professional learning was conceptualised which showed the interconnectedness and interrelationship of mentoring, reflection and portfolio development.

The research undertaken and presented in this portfolio has strongly contributed to the professional practices engaged in the University of Western Sydney, Nepean Bachelor of Education Primary Program, the New South Wales Department of School Education and Training and a layered mentoring model for early career researchers at the University of Western Sydney.
Specifically, the contribution made by the research has resulted in:


2. The incorporation of factors that contribute to professional learning in a number of courses in the University of Western Sydney, Nepean Bachelor of Education Primary Program. Specifically they have included:

   (i) The professional learning framework introduced into the first year subject *Introduction to Children and Teaching*.

   (ii) Portfolio development in a range of other subjects including *Secondary Method Personal Development, Health and Physical Education* in the Graduate Diploma of Education Secondary Program and *Introduction to Children and Teaching* in the first year Bachelor of Education Primary Program.

   (iii) The incorporation of the learning portfolio and professional learning framework into the New South Wales Department of Education and Training Sponsored Accelerated Secondary Initial Teacher Education Programs at the University of Western Sydney.

   (iv) Reflective practices embedded in the Bachelor of Education Primary Internship Program and a phased model of reflection introduced into that program to enable the students to reflect on their teaching practice.

3. The conceptualisation of a layered mentoring model for early career researchers provided a new conceptual framework for providing opportunities for mentoring relationships to develop amongst university lecturers, researchers and academics and for professional learning to occur.
RECOGNITION OF THIS RESEARCH IN THE PROFESSION

1. As a result of the study on teachers’ work I analysed and identified teachers’ work domains. These domains subsequently were published in the *Staffing of New South Wales Public Schools: A Review* undertaken by Professor Neil Baumgart on behalf of the New South Wales Department of School Education (1995). In this review these domains were suggested for inclusion in classroom teachers’ work reports.

2. The portfolio model I developed from the domains was acknowledged by the New South Wales Department of Education as an effective way to examine a person’s professional learning and was incorporated into their School Leadership Preparation Program. An overview of the training module developed for the leadership program is included in Part Two of this portfolio.

3. This portfolio model was also used as a framework for the University of Western Sydney Nepean B. Ed first year primary students to construct, organise and reflect on their professional learning through their portfolio.

4. The reflective learning phases documented in the paper *Reflection: Journals and reflective questions. A strategy for professional learning* have been:

   (i) articulated to teachers and student teachers involved in the B. Ed fourth year primary internship program to provide guidance to both teachers and student teachers on the phases of reflective learning and how the student teachers’ learning will follow a particular pattern during the internship.

   (ii) presented at the New Zealand and Australian Association for Research in Education Conference in Auckland, New Zealand in 2003. Following the conference the editor of the Australian Journal of Teacher Education invited me to submit this paper for review for publication in the journal (subsequently published in this journal).

   (iii) requested by the Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario, Canada for permission for the paper to be included as part of an eight day staff development program for 45 teachers. The paper will be used as reading material in one of eight modules to promote discussion around reflective practice and reflective practice tools (Appendix 1).
I also have been contacted by an academic at the University of Waikato for permission to use this paper in their professional practice course (Appendix 2).

(iv) invited by Professor Peter Cuttance to prepare a paper based on the findings of the paper presented at the NZARE/AARE joint conference in 2003 in Auckland, New Zealand to be disseminated through the National Quality Schooling Framework website (Appendix 3). The paper was submitted in February, 2005 for inclusion on this website.

5. My layered model of mentoring has been incorporated and implemented in a research concentration at the University of Western Sydney (Appendix 4) as part of the research culture development of academics. The model is being used in the research concentration to develop with new researchers and research leaders a collegial environment leading to co-mentoring relationships. My role in the research concentration has been to provide leadership through meta-commentary on how academics can and do work together through a co-mentoring relationship.

6. My research has also been recognised in the profession through invited presentations. The timeline of the presentations, the audience involved and the title and type of presentation are documented in Table 5.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date and Location</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Title of Presentation</th>
<th>Type of Presentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998 May Cronulla</td>
<td>NSW Department of Education Aboriginal School Leaders</td>
<td>Developing a Professional Portfolio</td>
<td>Presentation of training module for New South Wales Department of Education Aboriginal School Leadership Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998 July Leura, Blue Mountains</td>
<td>Members of Australian Council for Educational Administration</td>
<td>Professional Teacher Portfolios</td>
<td>Presentation at Annual State Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998 September Airport Hilton, Mascot</td>
<td>NSW Department of Education Early Literacy Initiative Facilitators</td>
<td>Teacher Portfolios: Documenting and Reflecting on Professional Growth and Development</td>
<td>Training Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998 October Narellan Primary School</td>
<td>School Executive and School Staff</td>
<td>Professional Teacher Portfolios</td>
<td>Presentation to Executive members and three workshops to staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998 October DET Granville District Office</td>
<td>Department of Education Granville District Interschool Leadership Group</td>
<td>Professional Teacher Portfolios. Implementing the Module of the New South Wales Department of Education School Leadership Preparation Program</td>
<td>Presentation to leadership group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002 University of Western Sydney</td>
<td>Department of School Education and Catholic Education representatives including Regional Office and secondary teaching staff, UWS academics, external university advisers</td>
<td>Teacher Engagement in Professional Experience</td>
<td>Presentation of findings of questionnaire distributed to school professional experience co-ordinators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 University of Western Sydney and local primary schools</td>
<td>Colleague and Associate Teachers involved in the fourth year B. Ed Primary Internship Program</td>
<td>Phases of Reflection</td>
<td>Presentation of findings derived from journal responses of associate teachers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. The significant research on mentoring and portfolios undertaken by Clarke, Power and Hine was acknowledged at the University of Western Sydney through the award of a number of internal grants. These grants included:


(ii) Hine, A., Power, A., & Clarke, M. (2000). $2,600 internal grant from the School of Teaching and Educational Studies and School of Lifelong Learning, UWS. Literature review and focus group meetings related to Internship.

(iii) Clarke, M. (2003). $1200 UWS School of Education and Early Childhood Studies Teaching Quality Grant. Title of Research: Starting conversations: Sharing of strategies from the viewpoint of the secondary school professional experience co-coordinator. A questionnaire was designed and data analysis was completed. The findings were reported at a Professional Experience Forum to which secondary school personnel attended.

The following four papers resulted from research undertaken as an outcome of these grants:


RESEARCH METHOD AND PROCESS

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH AND RATIONALE FOR USING QUALITATIVE RESEARCH IN THE STUDIES.

A qualitative approach has been used in this research. This approach is supported by the fact that it was conducted in authentic settings of schools and a university with teachers, student teachers and academics as participants in the studies and that data were collected from and by the participants within these settings.

Denzin and Lincoln (2003a), eminent writers in the area of research, define qualitative research as multi-method in focus, involving “an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world… [by] attempting to make sense of or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (p. 5). They emphasised that qualitative research involved the use of a variety of empirical materials including case study, personal experience, introspection, interviews, artifacts, and visual texts. The research outlined in this portfolio has used multi-methods of inquiry including a variety of data collection methods together with personal experience, introspective materials such as reflective journals, focus groups, semi-structured interviews and documents.

Denzin and Lincoln (2003a) also identified a useful model for mapping the landscape of qualitative research. This mapping consisted of five phases and showed the relationship among the phases that defined the research process. Their phased model
was used to describe the way in which qualitative research was used in the studies presented in this portfolio as published and unpublished papers.

The phases were identified as:

- Phase 1: The Researcher as a Multicultural Subject
- Phase 2: Theoretical Paradigms and Perspectives
- Phase 3: Research Strategies
- Phase 4: Methods of Collection and Analysis
- Phase 5: The Art, Practices and Politics of Interpretation and Presentation

This research used the process framework and therefore can be identified according to the above phases. The research in these studies evolved from my experiences and research background as a secondary school teacher and education lecturer in a university (phase 1). The theoretical paradigm (phase 2) in this research was based on interpretivism. The research strategy (phase 3) used was phenomenology and the methods of collection and analysis of data (phase 4) included document analysis, semi-structured interviews, focus groups and reflective questions and journals. Phase 5 involved the practices that were utilised to interpret and make sense of the data that was collected therefore producing the findings and recommendations of this research.
**Phase 1-The Researcher as a Multicultural Subject**

Denzin and Lincoln (2003a) highlighted in this phase that the researcher has a personal biography and “speaks from a particular class, gender, racial, cultural and ethnic community perspective” (p. 29). They believed that as a result of this personal biography a researcher views their research within a particular framework and from a particular perspective. I came into this research as an educator with a background in teaching in three middle class secondary schools with mostly white Anglo-Saxon students and teachers. My research was framed around my understandings about professional learning and was largely based on my experiences as the leader of professional development for staff in a secondary school. Further knowledge was based on my experiences with student teachers in the Faculty of Education at the University of Western Sydney. Even though I am aware of the range of cultures across the educational spectrum in which I am working, I acknowledge that the foundations of my own culture—white female middle-class Anglo-Saxon—is the lens through which I view the world. Constant feedback from the participants and other researchers has been used to broaden my views and ensure correctness of the cultural aspects of this research.

**Phase 2-Theoretical Paradigm**

A paradigm as defined by Guba (1990, p. 17) is a basic set of beliefs that guides action. Denzin and Lincoln agree with Guba’s definition and they describe a paradigm as “the net that contains the researcher’s epistemological, ontological and methodological premises” (2003a, p. 33). There are two commonly recognised
methodologies: positivism and non-positivism. A number of researchers, for example, (Cohen & Manion, 1989; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) believe that a non-positivist methodology is the most suitable when research being conducted involved determining the meaning that humans construct from their experiences. The methodology chosen for these studies sets the structure for the entire research. Within this non-positivism methodology an interpretive paradigm was chosen for the studies in this research as it was concerned with lived experience, the sense that was made of these experiences and the interpretations of these experiences by both the participants and the researcher. Decisions to use the interpretive paradigm were also influenced by the nature of the research focus, the field of study, the locations of the studies and the theory base of the researcher.

**Phase 3- Research Strategy**

Phase 3 begins with research design, which clearly identifies the research focus and the purpose of the study. The overall research focus for this set of studies was to explore the nature of the interrelationship between the factors of mentoring, reflection and portfolio development as key aspects of professional learning. The research focus arose from the identification of the purpose of the research which was to identify and interrogate factors that can contribute to and enhance professional learning especially in the pre-service education of students studying to be teachers.

The research design also connects the theoretical paradigm to the strategies chosen for inquiry and to the methods for collecting the empirical data. The research design positions the study in specific sites of inquiry, particular people or groups of people and to relevant interpretive materials including documents. In this research each study
identified a research question and focus and defined the purpose. The studies clearly
delineated the group of people studied and the particular sites of inquiry. Strategies of
inquiry connected the research to specific methods of collecting and analysing data
and “anchors paradigms in specific empirical sites or in specific methodological
practices” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003a, p. 36).

The groups of people involved in each of the studies, the sample size and the location
of the studies are outlined in Table 6. The table clearly indicates the diversity of the
locations used for the studies, the diversity of sample populations ranging from
student teachers in different years of study and involved in differing teaching
programs, secondary school personnel and academics. The table also indicates the
diversity of sample size ranging from four University of Western Sydney students to
131 surveyed professional experience co-ordinators in schools.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Paper</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
<th>Location of Project and Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ Work: Teacher competencies and their role in the professional learning of teachers</td>
<td>Four documents from State Departments of Education in Australia</td>
<td>Four States of Australia: QLD, NSW, WA, and SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW DET School Leadership Preparation Program Training Module</td>
<td>30 aspiring school leaders</td>
<td>DET school leader aspirants across NSW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Portfolios: Documenting and Reflecting on Teaching Practice. An Initial Report of the First Year Bachelor of Education Program and The Practicum at the University of Western Sydney</td>
<td>12 UWS students</td>
<td>1998 UWS Nepean B. Ed 1st year primary students across Western Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Western Sydney, Nepean Internship Program: A Model of Reflective Practice and Professional Learning</td>
<td>4 UWS students</td>
<td>2000 cohort of B. Ed 4th year primary internship students across Western Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Western Sydney, Education Internship: An evolving model</td>
<td>4 UWS students</td>
<td>2000 cohort of B. Ed 4th year primary internship students across Western Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internship learning connects the dots: The theory and practice of reflection</td>
<td>13 associate teachers</td>
<td>UWS B. Ed Primary internship 2002 cohort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Context/Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection: Journals and reflective questions. A strategy for professional learning</td>
<td>10 associate teachers</td>
<td>2002 UWS cohort B. Ed Primary Internship Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring for Effective Educational Futures (Symposium) Mentoring Skills: Implications for Portfolio Development and Professional Learning</td>
<td>11 UWS students</td>
<td>UWS Nepean B. Ed 3rd year primary students across Western Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring conversations and narratives from the tertiary experience</td>
<td>24 UWS students</td>
<td>UWS B. Ed 3rd year students studying a ‘mentoring’ subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12 colleague and 12 associate teachers</td>
<td>Colleague and associate teachers in B. Ed internship primary program 2001 across western Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 academic (mentee)</td>
<td>Academics at UWS from Faculty of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring in Initial Teacher Education. A Pilot Project at the University of Western Sydney</td>
<td>3 NSW schools</td>
<td>2003 three representative schools (1 primary and 2 secondary schools). Primary school- 500 students and 40 teachers Secondary school 1-700 students and 40 teachers Secondary school 2- 720 students and 65 teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher engagement in professional experience. Sustaining learning for our future teachers.</td>
<td>58 survey responses from professional experience co-ordinators in NSW DET, Catholic and Independent secondary schools</td>
<td>School professional experience co-ordinators of a total of 131 surveyed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconceptualising mentoring: Reflections by an early career researcher</td>
<td>3 UWS Academics</td>
<td>UWS Academics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The interpretive paradigm used in this research was phenomenology. Sonnemann (1954) introduced the term phenomenography to label phenomenological investigation aimed at a “descriptive recording of immediate subjective experience as reported” (p. 344). Phenomenology has its historical background in the philosophical work of Husserl (1859–1938). Other researchers followed this research strategy in other disciplines including the social and human sciences (Borgatte & Borgatte, 1992;
Swingewood, 1991); in psychology (Giorgi, 1985; Polkinghorne, 1989); in nursing (Nieswiadomy, 1993) and in education (Tesch, 1988). The term phenomenology has taken on a number of meanings and forms including transcendental phenomenology, existential phenomenology, and hermeneutic phenomenology (Schwandt, 2001). Gubrium and Holstein (1997) discussed social phenomenology while van Manen (1990) used the label hermeneutical phenomenological reflection. Patton (2002) described phenomenology as gaining a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of our everyday experiences.

Prosser (1994) explained phenomenography as a research methodology developed to indicate differences in students’ experiences of teaching and learning in higher education. It is this latter form that was used in this research. Prosser’s explanation of the research strategy phenomenography drew me to the interpretive paradigm as the initial research undertaken was concerned with student teacher experiences in schools and at university. Each of the papers presented in this portfolio use the interpretive paradigm to explore the areas of mentoring, reflection and portfolio development to gain a deeper understanding of how these factors, singularly or interconnectedly contributed to professional learning of student teachers and teachers. With an expanded understanding of the interpretive paradigm the work of van Manen (1977) became important. The papers *The Internship: A Journey of Professional Learning through Reflection* and *The University of Western Sydney, Nepean Internship Program. A Model of Reflective Practice and Professional Learning* examined associate teacher reflections on their internship practice in relation to van Manen’s hierarchy of reflection.
The issue of validity is one which must be considered in all research design. Validity is “posed in terms of what constitutes a credible claim to truth” (Silverman, 2000, p. 91). To ensure validity was considered in the studies in the research design phase, research instruments such as questionnaires and focus questions were piloted. Coding of categories that were determined by the researcher was also checked for validity by an external researcher to provide a second opinion.

**Phase 4- Methods of Data Collection and Analysis**

Flick (2002) has identified three essential features of qualitative research. These include the choice of appropriate methods, the recognition of different perspectives, and a variety of approaches and methodologies. These three features are evident in this research and are discussed in the published papers contained in this portfolio.

In these studies, within the interpretive paradigm, I have utilised a range of methods that are useful for collecting empirical evidence. Marshall and Rossman (1999) highlighted that in qualitative studies data collection and analysis “go hand in hand to build a coherent interpretation of the data” (p. 151). Patton (2002) discussed the challenge of qualitative analysis as making sense of vast amounts of data by reducing the volume of initial information, determining significant information, identifying significant patterns and constructing a framework for communicating what the data reveal (p. 432). Qualitative data analysis according to Marshall and Rossman (1999, p. 50) is a process of bringing “order, structure and interpretation to the mass of collected data”. The studies presented in this portfolio used a variety of qualitative data analysis techniques including content analyses, theme based categories and
generalisations. The choice for the use of these techniques was to bring order to a large quantity of data to show relationships among and between categories of data and to be able to draw generalisations from the analysis of this data. The data collection methods that were used in the studies in this research, that is, content analysis, semi-structured interviews, focus groups and reflective materials, are explained briefly in this data collection and analysis section.

- **Content (Document) Analysis**

Content analysis is a classical procedure for analysing textual material. One of the key features of document analysis, after careful examination of each document, is the identification of categories. The identification of categories enables a large quantity of material to be reduced in size. The content analysis of documents in my paper *Teachers’ Work: Teacher competencies and their role in the professional development of teachers* formed the cornerstone for my later research on portfolio development and the design of the learning portfolio model described in the paper *Portfolios: A strategy for professional learning*. Document analysis was also used as a data collection method to analyse the email conversations as related in the paper *Reconceptualising mentoring: Reflections by an early career researcher*.

- **Semi-structured Interviews**

Semi-structured interviews are characterised by an interview guide with open questions. The purpose of semi-structured interviews is to enable the interviewee to respond to the questions in an open manner. By eliciting responses in this way rich
data can be gained from the interviewees who are not constrained by a standardised interview schedule. Semi-structured interviews allow conversations to flow naturally and are a useful method of data collection when “concrete statements about an issue are the aim of the data collection” (Flick, 2002, p. 93). In this research semi-structured interviews were used as a data collection method in a number of studies. In an early paper *Teacher Portfolios: Documenting and Reflecting on Teaching Practice. An Initial Report of the First Year Bachelor of Education Program and the Practicum at the University of Western Sydney* statements from student teachers about the use and value of portfolios in the Bachelor of Education first year primary program were reported through such interviews. Research described in *Mentoring for Effective Educational Futures (symposium); Mentoring: Implications for Portfolio Development and Professional Learning* and *The University of Western Sydney, Education Internship: An evolving model*, also used the semi-structured interview as a data collection method. In the former of these two papers the purpose of using semi-structured interviews was to ascertain the perceptions of the B. Ed third year primary students about their role in mentoring B. Ed second year students in the development of their learning portfolio. In the latter paper on internship, semi-structured interviews were used to give voice to colleague and associate teachers involved in the B. Ed Primary Internship Program about key issues of quality teaching and mentoring. Several others papers including *The Internship: An Innovative Practice in Quality Teaching* and *Portfolios: A strategy for professional learning* also used semi-structured interviews as data collection method.
• **Focus Groups**

Lunt and Livingstone (1996, p. 96) argued that “focus groups generate discussion, and so reveal both the meanings that people read into the discussion topic and how they negotiate these meanings”. Morgan and Krueger (1998, p. 12) explained that “the hallmark of focus groups is the explicit use of the group interaction to produce data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group”. The purpose of using focus groups as an inquiry strategy in this research was to highlight this interactive aspect of data collection and generate themes based on the participants’ insights.

In the study resulting in the paper *The University of Western Sydney, Nepean Internship Program: A Model of Reflective Practice and Professional Learning* the focus group was a method of data collection, among a number of others, used to elicit data about the phases involved in reflecting on practice. The paper *The University of Western Sydney, Education Internship: An evolving model* also used the focus group as a data collection method to examine how to give voice to the participants involved in the internship. The focus group enabled issues to be raised about the difference made by the internship program to the teaching skills, educational development and preparation of pre-service teachers.

• **Reflective Materials**

Qualitative research findings were interpreted by making sense of what was learned by and reflected on that interpretation. As Gubrium and Holstein (in Denzin & Lincoln, 2003b, p. 215) explained “interpretive practice engages both the hows and
the whats of social reality; it is centred in how people methodically construct their experiences”. Reflection is a form of data collection that involves introspection. The studies in this research have shown that reflection can be viewed as a conversation with oneself. The conversation engages the person in thinking, writing or talking to themselves and others about questions that help them understand themselves and their actions in a more meaningful manner. Farris and Fuhler (1996) stated that professional learning can be enhanced through reflection and reflective practices such as journal writing. They explained “involving pre-service teachers in an in-depth analysis of their own thinking would be valuable learning” (p. 29). Parsons (1994, cited in Good & Wang, 2002) argued that reflective journals “allow students [student teachers] to ask questions, admit confusion, make connections, identify with others and grow and change ideologically” (p. 255). Studies in this research which have used reflective questions and journals as a data collection method included The Internship: A Journey of Professional Learning through Reflection; The University of Western Sydney, Nepean Internship Program: A Program of Reflective Practice and Professional Learning; Mentoring conversations and narratives from the tertiary experience; Reconceptualising mentoring: Reflections by an early career researcher and Reflection: Journals and reflective questions: A strategy for professional learning.

- **Questionnaire**

Questionnaires are administered in research to “some sample of a population to learn about the distribution of characteristics, attitudes or beliefs” (Marshall & Rossmann, 1999, p. 129). In the study reported in the paper Teacher engagement in professional learning.
experience. Sustaining learning for our future teachers the questionnaire was selected as the data collection tool. The strength of the questionnaire for this particular study lay in the ability to gather data from a specific population, that is, professional experience co-ordinators in schools. It enabled the data to be quantified and then generalisations about the results to be made.

• **Narrative**

The literature contains many definitions of the meaning of narrative (Clandinin & Connelly, 1990; Cortazzi, 1993; Denzin & Lincoln, 1995; Goodson, 1997; Josselson, 1995; Patton, 2002). At the core of any of the definitions of narrative, however, is that it is described as a way of knowing. Patton (2002) positions narrative as a form of phenomenology as narratives emphasise lived experience and a person’s perception of those experiences.

Narrative is a form of interpretive inquiry and narrative inquiry data can be collected through “conversations, chronologies, unstructured interviews, participant journals, field notes and artifacts” (Woodward, 1999, p. 19). The paper Mentoring conversations and narratives from the tertiary experience used narratives from students involved in a mentoring subject at the University of Western Sydney, colleague teachers and associate teachers in the B. Ed primary internship program and a less experienced academic supported by more experienced academics at the University of Western Sydney as a data collection method. Email conversations, a form of narrative, are analysed in the paper Reconceptualising mentoring: Reflections by an early career researcher.
An overview of the papers presented in this portfolio and the data collection methods used in each study reported on in the papers is represented in Table 7.
Table 7

Data collection methodologies used in each of the papers presented in this portfolio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Paper</th>
<th>Data Collection Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ Work: Teacher competencies and their role in the professional development of teachers</td>
<td>Content analyses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales Department of Education School Leadership Preparation Program “Learning Portfolios”</td>
<td>Reflective questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Portfolios: Documenting and Reflecting on Teaching Practice. An Initial Report of the First Year Bachelor of Education Program and the Practicum at the University of Western Sydney</td>
<td>Semi-structured interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolios: A strategy for professional learning</td>
<td>Focus group meetings and focus questions, semi-structured interviews, content analyses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Western Sydney Nepean Internship Program: A Model of Reflective Practice and Professional Learning</td>
<td>Focus group meetings and reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Internship: An Innovative Practice in Quality Teaching</td>
<td>Focus group meetings, semi-structured interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Western Sydney Education Internship: An evolving model</td>
<td>Focus group meetings, semi-structured interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Internship: A Journey of Professional Learning Through Reflection</td>
<td>Semi-structured interviews, reflective questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internship learning connects the dots: The theory and practice of reflection.</td>
<td>Focus group meetings and focus questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection: Journals and reflective questions. A strategy for professional learning</td>
<td>Focus questions, reflective journals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring for Effective Educational Futures (Symposium) Mentoring Skills: Implications for Portfolio Development and Professional Learning</td>
<td>Semi-structured interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring conversations and narratives from the tertiary experience</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring in Initial Teacher Education. A Pilot Project at the University of Western Sydney</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Engagement in Professional Experience. Sustaining learning for student teachers</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconceptualising mentoring: Reflections by an early career researcher</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Denzin and Lincoln (2003a) stated that “qualitative interpretations are constructed” (p. 37) as a result of notes from the field. The construction of the interpretations of the data moves from field notes and documents from the field to research text based on interpretations made from the field notes. In research presented in this portfolio interpretations and presentation of data from the field were interpreted through:

(i) Identification of themes which emerged from the data collected from content analyses on teachers’ work;
(ii) models developed through interpretation of the data (Learning Portfolio Model and Professional Learning Framework) including content analyses and literature reviews;
(iii) alignment of data to frameworks of learning presented by other researchers (such as van Manen, 1977; and Dietz, 1988); and,
(iv) developing a coding system from associate teachers’ journal responses and focus questions.

The model for mapping the landscape of qualitative research identified by Denzin and Lincoln (2003a) provided a useful framework to discuss the research presented in this portfolio. The model enabled the scaffolding of the qualitative research according to their identified phases. The phases provided the means for me to reflect on myself as a researcher and explain my research in relation to the theoretical paradigm, research strategy, data collection and analysis methods and interpretations and presentations made of my data.
PART ONE

SECTION TWO: THE LITERATURE

LITERATURE RELATED TO PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Any discussion about professional learning needs to be prefaced with a definition of learning. However, the act of defining learning is a complex task. Smith (1982) pointed to the complexity of this task when he stated:

*It has been suggested that the term learning defies precise definition because it is put to multiple uses. Learning is used to refer to (1) the acquisition and mastery of what is already known about something, (2) the extension and clarification of meaning of one’s experience, or (3) an organized, intentional process of testing ideas relevant to problems (p. 34).*

There are many definitions of learning (for example Boud, 1993; Boyd, Apps & Associates, 1980; Brookfield, 1986; Dewey, 1933; Kolb, 1984; Mezirow & Associates, 1990). Knowles, Holton and Swanson (1998) summarized the key components of definitions of learning. These components included change; learning as a process; natural growth; development and fulfillment of potential; personal involvement; self-initiated, learner evaluated, independent learning.

It was not until after World War 1 that a theory of adult learning became apparent. Lindeman (1926) strongly influenced by the work of John Dewey (1933) laid the
cornerstones for such a theory. Lindeman advocated, “adult education is a process through which learners become aware of significant experience. Recognition of significance leads to evaluation” (1926, p. 1691).

Some of Lindeman’s key assumptions regarding adult learning were identified as adults are motivated to learn as they experience needs and interests that learning will satisfy; experience is the richest source for adults’ learning and adults have a deep need to be self-directing. From the time that Lindeman stated that adults learn through experience many others (Dewey, 1933; Furlong & Maynard, 1995; van Manen, 1977; Vygotsky, 1978) have recognised the value and contribution that experience has on influencing adult learning.

In 1967 a Yugoslavian adult educator, Savicevic differentiated adult learning or andragogy, from children’s learning, or pedagogy. The andragogical model of learning was based on a number of assumptions including: the need to know, the learner’s self-concept, the role of the learners’ experiences, readiness to learn and orientation to learning. Savicevic’s model provided a conceptual framework of adult learning that was not previously evident and led other researchers such as Bandura (1970) to investigate the importance of the learner’s social context to learning. He agreed with Vygotsky (1978) that learning occurs through observation and modelling. Mezirow’s (1998) transformation theory described learning as the process of learning through critical self-reflection. He stated that learning is the process of using a prior experience to understand a new or revised interpretation of that experience in order to guide future action.
Professional learning, as used in this research, was grounded in Dewey’s philosophy (1938, 1966) that we learn from experience and reflection on that experience. Further, Dewey (1966) has described the act of learning as “one of continual reorganising, reconstructing [and] transforming experience” (p. 50). This theory linked very strongly with both Lindeman’s and Savicevic’s models of adult education and is therefore a useable theory base for this research.
THE CRITICAL LITERATURE RELATED TO MENTORING, REFLECTION AND PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

Seminal theorists such as Dewey (1933); Schön (1983); Shulman (1992); van Manen, (1977) and Vygotsky (1978) provided background knowledge and theoretical frameworks of learning, mentoring and reflection which underpinned the studies in this doctorate. This discussion of the critical literature has moved beyond these theorists to examine current researchers working in the fields of mentoring, reflection and portfolio development. While it is recognised that each of these fields have origins in and reported development outside education, this discussion will focus on the role these factors (mentoring, reflection and portfolio development) have played in teacher education.

The mentoring research of Carter and Francis (2000); Jipson & Paley (2000); Kochan & Trimble (2000); Mullen (2000); Rymer (2002) and Zeichner & Wray (2000) are discussed in this brief discussion of the literature. In particular the co-mentoring research literature is examined as this research strongly influenced the development of the layered model of mentoring presented as one of the studies in this doctorate.

The “learning through reflection research” of Boud (1993) and Kolb (1984) was examined in the professional learning literature. A current researcher’s (Dietz, 1998) professional learning cycle based on learning occurring through experience and
reflection was significant in the development of ideas of learning presented in one of the studies of this doctorate.

Retallick and Groundwater-Smith (1999) have continued to lead the research in the area of portfolio development. They put forward a framework based on teachers’ work where a professional learning portfolio can be used as accreditation for workplace learning.

The literature related to each of the above factors, mentoring, reflection and portfolio development, is discussed in relation to its contribution to professional learning.

MENTORING

A literature search did not reveal any clear consensus as to an agreed definition of mentoring. Anderson and Shannon cited in Kerry and Shelton Mayes (1995) believed that most definitions of mentoring were vague, broad and did not give enough direction to the mentor. Their view brings together many of the views expressed in the literature that “a) mentoring is fundamentally a nurturing process, b) that the mentor must serve as a role model to the mentee and c) that the mentor must exhibit certain dispositions that help define the process” (p. 29).

Mentoring as a tool contributing to professional learning has been viewed as a valued means of supporting student teachers and beginning teachers in their first years of teaching. Carter and Francis (2000, p.7) argued that the practice of mentoring has the potential to shift the outcomes of beginning teacher induction from transmission to
transactional and transformational learning. Mentoring, therefore, has the potential to not only assist in the transmission of the necessary skill sets that form part of the teacher’s practice but it can also be understood as the means by which the beginning teacher is assisted in resisting the adoption of negatively oriented survival skills together with an uncritical acceptance of the existing school ethos and culture (Carter & Francis, 2000; Furlong & Maynard, 1995; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000; Kerka, 1998; Schwiebert, 2000; Zeichner & Wray, 2000).

Carter and Francis (2000) also pointed out that the implementation of mentoring as a professional learning strategy relied upon “school environments that value teacher enquiry and learning” (p. 7). Schools that encourage “collaborative enquiry, cooperative practice and reflection” through the mentoring of beginning teachers further the promotion of professionalism in teaching (Carter & Francis, 2000, p. 7).

The co-mentoring relationship has been a recent development reported in the literature (Jipson & Paley, 2000; Kochan & Trimble, 2000; Mullen, 2000; Rymer, 2002). Co-mentoring recognises the contribution that each person brings to the relationship and is based on reciprocal benefit. Mullen (2000) defined the co-mentoring relationship as synergistic. She viewed it as providing opportunities to be involved in each other’s learning by sharing purpose and commitment in common projects. A number of other writers including Jipson and Paley (2000) and Kochan and Trimble (2000) documented their personal co-mentoring experiences. In their stories they discussed how these experiences were mutually beneficial. Their discussions were based on collaboration and shared decision–making. The ability to
collaborate and share was seen as providing opportunities to strengthen personal and professional skills.

Rymer (2002) discussed two essential components necessary for a successful co-mentoring relationship. The relationship should be a friendship of peers rather than a hierarchical relationship and that communication was dialogue rather than the transmission of organisational information. The co-mentoring relationship serves the individual needs of each person involved in the relationship. Within the relationship the individuals act as partners often complementing each other’s knowledge and skills. The co-mentors may be different ages and have different expertise, skills and knowledge. What is important in this type of mentoring relationship is that the relationship is mutually beneficial.

**REFLECTION**

For some time the term ‘reflection’ has been used in the teacher education literature. Dewey (1933) is viewed as the originator of the concept of reflection in the twentieth century. Reflection has continued to be a popular area for research for the last seventy years. Boud, 1993; Dietz, 1998 and Kolb, 1984 all identified learning as a cyclic model where learning occurred through experience and reflection. Although each of these models identified reflection as a significant part of the learning cycle, Dietz’s levels of learning was examined in detail as it was seen as a useful analysis tool to validate professional learning. Dietz explained the professional learning cycle as consisting of four levels (exploration, organisation, connections, reflection) with key characteristics indicative of each of these levels.
Dietz, (1998) and Smyth (1986) asserted that through reflection educators gain personal and professional knowledge. Essential to the development of reflective practice is the opportunity for beginning teachers to communicate with colleagues and discuss experiences as the basis of their reflections (Yost, Sentner & Forlenza-Bailey, 2000). Research suggests that repeated exposure to reflection, however, does not guarantee that beginning teachers will go on to develop critical or higher levels of reflective thinking (Bean & Stevens, 2002). There is growing evidence (Collier, 1999) that beginning teachers are still struggling to make the psychological shift required when moving into their roles as teachers. In their preoccupation with the process of teaching the process of learning through reflection is often overlooked.

There are a number of models of reflective practice, many of which have been adapted from van Manen’s levels of reflection (Collier, 1999). Van Manen’s model has been adapted by a number of researchers including Collier (1999); Pultorak (1993); and Liston and Zeichner (1987). While some researchers use an hierarchical model (Collier, 1999; van Manen, 1977), others focussed on a cyclic or evolving model (Boud, 1993; Dietz, 1998; Kolb, 1984).

Grossman and Williston (2001) also were interested in investigating how we prepare undergraduate students to use reflection to guide their current and future understanding of their teaching and learning. They believed, through their studies, that reflection enabled students to develop a deeper understanding about children, teaching and themselves and this reflection in effect contributed to professional learning (p. 236). Reflection processes need to be purposely directed. Woodward and
Sinclair (1998) asserted that “students [teachers] left to their own devices without direction will not necessarily become reflective. They need to be guided…” (p. 36).

The development of reflective skills, whether it be with student teachers or qualified teachers needs careful planning as a developmental process to ensure quality learning and development. While reflection is a stand-alone factor that contributes to professional learning, Retallick and Groundwater-Smith, (1999) and Klenowski’s (2000) research indicates how reflection is integral to learning portfolio development.

**LEARNING PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT**

Learning portfolios in this doctorate study are discussed as an instrument that assists with professional learning and encourages conversations and reflections about teaching. Learning portfolios are the selective identification, collection and reflection on a person’s professional learning over time and across a range of contexts (Edgerton, Hutchings & Quinlan, 1991; Shulman, 1992). The process involves the collection of artifacts, which are provided as examples of learning. Integral to the collection of the artifacts is the explanation and reflection on why the artifacts are included and how they represent professional learning.

The portfolio development process is particularly applicable to professional learning practices. Snyder, Lippincott and Bower (1998) commented that portfolios are able to support learning by engaging student teachers and others in sustained and rigorous enquiry into their own professional growth. During the 1990’s educational reformers recognised the benefits of portfolios as a strategy to foster reflective thought and
establish professional dialogue with colleagues. Lyons (1998) stated that the portfolio’s most significant purpose and value was to serve as a scaffolding for reflective teaching and learning. Others agree that students can learn to be more reflective about their learning and achievement through the portfolio process (Branch, Grafelman & Hurelbrink, 1998; Klenowski, 2000). Retallick and Groundwater-Smith (1999) in their research on workplace learning advocated that learning portfolios “recognise the legitimacy of workplace learning for teachers… [by providing] evidence of learning in addition to a record of the specific experience during which the learning occurred” para 24.

Thus, an examination of the literature clearly indicated that for portfolio development to be meaningful the inclusion of reflective practice was an integral feature of the portfolio development process.

Documenting one’s professional learning is becoming more commonplace in the teaching profession. Edgerton, Hutchings and Quinlan (1991) argued that as more student teachers are developing portfolios they are shaping a new culture of professionalism about teaching. Many of the student teachers in New South Wales now entering the teaching workforce have had the opportunity while at university to work through the learning portfolio process and have seen the benefits that this process has had on their professional learning (Woodward & Sinclair, 2002). By reflecting on their practice through portfolio development the new generation of teachers are able to engage in an evaluation of their teaching practice and review their teaching in light of their reflections.
Portfolios continue to be implemented in educational programs to provide evidence of professional learning. The New South Wales Institute of Teachers (2003), a statutory authority, in its advice to the Minister of Education recommended that teacher-developed portfolios be implemented as part of teacher accreditation. The Institute has indicated that portfolios provide evidence of demonstrated professional learning.

Both the seminal theorists previously discussed and the current literature on mentoring, reflection and portfolio development as related in this discussion have significantly influenced the ideas and conceptual frameworks developed in the studies presented as part of the research of this doctorate.
FINDINGS FROM THE PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

The paper presented in this doctorate *Portfolios: A strategy for professional learning* sets the scene about what a learning portfolio is and how it can be a useful mechanism that encourages reflections about professional learning and teaching.

The foundation work for this doctorate was the designing of a learning portfolio model (see paper 2). Built into this model were the contributions to learning that are made by reflecting on practice and having a dialogue with a mentor who provided assistance, guidance and support with learning. Wolf (1996) emphasised the need to develop a portfolio in collaboration with a mentor. He indicated that “ideally your mentor will have experience both in teaching and in portfolio construction” (p. 34). He also identified that mentoring, collaboration and feedback associated with the portfolio contributes to a teacher’s learning. It is these factors of mentoring, collaboration and feedback that provide the crucial elements to the portfolio model and process advocated in this research. Branch, Grafelman and Hurelbrink (1998); Davis and Honan (1998) and Freidus (1998), also strongly support the view that the mentoring process assists with portfolio development.

The portfolio model developed in these studies has some unique characteristics when compared to other models. Firstly, it is based on a framework of stages and criteria. The model incorporated identified domains; mentoring as an integral part of the process and reflection is incorporated into several of the stages. This model is somewhat unique in that mentoring, reflection and portfolio development were linked
to professional learning. The integration of the three factors had not been interrogated at this stage.

The aggregation of findings from the portfolio studies indicated that there is a need for on-going mentoring, peer feedback and further experience in reflective writing if portfolios are to contribute to professional learning. In addition, domains and major components for portfolios, development of the portfolio model and reinforcement of the fact that reflection needed to be taught were outcomes of these studies.

FINDINGS FROM THE REFLECTION STUDIES

While the studies in reflection also embraced mentoring and portfolios several findings reinforced the place reflection holds in the development of professional learning.

Van Manen’s (1977) three levels of reflection have been a useful strategy in the studies undertaken as part of this research to define and identify reflection. Technical reflection, the first level, is concerned with the efficiency and effectiveness of means to achieve certain ends. Practical reflection, the second level of reflection allows for an examination of goals and the outcomes of these goals. The third level, critical reflection, involves moral and ethical considerations and takes into account personal action and its impact on the wider socio and cultural contexts.
Two of my papers *The Internship: A Journey of Professional Learning Through Reflection* and *The University of Western Sydney, Nepean Internship Program: A Model of Reflective Practice and Professional Learning* examined student teacher reflection in relation to van Manen’s levels. The findings from these studies were that technical and practical levels of reflection were more common than critical reflection and that reflective practice needs to be appropriately supported by “others”.

In the model of reflective practice and professional learning designed at the University of Western Sydney and reported on in the paper *The University of Western Sydney, Nepean Internship Program: A Model of Reflective Practice and Professional Learning*, reflection was seen as a critical catalyst in the cultivation of professional learning. This paper discussed the model in detail and elaborated how it developed reflection at all phases within the process of learning. In this particular study it was found that when students write for themselves in a reflective way it can make their professional learning and teaching more explicit. The act of writing and reflection involved the student in reviewing past events and reviewing set goals in order to improve their professional learning and teaching practice.

It was also found that reflection can provide the tool to make sense of one’s ideas, problems or concerns. Reflection is about self-dialogue and can assist student teachers and beginning teachers to untangle their beliefs and understandings about teaching and learning.

Other findings from these studies were that the development of reflective writing compels learners to be explicit about their learning. It also moves learners towards a
more professional view of learning. Discussion with learners develops a greater awareness of the value and importance of reflection; however the question remains would mentoring assist critical reflection?

A number of other findings indicated that reflection through mentoring was an essential pathway to professional learning. Fundamental to reflective practice was the role of the mentor. This role should not be hierarchical but interactive. Such interactions improved communication, helped link theory and practice, was of reciprocal benefit and moved the learner towards independence.

**FINDINGS FROM THE MENTORING STUDIES**

My papers have examined mentoring in a number of contexts, namely, with students engaged in undergraduate programs such as the University of Western Sydney Bachelor of Education Primary Internship Program, the students involved in the Bachelor of Education third year “Mentoring” subject, the second year students who were mentored by these students and myself as an inexperienced colleague being mentored by more experienced colleagues. Through studies of these particular groups and individuals it became evident that the mentoring process provided a useful scaffold for professional learning in that it not only contributed to professional learning but also assisted with the development of reflective skills.

A number of key findings from previous studies were confirmed, for example, that mentoring greatly assists the development of portfolios, that mentoring is of mutual
benefit to all participants, and a supportive environment needs to be provided by the mentor in order to assist professional learning. In addition, specific findings from these studies identified the explicit skills needed for mentoring and that professional conversations and reflection were integral to mentoring through narrative. It was also noted that conditions for learning and time allotment was crucial for high quality mentoring to occur. The success of a mentoring relationship depends on the extent to which vital roles are available from the repertoires of the individuals.

**SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS FROM THE RESEARCH**

A conceptual framework of professional learning (Figure 1) was developed by the researcher to portray the relatedness of the three factors: mentoring, reflection and portfolio development to each other (the inner triangle) and to professional learning (the outer triangle). The findings from the studies in this research supported the hypothesis that there is an interrelationship of the factors of mentoring, reflection and portfolio development. Each factor, can singularly contribute to professional learning but there is also an interconnectedness of the three factors to the overarching concept of professional learning.

Mentoring provides the overall scaffolding and supporting framework on which to lay the foundations for the growth of reflection and portfolio development. Mentoring practices support the development of reflective skills and in turn assists with the required skills to develop a learning portfolio. Professional learning is assisted through the scaffolding provided by the mentoring process and the support and
assistance given to the protégé by the mentor. The mentoring process assists with conversations with the protégé related to reflection. Dialogue between the mentor and the protégé focuses on reflective practice and this reflection manifests itself in professional learning.

The interrelationship of the factors contained in the inner triangle of the framework contribute to assisting professional learning not only through reflective skills but also in the outcomes achieved through reflective practice. This reflection is then documented in a learning portfolio. Not only do both reflection and portfolio development have an interrelationship to each other but it has also become apparent that they have a similar relationship with the practice of mentoring.
Each of the factors contribute to Professional Learning

Figure 1
Professional Learning Framework
CONCLUSION

Research on teachers’ professional learning can assist us in understanding those practices, which can inform teachers’ knowledge. As Calderhead (1988) explained:

Such an understanding can enable us to examine critically our current teacher education practices and to build teacher education courses which equip student teachers not only with basic classroom competence but with the knowledge, skills and confidence to continue learning (p. 63.)

Professional learning needs to be an embedded practice of teacher work and the culture of teacher education programs. The studies documented in this doctorate have strong educational significance. The doctorate has investigated three factors that contribute to professional learning. By understanding the factors that impact on professional learning, school and teacher education programs will be in a better position to create a culture in schools and universities which supports continuous professional learning.

The singular factors of mentoring, reflection and portfolio development were related in the literature and their singular contribution to learning was described in the literature discussion. Some researchers including Branch, Grafeinman and Hurelbrink (1998); Carter and Francis (2000); Lyons (1998); Retallick and Groundwater-Smith (1999); Schön (1983) and Shulman (1988, 1992, 1998) revealed through their studies that the factors may not contribute to professional learning solely on their own but may also be interrelated with each other. However, these researchers did not show the connections between the three factors identified in this research. What was not clear in the literature was that the three factors identified in the research focus of this
doctorate were in fact interrelated and that it was this interrelatedness that contributed to significant professional learning.

The conceptual framework (Figure 1) illustrates the relationship within and between the investigated factors and demonstrates the imperative interrelatedness of these factors in developing a sound and resonant professional learning process. While it is recognised that each of these three factors is an entity in itself through the exploration of the connections, overlaps and relatedness of the three factors, mentoring, reflection and portfolios, this research draws the conclusion that through the meaningful combination of these three factors a significant professional learning program will result.
FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The findings from this doctoral research have provided not only new understandings about professional learning but also directions for further research. This research has highlighted that mentoring, reflection and portfolio development are key aspects that contribute to professional learning. Not only were these factors found to contribute individually to professional learning but they also are related to each other to enhance this learning. Hence, further research will focus on ways professional learning can be enhanced through the interrelationship of these factors.

In addition future research will include:

1. The re-conceptualisation and evaluation of mentoring as a layered model.

2. Further development of the implementation processes involved in reflective learning.

3. The evaluation of current documentation and processes being heralded by the NSW Institute of Teachers in relation to my professional learning framework.

4. The exploration, implementation and evaluation of my professional learning framework.

In addition to the above it is expected that a text emphasising this professional learning framework will be written for university, secondary and primary student teachers. Pearson Education Publishers have requested a proposal for this text (Appendix 5).
REFERENCES


http://www.uws.edu.au/about/acadorg/caess/seecs/research/educationresearchconference2003#1


Retrieved June 5, 2004 from


PART TWO

PUBLISHED

and

UNPUBLISHED PAPERS
INTRODUCTION

This portfolio is based on a number of my scholarly works, including published journal articles, refereed conference proceedings, unpublished papers, papers presented at national and international conferences, University of Western Sydney postgraduate conferences and the New South Wales Department of Education and Training School Leadership Preparation Program module. This portfolio includes demonstration of research output, model development and presentation of my research as an invited speaker.

OVERVIEW PART TWO

Part Two of this document includes:

1. An overview of the New South Wales Department of Education School Leadership Preparation Program and the training and development module prepared by the researcher.
2. A brief overview of each of the papers presented at the University of Western Sydney Ed. D Conferences.
3. A timeline to indicate the sequence in which the published and unpublished papers were written.
4. A brief discussion of each of the papers (individually written and co-authored) and the links between them. In these discussions, data collection methodology undertaken in each of the papers is briefly explained.
1. **New South Wales Department of Education School Leadership Preparation Program and the Training and Development Module.**

In 1998 the New South Wales Department of Education embarked upon a strong commitment to strengthen leadership qualities of their school personnel through the development and implementation of a School Leadership Strategy. The School Leadership Preparation Program was the initial stage of the program and it was at this stage that learning portfolios were introduced to participants. A pilot program of the New South Wales Department of Education, “The Aboriginal School Leadership Program”, was conducted during May, 1998. My Learning Portfolio Module was developed, introduced and presented to the participants of this program. The New South Wales Department of Education subsequently planned the School Leadership Preparation Program for teachers who had goals of seeking leadership responsibilities in schools, current school executive and principals seeking further appointments.

Within the School Leadership Preparation Program there were a number of modules and components, one being Professional Learning Portfolio Preparation.

This Learning Portfolio Module consisted of interactive workshops and information sharing. It set out the nature and purpose of learning portfolios for school leaders, giving guidance for their development and potential assessment. The module was divided into five sessions, namely:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Title of Session</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Session 1</td>
<td>What is a Learning Portfolio?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 2</td>
<td>Why Develop a Learning Portfolio?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 3</td>
<td>Structuring the Portfolio and Selecting the Components to Include</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 4</td>
<td>Issues to Consider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 5</td>
<td>Presenting the Portfolio</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. **Brief overview of each of the papers presented at the University of Western Sydney, Ed. D Conferences.**

An overview of each paper (Table 8) presented at the Ed. D Conferences is outlined in this portfolio. The ideas presented in these papers were the precursors for the fuller papers which were developed for presentations at the international and national conferences and then subsequent publishing of the revised versions of these papers.

### Table 8

**An overview of each of the papers presented at the University of Western Sydney, Ed. D Conferences**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>TITLE AND OVERVIEW OF PAPER PRESENTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1994 | Teachers’ Work: Teacher competencies and their role in the professional development of teachers  
This paper presented research on teachers’ work. The research was an investigation into the development of a schema to describe teachers’ work beyond the generic job lists that were prevalent in the literature. The development of the schema provided the categories identified from the research as a basis for recording professional learning as part of the learning portfolio development process. |
| 1996 | The Teaching Portfolio  
This paper generated the initial ideas on teaching portfolios. It provided the background necessary to pursue further understandings about portfolios and the development of the process model by the researcher. This paper was derived from a review and analysis of the literature. |
| 1997 | Teacher Portfolios: Setting the direction for professional development  
This paper argued that teaching portfolios could assist with professional development and learning. A model describing the stages and components of a teaching portfolio developed by the researcher was discussed. The model was based on the schema developed through the articulation of teachers’ work in previous research. |
| 1998 | Case Study: The Teacher Portfolio and the New South Wales Department of Education’s School Leadership Strategy  
This case study documented the development of the New South Wales Department of Education’s School Leadership Strategy. The area of ‘Preparation of a Professional Learning Portfolio’ was particularly discussed in the paper as was the model developed by |

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1 The papers presented at the UWS Ed. D conferences in 1996-2003 (Table 8) are not included in Table 1 as they were the precursors for the fuller papers listed in Table 1.
the researcher. The paper reported on the developmental stages of the Leadership Strategy and detailed the early piloting phases of the training and development module prepared by the researcher for the New South Wales Department of Education.

1999 **Supporting Teachers: Mentoring and its role in the teaching portfolio process.**
This paper discussed the teaching portfolio literature that advocated that mentoring is an integral component of the portfolio development process. In 1998 at the University of Western Sydney, Nepean the portfolio development model developed by the researcher was incorporated into the Bachelor of Education first year program in the subject “Children and Teaching”. This paper lay the foundations for the research undertaken in 1999 on student mentoring at the University of Western Sydney, Nepean.

2000 **Mentoring: Implications for Portfolio Development.**
This paper was an overview of the literature which drew the links with mentoring and how mentoring could assist with portfolio development. The paper formed the basis for the fuller paper presented at the UWS Ed. D conference in 2001.

2001 **Mentoring Skills: implications for Portfolio Development and Professional Learning.**
This paper reported on one attempt to develop and use mentoring strategies in support of professionally salient learning portfolios. The paper specifically examined the contribution that mentoring could make to professional learning and the development of a portfolio.

2002 **Informal Mentoring: A Reflection by an Early Career Researcher**
This paper focussed on the experiences of an early career researcher involved in an informal mentoring relationship at the University of Western Sydney. The informal mentoring relationship is explained using a layered model to describe the mentoring relationship. The benefits of the relationship are examined in relation to the implications such relationships have for professional learning of academics.

2003 **Learning portfolios: A strategy to assist with professional learning**
This paper was a further development of ideas presented in 1997 and moved from a descriptive explanation of the model development of the portfolio to a research paper which investigated the use of portfolios in a number of programs at the University of Western Sydney. The paper states in its findings and conclusions that professional learning could be developed through four components of the learning portfolio model.

### 3. Timeline of Published and Unpublished Papers

There is an interconnectedness of the articles presented in this portfolio. Each article examines the concept of professional learning and the impact of factors that can contribute to this learning.

The articles in this portfolio are sequential and form a journey of ideas derived from document analysis through to research in the field. Relevant literature examination and discussion support the papers. Although the literature examined professional learning in general, each paper specifically addressed one or more of the factors, that is, portfolio development, reflection and mentoring and its relationship to
professional learning. Much of the data were gathered from student teachers who were studying in the Bachelor of Education Program at the University of Western Sydney, Nepean\textsuperscript{2}. Data were drawn from a variety of subjects that the students were studying. Collection of data in an authentic setting meant that it was rich in the sense of providing multiple meanings to the researcher within a variety of contexts.

A chronological order of papers is presented in Table 9.

Table 9
Timeline of published and unpublished papers, which substantially contributed to this research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>TITLE OF PAPER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Teachers’ Work: Teacher competencies and their role in the professional development of teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>New South Wales Department of Education School Leadership Preparation Program Training and Development Module</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Teacher Portfolios: Documenting and Reflecting on Teaching Practice. An Initial Report of the First Year Bachelor of Education Program and the Practicum at the University of Western Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>The Internship: An Innovative Practice in Quality Teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>The University of Western Sydney Internship Program: A Model of Reflective Practice and Professional Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Mentoring for Effective Educational Futures (Symposium) Mentoring Skills: Implications for Portfolio Development and Professional Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>The University of Western Sydney Education Internship: An evolving model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>The Internship: A Journey of Professional Learning Through Reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Mentoring conversations and narratives from the tertiary experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Internship learning connects the dots: The theory and practice of reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Portfolios: A strategy for professional learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Reflection: Journals and reflective questions. A strategy for professional learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{2} The University of Western Sydney began operation on January 1, 1989 following the University of Western Sydney Act 1988 which created a federated university. From the beginning of 2001 the University of Western Sydney has operated as a single multi-campus university rather than as a federation, hence, papers from 2001 are not cited as University of Western Sydney, Nepean but rather as University of Western Sydney.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Mentoring in Initial Teacher Education. A Pilot Project at the University of Western Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Teacher Engagement in Professional Experience. Sustaining learning for our future teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Reconceptualising Mentoring: Reflections from an Early Career Researcher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the research carried out and reported on in these papers is sequential and developmental, the papers needed to be entities themselves and therefore may appear to have repeated discussions when read in tandem.

This paper reported on the initial research undertaken by the author on teachers’ work. The findings of this research underpinned subsequent studies and conceptual frameworks presented in this doctorate.

This study was a task analysis of teachers’ work and was an investigation into the development of a schema to describe teachers’ work. Most of the work conducted previously had been fragmentary and was mainly concerned with the identification of generic lists of ‘jobs’ that teachers do. This study sought to extend such taxonomies.

A schema on teachers’ work was developed through a synthesis of a content analysis undertaken in the early 1990’s. Documents from the Queensland Department of Education ‘Selection Record for Teaching Positions’ (1991); the New South Wales Department of School Education’s Teacher Entry Level Competencies (1992); the Western Australia Ministry of Education Job Analysis Project (1992) and the South Australian Department of Education’s Teachers’ Work: The Quality of Teaching in our Schools (1992) were examined. A synthesis of common themes was completed from the content analyses. The schema was then developed from the common themes to describe teachers’ work, which provided the foundations for the development of the learning portfolio model.
TEACHERS’ WORK: TEACHER COMPETENCIES AND THEIR ROLE IN THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS

MARGARET K.A. CLARKE

ABSTRACT

Although teacher characteristics and teacher behaviours have been studied quite exhaustively, until very recently little research had been conducted in the area of a task analysis of teachers’ work. This study is an investigation into the development of a schema to describe teachers’ work. The present schema was developed through a synthesis of the results of content analyses undertaken in the early 1990s in the Australian states of Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania. In keeping with the format of the Australian Standards Framework, the schema first identifies broad areas (units), then specific elements within them, before describing competencies (performance levels) for each element. Finally, this article draws implications for use of the schema, including entry requirements into the profession, professional development, self-reflection by teachers, appraisal, and accountability to the system and to the public.

INTRODUCTION

Australia has recently seen vigorous debate in the areas of the quality of teaching and national competencies for teachers. The teaching profession has been included in the national drive to improve the economic competitiveness of the nation by identifying
competency standards for all workers. Aligned to the debate about competency standards are the questions being raised about accountability for the work that teachers perform. Since most teachers are employed within state systems, the development of a set of competency standards for teachers has proceeded at the state or territory level although national projects on the quality of teaching and learning and the formation of a national Teaching Council have meant that parallel developments have occurred at the national level.

Currently, one of the foci of the New South Wales Department of School Education (DSE) is to develop performance agreements for all teachers. Presently only principals and senior executive participate in this process. However, the agenda of the DSE is to obtain performance agreements through all levels of the teaching service. As standards and quality are debated, the issues of what constitutes teachers’ work and how well teachers perform this work become major discussion points.

The purpose of this investigation was to examine the degree of commonality in schema already developed in various states and to see whether a synthesis was possible. Such a synthesis needed to define an essential set of competencies and to outline within each competency a set of performance levels. If a valid schema can be achieved and be given widespread recognition, then potentially it will have a number of important uses at both state-system and national levels.

**Context of the Study**

Within a prevailing economic rationalist perspective, concern with the economic future of Australia has prompted action to examine education and its outcomes within a framework of national needs. The belief is that for Australia to be economically prosperous and increase work productivity we must produce people who can compete in an increasingly competitive world. There is a world-wide desire to improve the quality of education and at the same time increase public accountability. McRae (1992) attributes this in Australia to the process of award restructuring and the move to improve both performance and product in both private and public sectors.
Internationally, there has been public and professional debate regarding the nature and the quality of teaching. The OECD Report (1989) concerned with schools and quality discussed the issues of standards in teaching and teacher competence. In Australia, the recent impetus for improving the quality of teaching was signalled by the then Federal Minister’s statement in *Strengthening Australia’s Schools* (Dawkins, 1988). This paper put forward a number of directions public schools should take if they were to contribute to the economic restructuring of Australia. One of these directions was an emphasis on quality of teaching and its relationship to the quality of the nation’s schools.

The recent competency movement in education has travelled along two parallel pathways. One has been the identification of key employment-related competencies for students (Finn, 1991 and Mayer, 1992); the other has involved the identification of competencies for professionals working in the education field.

**Firstly,** the development of employment-related competencies in students had its beginning with the Finn Report (1991) commissioned by the Australian Education Council (AEC). It focused on increasing the participation of young people in post-compulsory education and set out six key competencies essential in the workplace. The Mayer Committee (1992) was established to develop further the key competencies related to employment as set out in the Finn Report. The first discussion paper produced by the Mayer Committee in May 1992 defined seven key areas of competency and explored levels of performance for students for each of these areas. The final report in September 1992 set out proposals for implementing the key competencies and the development of nationally consistent approaches to assessment and reporting on young people’s achievements in these key competencies. The Commonwealth Government has now committed substantial resources to the implementation of a Key Competencies Program.

**Secondly,** the drive to define standards of competence for professionals has been supported by several current initiatives. Thus, the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) has been one of the agencies in a country with sizable levels of migration behind the development of national competency standards for the professions. To date the recognition processes in Australia for overseas qualifications
have been fragmented and different states and territories have been applying different criteria for entry to practice at a time when the immigration policy has provided them with needed workforce skills.

Apart from assisting with a more uniform practice for overseas skills recognition, the move to competency standards also supports the Government’s strategies for the reform of the Australian labour market. One of the important outcomes will be a resolution of the differences in standards which currently restrict mobility of the workforce across the states of Australia. The development and use of competency standards also has implications for training, industry practices, career path progression and award restructuring.

The publication in 1990 of “National Competency Standards: Policy and Guidelines” has represented a major step in the development of a competency-based standards framework for education and training in Australia. The National Training Board (NTB) is promoting the development of competency standards for occupational groups, including the professions, through an Australian Standards Framework. This framework has set competency levels and each industry and profession is being asked to align its career path training requirements with these.

The Australian Standards Framework is divided into 8 levels. Level 1 is the base level for a competent worker while level 8 extends to competencies for senior professionals or managers. Each classification has an overall competency standard consisting of a number of units of competency. Level 7 indicates the least experienced level of a profession, that is, its entry level. A task for the gatekeepers of the standards for each profession is to specify the skills corresponding to the entry level for the profession and the competence required in the workplace for this and other levels. This task has been addressed recently by a significant number of professional areas (including engineering, nursing, psychology, agriculture and accountancy, just to name a few).

In the same vein, in early February, 1994, the Minster for Education in NSW released a document on the “Desirable Attributes of Beginning Teachers” after extensive advice and consultation.
The Department of Employment, Education and Training (1992) has determined the terminology to be used in the workplace for the system suggested by the National Training Board. A unit of competency describes discrete, identifiable components of professional performance within a broad area. Units are further divided into elements of competency. These describe in more detail what is done in the workplace (performance based inference). They are expressed in active form, describing what the professional does. In addition, the competency based standard uses performance criteria to express what a competent professional would do in terms of observable results and/or behaviour in the workplace.

**The Concept of Competence**

Competence as a generic construct cannot be observed directly. It is necessary to obtain some form of evidence of the application of the competency from which the underlying construct might be inferred. An analysis of the definitions of competence shows that competence can be approached from a variety of viewpoints. Definitions produced by Finn (1991) and Mayer (1992) describe the concept of competency to include not only skill and understanding but also the ability to transfer knowledge and skills to new situations.

In relation to teachers’ work, Peacock (1993, p. 9) defines a competency as “a combination of attributes of varying complexity underlying some aspect of successful professional performance”.

It is clear from an analysis of the definitions of competence that a difficulty has arisen because competence can be approached from a variety of viewpoints. An attribute-based definition of competence involves definition of a series of personal attributes (e.g., a set of skills, knowledge and attitudes) that are believed to underlie competence. This approach is prominent in professional education and training, where there are many attributes important in professional practice. Appropriate teaching behaviour involves not only skills but also the exercise of professional judgement, decision making and problem solving. A difficulty with many of the more complex attributes is that they can be difficult to appraise (Department of Employment, Education and Training [DEET], 1992, p. 23).
A **performance-based** definition of competence observes the performance of the individual in the actual workplace. In the performance-based approach individuals demonstrate competence of an attribute by their behaviour in an applied context. Performance-based approaches “specify what people have to be able to do, the level of performance required and the circumstances in which that level of performance is to be demonstrated” (DEET, 1992, p. 23). One of the problems of this approach is that there may be a tendency to select aspects of performance that are easy to appraise. A combination of the above “focuses attention on the personal attributes of a competent professional as well as how those attributes are likely to be applied and expressed in competent performance in the actual workplace” (DEET, 1992, p. 24).

**An Historical Background of the Competency Movement**

Masters and Bowden (1993) outline the origins and evolution of the competency-based movement. They state that the competency movement was derived from the behavioural objectives movement of the 1950s in the United States. Four related developments of the 1970s are cited in Masters and Bowden. These are mastery learning (Bloom, 1974); criterion referenced testing (Popham, 1978); minimum competency testing (Jaeger, 1980) and competency based education (Burke et al., 1975). A major difficulty with the behaviourist approach was the fragmentary nature of a large number of isolated skills. Thus Masters and Bowden (1993) give the example of a behavioural competency-based teacher education program in the 1970s, in the United States, as listing 22 items, but within five years the list had grown to over 6,000 items. The behavioural approach, supported in teacher education by skill development through micro-teaching, was later surrounded by controversy, with considered reflective practices favoured as a means of assessing competence.

In the United Kingdom there were earlier behaviourist versions of the competency movement. Recently, however, a more contemporary form of the competency movement has been promoted by the British Government to reform vocational qualifications. Thus Masters and Bowden (1993, p. 24) explain that “the conceptual base of the movement has been modified and developed in recent work in the U.K.” The criticism of the early competency movement was that it was too narrow and task oriented with unwieldy lists of specific tasks produced. In a response to these
criticisms, the United Kingdom’s Training Agency recommended the adoption of functional analysis as a method to develop competency standards. “The result of a functional analysis is a number of Units of competence each divided into a set of Elements of Competence with their associated Performance Criteria to be used in judging whether an individual is “competent” in relation to that particular element” (Masters & Bowden, 1993, p. 24). This framework parallels the model being promoted by the National Training Board in Australia for the development of competency standards for the professions.

**Teachers’ Work**

The literature on teacher job analysis is relatively sparse. Specific studies which have been carried out have focused on a certain population of teachers, for example, beginning teachers, or teachers teaching in a specific subject area. Several of the studies identified and verified the professional education competencies evident among beginning teachers. Competencies were listed under different areas such as program planning; development and evaluation; planning of instruction; execution of instruction; evaluation of instruction (Lamberth, 1982).

There seems little commonality of factors presently identified by researchers which describe teachers’ work. Both Potter (1980) and Darling-Hammond and Millman (1990) identify distinct conceptions of teachers’ work. Potter (1980) describes factors of teachers’ work that were identified as a result of a questionnaire which was developed for teacher selection tests. These factors were ‘busy work’, administration, testing and evaluation, breadth of instructional goals, counselling, teaching, enrichment, and extra-curricular activities. Darling-Hammond et. al. (1990) describe teaching as labour, teaching as craft, teaching as profession, and teaching as art.

The debate and recent discussion relating to teachers’ work and the disagreement which is surrounding the discussion is based on the different conceptions of the nature of teaching, the maintenance of standards, and performance appraisal methods. At the present time there is little agreement between researchers and educators as to what constitutes teachers’ work.
Significance of the Research

Most of the work conducted to date in this area has been fragmented and concerned mainly with the identification of generic lists of ‘jobs’ that teachers do. Even current work being investigated by the Departments of Education in the states of Australia has in many instances gone no further than the generation of these lists. This present investigation sought to extend such taxonomies by considering elements and levels within the units identified.

Louden (1992, p. 46) acknowledges that using data from sources such as the work being conducted in each of the states of Australia would act “as a starting point [to develop] a draft set of competencies … for the teaching profession”. Louden and Wallace (1993) as part of a consultancy team for the National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning (NPQTL) identified, in his research, areas similar to those identified in this investigation. His work examined similar documents and he identified five broad areas, namely: Teaching Practice, Student Needs, Relationships, Evaluating and Planning, and Professional Responsibilities. The emphasis of his work, however, is the development of case studies for each of the elements he identified within the broad areas.

The concept of case studies to support the units or broad areas was criticised by Deer (1993, p. 52). She expressed concern about the number of case studies necessary to cover all the key learning areas in the K-12 New South Wales curriculum. Her belief is that this approach is unwieldy. However, an approach “based on realistic, complex workplace problems” is supported by Masters and McCurry (1990, p. 1). Louden and Wallace (1993, p. 17) justified the use of case studies as they “add [to] the flavour of the complex and indeterminate problems teachers face with students”. This investigation integrates the current research on ‘teacher work’ in a way which identifies the competencies that a teacher develops and indicates the level of performance that a teacher has achieved. Through the synthesis and reorganisation of previous research this study adds a unique contribution to this field of knowledge. Competency levels and levels of performance of teachers have not been uniformly accepted for the profession of teaching. An instrument has been developed in this investigation which allows a teacher or supervisor to indicate the level of
performance that an individual or person has achieved. This instrument can be linked to the area of professional development, appraisal and accountability of teachers.

Method

The study began in 1992 with content analyses of research of teachers’ work being conducted in the different states of Australia at that time. Documents describing teachers’ work were examined. These included Queensland Department of Education Selection Record for Teaching Positions (1991); the NSW Department of School Education’s Teacher Entry Level Competencies (1992); the Western Australia Ministry of Education Job Analysis Project (1992) and the South Australian Department of Education’s Teachers’ Work: The Quality of Teaching in Our Schools (1992).

A synthesis of common themes was completed from the content analyses. A schema was developed from the common themes to describe teacher work. Standards of competency were developed to indicate achievement within a competency.

Consistent with the Australian Standards Framework (National Training Board, 1990), the schema is based on units, elements and competency standards.

- **Units** are broad descriptions of competencies which are essential for effective work that teachers perform.
- Within each unit a set of **Elements** is identified which are less broad in perspective and which focus more specifically on further divisions of the unit.
- Within each element a set of **Standards** was developed to describe qualitative differences in the way teachers perform their work. Three standards of competency are described for each element:
  - Competency Standard 1 (lowest)
  - Competency Standard 2
  - Competency Standard 3 (highest)

The schema has the following components and an example from the schema is given to illustrate this framework.
UNIT - CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

ELEMENT - Student behaviour

COMPETENCY STANDARDS

*Competency Standard 1* - Uses effective management strategies

*Competency Standard 2* - Achieves student responsibility for personal behaviour

*Competency Standard 3* - Develops in students a responsibility for whole group behaviour

**Developmental Work in the States**

Content analyses of the research evolving in the study of teachers’ work in the states of Australia was undertaken. The analyses involved contact with each of the Departments of Education in the States of Queensland, New South Wales, Tasmania, Western Australia and South Australia. A discussion follows of each state’s approach to the studies of teachers’ work.

**New South Wales and Queensland**

Initially, both Queensland and New South Wales had determined the competencies required for teachers at entry level to the profession. The New South Wales document “Teacher Entry Level Competencies” was very comprehensive with ten domains identified. This document adopted the National Training Board (NTB) framework by focusing on levels of performance rather than knowledge. A set of entry level competency standards for teachers was prepared in December, 1991, by the New South Wales Department of School Education and after extensive advice and consultation, released by the Minister in February, 1994 as a document labelled “Desirable Attributes of Beginning Teachers”.

In Queensland, the list of competencies identified only four areas. The Queensland Department of Education then developed a “Selection Record” “to facilitate the consistent assessment of the relative merit of applicants for employment as a teacher. This is done by defining the key competencies of a teacher and by providing ways to
measure the level of competency displayed by an applicant” (Queensland Department of Education, 1991, p. 1).

Tasmania

Tasmania has not been directly involved in the determination of components of teachers’ work. This state has been investigating what constitutes effective teaching. The introduction of teacher appraisal in Tasmania began in August, 1990 with the Tasmanian Industrial Commission determining that a system of appraisal be introduced to cover all teaching staff, district superintendents and non-teaching staff.

The system of appraisal was phased into schools in 1992. Schools in 1991 were invited to share what they were learning about appraisal in trials that were being carried out. Interviews took place with those personnel who were responsible for introducing the idea. The Tasmanian Department of Education found that in its preparatory discussions of appraisal it was of importance to define effective teaching and identify the characteristics of effective teachers. The Tasmanian work resulted in lists of criteria for appraisal of the work of teachers.

Western Australia

This state has undertaken a job analysis project through the Ministry of Education and the State School Teachers’ Union of Western Australia. Domains of teachers’ work have been determined by the following methods.

1. Through discussions they have identified the factors which influence the way in which classroom teachers carry out their responsibilities. These were identified as: ethos, environment and culture of the school, organisational features of the school, curriculum, student factors including welfare, classroom management, and teacher factors including professional and personal development and school activities.

2. A job analysis team visited schools conducting in-depth interviews on a one-to-one basis lasting for approximately two hours. Teachers were asked about their responsibilities and their duties and the interview format was a series of open questions received by the interviewee prior to the interview. Variables which could influence a teacher’s role, such as aspects of the school community, location, school population, and special programs offered by the school, were indicated as part of the interview questions. The purpose of the
interviews was to collate information about what work teachers share in common, but also what distinguished an individual’s role from those of other teachers.

3. Information given by the interviewees provided an overall picture of the responsibilities and duties of the people in specific jobs.

The Western Australian model consisted of broad categories with a statement of responsibility given within each category. Tasks associated with the statement were listed. A document “What Do Teachers’ Do?” was published as a result of this investigation.

**South Australia**

A most comprehensive analysis of teachers’ work was developed by the Education Department of South Australia. The aim of this analysis was “to present a clear and detailed description of the work which teachers in the Education Department of South Australia are expected to perform” (1992, p. 1). This document is complemented by “The role and responsibilities of the teacher”. The South Australian document explained that any effort to improve the quality of teaching is dependent on a definition of what teachers do.

In a rationale for the development of a framework of teacher competencies, the South Australian Department of Education gave the reasons as being to:

- a) help teachers and principals clarify work practice
- b) guide improvement
- c) avoid role ambiguity
- d) show the community the demands and conditions of teachers’ work
- e) demonstrate accountability
- f) enhance the image of the teaching profession.

The South Australian framework is centred around eight core areas. These are stated simply as headings. These headings are: teaching practice, student needs, relationships, assessment and reporting, programming and planning, classroom management, discipline, professional and school responsibilities.
In terms of the NTB framework these would be classified as UNITS. These headings are each followed by a description of the essential ELEMENTS of the work. For each of these core areas a set of criteria is identified. These are listed as action statements. Indicators associated with a criterion are listed to help identify how that criterion might be observed if it were appropriately performed. The South Australian Department of Education has acknowledged that the duties and tasks identified in their document should be seen as a starting point for further discussion and that any discussion of teachers’ work will “require ongoing revision” (South Australian Department of Education, 1992, p. 1).

**Building on the Work in States**

A synthesis of common themes has been completed from the content analyses of studies undertaken in Queensland, New South Wales, Western Australia and South Australia. The Tasmanian work has not been included as teacher competencies on a system-wide basis were not developed, but rather teachers’ work was described on an individual school basis.

Information was collated on a spreadsheet using the framework adopted by the NTB for competency standards. A summary of common categories (units) was developed to reflect the broad categories across states. Other categories were included even if they were only featured in some states’ analyses.

Table 1 summarizes the broad categories (units) identified and the elements within each unit.
Table 1:  
**Broad Categories for Professional Learning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Teaching Practice</td>
<td>Including curriculum knowledge, program design, teaching methods and student learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Meeting Students’ Needs</td>
<td>Including application of learning theories, catering for child and adolescent development, program implementation, motivating students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Classroom Management</td>
<td>Including managing student behaviour, reinforcing positive outcomes, and managing the learning environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Assessment and Reporting</td>
<td>Including the development of assessment strategies, designing instruments, maintaining records, giving feedback and reporting to parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Interpersonal Relationships</td>
<td>Including the development of interpersonal skills, effective communication with students, staff and community, providing leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Professional Activities</td>
<td>Including professional development, undertaking school responsibilities, engaging in extra-curricular programs, meeting legal and ‘duty of care’ obligation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CONCLUSION**

At least in theory, the schema developed should be a useful tool for a variety of purposes. The schema could be used by teachers to self-reflect on their teaching performance. It could serve the purpose of facilitating discussion between groups of teachers generating greater collegiality between these teachers. The schema could also be used to encourage supervisors and teachers to collaboratively discuss and make judgements about teachers’ work. It could act as a supervisory tool based on discussions about the level of performance attained by a teacher.

It has been suggested by Louden (1992) that a set of competency standards could be used in the preservice education for teachers. The notion of performance levels within the schema could also serve a purpose in the merit selection process for promotion.

The limitations of the schema lie in the fact that we must question whether we can capture all the complexities of teaching through a competency-based approach. Can all the intricate and integrated tasks of teaching be defined in the schema? If it can’t it is at least one of the first steps in the identification of the work that teachers do and the performance of teachers.
Discussions with teachers have revealed their concerns and misgivings about the use of competency standards. If the standards are to be introduced into the school situation for any purpose there would need to be significant preparation and inservice training of staff outlining the use and purpose of the standards.

REFERENCES


This paper was originally presented at two University of Western Sydney Doctorate of Education (Ed. D) conferences (1996, 1997) and at invited presentations with the New South Wales Department of School Education (May, Sept, Oct, 1998). The paper was further developed and presented at the Australian Council for Educational Administration Conference (1998) and the University of Western Sydney Education Research Conference, Parramatta, NSW, October, 2003.

Paper 1 in this document articulated the nature of teachers’ work and identified a number of domains underpinning the focus of this paper. For this paper a literature review in the area of teaching portfolios was undertaken and included examining what a teacher portfolio was, its purposes and uses, teacher portfolios as a method of professional learning, structuring the portfolio and evaluating the portfolio. This review revealed that teacher portfolios were a compelling means in assisting professional learning. A framework was developed which described the process of learning portfolio development. This framework was linked to the domains identified in paper 1. From the schema developed in paper 1 a process model was developed to assist with the development of a learning portfolio. The model was developed through an analysis of the literature.

This paper explains that the learning portfolio model was trialled in three programs and that data was drawn from four sources: the literature on portfolios, a focus group meeting with the pilot group of the Aboriginal School Leaders undertaking the DET
School Leadership Preparation Program and responses to questions (NSW Department of Education and Training School Leadership Program), structured interview questions with first year primary Bachelor of Education students and analysis of student documentation in their portfolios (Bachelor of Teaching Secondary Program).
PORTFOLIOS: A STRATEGY FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Maggie Clarke

ABSTRACT

There has been a proliferation of literature in the last fifteen years on the use of portfolios, specifically in the field of education. The portfolio purpose has been wide ranging including reflection on early teaching experiences, evaluation of teachers for tenure, national teaching certification and as a method to improve teaching.

This paper discusses the learning portfolio as an instrument that assists with professional learning and encourages conversations about reflections on teaching. A model developed by Clarke (1997) was found to provide a useful framework for student teachers at the University of Western Sydney for organising the structure of the portfolio. What differentiates this research from others describing learning portfolio implementation is that the student teachers organised their portfolios into categories, which were derived from an Australian context of teachers’ work identified through content analyses of beginning teacher documents from Departments and Ministries of Education across Australia.

INTRODUCTION

Portfolios in this paper are discussed in relation to the “new professionalism of teaching” as a way of empowering student teachers to reflect on and analyse their teaching practice. The paper examines the notion of what a portfolio is and, more specifically, it addresses issues surrounding the learning portfolio as a professional learning strategy. A learning portfolio model developed by the author is explained in
terms of its usefulness as a learning tool for pre and post-service teachers. My interest in portfolios stems from their use as a tool, which enables learning to be recorded and reflected upon. It is in this context that this paper discusses the development and trialling of the model of portfolios as a strategy to facilitate learning in two teacher education subjects that I have taught at the University of Western Sydney (UWS) as well as in a School Leadership Program introduced by the New South Wales Department of Education and Training (DET).

What is a Portfolio?

Many people would be able to describe, in general terms, what a portfolio is. They would have understandings of an artist’s portfolio, a photographer’s portfolio and an architect’s portfolio. What all of these portfolios have in common is that they are a collection of the person’s best work portraying a variety of examples of work to a client. Professions such as nursing and teaching have taken this concept of portfolio development further by providing examples of work in authentic settings, with reflections on practice. Professional portfolios in these contexts need to do more than just display or report on “best work”. Indeed, examples of work that needed improvement or change can also be included with reflective statements describing why the work was ineffective or needed improvement for professional growth to occur. Portfolios in the field of education have broadened these boundaries to not only include “best work” but also describe and reflect upon professional growth, learning and development. A definition proposed by Shulman (1992, p. 111) and referred to by many researchers in the field of portfolios is that the:

portfolio is a structured, documented history of carefully selected set of coached or mentored accomplishments substantiated by samples of work and fully realised only through reflective writing, deliberation and serious conversation.

It is this definition that is the core of the work I have been doing at UWS.
Context and background to the concept of portfolios

The inadequacies of former strategies to judge, for example teacher competence and learning, have led to a new regime of approaches to professional learning. Recent research related to professional development focuses on the ways in which individuals take on a fuller responsibility for their personal and continuing learning. The literature in this area of professional development indicates that strategies such as:

- mentoring (Reiman & Thies-Sprinthall, 1998; Bartell, Kaye & Morin, 1998);
- reflection on practice (Schon, 1983; Gaffey & Woodward, 1994; Fine, 1998; Clarke, 1999; Brunton, Ferry & Watson, 2001); and,

all point to the fact that learners need to take an active and robust role in their professional learning.

THE LEARNING PORTFOLIO

A portfolio is developed with its particular purpose in mind. The focus of this research on portfolios has been on the use of portfolios in professional learning. Portfolios in this context encourage reflection on practice and through this reflection learning becomes evident.

It is apparent from the literature (Barton & Collins, 1993; Shulman, 1998; Retallick & Groundwater-Smith, 1999) that there is no one thing called a portfolio. There are different ideas about what portfolios are, what they should contain and for what purpose and practice they are to be used. Shulman (1998) draws on the analogy that “as teachers, we can accumulate a great deal of documentation of our work. But depending on the case we have to make, we draw from the filing cabinet and create a particular portfolio” (p. 23).
The learning portfolio, in education, has as its purpose the development of an individual’s understandings about teaching and learning through the use of reflective writing. Retallick and Groundwater-Smith (1999, p. 5) have described the learning portfolio as “a compilation of evidence which demonstrates the acquisition, development and exercise of knowledge and skills in relation to professional work practices”. Edgerton, Hutchings and Quinlan (1991) and Barton and Collins (1993) concur with Retallick and Groundwater-Smith in that they believe a learning portfolio is a structured and organised collection of evidence of a teacher’s work that is selective, but, in addition, it is reflective and collaborative and demonstrates a teacher’s accomplishments over time and across a variety of contexts. This view of a learning portfolio enables actual samples of teaching performance to be collected, such as lesson plans and student work, but also includes the teacher’s reflection on the importance of the work.

Shulman (1998) advocates that the portfolio construction should be a collaborative venture with a trusted colleague. Bartell, Kaye and Morin (1998) and Friedus (1996) have supported mentoring as an integral part of the process. As a culmination of these ideas, this paper puts forward a summative definition:

The learning portfolio is a selective compilation of evidence which demonstrates reflection on practice through reflective writing in collaboration with a mentor, who provides assistance and support throughout the portfolio development process.

This definition will be used as a basis for learning portfolios in this paper.

In discussions over a number of years with students at the University of Western Sydney, the key issues and components of a learning portfolio have been identified. These issues are:

**A learning portfolio:**

- needs a structure and organisational framework;
- exhibits a selective sample of a person’s work;
- is a continuous process;
• enables reflection on practice;
• is created in an environment of collaboration, usually with a mentor; and
• contributes to professional learning.

These issues are supported in the literature and are basic to this research.

**Why develop a learning portfolio?**

One of the major benefits for student teachers and teachers in the development of a learning portfolio is that they can identify their own professional learning needs (Frid & Reid, 1999). The learning portfolio develops a teacher’s sense of ownership and responsibility for personal learning through the processes of selecting, reflecting, goal setting and mentoring (Branch, Grafelman & Hurelbrink, 1998). Learning portfolios have also been found to be particularly useful as a method for professional learning as they capture the complexity of teaching in a manner that other forms of professional development cannot (Wolf, 1991). Learning portfolios provide opportunities for student teachers and teachers to reflect on their philosophy of teaching, their educational goals and teaching practice and the outcomes of their students’ learning.

The Bachelor of Education program at the University of New England “aims to support students to develop as professionals who engage in ongoing learning, and personal and professional growth and reflection about their practice” (p. 2) through the use of learning portfolios.

Shulman (1988) also reflects these benefits of developing a learning portfolio, indicating that they are able to illustrate the richness of teaching. Shulman (1988) and Snyder, Lippincott and Bower (1998) all strongly support the view that learning portfolios provide opportunities for student teachers and teachers to engage in the rigorous inquiry, analysis and reflection of their teaching practice. As a tool for learning for the individual the learning portfolio can be constructed as a continuous process, able to be revised and updated throughout a person’s university and teaching careers and as professional learning needs change and develop.
**Learning Portfolio Model**

The six broad categories identified in Table 1 form the nucleus of the Learning Portfolio Model developed by Clarke (1998). The Learning Portfolio Model, developed and based on Australian content analyses of the work teachers do (Clarke, 1994), is a structure for explaining to student teachers and teachers the process of learning portfolio development. The model is based on the six categories identified by Clarke (1994) and summarized in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Elements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Practice</strong></td>
<td>Curriculum knowledge, program design, teaching methods and student learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meeting Students’ Needs</strong></td>
<td>Application of learning theories, catering for child and adolescent development, program implementation, and motivating students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Classroom Management</strong></td>
<td>Managing student behaviour, reinforcing positive outcomes, and managing the learning environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment and Reporting</strong></td>
<td>Development of assessment strategies, designing instruments, maintaining records, giving feedback and reporting to parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interpersonal Relationships</strong></td>
<td>Development of interpersonal skills, effective communication with students, staff and community, providing leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional Activities</strong></td>
<td>Professional development, undertaking school responsibilities, engaging in extra-curricular programs, meeting legal and ‘duty of care’ obligation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Clarke (1994)

The above is a summary of the six broad categories for organisation of a Learning Portfolio. These categories form the nucleus of the Learning Portfolio Model.

The research described in this paper applied these categories to the gathering and arranging of learning portfolio evidence. King (1991), emphasising that providing a structure through the use of categories builds the framework for teachers to document their work in the portfolio, supports this process. The model incorporates three
components that according to Collins (1990), Wolf (1991) and Edgerton, Hutchings and Quinlan (1991) should be contained in a portfolio. These are:

- artefacts - the things that teachers produce such as tests, worksheets, notes to parents;
- reproductions - the materials that teachers don’t usually capture (for example, photographs of bulletin boards and white/blackboards, audiotapes and videotapes of classroom practice); and
- reflections - written explanations and evaluation of practice.

Combining these components with the categories provides the process for evidence collection. Essential to the model is the incorporation of mentoring as an integral part of the learning portfolio development process. The mentor plays a significant role in providing support, assistance and feedback on the evidence in the categories and on the written reflections.

This model was trialled in a number of arenas and with a variety of audiences. Firstly, the framework was acknowledged by the New South Wales DET in its School Leadership Program, initiated in 1998. A mandatory requirement of the Leadership Program was the development of a learning portfolio. The participants in this program were teachers who had goals of seeking leadership responsibilities in schools, current school executives and Principals seeking further appointments. A training module was developed by the author for the New South Wales Department of Education for the School Leadership Program. The module examined key elements of the learning portfolio development process such as what is a learning portfolio, why develop a learning portfolio, the learning portfolio development process, reflective writing, structuring the learning portfolio, selecting the components to include and presenting the learning portfolio formed part of the discussions in the training module. The Learning Portfolio Model advocated and developed by Clarke was utilised in the training module to explain significant aspects of the portfolio development process.

Secondly, the learning portfolio process has been trialled with undergraduate students in the Bachelor of Education first year Primary Program at the University of Western Sydney in the subject Introduction to Children and Teaching (Clarke, 1999).
Thirdly, in 2002 and subsequently in 2003 the learning portfolio was introduced in the Bachelor of Teaching Secondary Professional Experience Program. Students in this program hold an undergraduate degree and study for a further one-year teaching qualification.

**RESEARCH INTO THE USE OF THE LEARNING PORTFOLIO MODEL**

**METHOD**

**Data Collection and Analysis**

Data has been collected and analysed from each of the above trials where the Learning Portfolio Model was implemented. Data have been drawn from four sources: the literature on portfolios; a focus group meeting and responses to questions (NSW Department of Education and Training School Leadership Program); structured interview questions (Bachelor of Education Primary Program); and analysis of student documentation in their portfolios (Bachelor of Teaching Secondary Program).

Specifically;

1) The research literature was used to distinguish learning portfolios from other types of portfolios to give form and shape to the data and the analysis of that data.

2) The focus group “is a collectivistic rather than an individualistic research method that focuses on the multivocality of participants’ attitudes, experiences and beliefs” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 836). It was used as a data collection mode in this study to give “voice” to one distinct group of participants involved in the DET School Leadership Program.

3) The structured interviews with the first year Bachelor of Education (B. Ed) (Primary) students were used as a research method to elicit individual responses from participants in the program. The one-on-one approach allowed the researcher to gather data from the student teachers on their perceptions and feelings about their experiences developing a portfolio.

4) The portfolios in the Bachelor of Teaching (B.Teach) Secondary Program were examined utilising a checklist of essential components and
organisational structure framework. The checklist provided the means for the examiner to undertake a content analysis of the portfolios.

**New South Wales DET School Leadership Strategy**

As part of the New South Wales DET School Leadership Strategy, the Learning Portfolio Model (Clarke, 1997) was implemented using DET categories that were the focus of the Leadership Program. That is, Educational Leadership, Cultural Leadership, Strategic Leadership, Organisational Management and Educational Management. The Learning Portfolio Model (Clarke, 1997) underpins the School Leadership Strategy. The training module, which included the Portfolio Learning Model developed by the author, was also piloted as part of the DET Aboriginal School Leadership Program in 1998. The Learning Portfolio Model (Clarke, 1997) remained an integral part of the School Leadership Program until the Program was discontinued in 2003.

A focus group meeting was held with the first cohort of teachers in the Mount Druitt school district (a western suburb of Sydney) involved in the School Leadership Program. Nine participants were present at the meeting whose purpose was to identify key issues associated with professional learning and portfolio development. The key question discussed at the meeting was “Has professional learning been enhanced through the development of a learning portfolio?” Two further questions arising from this key question were also raised with the participants. These were:

What part/s of the portfolio process made professional learning effective?

What were any benefits in developing a learning portfolio?

**UWS Bachelor of Education First Year Primary Program**

Structured interviews (Appendix 2) were undertaken with twelve students (n=12). The sample comprised seven female and five male students with ages in the range of 19 to 50 in the first year primary program in 1998. The purpose of the interviews was
to explore student teachers’ perceptions of learning portfolios and gain insights into their feelings and experiences regarding the portfolios usefulness.

**Bachelor of Teaching (Secondary)**

The students in the Bachelor of Teaching Secondary Program were introduced to the concept of learning portfolios in their Professional Experience program. The Learning Portfolio Model (Clarke, 1997) was used as the scaffold to introduce the student teachers to the organisational structure of the Learning Portfolio and the suggested six categories were explained. Several lectures were also included that dealt with reflection and reflective writing. To introduce the concept of a mentor to the Learning Portfolio process the students were encouraged to discuss their Learning Portfolio development on a needs basis. The cohort of students for the professional experience subject on the Penrith campus was 150 students. To mentor each of these students was an impossibility for one academic to achieve. However, in order for student teachers to understand the purpose and role of a mentor in the learning portfolio process the students were given the opportunity and encouraged to meet with the mentor. Many of the students took the opportunity to explore their feelings and reflections with me about their practice during their practicum. Discussions ranged from questions about the selection of artefacts and reproductions that defined their learning, the process of reflecting on their practice and development of their reflective writing skills.

An academic independent from UWS reviewed the Bachelor of Teaching secondary portfolios. The reviewer was given a checklist of eleven criteria that was necessary to include in a learning portfolio (see Table 2). In addition a copy of lecture notes relevant to portfolio development were provided to the reviewer.
Table 2:
Checklist of eleven portfolio criteria provided to external marker for students from Bachelor of Teaching (Secondary).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Organised and Structured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Statement of Purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Career Map</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Professional Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Description of Achievements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Evidence of Professional Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Variety of Artefacts and Reproductions included</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Selective Evidence in a Variety of Categories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Reflective Writing Engaging in the Analysis of what the Student Teacher and their Students have Accomplished</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reviewer examined each of the portfolios and commented on them in relation to the criteria. The reviewer selected sixteen portfolios as being exemplary.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

DET first cohort of School Leadership Program

Some key issues emerged from the focus group meeting and the discussion of the questions. All the participants in the group strongly agreed that there was a need to have a structure for a Learning Portfolio. They felt that the suggested model developed by Clarke (1997) was a very effective way to structure and organise their ideas about their learning as it provided a scaffold to interrogate and explain their learning. They explained that the suggested components included in their portfolio made them focus on their learning in an organised and systematic way.

The role of the mentor as part of the portfolio model was discussed by the participants as important as the mentor provides feedback throughout the portfolio development
process. The participants indicated that this feedback especially assisted in enabling
them to focus on their learning and reflect on this learning with their mentor.

The group commented that reflective writing was not an innate skill but rather it
needed to be taught and developed. This aspect had not been evident in the School
Leadership Program but it was strongly suggested by the participants that reflective
writing skills be included as part of any future programs.

**Bachelor of Education First Year Primary Program 1998**

The interview responses overwhelmingly supported the view that learning portfolios
are a compelling professional tool. They enable student teachers to draw together
their experiences in practicum and their theory subjects throughout the year. The
portfolio also assisted them to reflect on what they had learnt about how children
learn and the development of their teaching skills. The categories (identified in Table
1) trialled with the B. Ed first year students were found to be a useful mechanism for
organising the artefacts and reproductions.

These categories also assisted the student teacher by providing an organisational
structure for reflective statements and collection of artefacts. Reflective writing
associated with the artefacts focused student thinking about teaching practice and
enabled students to focus on reasons for inclusion of certain artefacts, which often
exemplified how their professional learning occurred. Providing opportunities for the
pre-service teacher to engage in reflection provides the experience for our future
teachers to understand and appreciate the value of documenting and reflecting on
personal learning as a means of professional self-understanding and improvement.

The learning portfolio was also seen by the student teachers as a living document that
mapped developing skills and responsibilities.

*It was fantastic. I can’t wait to get it back to see if my tutor feels the same
way. It’s going to be with me for a long time. I’m going to build on it. It’s
going to be involving. (Joanne)*
Student teachers felt that the portfolio process enabled them to critically analyse themselves as teachers and allowed them to identify where improvement could be made. The following statement summed up the student teachers reactions to the development of a learning portfolio.

*I think it’s a very good way of helping us to reflect on what we have learned, because you don’t realise how much you have learned. Without having the portfolio, I don’t think I would have put it all together myself. I think it really helped and it drew from every subject as well, which was great.* (Clare)

This powerful comment from one student teacher synthesizes the views held in regard to the value of the portfolio as a professional learning tool.

*I it all comes back to making you look critically at yourself… It really makes me think about my own development, where I can improve, where I have improved and what the future holds for me.* (Harriet)

All three of these were white anglo-saxon background, aged nineteen and had just completed in the previous year their final year of high school.

An analysis and discussion of the interviews were reported in Clarke (1999).

**Bachelor of Teaching Secondary**

The independent reviewer identified 16 exemplary portfolios indicating that these students had used the scaffold of the model to document their learning. They used the six categories defined by Clarke (1997) to define and structure their portfolio which made for easy readability of the document. Fourteen of the student teachers had a clearly defined statement of purpose of the learning portfolio indicating that it was a document of their professional growth and learning over time.

Two examples of the Statement of Purpose of the portfolios are included to illustrate student teacher understanding of the task of writing a portfolio. Janice and Kath were white, middle-class, aged twenty five, both with undergraduate degrees.
Janice wrote

This learning portfolio has been designed as an invaluable record of my learning as a teacher to assist myself in planning for continual professional development.

Kath in her Statement of Purpose wrote:

This portfolio contains various documentation and evidence that has been collected during my teaching experiences. These pieces of information will demonstrate my involvement and growth as an individual.

Every exemplary portfolio showed well-developed skill in reflective writing providing through this writing evidence of professional learning. Many of these student teachers used lesson plans as an example of an artifact to demonstrate their professional learning. They included their supervising teachers evaluations of their lessons and then developed action plans to act upon their teacher’s advice. The action plans and subsequent lessons were then commented upon in the context of what they as a teacher had learnt and what they believed their students had learnt.

It was interesting to note that students in method subjects such as Creative Arts and PD/H/PE had developed outstanding portfolios. This may in part be explained by the fact that both these method subjects have previously engaged students in portfolio development and reflective writing. Portfolio preparation and development is a skill and it takes time to develop this skill.

Some of the reviewer’s comments are included to provide a view of the reflective nature of the students’ writing that was evident in their portfolios.

A well developed portfolio that thoroughly demonstrates your growth and reflection.
Clearly reflects your commitment to your professional growth.
Very thoughtfully prepared—indicates a reflective approach to your teaching.
You have fully reflected on your teaching practice. A good indication of your growth as a professional.
These four students (3 female and 1 male), aged between 25 and 37 years old were of varying cultural backgrounds.

CONCLUSION

The three programs discussed where learning portfolios have been trialled and implemented have shown that the Learning Portfolio Model (Clarke, 1997) supports professional learning. The portfolios demonstrated that professional learning could be developed through four major components of the model and can be synthesised as follows:

- The categories were shown to be a useful strategy to scaffold reflections about learning.
- The categories allowed for the organisation of artefacts and reproductions.
- The reflective writing has assisted the writers to identify areas of professional learning.
- The mentor in the portfolio model assisted with reflections and professional learning and provided essential feedback to the mentee.

Collins (1990, p. 16) advocates that portfolios hold great promise for assessing teachers but they may have even greater value to teachers themselves as “they open the door to serious discussions about teaching”. This point could be investigated by education authorities as it provides a vehicle for student teachers and teachers to gather evidence of their own professional learning and enables them to reflect on teaching practice.

Documenting one’s professional learning is becoming more commonplace in the teaching profession. Our beginning teachers experience reflective practice during their teacher education program. Edgerton, Hutchings and Quinlan (1991) argue that as more student teachers are developing portfolios they are shaping a new culture of professionalism about teaching. Many of the student teachers now entering the teaching workforce have had the opportunity while at university to work through the Learning Portfolio process and have seen the benefits that this process has had on their professional learning. By reflecting on their practice through portfolio
development the new generation of teachers are able to engage in an evaluation of their teaching practice and review their teaching in light of their reflections.

RECOMMENDED FURTHER RESEARCH

I am particularly interested in the work of Brown (2002) who claims that learning portfolios “allow students to actively participate in identifying and evaluating learning outcomes” (p. 228). She cautions that little has been documented on the actual learning that results from portfolio development. In her study, undertaken at Barry University: School of Adult and Continuing Education in Miami, Florida, she posed three semi-structured questions in an interview situation. The focus of the questions was related to development of a portfolio and student understandings of their learning and the learning process. As well, one of the questions asked the participants to identify the types of learning that resulted from the technical aspects of constructing a portfolio. Three major findings were revealed, namely: student teachers had a marked increase in their self-knowledge; they had a greater recognition of the value of learning from work and from mentors; and improved communication and organisational skills and greater appreciation of the role of reflection in recognising learning. Brown claims that these findings strongly suggest that further research needs to be undertaken into what student teachers learn from portfolio development.

Retallick (1999) and Zeichner (2000) also caution that any future studies of Learning Portfolios in teacher education should delve deeper into the nature and quality of the reflection that occurs through portfolio development. Some of the findings from studies undertaken on portfolios and reflection in the Bachelor of Education Primary Internship Program at the University of Western Sydney have reported on the types of reflection students are involved in during their internship (Power, Clarke & Hine, 2002a) and the levels and depth of reflection that are attained during and after the internship (Power, Clarke & Hine, 2002b).
APPENDIX 1

Model indicating the inter-relationship between the broad categories identified by Clarke (1992) for organisation of a learning portfolio, the components used to collect evidence for the portfolio and the role of a mentor in the portfolio development process.

DEVELOPING A LEARNING PORTFOLIO
- A Suggested Model -
APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS—University of Western Sydney Bachelor of Education, First Year Program.

1. After the lecture and tutorials explaining learning portfolios, what were your initial reactions?
2. What do you see as the benefits of developing a learning portfolio?
3. Comment on your experiences with the reflective writing aspects of the learning portfolio?
4. In what ways can you see that learning portfolios will assist you in your professional development?
5. Comment on the ways in which the development of a learning portfolio has assisted you in developing your teaching skills.
6. In what ways has the development of a portfolio assisted you in understanding how children learn?
7. How was the peer feedback useful?
8. If you used the suggested categories and model in what ways did you find them useful to assist you in organising and structuring your portfolio?
9. Now that you have completed your portfolio to this stage what are your reactions?
REFERENCES


This paper was presented at the fourth international biennial conference of the Practical Experiences in Professional Education Association, Christchurch, New Zealand, 19–22 January, 1999. The conceptual framework for the development of a portfolio as documented in this paper was influenced by the teachers’ work themes identified in the previous study and reported on in papers 1 and 2.

This paper reports on the initial implementation phases of the development of teacher portfolios by student teachers in their first year Bachelor of Education program at the University of Western Sydney, Nepean. While studying a subject titled *Children and Teaching* the student teachers were introduced to my portfolio development model which describes an organisational framework and stages of portfolio development. This framework was described in paper 2 (see appendix 1, p.119).

Data were gathered from interviews with student teachers involved in this subject. Twelve structured interviews were undertaken with the sample comprising seven female and five females with ages in the range of nineteen to fifty. The main focus for the interviews was to capture student teacher perceptions and understandings of portfolios. The interviews also revealed insights into the student teacher’s feelings and experiences in relation to the portfolios usefulness. A number of themes emerged from the interview data, which informed the 1999 program.
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In the Deep End: First Year Student Teachers’ Images of Themselves in the Role of Teacher
Helen Huntly
Editorial

Welcome to the 1999 issue of PEPE Inc’s International Journal. This volume contains articles, by invitation, from prominent academics who have commitment to practical experiences in professional education. As such, it complements three other activities aimed to ensure practicums become positive learning experiences for all participants: provision of research scholarships; organisation of international conferences (the Fourth such Cross - Faculty Conference was held in Christchurch earlier this year); and publication of research monographs and newsletters (Research Monograph No. 3 is currently in press).

In this issue of the Journal, Ken Zeichner recounts his long and well-known promotion of action research and classroom inquiry as a means of developing reflective student teacher and teacher professionals, able to enhance the learning outcomes of youngsters in their care. He explains some of the essential characteristics of such programs, if they are to be truly transformative and address the more powerful moral, ethical, political and cultural contexts of teachers’ professional practice, rather than merely cosmetic structural or instrumental changes. Susan Groundwater-Smith uses case studies to exemplify how portfolios can be used, at both individual and corporate levels, to document means by which professional learning has occurred and has contributed to both teachers’ professional development and their students’ learning outcomes. Guiding principles for developing and using professional learning portfolios are enumerated, their essential components are listed and criteria for their assessment are suggested.

Bob Lonie reports on the outcomes of an evaluation of the Professional Practice Program in the QUT Bachelor of Social Science (Human Services) degree. Feedback on a range of issues was obtained from both students and industry supervisors. Initiatives to meet the identified problems and emerging trends are proposed. Maggie Clarke reports on student feedback about the recent introduction of teacher portfolios in the first year of the Bachelor of Education program at the University of Western Sydney, Nepean. Students were generally supportive of this opportunity to develop a personal portfolio, as it provided them with a means to showcase their professional growth over time. It also placed them on a path to acquire the skills of reflecting and evaluating their own professional practice. Valuable suggestions are made about ways in which student teachers can be assisted in developing worthwhile teaching portfolios, including more extensive peer feedback and availability of knowledgeable mentors.

In the final paper, Helen Huntly describes an action research project that followed the professional development progress of student teachers, resulting from their active involvement in weekly physical education practice teaching lessons in a local primary school during the first term of the BEd program. While these student teachers expressed enjoyment with their ongoing practicum experiences, initial concerns about pupil control gradually diminished and were partly replaced with a focus on their own professional development as ‘teacher’. A number of recommendations for the practicum are presented.

Dr Allan Yarrow
Jan Millwater
Teacher Portfolios: Documenting and Reflecting on Teaching Practice. An Initial Report of the First Year Bachelor of Education Program and The Practicum at the University of Western Sydney.

Maggie Clarke, Academic Co-ordinator of Professional Experience, School of Teaching and Educational Studies, University of Western Sydney, Nepean.

ABSTRACT

This paper reports on the initial implementation phases of the development of teacher portfolios by student teachers in the first year Bachelor of Education program at the University of Western Sydney, Nepean. Portfolios have been seen to be a dynamic professional development tool that enable conversations about teaching practice in an authentic setting (Shulman, 1988). The development of a teacher portfolio by student teachers is built on the understandings that students can link theory to practice through reflective writing and dialogue with peers and co-operating teachers. While studying a subject titled ‘Children and Teaching’, the student teachers were introduced to a model developed by Clarke (1997) which described an organisational framework and stages of portfolio development. During Practicum, student teachers collected artefacts and reproductions which exemplified their professional experience and learning. The portfolio formed part of their assessment for ‘Children and Teaching’ and was evaluated by peers and lecturers. The data for this study have been gathered from interviews with student teachers involved in the subject ‘Children and Teaching’. The main focus of the interviews was to capture student teacher perceptions and understandings of portfolios. Emerging concepts have been identified in the analysis section of the paper and these concepts will inform the 1999 program. It is the intention of the Bachelor of Education program to include portfolio development throughout the undergraduate degree. This will enable student teachers to showcase their professional growth and development over time and will develop skills in reflecting and evaluating professional practice. The development of a teacher portfolio can enhance a student teacher’s ability and potential to document a life long view of professional development.

Portfolios as a Professional Development Tool

Portfolios have been seen as a compelling means of professional development that can sharpen a person’s professional focus of their learning and development (Shulman, 1988; Collins, 1990). They are a useful tool for collecting and providing evidence of one’s growth and development over
time. Portfolios can be viewed as a living document that change as the purpose and need arises. Portfolios provide the means for a person to take responsibility for his or her own professional development. They can capture the complexity of one's profession through the careful selection of artefacts and reproductions. Portfolios develop skills in reflection and evaluation and challenge a person's critical thinking to implement improvements in professional practice.

The Introduction of The Teacher Portfolio In The Bachelor of Education Program

The Bachelor of Education program is a three year teaching, undergraduate program. The subject ‘Children and Teaching’ is a three hour per week subject studied for one semester in the first year Bachelor of Education program. This subject is paralleled by Practicum experiences to enhance students' understanding of how children learn. The Practicum experience in semester one consists of seven single day visits over seven weeks with student teachers observing, assisting and reflecting on teaching practice across kindergarten to Year 6. It is the intention of this Practicum experience to gain a broad view of similarities and differences in teaching methods and styles across all years. Semester two Practicum experience consists of ten single days over ten weeks. Students are allocated to one class and one teacher during this time. By week six, student teachers are expected to have begun teaching several lessons and reflected on their experiences. The School of Lifelong Learning and Educational Change delivers the subject.

The subject introduces the student to a range of issues which are critical to effective teaching and learning. These issues centre on the responsibilities of teachers to observe and understand the children in their care, plan for individual children on the basis of diagnostic evaluations, employ teaching approaches which cater for the needs of individuals as well as the group and employ assessment processes which empower children. The subject stresses the application of teaching approaches, especially those relating to flexible lesson planning, co-operative learning and small group work, during associated fieldwork experiences (Children and Teaching subject outline, p.2, 1998).

During the early part of 1998, discussions were held with the lecturers of the subject and the Academic Co-ordinator of Professional Experience. The aim
of the discussions was to explore the concept of linking theory to practice through the development of teacher portfolios. It was felt that traditional forms of assessment such as essays, tests etc. failed to capture the authenticity of the teaching setting. It was seen to be beneficial to include portfolio development in the subject 'Children and Teaching' as this subject related directly to teaching methodology and how children learn. It was apparent that there was a direct link between the subject content and the Practicum experiences. Students, it was felt, could directly relate their theory knowledge to their practical experiences in schools. The portfolio development also had the added advantage of allowing students to self-direct their learning at their own pace. It enabled them to take full responsibility for their individual learning and professional development.

The Co-ordinator drafted an assessment task (worth 50%) of the total marks for the subject. Student teachers were asked to draw upon their observations and reflections of their experiences during and after their Practicum. Part (a) of the assessment task required student teachers to provide evidence of their learning and professional development through the collection of artefacts and reproductions and through personal reflection of the reasons for the inclusion of the artefacts and reproductions. Part (b) of the assessment required an analysis by the student teacher of what they had learnt about children and teaching during their Practicum and they were required to provide evidence of their reading on these issues. The student teachers were asked to present their portfolio in the last week of semester two to a group of their peers for twenty minutes during tutorial time.

Background of the Model Used in the Development of the Portfolio

Providing evidence for the portfolio has been aligned in most instances in the literature to identified categories. Wolf (1991, p.8) states that ‘tying the choice of evidence to a few key categories helps to limit the amount of information to be collected’. A model for portfolio development developed by Clarke (1997) utilised a set of domains identified from a study in 1992 of teachers’ work. The study began with content analyses of research of teachers' work being conducted in the different states of Australia.

Documents describing teachers' work were examined. These included:
- Queensland Department of Education Selection Record for Teaching Positions (1991); the NSW Department of School Education's Teacher Entry

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Level Competencies (1992); the Western Australia Ministry of Education Job Analysis Project (1992); and the South Australian Department of Education's Teachers' Work: The Quality of Teaching in our Schools (1992).

A synthesis of common themes was completed from the content analyses. A schema of domains was developed from the common themes to describe teachers' work and these are presented below.

**Figure 1: Teachers' Work. Schema of Domains**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Student's Needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment and Reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The suggested domains provide the identified areas for evidence collection. Combining artefacts, reproductions and reflections as suggested by Collins (1990) provide the means for evidence collection. Utilising the domains as the structural framework assists student teachers in developing an organisational context for providing evidence in their portfolios. By combining Collins' three components (artefacts, reproductions and reflections), this suggests a process for evidence collection. A model developed by Clarke (1997) utilises the domains identified in Figure 1 to initiate student thinking about developing a portfolio. The model integrates ideas presented in the Florida Beginning Teacher Program. This program was mandated by the Florida State Board of Education and is a model for the development of teaching competence for the beginning teacher (Terry and Eade; 1983, p.1). This program comprised three stages.

1. the collection of data to support teaching competence
2. the review and analysis of the data by a support team
3. the commitment to a plan of action by the teacher' (Terry & Eade; 1983, p.4).

However, it would seem that these stages could be enhanced by the addition of two further stages, namely: reflection on data collected and on teaching practice, and support and feedback by a mentor. Built into the model by
Clarke is the essential role of the mentor in assisting and supporting teachers in developing their portfolio.

The Implementation Stages

Lecture Outline

Student teachers were introduced to the concept of portfolio development in a mass lecture in the subject ‘Children and Teaching’ through various definitions of portfolios by researchers (Barton and Collins, 1993; Terry and Eade, 1983).

Edgerton, Hutchings and Quinlan (1991 and Shulman (1987, 1988) were introduced to students and key words from the definitions were identified. A synthesis of ideas from these definitions was produced to indicate key features of portfolios. These key features included the necessity for portfolios to be organised and structured, to demonstrate proficiency, to be compiled from a variety of sources and that they are selective, reflective and collaborative. The work of Shulman (1988) was highlighted to demonstrate that portfolio development should include a mentor in the process to assist with discussions about its compilation and reflections on teaching. Shulman emphasises that portfolios are living documents that unfold over time and should contain serious conversations about teaching through reflections and analysis of teaching and learning. Although this aspect did not occur in 1998, it has been put forward that the current second year students in the 1999 program could act as mentors for first year students entering the program. A set of essential components adapted from Retallick and Groundwater-Smith (1996) was included in the lecture as a proposed structure for portfolio development for consideration by student teachers (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Suggested Essential Components for inclusion in the Portfolio

| Table of Contents |
| Statement of Purpose |
| Career Map |
| Personal Philosophy of Teaching and Learning |
| Professional Development Goals |
| Achievements/Learning in each of the Domains |
| Evidence of Professional Learning |

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Student teachers were introduced to the types of evidence they could collect. The work of Collins (1990) and Seldin (1991) was identified as methods to consider. Collins' work was explained in the context of the collection of evidence through identification of appropriate and selective artefacts and reproductions and examples were highlighted. Collins also suggests that reflective writing and discussion follow each piece of evidence. Seldin's work was also included to provide student teachers with an understanding that evidence should be provided from a variety of sources. Seldin identified these sources as material from oneself, material from others and products of good teaching.

The model developed by Clarke (1997) was introduced as a model to assist with the organisation of student teachers' portfolios. Each of the domains was explained and examples given of suitable artefacts and reproductions representative of the domain and the student teachers' teaching and learning.

Tutorial Activity

Following the lecture, tutorial activities were suggested to consolidate ideas presented. Students were asked to further develop ideas about suitable artefacts and reproductions for each domain. They were asked to consider and reflect on the meaning of a philosophy of teaching and articulate their personal philosophy of teaching. A career map activity was conducted to assist students with identifying major stages in their professional development.

Peer Feedback Session

Student teachers presented their portfolios to a group of their peers during tutorial time. This step in the process was incorporated to exemplify the feedback stage outlined in the model by Clarke (1997). The peers provided written feedback to the student utilising a peer feedback proforma. Students were then able to make any adjustments or amendments based on the feedback. A final version of the portfolio was then submitted by students for final assessment by the lecturers. At the conclusion of the small group peer feedback session, a general overview was conducted. From one tutorial group attended, general comments from peers included the need for student teachers to justify the placement and inclusion of specific artefacts/
reproductions and reflections needed to be related to theory and research. Components missing in the portfolio were identified by the peers. The peer feedback indicated that the portfolios were generally well organised, structured and easy to read. The students indicated that the model by Clarke (1997) and the components identified by Retallick and Groundwater-Smith (1996) were useful in assisting them in structuring the portfolio.

During the general overview session, students when questioned about the usefulness of the portfolio described them as providing a focus for important professional growth and enabled them to refer to the portfolios over time. They viewed the portfolio as a tool to reflect on Practicum practices and it enabled them to identify areas where they have developed professionally.

Analysis and Discussion of the Student Teacher Interviews

Twelve structured interviews (Appendix 1) were undertaken with the sample comprising seven female and five male students with ages in the range of nineteen to fifty. The purpose of the interviews was to explore student perceptions of teacher portfolios and gain insights into their feelings and experiences regarding the portfolios usefulness. The interview responses overwhelmingly supported the view that teacher portfolios were a compelling professional tool that enabled students to draw together their experiences in Practicum and their theory subjects throughout the year to reflect on what they had learnt about how children learn and the development of their teaching skills. Four of the students commented on the way in which the portfolio assisted them in tying and linking the subject to their Practicum. 'It's really tied the subject all into one and the Practicum'. A number of concepts (detailed below) have emerged from the interview data and these concepts will inform the 1999 program.

1. Learning how to construct a portfolio:

Nine of the twelve students initially felt confused and hesitant after the lecture introducing the assessment task of developing a portfolio. This confusion was attributed to the fact that they had no previous knowledge or experience with portfolios. The students believed that the lecture was useful and provided guidance for the organisation and development of their portfolio with the domains providing a starting point for consideration of ideas and collection of artefacts.
‘I started looking at the domains and I could see the benefit. I found the lecture was useful ‘cos it gave guidance and somewhere to head with the portfolio’.

One student commented that:

‘It [the portfolio] actually got me thinking about the wholeness of what we’re doing, how everything contributes to everything’.

It was felt that further ideas needed to be generated in the tutorials to gain clarification of ideas presented in the lecture. Tutorials (because of the smaller numbers of students in the group) provided the opportunity for students to ask questions and obtain feedback from their peers and tutors. One student indicated that the advice and information given by a lecturer on a one to one basis provided further clarification of ideas. This may indicate that indeed the concept of introducing further mentoring as suggested in the model by Clarke (1997) into the process is worthwhile and could be furthered examined in 1999.

2. Reflections on students’ professional learning:

There were mixed responses to the reflective writing task. Six of the students felt comfortable reflecting on their practice while five students found this aspect very difficult. Students suggested that examples of reflective writing would have been useful to provide them with more guidance.

There was general agreement with the students that there was a need for further experience with reflective writing. Little or no previous experience had been evident in subjects other than one task in an earlier subject. Even in the subject ‘Children and Teaching’, there was an assumption that students knew what reflective writing was and would know how to write reflectively. This was not the case. Some students found this aspect of the portfolio process difficult and suggested development of skills in this area.

One student indicated that the reflective writing crystallized her thinking about her practice and made her focus on the reasons for
inclusion of certain artefacts and reproductions. However, students found that the word limit of 750 words was too limiting as so much needed to be reflected upon. Reactions on completion of the portfolio indicated that students found that the reflective practice gave them insight into the development of teaching skills and the ways in which children learn. Students concluded that reflecting on student artefacts and reproductions helped them realise that children develop at different stages in their class.

One student explained that she would not have made the connections between teaching practice and learning if there had not been the opportunity for her to reflect on her practice.

Students indicated that the portfolio process highlighted their awareness of the links between their Practicum, lectures and tutorials. One student indicated that she would like to ‘defend’ her portfolio verbally to a panel so that she could explain and emphasise various aspects of the portfolio. This aspect has been discussed and will be included in the ongoing development of the portfolio program in the students’ final year of study. All of the comments, except one, indicated that the portfolio experience was positive. The following students’ statements sum up in essence most of the students’ reactions to their portfolio development.

It was fantastic. I can’t wait to get it back to see if my tutor feels the same way. It’s going to be with me for a long time. I’m going to build on it. It’s going to be involving. Yeah, it’s really .. it’s taken on a life of its own, this document I think. And the other thing about it, so much of university is learning, being taught and then being judged on what you know. But this actually was a bit like a display piece of my achievements. This is what I’ve got out of this semester. This is what I’ve got out of my prac. So I like my portfolio.

I think it’s a very good way of helping us to reflect on what we’ve learned, because as I said you don’t realise how much you have learned in the last year. And it has been a huge learning experience. Without having the portfolio, I don’t think I would have put it all together myself. I think it really helped and it drew from every subject as well, which was great.
3. Professional learning and development:

Students felt that the portfolio process enabled them to critically analyse themselves and allowed them to identify where improvement could be made. It all comes back to making you look critically at yourself. It really makes me think about my own development, where I can improve, where I have improved and what the future holds for me.

Three of the students indicated that the portfolio was a life-long career document which would assist them in their own improvement and development. They felt that the process should be continued in 2nd and 3rd year so that they could amend their document over time as they developed professionally.

Three students however, had a limited view of the purpose of a portfolio. They felt that it was solely for the purpose of providing evidence to an employer at interview and that it would assist them in gaining employment.

Two students indicated that the development of a portfolio had started directing ideas about their study and focussing on areas of interest. They indicated that documenting their goals assisted them in providing direction for their future learning.

'Yeah well, one thing is for sure it's put me on the road to thinking about what I want out of this degree, what I want out of my teaching. It's made me sort of start directing my study a little bit'.

One student stated:

'I think it's a growth document, it's going to help me grow.'

4. Development of teaching skills:

Seven students felt that a portfolio enabled them to evaluate their teaching practice and improve on elements of it. They indicated that the development of a portfolio made them aware of their practices in
the classroom and reflections enabled them to question why particular practices were used. The portfolio development encouraged students to utilise a variety of teaching methods as one of the suggested domains was ‘Teaching Strategies’. Students felt that they should use as many teaching methods as possible so that they could reflect on them in this domain in their portfolio. The ‘Teaching Strategies’ domain also highlighted to some students that there was a need to further develop a variety of teaching strategies.

There was some tension reported by one student that their cooperating teacher during their Practicum was reluctant for them to teach using innovative methods such as co-operative learning and groupwork. Students indicated that they discussed some of these issues in their reflections.

5. Peer Feedback:

Peer feedback was seen as being very useful and encouraging as students were able to consolidate their thinking on the portfolio based on peers’ comments. One student saw this process as the first step in acting collegially – a concept they felt was at the core of their profession.

Ten students commented that discussing their portfolio in groups gave them the opportunity to view others’ ideas and identify their own portfolio before final assessment by the Academics.

‘We found it very useful. It really tied down a lot of our own thoughts and made us bounce ideas off each other and really get some direction’.

The peer feedback proforma proved to be very helpful as it provided a focus for peer discussion and allowed students to reflect on the comments made by the peers and make changes where appropriate. Students considered that more time should have been devoted to the peer feedback session. They felt that twenty minutes was inadequate as the peers provided excellent feedback.

The students commented that, although the portfolios were all different, they agreed that this was a positive aspect as the portfolio
reflected individuals' ways of doing things. It was suggested that peer assessment should be conducted over a period of time to ensure feedback throughout the development of the portfolio not just at the end of the process. However, some students explained that the usefulness of the peer feedback session depended on the group they worked with and the effort their peers had put into their own portfolios.

6. Structure of the Portfolio:

Students indicated a variety of approaches used to structure their portfolio. Some students used the suggested domains by Clarke (1997) and found them useful in providing an organisational framework. ‘Being able to order your thoughts into domains was very useful’. Students were able to make links with each of the domains and described them as showing the integration between teaching and learning. ‘It [the domains] really highlighted how it all interweaves, with the whole school picture’. The domain ‘Teaching Practice’ assisted student teachers in thinking about individual learning needs of students and how individual differences could be catered for by utilising a variety of teaching strategies.

Some students explained that they organised their portfolios using the ‘essential components’ as a guideline for the structure of the portfolios in conjunction with the domains. It was also evident from examining the portfolios that students also organised their portfolio in two sections, part A and part B as described in the assessment task. It seems that there was some confusion between the domains and the categories a) and b) as explained in the assessment task. This area needs further thought for 1999 to ensure that directions are clearer for students.

Conclusion: Implications and Strategies for Future Planning

The development and implementation phases of the portfolio initiative for students has provided conversations about learning and teaching within the Schools of Education. It has stimulated thoughts regarding professional development for pre-service teachers and generated discussions about a co-ordinated approach to portfolio development across the curriculum.
As a result of the comments received from students in regard to the usefulness of the development of a teacher portfolio, it was resolved at a B.Ed Course Management Committee meeting in December 1998 that the development of portfolios would be linked to subjects in all years of the student's study. A co-ordinator was nominated to develop a unified approach to portfolio development throughout the students' course. A further development of this initiative will be to examine the possibility of linking student teachers to mentors to assist with the students' professional development.

The student teacher interviews revealed a number of issues which have implications for planning in 1999. Thus, it was evident that there is a need to train the tutors of the subject in order for them to be able to provide the ongoing support and assistance to students. Students indicated that throughout the process there was a need to establish an ongoing rapport with an Academic to assist with clarification of ideas and advice. Although students found the lecture very useful, it was felt that tutorials provided the opportunity for further discussion of ideas. Students indicated more than one tutorial was necessary as this would allow them to consolidate ideas.

There is evidence from the interviews to suggest that mentoring needs to be further considered in each of the years of study. This aspect has been acted upon by considering a variety of ways to include mentoring in each of the subjects related to the portfolio development. Discussions are currently taking place to further develop this aspect.

Further experience with reflective writing needs to be planned into the first year program. There was a wrong assumption made in 1998 that students had experience with reflective writing in secondary school or had an innate ability to carry out this task. It is imperative that students be given the opportunity to develop their reflective writing skills as part of their course of study.

Students have suggested that the peer feedback session be extended over a period of time to allow feedback to be an ongoing process rather than an end process. Students valued the peer feedback and stated that further time be given to this aspect.
Further thought needs to be given to the wording of the assessment task so that it clearly indicates how the identified domains should be linked to the task.

The development of portfolios by students in their first year of study in the R Ed program at the University of Western Sydney Nepean has endeavoured to develop in students an attitude of lifelong learning and has been identified by the students interviewed as one of the most worthwhile experiences in which they have been involved.

APPENDIX 1:

Interview Questions

1. After the lecture and tutorials explaining teacher portfolios, what were your initial reactions?
2. What do you see as the benefits of developing a portfolio?
3. Comment on your experiences with the reflective writing aspect of the portfolio.
4. In what ways can you see that portfolios will assist you in your professional development?
5. Comment on the ways in which the development of a portfolio has assisted you in developing your teaching skills.
6. In what ways has the development of a portfolio assisted you in understanding how children learn?
7. How was the peer feedback useful?
8. If you used the suggested domains and model in what ways did you find them useful to assist you in organising and structuring your portfolio?
9. Now that you have completed your portfolio to this stage what are your reactions?

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*Action Research and the Preparation of Reflective Practitioners*


Education Department of South Australia. (1991). *Teachers' Work: The Quality of Teaching in our Schools*.


PAPERS WITH A PRINCIPAL FOCUS ON REFLECTION


PAPER 4. (UNPUBLISHED)


This paper formed one of a series, which discussed reflection as a factor that contributed to professional learning. The studies were positioned around research undertaken with the Bachelor of Education fourth year primary internship program. The paper argued that professional learning occurs through the act of reflective writing. A model of professional learning and reflection (Clarke, Power & Hine, 2001), developed as part of the B. Ed internship program was discussed. This model was related to the premise that reflective practices contribute to professional learning. The model was developed as a result of focus group meetings held with associate teachers (student teachers in the internship program) and colleague teachers (practising teachers involved in the internship program).

Focus questions were posed initially to the associate teachers early in their program. The focus questions evoked critical self-discussion about the associate’s practice and understanding of teaching. Associates were asked to reflect by writing their responses to the focus questions. During the internship the associates were encouraged to revisit the focus questions and reflect on the questions in light of their experiences during their period of internship. It was during this phase that discussions about professional learning were held between the colleague teacher and the associate teacher. These meetings and discussions provided the opportunity for associate teachers to inform their practice through critical reflection. Close to the end of the internship the associates shared their thinking about their teaching practice at a focus group meeting. The act of reflecting on practice allowed the associate teacher to interrogate their teaching and to question their learning and the learning of their students.
The professional learning and reflection model had been operationalised but had not been documented. The act of writing up the reflective process used in the internship enabled the researchers to document the process. It also gave insights into the need to further develop students’ reflective skills throughout their Bachelor of Education program.
THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM: A MODEL OF REFLECTIVE
PRACTICE AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

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THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY INTERNSHIP PROGRAM: A MODEL OF REFLECTIVE PRACTICE AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

ABSTRACT

Being involved in the internship program and engaging in reflective writing has critical implications for the professional learning of the associate teacher. In the Teacher Education Review (2000) Ramsey suggested that internships are an effective way to provide field experience for pre-service educators, thereby developing professional learning. The literature indicates that key features of an internship include professional learning and this paper argues that this occurs through reflective writing.

INTRODUCTION

The Ramsey Review (2000) in its findings and discussions takes the standpoint that initial teacher education must be firmly rooted in the workplace. This notion of professional learning on-site can be achieved with increased partnerships occurring between Universities, employees and schools (p. 61). Ramsey identifies a critical point in which extensive attention needs to be made in teacher education in the area of improving the transition from teacher in training to fully-fledged teacher using mentoring, internships and better induction (p. 14). Internship agreements can only seek to strengthen these partnerships and provide worthwhile, meaningful experiences that provide pre-service teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary for them to take their place in school situations.

Research into internships and the extended practicum covered by this Review connects better preparation of pre-service teachers with an improvement in learning and professional development (Boser and Wiley, 1990). The power of the internship or extended practicum according to Walker and Halse (1995) is that workplace learning undertaken by teachers is most significant when it occurs over a sustained
period of time. This view is upheld in the Ramsey Review. Because of the extended
time in schools and classrooms experienced by the associates in the internship we
argue that professional learning is made visible through reflective writing of their
experiences on-site in schools. Therefore we contend that professional learning
occurs when there is acknowledgement by the associates that classroom practice leads
to improved learning outcomes for students. The associate as a professional reflects
on teaching roles and responsibilities and can reflect on the links between actions and
outcomes.

THE INTERNSHIP: A MODEL OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Hatton and Harman (1997) describe the key features of an internship program as an
extended placement in the workplace prior to full-time teaching. In this program a
variety of teaching skills such as program planning and implementation, classroom
management, professional learning and curriculum development can be nurtured and
expanded through a close association with a more experienced teacher. Interns are
afforded the responsibility of undertaking higher levels of teaching while being
supported in their transition into full-time teaching.

The internship at the University of Western Sydney occupies the third term of the
school year. The colleague teacher (qualified teacher in a school) is freed from
teaching for three days per week to take part in negotiated educational projects in
their school. Associate teachers (current student teachers undertaking the Internship)
experience a modified introduction to teaching designed around reflection on the
characteristics of teaching via action research, reflective questions and reflections of
 teaching practices.

These students have previously, in their program of study, developed and
demonstrated their reflective skills through the presentation of a learning portfolio.
Over their four-year course the associates collected evidence for their portfolio, which
exemplified their professional learning. The collection of artefacts in the portfolio is
commented on by the student teacher to show examples and justification of their
professional growth and development over a period of time.
In the model of professional learning (Figure 1) designed at the University of Western Sydney by the researchers, reflection is seen as a critical catalyst to the cultivation of professional learning and consequently the internship program. This paper discusses this model in detail, and elaborates how it develops critical reflection and reflective practice at all phases.
Phase 1 (see Figure 1, phase 1) of the model draws its focus from a first meeting of the group of associate teachers where focus questions are discussed.

**FOCUS QUESTIONS**

What are your expectations of the internship?
What do you hope to achieve from the internship?
How will you measure your achievements?

Paula, an associate teacher from the 2000 cohort responded to the first two focus questions by commenting:

> I feel that the internship will not only help me to further develop my knowledge and the required skills but will provide me with an opportunity to apply the knowledge gained in a practical learning environment. I hope to be able to develop my potential as a classroom educator through a process of practical teaching, teamwork, discussions and guidance from lecturers, other teachers and peers which the internship ideally provides.

Focus questions evoke critical self-discussion about the associates’ practice, (Phase 2 Figure 1). In this phase associates are encouraged to reflect on their practice with themselves as audience. This may take the form of Vygotskian private speech or tape recording ideas and then replaying the recording while in the act of reflecting. It is important in this phase that associates maintain a free flow of ideas in their reflection, problem posing and brainstorming a range of solutions in a non-judgmental environment.

In the act of writing reflectively, the associate is encouraged to take the time to sit and think about their teaching (Phase 3). During this phase freedom in writing is encouraged based on the critical self-discussion of phase 2. This writing is not necessarily shared with the colleague teacher. The associate writes for himself or herself and it is this act of writing reflectively that makes professional learning and teaching more explicit.
During the internship the associates are encouraged to revisit the focus questions and reflect on their practice (Phase 4). This phase also encourages the associate teacher to reflect on and evaluate their lessons in detail to give insights and greater understanding to their teaching practice. Links between actions and outcomes are encouraged. It is during this phase that discussions are held between the colleague teacher and the associate teacher. At this meeting the associate is asked to engage in professional dialogue with their colleague teacher about their progress and their ongoing professional learning. In this phase the associate is supported in their attempts to be reflective by the guidance and assistance of their colleague teacher. Suggested areas for discussion at this meeting include:

- the setting of specific goals by the Associate teacher and target dates for their achievement
- discussion of what has gone well to date in the internship
- discussion of areas that need development and suggestions for how these can be achieved.

The act of reflection involves reviewing past events and reviewing set goals in order to improve professional learning and teaching practice. One associate indicated that they appreciated the interim progress meeting as it gave them the opportunity to set practical goals for the remainder of the internship. Another associate indicating what was going well said, “She thinks that the noise level in her class is productive but wonders whether other teachers near her think the same”. However this associate further commented that she wants to target development of management strategies. These meetings provide the opportunity for associates to inform their practice through critical reflection based on sound theoretical knowledge. They are asked to challenge themselves if faced with difficult situations and reconstruct their practice based on discussions with their colleague teacher. Associates and colleague teachers gain insights into the issues confronted through their reflections. As a result of these meetings associates are able to modify their practice in light of their reflections.

Close to the end of the internship the associates and colleague teachers share their thinking about their practice in schools (Phase 5). There is shared responsibility between the University, colleague and associate teacher in a supportive environment for this focus group meeting. In this collegial meeting, shared group reflection is
fostered. Overlapping experiences, confirmation, reinforcement and gains in confidence are typical outcomes of this meeting as is indicated in the following comments from Glenda colleague teacher in 2000:

as a result of participation in the internship program associate teachers learnt how to program, to fit in with staff and the school routine, gaining confidence in a school setting, observation of children’s development and the link between theory and practice.

Kim, an associate teacher reflecting at a focus group meeting on the outcomes of the internship program commented:

I feel that the internship program really did serve to meet my needs of gaining more teaching experience and developing confidence in areas of weakness. It also enabled me to experience team teaching and gave me the opportunity to work with a variety of people.

This view was supported by a group of associates in a focus group meeting held in 2001. They indicated that they have a feeling of increased confidence about themselves and their ability to work unsupervised.

Through the discussion of the focus group meetings there is confirmation of the individual experiences by the collegial group. The associates’ feel secure in that they have met the same kind of challenges in a collegial environment. They feel supported in the knowledge that their experiences overlap with each other in a community of professional learners. This manifests associate's professional learning and causes their teaching to be more explicit. The act of reflecting on practice enables the intern to interrogate their teaching. It enables them to question their learning and the learning of their students. Prue at one of the focus meetings in 2000 indicated this point most strongly:

I’ve always kept a journal and reflected every day and so I was able to develop as a teacher and also reflect on what the students learned and make sure that the students were actually learning and I could monitor their learning and their outcomes over a longer period of time.
CONCLUSION

Ryan, Toohey and Hughes (1996) are indicative of research published over the last five years where the practicum and internship have received greater attention by researchers. This attention, informed by educational theories, is an attempt to understand the learning conditions in which student and beginning teachers gain the maximum benefit of professional learning. Identified as crucial to the optimum learning condition for student and beginning teachers is the “opportunity to reflect on or to examine experience in light of the individual’s current knowledge and understanding (Ryan, et. al, 1996).

This paper and research has found that a critical feature of the internship is the encouragement of reflective practice. Friedus (1998) supports the view of this research that through the reflective process “…students learn to look for patterns and connections within and among the educational experiences they have found meaningful for themselves and their students” (p. 56). Martinez (1993) argues that teacher education needs to engender critical reflective professionals who learn to construct and shape the complex patterns and factors that influence and impact upon their teaching practice. The model of professional learning through reflection on the internship discussed in this paper is a process model which reflects these views as it encourages the development of active reflective writing to enable reflection on practice, compels teaching to be explicit thereby manifesting professional learning.

The study by Dobbins (1996) in which student teachers focussed on their learning during their practicum found the reflection process beneficial to themselves, their students and the school based supervisors involved in their practicum. Using a journal to consciously reflect on their daily experiences, along with participating in weekly interviews, student teachers found their learning experiences to be positive as they felt empowered, valued and in control of their own learning. Taking the time to consciously engage and analyse their experiences resulted in the student teachers learning much more “from their experience rather than just merely having the experience” (Dobbins, 1996, p. 272). Our research would support these findings of Dobbins as Veronica, an intern depicts in her comment,
I’ve kept my journals and looking back you know whenever you have time to look back and read through them and you think ‘wow was that how I thought at that time’.

As our research has shown, with appropriate support and the development of reflective practice beginning teachers can expand their teaching repertoire (Shaffer et. al, 1992 & Ballantyne, et.al, 1995). The internship through critical reflection and the manifestation of professional learning is one example of a different approach taken in teacher education to provide the additional support necessary for teachers as they make their transition from pre-service teacher to beginning teacher.
REFERENCES


This paper examined the benefits of the internship program at the University of Western Sydney since its inception in 1995 and provided a link between the discussions of the Ramsey Review and the practice of the classroom. The increased interest in the internship as the preferred model of teacher preparation made this research timely. The paper addressed key issues of quality teaching, mentoring, reflection and links between theory and practice by providing evidence to support anecdotal impressions.

One of the key findings of this study was that mentoring was fundamental to assisting reflective practice. A pattern of interrelationships between the factors of mentoring, reflection and portfolio development began to emerge in the studies and supported the hypothesis proposed by the author that professional learning was contributed to by these factors.
THE INTERNSHIP:
AN INNOVATIVE PRACTICE IN QUALITY TEACHING

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ABSTRACT

Examining the benefits of the internship program at the University of Western Sydney Nepean since its inception in 1995 provides a link between the theory of the Ramsey Review and the practice of the classroom. In the Teacher Education Review, Ramsey suggested that internships are an effective way to provide field experience for pre-service educators. The increased interest in the internship as the preferred model of preparation for pre-service teachers makes this research timely.

The internship places the associate teacher in the situation where they are required to sustain their teaching over a full school term. The literature indicates that the key features of an internship include acceptance of higher levels of responsibility, a supported transition into full-time professional teaching, and encouragement of reflective practice (Hatton and Harman, 1997, p. 1). One of the requirements is site-based action research. The associate teacher undertakes an action research project with their class and reports the outcomes of the project as part of their course requirements.

Evaluations of internships in Australia have included positive anecdotes from participants about their experiences. (Davies & Polinitz, 1994; Johnson, Ratsoy, Holdaway & Friesen; 1993, Pendry, 1994). In NSW there has not been enough time for long term studies into the effects of completing an internship before entering the teaching profession. This paper aims to address key issues of quality teaching, mentoring and links between theory and practice by providing evidence to support anecdotal impressions.
INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade the importance of the internship or extended practicum has received greater currency and interest in the literature on teacher education. The recent review of teacher education commissioned by the New South Wales Minister for Education and conducted by Gregor Ramsey (2000) confirms what teachers new to the profession have known for many years; that their on the job preparation has been inadequate (Ramsey, 2000). Examples of how other professions prepare their practitioners for the workplace substantiates such points of view. Nurses, for example, undertaking a three-year undergraduate course of professional training, undergo 90 days of clinical experience in the workplace (Ramsey, 2000). By comparison, teachers who have completed four years of study that includes a three-year undergraduate degree followed by a one-year graduate diploma, undertake between 40 and 60 days of practical experience in the workplace (Ramsey, 2000). Internship programs can provide a mechanism for addressing this issue by providing extended periods of learning in the workplace by students during their 4th year.

Ramsey (2000) focussed on the practicum and the professional experience of teachers as one of its four main critical issues. Arising from the more general issues of the terms of reference the review investigated how teacher educators can offer the kinds of professional experience that enable new teachers to teach effectively. It also sought to review the effectiveness of the current practicum model.

A range of evidence was presented about the appropriateness of the current practicum models and the effectiveness of these models in preparing future teachers for the world of teaching. It was reported that pre-service teachers are not often able to make the connections between the theory of their university courses and their actual field experience (Ramsey, 2000). One submission noted

"...anecdotal and empirical evidence strongly suggests that the majority of teachers trained in traditional university courses arrive at schools after graduation very much unaware of how school and classroom cultures operate, [and] unable to see the relationships between what they have studied and how it can be translated into classroom practice that produces effective student learning. (Ramsey, 2000, p. 59)"
The Ramsey review strongly advocates the desirability for maximising the amount of time student teachers undertake during the practicum. One of the critical issues requiring attention is identified as the need to improve the transition from pre-service training to induction of teachers. This was to be achieved through strategies such as internships and mentoring.

The Ramsey review in its findings and discussions takes the standpoint that initial teacher education must be firmly rooted in the workplace. This can be achieved with increased partnerships occurring between Universities, employees and schools. Internship agreements can only seek to strengthen these partnerships and provide worthwhile, meaningful experiences that provide pre-service teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary for them to take their place in school situations.

Research into internships and the extended practicum covered by this review connects better preparation of pre-service teachers with an improvement in quality teaching, learning and professional development. Boser and Wiley, 1990 (cited in Hatton and Harman, 1997) report principals as stating that teachers employed after undertaking an internship were more highly committed and better prepared than their counterparts. To date the evaluation of internships introduced in Australia, the United Kingdom and United States and Canada, have reported positive experiences by the participants (Andrew, 1990, cited in Hatton & Harman, 1997; Davies & Polinitz, 1994; Johnson, Ratsoy, Holdaway & Frieson, 1994; Pendry, 1994).

The power of the internship or extended practicum according to Walker (1995) is that workplace learning undertaken by teachers is most significant when it occurs over a sustained period of time. The viability of these programs however depends upon the strength of the partnership between the individuals and the institutions and the articulation of clearly defined roles, responsibilities and outcomes for all participants. Commitment by government through policy and funding is also necessary to ensure greater opportunity to participate in such a program.
Features of the Internship

Hatton and Harman (1997) describe the key features of an internship program as an extended placement in the workplace prior to full time teaching whereby classroom management skills can be nurtured and expanded through a close association with a more experienced teacher. Interns are afforded the responsibility of undertaking higher levels of teaching while being supported in their transition into full-time professional teaching. A critical feature of the internship is the encouragement of reflective practice.

The internship in the present day (Johnson et al., 1993) can range from teaching a few lessons within a university degree, to one semester of practicum teaching to a whole year of professional practice. The school and university undertake a shared responsibility for the supervision of the intern. Professional status is usually awarded at the end of the internship (Johnson, et al., 1993).

Longitudinal studies on the benefits of the internship program undertaken by Andrew, 1990, (cited in Hatton and Harman, 1997) reported higher levels of career satisfaction, increased commitment, greater adequacy of preparation and an insight into interns’ perceived teaching abilities. A follow-up study of interns after completing a 2-year school based program in the United States were still working as teachers five years later. The study reported that participants rated the program in terms of the value of a sustained classroom experience, collaborative support experienced from fellow interns and mentors and in particular support from university supervisors (Hatton & Harman, 1997).

The results of a study into a 12-week internship program in early childhood education by the University of Newcastle, Australia reported the benefits to interns in the areas of higher levels of efficiency, enhanced interpersonal skills, greater facility in working with individual children and increased confidence (Davies & Polinitz, 1994 cited in Hatton & Harman, 1997). Teachers involved with interns support the findings that interns demonstrated high levels of professionalism; reflective practice in their discussions about teaching together with a sense of personal growth (Hatton & Harman, 1997). The authors of the study however caution against broad
generalisation of the findings as the results were derived from a specific and limited area of teaching, namely, early childhood education (Hatton & Harman, 1997).

Other studies into short-term programs report similar gains to participant interns. A study by Wollongong University of teachers in their 4th year in school-based work also reported an improvement in their reflective capabilities (Booth & Wilson, 1992, cited in Hatton & Harman, 1997). Likewise Queensland University of Technology (QUT) found that all parties experienced benefits from a 6-week internship program. While Associate Teachers experienced an improvement in their competency, mentors were given time to undertake their role as well as participate in professional development opportunities (Whitta, Yarrow, Muller & Millwater, 1995, cited in Hatton & Harman, 1997).

Characteristics of interns are that they are self-confident, competent in pedagogy and subject matter, able to adjust to new situations and committed to teaching and keen to succeed (Andrew, 1990; Bolam, 1987; Etheridge, 1989; Watson et al. 1991 cited in Hatton & Harman, 1997). Interns have also been described as possessing rational, well-developed thinking skills about themselves and their practice (McIntyre, 1991, cited in Hatton and Harman, 1997). However, they have also been noted to have unreasonable expectations of themselves; their schools and the students they teach (Hatton & Laws, 1993, cited in Hatton and Harman, 1997; Martinez, 1993). Initially they are preoccupied with concerns such as whether they have made the right career choice, will they succeed as teachers, dealing with the tasks at hand (such as lesson preparation and administrative issues) and acceptance by their peers as equals (Hatton & Harman, 1997). Well-planned internship programs can address these issues so that the interns’ attention can be turned to the impact that their teaching is having on their students (Dinham & Scott, 1996; Fogarty & Lennon, 1991; Huling-Austin, 1992 cited in Hatton & Harman, 1997).

Internship programs are differentiated from the shorter practicum experience that forms part of the pre-service education or initial degree undertaken by the student. In New South Wales students typically undergo 45 days of supervised and assessed practicum teaching as part of their first qualification. This practicum experience places an emphasis on learning how to deal with whole-class teaching. In contrast,
Internships are identified by a longer, transitional period, ranging from one semester of teaching to one to two years and with anything from three days of teaching per week to a full-time load. For early school-based activities, allowances or stipends are paid to teachers involved with an internship program for a beginning teacher. This does not occur in the UK or USA (Hatton & Harman, 1997).

Another central part of any internship program is the involvement of mentors to support the teacher in transition (Hatton & Harman, 1997). A mentor may be known as the “Co-operating Teacher”, “Colleague Teacher”, “Supervisor”, “Principal”, “University Lecturer” or “Peer”. In most internships programs the intern is also referred to as an Associate Teacher.

The importance of the mentor in an internship program

Acceptance, compatibility of values, commitment to teaching and openness are qualities that have been identified for an effective relationship between Associates and mentors (Carruthers, 1993; Kling & Brookhart, 1991, cited in Hatton & Harman, 1997). In the Australian context the mentor is the “Colleague Teacher”. The role of the mentor is to work alongside the intern on shared classroom issues and tasks, offer advice when needed and most critically, encourage the development of reflective practice on the part of the Associate Teacher (Hatton & Harman, 1997). In addition to this, mentors provide direct professional support to Associates by providing resources for problem-solving, personal support and encouragement and mediating on their behalf with other staff members (Wildman, Magliaro, Niles & Niles, 1992, cited in Hatton & Harman, 1997; Hine, Clarke & Power, 2000). Mentors themselves require time, autonomy and opportunities for professional collaboration to be effective in their roles.

Internship at the University of Western Sydney

Internships as a form of professional field experience have increased significantly in the last five years. The internship examined in this study has operated since 1995 at the University of Western Sydney. It is a collaborative venture with the key
stakeholders being the Department of Education and Training, the University of Western Sydney, Schools of Education, students and local schools.

The internship was introduced as an innovation in 1995 and its success with students and teachers in local schools has increased. In 2000, eighteen schools hosted the program and twenty-eight teachers worked alongside UWS students and staff. In 2000, there has been the largest cohort of students at UWS in this program. This project examines internships through a site-based analysis of the program conducted at UWS from the perspective of graduates of UWS, colleague teachers and current students. The increased interest in the internship as the preferred model of preparation for pre-service teachers makes this a timely project.

The internship occupies the third term of the school year. The colleague teacher (qualified teachers in a school) is freed from teaching for three days per week to take part in negotiated educational projects in their school. Associate teachers (current students undertaking the Internship) experience a modified introduction to teaching designed around reflection on the characteristics of teaching via action research and the trial of an integrated curriculum. The associate teaches for three days per week. During the fourth day the colleague teacher and associate teacher engage in action research involving the class. On the fifth day the colleague teacher teaches their own class and the associate teacher attends the University to work on the action research and the integrated unit.

Aims of the study

The study aimed to undertake an investigation of the graduates of the UWS Internship program over the past five years as well as current colleague teachers and the current cohort of internship student teachers (associate teachers) to determine the difference made by the internship program to the teaching skills, educational development and preparation of pre-service teachers. By studying these teachers the investigators aim to identify improvements in quality of teaching as an outcome of the internship program.
The study was a pilot study investigating the long-term effects of completing an internship. It aimed to provide evidence from teacher reflections. In the future it is intended to develop into a longitudinal study and provide much needed data that as yet has not been compiled in this area.

**Method**

This study was conducted over four months and included 5 graduates of the UWS Internship program, 28 colleague teachers in schools hosting the program and 28 associate teachers (students currently undertaking the internship program) in the current cohort of internship students. The participants included both males and females. Participants were selected on a voluntary basis and were informed that they could withdraw from the project at any time. The study consisted of two phases, namely

- Phase 1 - six focus groups meetings chaired by the researchers were conducted involving current students and colleague teachers. Minutes of these meetings were taken and then a draft sent to all participants for clarification of points raised to ensure accuracy of information.

- In Phase 2, data collection took the form of structured interviews with key stakeholders consisting of 9 colleague teachers, 4 associate teachers and 5 graduates. Transcripts were produced of each interview to facilitate data analysis. Table 1 identifies the interview questions given to all participants in the study.
Our research and a review of literature identifies three critical outcomes that are characteristic of participation in the internship, namely:

- the nurturing of teaching skills,
- the improvement in professional development
- the pre-service experience of associate and colleague teachers which underpin quality teaching.

**Nurturing of teaching skills**

Hatton and Harman, (1997) reported an increase in the nurturing of teaching skills as a result of participation in an internship program. Their study identifies higher levels of efficiency, enhancement of interpersonal skills, greater ability to work with individual children, increased levels of confidence, a shift in emphasis to individual learning and development of reflective practice as perceived outcomes of an internship program. Dobbins and Mitchell (1995) found that through participation in an internship program associate teachers developed a broader conception of what is teaching while their classroom knowledge and skills underwent consolidation and refinement in the classroom. Similarly, our study identified these particular outcomes of the internship, as interviews with associate teachers reveal.
Kim commented:

*I had a great time in my class. I found that I have a natural inclination towards students with special needs and learning difficulties. In my time there one child went from definitely repeating year 1 to being able to go to year 2. Another child went from scribbling in his writing book to writing two and three page stories. Had it not been for the extended time in the classroom the internship allows, I would not have seen the long term good that can derive from being committed to your children. I also saw some great ideas for the classroom, things such as routine, dancing, charts that I had heard about in lectures but not seen in action. It was a really enjoyable time in the classroom. I received letters from parents at the end of the internship, and many came in to see me as well. It was excellent to be made a part of a teaching community. I learnt how to program which was a bonus.*

Veronica, a graduate intern who has been teaching for five years stated:

*That year was a major eye opener, a big eye opener for me .... things that I realised exist out there and I think that it prepared me so well for the years to come because I always look back to it and reflect back on it ....*

Johnson, Ratsoy, Holdaway and Friesen (1993) undertook a large-scale research project with over 6,000 stakeholders to ascertain whether internships were an effective means of “improving teaching competence”. A study of this size had not previously been undertaken to assess the value of an internship program. All participants in the program agreed that internships were valuable in providing a link between theory and practice and that they were helpful in assisting beginning teachers make the transition into teaching. The research findings demonstrated that the “internship was effective in improving the classroom teaching skills of interns” (Johnson et al., 1993, p. 299). Our research supports these findings, as all interns and colleague teachers stated that the internship experience had significantly improved classroom teaching skills. Prue’s comments are indicative of our findings:

*I developed a full program and so that enhanced my teaching because I became better at developing units of work, I had a one two three and so I was developing for three levels with an A stream class and so I was able to develop the full program and implement a range of strategies, particularly those from university for example the course on thinking skills it gave me that opportunity to develop those and try out new strategies and to develop flexibility in teaching, to implement a range of different evaluation techniques*
and also reflect on your own teaching and their effectiveness, and be responsive in my teaching, I’ve always kept a journal and reflected every day and so I was able to develop as a teacher and also reflect on what the students learned and make sure that the students were actually learning and I could monitor their learning and their outcomes over a longer period of time. I’ve put a lot of the theory into practice.

and as two colleague teachers Wilma and Cheryl commented:

**as a result of participation in the internship program associate teachers learnt how to program, to fit in with staff and the school routine, gaining confidence in a school setting, observation of children’s development and the link between theory and practice.**

Kim, an associate teacher reflecting on the outcomes of the internship program commented:

*I feel that the internship project really did serve to meet my needs of gaining more teaching experience and developing confidence in areas of weakness. It also enabled me to experience team-teaching and gave me the opportunity to work with a variety of people. I had the opportunity to seek out other staff members to get help and assistance which was great.*

**Improvement in Professional Development**

Studies by Wollongong University of teachers in their 4th year in school-based work also report an improvement in their reflective capabilities (Booth & Wilson, 1992, cited in Hatton & Harman, 1997). Likewise Queensland University of Technology (QUT) found that all parties experienced benefits from a 6-week internship program. While associate teachers experienced an improvement in their competency, mentors were given time to undertake their role as well as participate in professional development opportunities (Whitta, Yarrow, Muller & Millwater, 1995, cited in Hatton & Harman, 1997). This is depicted in the colleague teacher Glenda’s interview, when she states:

*The positive outcomes for me was that I could see the development of my associate teacher and I could see what was happening with her and how she was thinking and planning, I really enjoyed that part of it. I could then, for my own development, plan these maths activities and teach these small groups of*
children maths and so the school benefited that way. I also benefited from having Ellie there because there was a different point of view on things.

and Lynne, a colleague teacher commented:

It makes you think because you’re so used to doing your job you don’t actually sit down and analyse how do I get kids to do that. He said ‘how do you do that?’ and I had to sit down and think how DO I motivate them to do this? At the beginning of the internship, he would tell them the whole days program in the first 15 minutes of the day and I thought, no you’ve got to leave a bit of mystery there and by the end he was doing the same.

Longitudinal studies undertaken in New Hampshire (Andrew, 1990, cited in Hatton & Harman, 1997) reported the following professional benefits as higher levels of career satisfaction, commitment, adequacy of preparation and development of teacher’s own perceived teaching abilities, as a colleague teacher, Mavis depicts when she states:

There’s been a mutual sharing of ideas and we had to, as all of the colleague teachers and associate teachers would have had to, negotiate so that there is some consistency of discipline and approach to various things, strategies for management of difficult children and so on. But beyond that there was freedom for the intern to implement her strategies and I did learn things from those, different ideas that hadn’t occurred to me and so on. I guess that she then also picked up things that she may not have had an opportunity yet to try and so it was a mutual sharing of a whole range of ideas and strategies.

and Prue, commenting on her professional development as an associate teacher in the recent internship program stated that:

Well the school actually asked me to come back and present what I did in my action research, for the teachers [to see] the strategies that I’d implemented when using computers. And that really gave me confidence knowing that they’ve seen what I’ve done and they were willing to take on board the information that I’d found from my research and also the strategies that I’d implemented as a result; and basically that’s given me a lot of confidence as a teacher knowing that I’m able to do things like staff development to help teachers. Just being a member of a staff, being involved in staff meetings and a range of other collaborative meetings, helped me do a range of other things that I hadn’t had the opportunity to do. I’ve also developed more flexibility with my teaching and the ability to work collaboratively with other teachers. I developed strategies that my colleague teacher would suggest and so that’s
enhanced my teaching and classroom management, and also learning how to understand the students and their interests.

A follow-up study of interns who had completed a 2-year school based program in the United States and were still working as teachers five years later reported that participants valued the internship program in terms of the value of a sustained classroom experience, the collaborative support experienced from fellow interns and mentors and on-site courses addressing interns concerns (Hatton & Harman, 1997). Our study found similar long-term benefits experienced by past graduates of the internship program, as depicted in Veronica’s statements:

With the action research I found myself growing as a teacher and looking at things in a different way in regards to data that I was collecting and how to use it. With the action research it developed my thinking, it was higher order thinking ..., actually I do refer to my action research project very often because it was a topic that was unique that I was investigating and I’ve used it in my school to bring examples through with thinking skills and with assessing and evaluating techniques too. I was doing a casual block for two years in another school and I actually got the front section of my action research copied out to all the staff as information for them and it was very useful in that way and I actually used it again to develop a booklet for thinking skills, at this school which the teachers are using as a tool for their teaching in class and so we put it all together and made up a little resource book for teachers.

**THE PRESERVICE EXPERIENCE OF ASSOCIATE AND COLLEAGUE TEACHERS**

Perhaps of greatest importance to the success of any internship program is the appropriateness of the colleague teacher for the associate teacher. Furlong and Maynard’s (1995) developmental framework used by staff involved with student mentoring indicates that the “supervisory” approach is applicable to the learning needs of the student in practicum, as they are “beginning to teach” and undertaking “supervised learning”. As the student progresses to goals of an internship, they have moved “from teaching to learning” and “autonomous teaching” (Hatton & Harman, 1997, p. 12). This progression requires a “conscious role” change on the part of teachers responsible for mentoring students as the learning needs of the intern have evolved (Cameron & Hayden, 1995, cited in Hatton & Harman, 1997).
Ballantyne, Hansford and Packer (1995, p. 242) surveyed 24 teachers commencing their first teaching assignment in Catholic primary schools in Queensland in 1993. These participants rated the assistance they received from experienced teachers as the most important influence on their teaching (p. 249). Maynard and Furlong (1995) outlined three models of supporting beginning teachers: the apprenticeship model in which an inexperienced teacher is involved in joint planning and works alongside, emulating an experienced one; the competency model in which the mentor is a systematic trainer of teacher competencies; and the reflective practitioner model in which the mentor is a co-enquirer into the learning process. Rothera, Howkins and Hendry (1995) cited in Hatton and Harman, 1997 posited a “process model” of support in which experiential learning is the conduit for the beginning teacher to internalise the values of the mentor, participate in problem-solving and eventually become independent of the mentor. In a study of 51 mature-age teachers upgrading their qualifications, they found that, for the participants in the course, the roles of “adviser” and “object of trust” took priority over the role of “assessor” (p. 102).

In a study by Campbell-Evans and Maloney with internship (school-based semester) pre-service teachers from Edith Cowan University (1997), sixteen final-year education students were surveyed and further data was drawn from journals and focus-group evaluation meetings. The researchers drew a distinction between co-operating teachers who, on the one hand, took on the traditional role of supervisor and, on the other, fostered a reflective stance towards teaching. They found that the latter relationship was potentially an opportunity for professional development for all participants - academics, pre-service teachers and co-operating teachers. This echoed a study conducted by Wildman, Niles, Magliaro and McLaughlin (1990) cited in Hatton and Harman, 1997 with fifteen pairs of beginning and veteran teachers over a period of three years. They made the point that the collaborative reflection on teaching sometimes resulted in the veteran teachers seeing things in their own teaching that they had not realised were there.

Two focus group meetings with colleague teachers, associate teachers and university staff identified the following characteristics of the relationship between colleague and associate teacher. These are empowerment, colleague support, mutual respect
professional progress, rapport, shared learning and team relationships. Each of the professional relationships in the schools displayed differences.

- Cheryl and Sally had established a fine rapport. Sally was aware that she needed to come to terms with managing the children's behaviour and discussed a range of strategies with her colleague teacher Cheryl. She spoke about asking the children for 30cm voices, as a way of reducing the sound to that level/distance of projection.

- Wilma and Annette had similarly established a bond. Annette told the group that she was so pleased that the children would bring permission notes to her and ask questions of her, accepting her alongside her colleague teacher Wilma. She praised her colleague teacher and spoke about the challenges and needs of composite classes. In turn, her colleague spoke about Annette’s efficiency in the classroom.

- In the second school, Neryl not only had the benefit of Chris' experience and guidance but there were also several first-year appointed teachers at the school, so she did not feel 'new' on her own.

- In the third school, Jill and Robyn wanted to know when the students would be available to take up permanent employment in the school, an idea which the associates welcomed.

In the second meeting, towards the end of the internship, we discussed some of the things that the colleague teachers had done for their school were discussed

- Jill and Robyn had been working on Literacy. Much of their time had been with acquiring and developing resources and some time had been allocated to working with other teachers in the school, teaming in the class.

- Cheryl and Wilma had been working on Count-me-in and Cheryl had also been working on language networks that the school had made with the High School.

- Sascha's school had been putting on a musical and she had afforded release to the teachers who needed to be working on that.

There are a variety of themes that emerge from responses to the first question of the interview (see Table 1). In most responses, the priority was seen to be becoming skilled in the practical day-to-day running of the classroom and its relationship to the whole school. In two important instances, past interns who were now teaching placed emphasis on the benefits of learning how to conduct research in the classroom. It was very interesting that one of these interns, May, had a negative experience in the 1995
internship and this necessitated a change of school and colleague teacher. May reflected on the move to the different school in this way:

The relationship with this colleague was different because she could believe what I was doing. In the first school I was not on colleague terms.

The other 1995 intern, Katy, had a beneficial relationship with her Colleague teacher but she reported that the staff still saw her as a student teacher. For this reason she formulated the idea that the action research was the most important component of the internship:

I think the research was more a priority than practical things. The practical things were a bit of a problem in that you were treated just as a prac student. People couldn’t seem to differentiate between the two. The program was so new. So it was always “How’s your prac going?” and you didn’t feel as a professional. You felt more like a student. I guess it’s great they try to help you out but your other friends from Uni – they’re off casual teaching and getting paid. And you’re here and still getting the student attitudes. That’s why I would weigh more importance on the action research and what you learn from that and working with another person.

This relationship with the colleague teacher, then, is critical. Comments about this relationship were not confined to the responses to the fifth question. There is much in the comments from the colleagues about sharing ways of classroom practice. For example, Margaret expressed her enjoyment in passing on her classroom insights to someone starting on “the coalface”. The issue of time to debrief together was a common one.

Vivienne said:

My teacher is supportive in every way, encourages me to do everything. She’s always there for me, but she lets me do everything. I think the only thing we [my colleague teacher and I] lacked was that we didn’t have enough time for each other. She originally had RFF on one of the days that I was there but then that was changed and she was given that on another day. That would have been helpful to have more communication and feedback.
From an associate teacher's perspective, Prue talked about the confidence she gained from interacting with her colleague teacher on assessment and using computer technology in classroom teaching:

_We worked quite closely together on the composite 1/2/3 class with a range of levels of ability... debriefing each other over what had been done. And he gave me a lot of positive reinforcement which really went a long way when you're doing flat out programming for such a long time... He gave me a lot of confidence saying “It’s your class”, and he’d often come to look at what I’d done in terms of assessment and using computer technology and build on that as part of his own teaching._

From the Colleague teacher’s perspective, Libby also spoke about the relationship as one of interaction:

_I felt that we both learned from each other. My associate teacher asked questions about practice and this provided opportunities for professional dialogue and open discussion to occur. I felt that the internship program allowed each to support the other in our professional practice. My professional development was enhanced as I was able to reflect on why things were done in certain ways._

Veronica, one of the past interns from 1995, talked of the issue of confidence, too. She identified the improvement in communication skills which was part of the internship process:

_It was very important in the internship to have communication with the University and with the Colleague teacher. I think I developed a lot of skills with talking, and people skills. Gaining that confidence to be out there... You need to work as a team within any school, within any grade. I think you need to have those skills that I first developed in the internship program with my colleague teacher... I remember that Colleague teacher in 1995 saying that [the internship] gave her an opportunity to reflect on her teaching, re-evaluate how she did things. Within schools over the last five years I’ve had to work very closely with various people, either within the grade when you’re programming or developing performances for some sort of event. You need to work as a team to get the job done._

Another of the 1995 interns, Betty, spoke about the influence of her colleague teacher in this way:
In the internship, you can start to develop as a teacher yourself. You've also got this colleague teacher and you've watched what they do. I'll be very honest. I still do a lot of things the way that I had seen my colleague teacher do then - and she was a wonderful colleague. I have picked up a lot of her approaches and I'm still using them.

Tony, also from the 1995 interns, added that, having a colleague teacher to be able to confer on what to do with class problems, "meant a lot... and you picked up on aspects of your colleague teacher’s programming and their rapport with the children”.

Among the 1995 interns, Katy reflected on the two-way benefits of the internship within the relationship with the colleague teacher:

We worked very well. I got a lot of great ideas from her and I think she picked up some from me. I learned how to team teach. I love teaching science and she wasn’t keen to do that. And so we would put the classes together and I would take science and she would take HSIE. You learn that your confidence is central to the best learning that the kids can have.

Lynne raised the question of the “big-picture” benefit when she talked about her associate teacher, Mitchell’s, introduction of different values into the school:

He’ll be a great teacher... He and I got on really well and we didn’t have any problems... It was a very positive experience and I thoroughly enjoyed it... For the school there was benefit because we had a young enthusiastic teacher in the place. Most of our staff here are in the older age group. I’m not saying we’re not enthusiastic, but he brought different values into the school and even the dynamics in the staff room completely changed, which was good.

Similarly Glenda commented on benefit to the school, this time through her own professional involvement in the program chosen to do in her release time from class. Sascha, too, supported this viewpoint, saying:

I had someone I was sharing a grade with and had to communicate ideas. I’ve learnt from it so much. I also got to be involved in a lot of school activities, such as the musical, making links with technology, and lots of communication time with parents. It’s helped because I’ve been doing a relieving executive position. The opportunities I’ve been given are just terrific. Vivienne being here enabled us to do that. She’s benefited my class, my own teaching and skills, and the school... One of the good things about the way the relationship
has built up is that she would come and say “I want to do this and I’m not sure how to do it.” I’d ask her how she thought she might do it and suggest an approach. She’d go and try and she’d say Your way just did not work for me. I think that whole teaching process of trial and error has developed for her. And going the other way, she’d give me work to finish off and I’d say “This didn’t work out”. She’d get quite excited about the fact she offered some new approach and it took a while for me to get a handle on it. That professional development which is gained through trial and error without fear is terrific. I congratulate her. I think of her so highly and so does the whole school.

Jennifer’s comments identify benefits for the colleague teachers as the recognition of another teacher seeing them at work, and the two-way interaction with the associates:

I just love having another teacher in the class. I’m the sort of person that I like to show what I’ve done for the past 27 years in the classroom. I feel I’ve got a lot of experience and I want to show it to them. And then you also pick up on a good idea [from them]... I just thought I’m going to miss her, she’s a really good teacher. She has enthusiasm, initiative, nothing’s too much trouble... If we were going on an excursion I’d say to her “Have you done this?” and she’d say “It’s all done - class list, people phoned.” I said to her later on “I never felt I had to hover outside the classroom.” And she laughed and said “Yes you did. You hovered but not for long”.

CONCLUSION

To ensure the “carry-over” of progressive teaching strategies learnt during pre-service education it is argued that support for the associate teacher is essential. Research by Ballantyne et al. (1995), found that while attitudes towards “discovery and inquiry methods of teaching” remained positive, the certainty of this approach reduced over the first term of teaching (Ballantyne et al., 1995). The internship and extended practicum are increasingly being seen as a means of reducing this trauma thereby ensuring the continuation of child-centred teaching and learning practices (Johnson et al., 1993).

A review of Australian research on the practicum by Tisher (1987) noted the complexities of teacher education to include social, political and educational issues. The reality of teaching encompasses relationships and dynamics that move beyond the four walls of the classroom. Tisher (1987) argues that rarely have educational theories informed what is known about the practicum and its effects and how best to
educate students to be more effective as teachers. In research published over the last five years or so the practicum and internship has received greater attention by researchers, informed by educational theories, in an attempt to understand the learning conditions in which student and beginning teachers gain the maximum benefit (Ryan, Toohey & Hughes, 1996). Identified as crucial to the optimum learning condition for student and beginning teachers is the “opportunity to reflect on or to examine experience in light of the individual’s current knowledge and understanding” (Ryan, et al., 1996).

Using an interpretive inquiry method Martinez (1993) studied four beginning teachers from different backgrounds as they commenced their first year of teaching. Martinez found that the teachers’ own “biographies” had the greatest influence on the classroom management perspectives and the strategies employed by them. Martinez (1993) argues that teacher education needs to engender “critical reflective professionals” who learn to construct and shape the complex patterns and factors that influence and impact upon their teaching practice.

Greater preparation and support has been recognised as necessary for beginning teachers as they make their transition into full-time teaching practice. With appropriate support and the development of reflective practice beginning teachers can expand rather than contract their teaching skills retaining their student-centred approach learnt during the course of their pre-service education (Shaffer et al., 1992, & Ballantyne et al., 1995). The internship and mentoring programs are examples of the different approaches taken in teacher education to provide the additional support and preparation necessary for teachers as they make this transition.

School-based supervisors also reported the benefit to themselves in focussing on the “learning aspect of the practicum experience” (Dobbins, 1996, p. 272). Their involvement in the study made them aware of their own learning as well as challenged their thinking about their own teaching practice (Dobbins, 1996). Of particular interest to this study is that associate teachers reported being improved as “teachers” as a result of the reflection process (Dobbins, 1996, p. 272). The study by Dobbins (1996) in which associate teachers focussed on their learning during practicum found the reflection process beneficial to themselves, their students and the
school-based supervisors involved in their practicum. Using a journal to consciously reflect on their daily experiences, along with participating in weekly interviews both individually and in groups, associate teachers found their learning experience to have a positive impact as they felt empowered, valued and in control of their own learning (Dobbins, 1996). Taking time out to consciously engage and analyse their experiences resulted in the student teachers learning much more “from their experience rather than merely having the experience” (Dobbins, 1996, p. 272). Our research would support the findings of Dobbins as Veronica depicts in this comment,

*I’ve kept my journals and looking back you know whenever you have time to go back and read through them and you think of wow was that how I thought at that time and I was linking it back to my Uni lectures.*

The school-based supervisor also confirmed a longer-term improvement to the classroom practices of the associates in that they developed an understanding of why they did what they did (Dobbins, 1996). Associate teachers also identified how understanding their own learning would assist them in understanding the learning of their own students (Dobbins, 1996).

Fundamental to reflective practice is the role of the mentor. According to Furlong et al. (1995), beginning teachers develop their own practical professional knowledge once they begin teaching in the classroom. They too acknowledge that student teachers bring to bear a range of knowledge, skills and understanding based on their own experiences (Furlong, et al. 1995). In order to establish a rational basis for professional action students learning how to teach must systematically enquire into their own and other people’s teaching practice (Furlong, et al. 1995). It is the mentor’s role to assist in this systematic enquiry undertaken by the student teacher. Advocating a developmental approach to understanding how student teachers learn to teach, mentoring they argue is also developmental with associated strategies to assist in student development. According to Furlong et al. there are three stages of mentoring and student development - beginning teaching; supervised teaching; from teaching to learning (Furlong, et al., 1995). The importance of the relationship between the mentor and the associate teacher cannot be undervalued as the quality of
this relationship directly impacts upon the learning and the classroom practices of the novice teacher.

In conclusion, there are a number of intimately connected themes that have emerged in this study. These are that:

- the learning experience of the associate teacher in the internship impacts positively upon their professional development;
- the colleague teacher’s facilitation of the associate’s reflective practice results in quality teaching, knowledge and skills;
- the associate teachers require appropriate and timely support for this learning to be most effective;
- a non-hierarchical, interactive relationship between the colleague teacher or mentor with the associate is essential for positive outcomes, and, finally,
- the internship enriches the school community.

The findings presented further augment the increasing body of evidence that supports the benefits of extended internship programs that develop quality teaching.
REFERENCES


This study showed that professional learning was enhanced through a mentoring process and that a relationship, which fostered reflection about teaching was an opportunity for professional development for both associate and colleague teachers.

The paper aimed to give voice through evidence collected from semi-structured interviews with colleague teachers and associate teachers to three key issues associated with the internship, that is, quality teaching, mentoring and links between theory and practice. The methodology used was derived from the previous paper.

The study consisted of three phases. Phase one involved six focus group meetings with the colleague and associate teachers from the cohort in 2000. Phase two consisted of semi-structured interviews with the colleague and associate teachers. Phase 3 involved four focus group meetings in 2001 with new colleague and associate teachers.
PARTNERS IN LEARNING
VOICES IN THE FIELD

FIELD BASED LEARNING
CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS, 2001

Editor: Julie Clark
July 2002
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University of Western Sydney Education Internship: An evolving model

Anne Power, University of Western Sydney
Maggie Clarke, University of Western Sydney
Alison Hine, University of Western Sydney

Links between the theory of the Ramsey Review and the practice of the classroom emerge through an examination of the benefits of the internship program at the University of Western Sydney. In the Teacher Education Review, Ramsey suggested that internships are an effective way to provide field experience for pre-service educators. Since its inception in 1995, the University of Western Sydney places the associate teacher in their fourth year in internship where they are required to sustain their teaching over a full school term. The literature indicates that key features of an internship include acceptance of higher levels of responsibility, a supported transition into full-time professional teaching and encouragement of reflective practice (Hatton & Harman, 1997). One of the University of Western Sydney’s requirements is site-based action research. The University maintains contact with the schools in which the associate teachers are placed by a series of focus group meetings. The associate teacher undertakes an action research project with their class and reports the outcomes of the project as part of their course. In 2001, the University has renewed its efforts to have the action research be an integral part of the associate teachers’ reflective practice. Literature reveals that internships in Australia have received positive anecdotal evaluations from participants. (Holdaway, Johnson, Rasoy & Priesen, 1994). In NSW there has not been enough time for long term studies into the effects of completing an internship before entering the teaching profession. This paper aims to give voice to key issues of quality teaching, mentoring and links between theory and practice by providing evidence from structured interviews with colleague teachers and associates to support anecdotal impressions.

Over the last decade the internship or extended practicum has taken on greater importance in literature on teacher education. The recent Review of Teacher Education conducted by Ramsey (2000) confirms the limitations of existing practicum experiences. Ramsey focussed on the professional experience of teachers as one of the Review’s four main critical issues. He reported on submissions to the Review that preservice teachers often were not able to make connections between the theory of their university courses and their field experience (Ramsay, 2000). One submission noted

...anecdotal and empirical evidence strongly suggests that the majority of teachers ... arrive at schools after graduation very much unaware of how school and classroom cultures operate, [and] unable to see the relationships between what they have studied and how it can be translated into classroom practice that produces effective student learning (p. 59).

The transition from preservice education to induction of teachers can be achieved with increased partnerships occurring between Universities, employers and schools. Internship agreements seek to strengthen these partnerships and provide worthwhile, meaningful experiences that provide preservice teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary for them to take their place in school situations. The power of the internship or extended practicum according to Walker and Halse (1995) is that workplace learning occurs
over a sustained period of time. Research into internships and the extended practicum covered by this Review connects better preparation of pre-service teachers with an improvement in quality teaching, learning and professional development. Boser and Wiley (1990) report principals' findings that teachers employed after undertaking an internship were more highly committed and better prepared than their counterparts.

Features of the internship

Hatton and Harman (1997) describe the key features of an internship program as an extended placement in the workplace prior to full time teaching whereby classroom management skills can be nurtured through a close association with a more experienced teacher. Interns may have unreasonable expectations of themselves (Martinez, 1993). Initially they can be preoccupied with concerns such as whether they have made the right career choice, will succeed as teachers, and can deal with practical tasks at hand (such as lesson preparation). Well-planned internship programs can address these issues.

A critical feature of the internship is the encouragement of reflective practice. The role of the colleague teacher as mentor is fundamental to this reflection. In order to establish a rational basis for professional action, associates learning how to teach need to systematically critique their own and others' teaching practice (Maynard & Furlong, 1993). Colleague teachers provide direct professional support to associates by providing resources for problem-solving, personal support and mediating on their behalf with other staff members (Wildman, Magliaro, Niles & Niles, 1992; Hine, Power & Clarke, 2000).

Internship at the University of Western Sydney

The internship examined in this study has operated since 1995 at the University of Western Sydney. It is a collaborative venture with the key stakeholders being the Department of Education and Training, the University of Western Sydney, Schools of Education, students and local schools. The internship was introduced as an innovation in 1995 and its success with students and teachers in local schools has increased. In 2000, 18 schools hosted the program and 28 associate teachers entered this program. The same number of colleague teachers worked alongside them and UWS staff. In 2001 there are 19 associates and 17 colleague teachers involved in the program.

The internship occupies the third term of the school year. The colleague teachers (qualified teachers in a school) are freed from teaching for three days per week to take part in negotiated educational projects in their school. Associate teachers (current students undertaking the Internship) experience a modified introduction to teaching designed around reflection on the characteristics of teaching via action research and the trial of an integrated curriculum. During the fourth day the associate teacher engages in action research involving the class. On the fifth day the colleague teacher teaches their own class and the associate teacher attends the University to work on the action research and the integrated unit.

Aims of the study

The purpose of the two-year study, begun in 2000 was to determine the difference made by the internship program to the teaching skills, educational development and preparation of preservice teachers. The researchers have sought to investigate the long-term effects of completing an internship. In this paper we report on issues of quality teaching, mentoring and links between theory and practice.

Method

The participants (male and female) contributed their voices to the study on a voluntary basis and included 5 graduates of the UWS Internship program, 40 colleague teachers in schools hosting the program and 40 associate teachers (currently undertaking the internship program) in the current cohort of intern students. The study consisted of three phases:

- Phase 1: Six focus group meetings in 2000 chaired by the researchers were
conducted involving associates and colleague teachers.

- In Phase 2, data collection took the form of structured interviews with key stakeholders consisting of 9 colleague teachers, 4 associate teachers and 5 graduates. Transcripts were produced of each interview to facilitate data analysis. Table 1 identifies the interview questions given to all participants in the study.
- In Phase 3, four focus group meetings in 2001 were chaired by the researchers.

These meetings involved new colleague teachers and associates.

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<th>INTERVIEW QUESTIONS</th>
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<td>1. What should be the priorities of the Internship program? To what extent have these been achieved? In your opinion, what should be included in an Internship? Why?</td>
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<td>2. Describe the positive outcomes that you have derived from being involved in the Internship program.</td>
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<td>3. To what extent do the University subjects and the Action research program of the Internship relate to your experiences as a teacher and contribute to your understanding of theory into practice?</td>
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<td>4. How has the Internship program contributed to your practice of teaching and developed your skills as a teacher?</td>
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<td>5. Comment on the way in which you feel your relationship with your associate teacher/colleague teacher contributed to your professional development and the associate teacher's professional development.</td>
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Table 1. Interview Questions

The focus group meeting and interview responses were categorised into three broad critical outcomes. These were:

- **nurturing of teaching skills** — towards quality teaching
- **improved professional development** — linking theory to practice
- **mentoring experience of associate and colleague teachers** — underpins quality teaching.

**Nurturing of teaching skills — towards quality teaching**

Our study reported outcomes of increases in the nurturing of teaching skills as a result of participation in an internship program; and confirmation of enhanced interpersonal skills, ability to work with individual children and a development of reflective practice. Such outcomes were revealed in interviews. Kim, an associate commented on individual children:

I found that I have a natural inclination towards students with special needs and learning difficulties. In my time there one child went from definitely repeating year 1 to being able to go to year 2.

Another child went from scribbling in his writing book to writing two and three page stories. Had it not been for the extended time in the classroom the internship allows, I would not have seen the long term good that can derive from being committed to your children....

It was excellent to be made a part of a teaching community.

Trudy, another associate, commented on her reflective practice:

I had a Class one/two three and so I was developing for three years with an A stream class. I was able to implement a range of strategies, particularly those from the course on thinking skills. It gave me the opportunity to develop flexibility in teaching, to implement a range of different evaluation techniques and also
reflect on and be responsive in my teaching. I’ve always kept a journal and reflected every day and so I was able to develop as a teacher and also reflect on what the students learned and make sure that the students were actually learning and I could monitor their learning and their outcomes over a longer period of time. I’ve put a lot of the theory into practice.

Our research on the internship expands on findings reported by Johnson, Ratsay, Holdaway and Friesen (1993) that internships were valuable in providing a link between theory and practice and that they were helpful in assisting beginning teachers make the transition into teaching. The outcomes reported in our research supports these findings and those of Dobbins and Mitchell (1995) and Hatton and Harman (1997) as all interns and colleague teachers stated that the internship experience had significantly improved classroom teaching skills. Our research extends their findings with reference to the work in which the colleague teachers engaged.

**Improved professional development – linking theory to practice**

Two kinds of professional development are identified in our research. There is a professional development for the colleagues, which is manifest in the sharing of sound wisdom and in the reflection, which the teamwork with the associate engenders. Jennifer’s comments also identify the benefit of recognition of another teacher seeing them at work:

I’m the sort of person that likes to show what I’ve done for the past 27 years in the classroom. I feel I’ve got a lot of experience and I want to show it to her. And she has enthusiasm, initiative. I said to her later on ‘I never felt I had to hover outside the classroom’. And she laughed and said ‘Yes you did. You hovered but not for long.’

and Lynne commented on the self-analysis or reflection benefit:

Because you’re so used to doing your job you don’t actually sit down and analyse how do I get kids to do that. My associate asked ‘how do you do that?’ and I had to sit down and think how DO I motivate them to do this?

**Action research component**

For the associates, much of the Professional development lies in the Action research, which is conducted in the Internship. Prue stated that:

Well the school actually asked me to come back and present what I did in my action research, for the teachers [to see] the strategies that I’d implemented when using computers. And that really gave me confidence knowing that they’ve seen what I’ve done and they were willing to take on board the information that I’d found from my research and also the strategies that I’d implemented as a result; and basically that’s given me a lot of confidence as a teacher knowing that I’m able to do things like staff development to help teachers. I’ve also developed more flexibility with my teaching and the ability to work collaboratively with other teachers.

The long-term benefits of the action research component of the internship also come through in our study, as depicted in Veronica’s statements:

With the action research I found myself growing as a teacher and looking at things in a different way in regards to data that I was collecting and how to use it. With the action research it developed my thinking, it was higher order thinking … actually I do refer to my action research project very often because it was a topic that was unique that I was investigating and I’ve used it in my school to
being examples through with thinking skills and with assessing and evaluating techniques too. I was doing a casual block for two years in another school and I actually got a section of my action research copied out to all the staff as information for them and it was very useful in that way and I actually used it again to develop a booklet for teaching skills, at this school which the teachers are using as a tool for their teaching in class and so we put it all together and made up a little resource book for teachers.

It is evident that the action research in which the Associate Teachers engage is not only formative for them as they effect the transition to the teaching profession but it is also professional development for the teacher with whom they are working for the period of the internship. It is a situation in which all participants benefit from focused professional learning.

The mentoring experience of associate and colleague teachers

Perhaps of greatest importance to the success of any internship program is the appropriateness of the colleague teacher for the associate teacher. As the student progresses towards goals of an internship, they have moved from supervised teaching to “autonomous teaching” (Hatton & Harman, 1997, p.12). As the learning needs of the intern have evolved, Rothera, Howkins and Hender (1995) posited a ‘process model’ of support in which experiential learning is the conduit for the beginning teacher to internalise the values of the mentor, participate in problem-solving and eventually become independent of the mentor. In a study by Campbell-Evans and Maleoney with internship pre-service teachers from Edith Cowan University (1997), sixteen final-year education students were surveyed and further data was drawn from journals and focus-group evaluation meetings. The researchers found that a relationship, which fostered reflection about teaching, was potentially an opportunity for professional development for all participants - academics, pre-service teachers and colleague teachers. In a study conducted by Wildman, Niles, Maeliari and McLaughlin (1990) the researchers made the point that the collaborative reflection on teaching sometimes resulted in the veteran teachers seeing things in their own teaching that they had not realised were there.

In our study, two focus group meetings with colleague teachers, associate teachers and university staff identified the following characteristics of the relationship between colleague and associate teacher. These are empowerment, colleague support, mutual respect, professional progress, rapport, shared learning and team relationships. The relationship with the colleague teacher is critical. Veronica, one of the past interns from 1995, talked of the issue of conidence, too. She identified the improvement in communication skills which was part of the internship process:

It was very important in the internship to have communication with the University and with the colleague teacher. I think I developed a lot of skills with talking, and people skills. Gaining that confidence to be out there. You need to work as a team within any school, within any grade. I think you need to have those skills that I first developed in the internship program with my colleague teacher… Within schools over the last five years I’ve had to work very closely with various people, either within the grade when you’re programming or developing performances for some sort of event. You need to work as a team to get the job done.

Among the 1995 interns, Katy reflected on the two-way benefits of the internship within the relationship with the colleague teacher:

We worked very well. I got a lot of great ideas from her and I think she picked up some from me. I learned how to team teach. I love teaching science and she wasn’t keen to do that. And so we would
but the classes together and I would take science and she would take HSIE. You learn that your confidence is central to the best learning that the kids can have.

In the focus group meetings, towards the end of the internship, some of the things that the colleague teachers had done for their school were discussed. Jill and Robyn had been working on Literacy. Much of their time had been with acquiring and developing resources and some time had been allocated to working with other teachers in the school, learning in the class. Cheryl and Wilma had been working on Count-me-in and Cheryl had also been working on language networks that the school had made with the High School. Sascha’s school had been putting on a musical and she had afforded release to the teachers who needed to be working on that. Several teachers commented on benefits to the school, through their own professional involvement in the program. Sascha explained this viewpoint, saying:

I had someone I was sharing a grade with and had to communicate with. You learn from it so much. I also got to be involved in a lot of school activities, such as the musical, making links with technology, and lots of communication time with parents. It’s helped because I’ve been doing a relieving executive position. The opportunities I’ve been given are just terrific. Vivienne being here enabled us to do that. She’s benefited my class, my own teaching and skills, and the school... I think that whole teaching process of trial and error has developed for her... I congratulate her. I think of her so highly and so does the whole school.

Conclusion
It is critical to professional development that progressive teaching strategies, learnt during pre-service education, survive the initial teaching experience. Research by Ballantyne, Hansford and Packer (1995) found that while attitudes towards discovery methods of teaching remained positive, practical uses of such approaches reduced over the first term of teaching. The internship and extended practicum are increasingly being seen as a means of ensuring the continuation of child-centred teaching and learning practices (Johnson, Ratsoy, Holdaway & Friesen, 1993). The reality of teaching encompasses relationships and dynamics that move beyond the four walls of the classroom. Martinez (1993) argues that teacher education needs to engender “critical reflective professionals” who learn to construct and shape the complex patterns and factors that influence and impact upon their teaching practice.

The internship and mentoring programs are examples of the different approaches taken in teacher education to provide the additional support and preparation necessary for teachers as they make this transition. Of particular interest to our study is that associate teachers reported being improved as “teachers” as a result of the reflection process. Focus group meetings were the site of conscious reflection and analysis of professional learning. Comments such as these by Veronica confirm this:

I’ve kept my journals and looking back you know whenever you have time to go back and read through them and you think of wow was that how I thought at that time and I was linking it back to my Uni lectures.

Fundamental to reflective practice is the role of the mentor as teachers begin to develop their own practical professional knowledge once they begin teaching in the classroom. In order to establish a sound basis for professional action, students learning how to teach must systematically enquire into their own and other people’s teaching practice (Maynard & Furlong, 1995). It is the mentor’s role to assist in this systematic enquiry undertaken by the student teacher. The importance of the relationship between the mentor and the associate teacher cannot be undervalued as the quality of this relationship directly impacts upon the learning and the classroom practices of the novice teacher. Mentoring is
developmental, moving the novice teacher towards independence in planning and encouraging student-centred learning in the classroom.

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Hauton, N. & Harman, K. (1997) Internships within Teacher Education Programs in NSW: A further review of recent Australian and Overseas Studies. Education Faculty, University of Sydney & Training & Development Directorate of the NSW Dept. of School Education.
This study provided further evidence that a person’s professional learning was positively influenced by a mentoring experience, and the inclusion of reflective practice enhanced this learning. The methodology used expanded on the previous processes reported in the last two papers.

At the macro level, the University of Western Sydney continued to rethink professional practice and this paper examined research which tracked Internship participants, both colleague and associate teachers since 1995 to the graduating cohort of 2001. This paper explored the experience of the 2001 cohort of the B. Ed Internship program and sampled the 1995 and 2000 cohorts. The study had two purposes. Firstly, the qualities of reflection in which the participants engaged were examined and then conclusions about the relationship of reflection to the experience of the pre-service teacher and full-service teacher were explored.
THE INTERNSHIP: A JOURNEY OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING THROUGH REFLECTION

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ABSTRACT

Reflection is a sign of the mature independent teaching practitioner. As the intern teacher moves towards full engagement with the profession, reflection is a part of the process by which they rethink and reshape future directions. At the macro level, the University of Western Sydney continues to rethink professional practice and this paper examines research which tracks Internship participants, both colleague and associate teachers since 1995 to the graduating cohort of 2001. This university is positioned to provide information towards a longitudinal study that follows student teachers into their first years of teaching. This paper explores the experience of the 2001 cohort of the B. Ed Internship program and samples the 1995 and 2000 cohorts in order to distinguish the reflection that is before full service and the reflection that stems from the initial years of teaching.

INTRODUCTION

During the last decade the internship or extended practicum has taken on importance in literature on teacher education. This appears in contexts such as the recent Review of Teacher Education conducted by Ramsey (2000), which focussed on the professional experience of teachers as one of its critical issues. Over the same period, the literature on the teacher as reflective practitioner has also grown. Consequently, this paper reports on research conducted in 2001 examining the reflection of pre-service teachers and teachers who have completed their teacher education with an internship.

The power of the internship or extended practicum according to Walker and Halse (1995) is that workplace learning occurs over a sustained period of time. Research into internships and the extended practicum clearly documents the interrelationship between better preparation of pre-service teachers with an improvement in quality teaching and professional learning. For example, Boser and Wiley (1990) report principals’ findings that teachers employed after undertaking an internship were more highly committed and better prepared than their counterparts. Russell and Munby
(1991) found that experience in the classroom prompted reflection; and Maynard and Furlong (1993) found that this reflection on experience transferred into meaningful practice. Clearly links between theory and practice were increased as a result of undertaking the internship and reflecting upon this experience.

**Reflective Practice**

A critical feature of the internship is the encouragement of reflective practice. The role of the colleague teacher as mentor is fundamental to this reflection. Interns may have unreasonable expectations of themselves (Martinez, 1993). Initially they can be preoccupied with concerns such as whether they have made the right career choice, will succeed as teachers, and can deal with practical tasks at hand (such as lesson preparation).

In order to establish a rational basis for professional action, associates learning how to teach need to systematically enquire into their own and other people’s teaching practice (Maynard & Furlong, 1995). Colleague teachers provide direct professional support to associates by providing resources for problem-solving, personal support and mediating on their behalf with other staff members (Clarke, Power & Hine, 2000).

It has long been acknowledged that lack of time is the single biggest inhibitor to pre-service teachers’ reflective practice (Jackson, 1968; McNamara, 1990; Richert, 1990; Pultorak, 1993; McLaughlin & Hanfin, 1994). To counteract that, the internship not only provides time but also the special relationship of the colleague-mentor with the developing professional associate. Beattie (2000) states that professional learning provides the context in which pre-service teachers “learn to learn from and with others and engage in the co-construction of meanings” (p. 4). Her research is concerned with the creation of a professional identity. Beattie states that it is “a unique process ... [in that it] involves the transformation of existing knowledge and the adaptation of such knowledge, skills and attitudes to the professional situations at hand” (p. 19).
Internship Model at the University of Western Sydney

Since 1995, the internship at the University of Western Sydney has operated as a collaborative venture involving the Department of Education and Training, the University's Schools of Education, students and local schools. In 2000–2001, there were 40 associates and 40 colleague teachers involved in the program. The internship occupies the third term of the school year. The colleague teachers (qualified teachers in a school) are freed from teaching for three days per week to take part in negotiated educational projects in their school. Associate teachers (current students undertaking the Internship) experience a supported introduction to teaching designed around reflection on the characteristics of teaching via action research and the trial of an integrated curriculum. During the remaining days the associate teacher engages in action research at the school and at the University.

Aims of the study

The purpose of this part of the study was 1) to identify the qualities of reflection in which the participants engaged; and 2) to draw some conclusions about the relationship of reflection to the experience of the pre-service teachers and teachers. The researchers have been investigating the long-term effects of completing an internship over the last three years.

Method

The participants discussing reflection contributed their responses on a voluntary basis and included 3 associate teachers of the UWS 2001 Internship program, 2 graduates from the 2000 Internship program and 1 from the 1995 Internship program. In addition 3 colleague teachers in schools hosting the program were canvassed. The study consisted of two phases:
Phase 1

Phase 1 data collection took the form of structured interviews with 3 associate teachers in 2001 Internship. Transcripts were produced of each interview to facilitate data analysis.

Table 1:
Interview questions to 2001 associate teachers

<table>
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<tr>
<th>FOCUS QUESTIONS</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. What are your expectations of the internship</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. What do you hope to achieve from the internship?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. How will you measure your achievements?</td>
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The focus questions evoke critical self-discussion about the associates’ practice. These focus questions encourage the associate teachers to reflect on their practice with themselves as audience. It is important that associates maintain a free flow of ideas in their reflection, problem posing and brainstorming a range of solutions in a non-judgmental environment.

During the internship the associates are encouraged to revisit the focus questions and reflect on their practice. The revisiting of the focus questions enables the associate teacher to see the changes in their learning that have taken place since the beginning of the internship.

Phase 2

Phase 2 data collection took the form of structured interviews with 2 graduates in 2000 Internship and 2 graduates in 1995. Internship. Transcripts were produced of each interview to facilitate data analysis.

Table 2 identifies the interview questions given to the graduate teachers in the study.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOCUS QUESTIONS</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Describe an occasion in your teaching which has made you reflect on your teaching practice.</td>
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<td>2. Recall what you did as a result of the reflection</td>
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<td>3. What do you think is the relationship between reflection and problem solving?</td>
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<td>4. Of these kinds of reflection, which do you think you have emphasised?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Critical Reflection—concerned with judgements on professional activity is equitable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Technical Reflection—concerned with effectiveness of means to meet ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Practical Reflection—concerned with goals, assumptions and outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. In what ways do you associate reflection with working as a teacher?</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. What do you think is the relationship between reflection and your professional learning?</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Do you make time for reflection</td>
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<tr>
<td>• each day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• each week</td>
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<tr>
<td>• each term?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Do you discuss your reflections with colleagues or write them down for your own use?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Do you notice your reflections changing as your length of time in the teaching profession grows?</td>
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**Reflection: Developments over time**

Our research identifies developments in reflection from participants in the internship, namely that teachers may experience change in the kind of reflection which they use. One of the features of reflection in this study is that it changes according to the length of time in which the teacher has been in the profession. Initially, reflection seems to be concerned with the more inward looking approach of “doing the right thing”, “being seen to be in control” and “handling the situation right”. For example, one pre-service teacher in the study took time to adjust to the strategy of team teaching and gradually accepted responsibility for sharing class management. Another pre-service teacher grappled with the problem of encouraging students to develop thinking skills and gradually discovered some positive signs in students which encouraged him to continue his teaching techniques.

van Manen (1977) developed a hierarchy of reflection, with three levels derived from Habermas (1973). These are:
technical reflection, concerned with the efficiency of means meeting ends

practical reflection, examining goals, the assumptions on which these are based and the actual outcomes

critical reflection, concerned with questions of equity and justice

Research by Wilson, Hine, Dobbins, Bransgrove and Elterman (1995) confirms that through reflection and in particular journal writing van Manen’s three levels of reflection are exercised,

reflection reveals how student teachers think about teaching and help to educate them to reason soundly about teaching practice ( p. 167).

Wilson et al. concluded that:

reflection can lead students to become autonomous actors in the world of education, rather than passive acceptors of traditional culture and practice (p. 174).

In the current study each of the participants was asked to reflect on their internship practice in relationship to van Manen’s three levels of reflection. Most participants recognised and acknowledged that they used parts of most of van Manen’s levels.

The 2001 interns interviewed were concerned with the technical and practical issues of their practice and their reflections were wound around these two main areas. Several interns in the 2001 internship program reflected that they now look beyond the classroom and have become involved in the wider school community. Julie provides an example of practical reflection by stating “I’m getting practical experience as part of the whole school by doing things like doing playground duty. I was involved in the book parade, the walkathon and the assemblies”. Julie was keen to point out that she now has wider connections than just her colleague teacher helping her but finds that support and assistance is given by many of her colleagues and this has significantly assisted her with her professional learning. Julie comments that she had intentions when she first began the internship to complete a personal
reflection each day. Her intentions were to complete formal reflections and write them down but she has found:

> that I’m always reflecting in my discussions with colleagues and people out of school...I’m always talking about what’s happening and what I’m learning.

Concerns of developing and sustaining confidence was evident in the interviews held with the 2001 interns. Julie’s comments are indicative of the thoughts expressed by the interns.

> Now I’m still developing confidence. I realise now that it is OK to have a bad day- everyone does. I’m now able to test new ideas and experiment. I didn’t have the confidence to do that before. I just saw what worked for the colleague teacher and that was what I did, whereas now I’m able to test my own ideas.

Rebecca, a 2001 intern student shows in her technical, level one reflections that she was concerned with the day to day aspects of her teaching and what was a struggle for her earlier on is no longer a struggle or important. In relation to a teaching programme, Rebecca explains that:

> [I] didn’t understand all the terminology and where things fit into it...and I was just saying to [my colleague teacher] last week that I was looking at it again and it just makes so much sense now.

Rebecca through her expressed concern about classroom management strategies and the way in which they have developed over the time of her internship depicts a movement towards practical reflection. She was worried at the beginning of the internship about the kind of behaviour reinforcement she was employing in her other practicums and how she wanted to develop this aspect of her teaching during the internship. She indicates in her practical reflections that in discussions with her colleague teacher she was able to focus on the “positive behaviour of the students rather than the negative behaviour” and that this change in her focus on classroom management had changed the climate of her classroom for the better.
Rebecca says that she has made some really big changes.

_A lot of the things that I’ve written have- I’ve actually changed which is great._

Rebecca, employing technical reflection, reflected the goals she set herself at the beginning of the internship such as learning a great deal more about the primary school organisation and the teaching involved in it such as appropriate programming. Moving towards practical reflection she highlighted that she wanted to cater for individual needs in the classroom as well as develop better classroom management strategies. Rebecca indicates through her reflective practice that

_I feel that each of these points I have achieved._

Rebecca stated at the beginning of the internship that she wanted to gain confidence as a teacher. Reflecting on her experiences at the end of the internship and developing towards critical reflection Rebecca says that

_I can easily say that I have gained heaps more confidence. I’m always talking to my colleague teacher and asking for her advice and she gives me a lot of feedback... I can see from my prac reports that comments teachers have written I’ve already sort of overcome some of the problems so that’s good._

Through the discussion of the focus group meetings there is confirmation of the individual experiences by the collegial group. The associates’ feel secure in that they have met the same kind of challenges in a collegial environment. They feel supported in the knowledge that their experiences overlap with each other in a community of professional learners. This manifests associate's professional learning and causes their teaching to be more explicit. The colleague teacher of Rebecca explained in the one of the focus group meetings that Rebecca’s reflections were

_very, very honest...[and] they’re not masked in any way._

The colleague teacher indicates that through Rebecca’s reflections she can relate to how her associate teacher is feeling about certain things and this in turn enables her to
know where she needs to come in and help or to give some encouragement. She comments that

you can really see the growth too in those personal reflections.

Narelle, a 2001 intern, in her interview discusses the way in which she measures her achievements. She says

I’ve been doing daily reflections which is about the way I present things, the way I implement—the implementation, organisation of the lesson, something that you think goes wrong or my questioning was really poor then I’ll write a way that I can change it.

Several of the 2000 Interns evidenced van Manen’s first level of technical reflection, namely a concern with the efficiency of means meeting ends, of doing the right thing, of being seen to be doing the right thing. It is reflection without insight or understanding, as Sarah, one of the 2000 interns portrays:

You’re trying to prove yourself as a new teacher. You’re trying to say, ”Well, I did 4 years at Uni. and I’m a teacher.” But you’re not. I’m fine now but that first time I thought, ”I’m not good enough to be a teacher. I can’t control them” And I sat down and thought ”Now, what were some of the things we did at Uni? How can I find the things that interest the kids?”

You reflect every day as a teacher. I ask myself questions. Am I doing it right? Am I doing the right thing? Did I handle that right? Should I have said that to that student? Did I say the right thing to that parent? Was that note professional that I handed out?

What do other people think of me? That’s the worst part—worrying about what other people think of me. At the start, if there was a staff meeting and something was discussed that I had an opinion about, I was too scared to share that opinion.

Issues of classroom management, teaching competency and how other teachers will judge their competency are some of the first things, which the 2000 interns discussed in their interviews. At the same time they were able to acknowledge breakthroughs with their students in terms of goals and outcomes achieved. Practical reflection, level
two of van Manen’s hierarchy of reflection, examining goals, the assumptions on which these are based and the actual outcomes became evident in the intern’s reflections and depicted a growth in their reflection and a significant shift to a higher level of reflection. Sarah reflects this shift when she states:

At the beginning of the year, the Year 1 Class that I had included some children with behaviour problems. By the end of term 3 with them, I had them in such a good routine that little boys that would fight constantly at the beginning of the year were talking nicely to other kids. Even the mothers were saying, “What have you done? They’re so friendly and warm now.” That was such a good thing for me. I thought, “Wow, I’m making a difference. I’m doing something.” I reflect on those successes as well. Someone will come up and say, “You’re doing such a good job. Gosh, you’ve got a good class.” And I know that’s my class.

Significantly, there is also an awareness of change in herself and her idea of what teaching is about:

Sometimes you don’t even realise that you reflect. We actually started a support meeting group on Thursdays, a few of us teachers. You need to be able to sit down and say this is what happened. And other people will say, "Why don’t you try this approach?" People I see reflect like that. If a teacher says, "I don’t reflect"—it’s not real. You are doing it all the time.

How else do you improve? A lot of teachers I talk with on Thursdays have been in teaching longer than me. Two began with me. You’ve got partners who don’t understand what it’s like to go out and teach. The dramas you face every day. When you’re asking opinions of older teachers, you’re also reflecting on your experience. You describe it and you’re trying to find out so that you can help yourself. Now I reflect on little things. Like praising children. I wasn’t into that. And now I am. Because these kids don’t get that. They don’t get that attention. You walk out of Uni. with this vision of yourself as a teacher. And it’s not like that. It’s to do with the needs of the children.

Both Sarah and another 2000 Intern, Linda, had stories of children not understanding what they were talking about when they thought they had explained so carefully. These two teachers have reached different planes of reflection. Sarah's response shows that she has learned a lot about planning for the stage and experience of the children. But she does not query why her explanation needed to be clearer and why the planned lesson did not work for the children:
That was my perfect lesson plan blown. So I had to scrap what I’d planned because it wasn’t working and make it clearer for them. Once they understood it, they loved it. What you’ve got on paper isn’t always what you do. The prior learning of the kids comes into it for sure. You can’t teach something to a kid that doesn’t take them into account. You’ve got to relate things to where they are, their surroundings, what they know.

Linda, however, responded:

It really bothered me. I went back into their history in Year 1 and they had a disturbed year. So reflecting on the lesson not working prompted me to find out more about what their needs were. Sometimes I think those things that confuse children can be developmental. Sometimes, at the start of the year, the children are not where the outcomes for the previous year say they are. I talked to another teacher on the same grade and told her what had happened. She said “Just explain it like this”... and I did. The kids said “Oh great...” and away they went. That teacher has been teaching there for years.

I think you reflect at the time but I think you reflect more afterwards. Like, if I’ve done something that worked I try to understand what it is that worked. I do it because I want to be the best teacher I can be.

In most instances Sarah is operating within the first level of reflection, technical rationality. As Hatton and Smith (1995) point out, technical reflection is an essential part of teacher development and a preparation for other kinds of reflection. Sarah’s technical reflection prepares her for the second level of practical reflection. However Linda, more frequently is operating within the second level of practical reflection. She demonstrates this by declaring:

I really hope I do the practical because I like that. I don’t think you can learn in your profession without reflecting. I think you need to constantly evaluate what has happened, how you can improve the way you present things, the environment for the children. I think professional learning is based on reflection. I’m learning to become a better professional. I tend to reflect, as the year has gone on, whether the class is progressing, whether they are meeting the outcomes, whether they are “in the right spot”.

However, Prue, another 2000 intern evidences a move towards a more critical level of reflection where the consequences of educational actions are considered in a wider
After developing a full program which enhanced my teaching it was obvious that I became better at developing units of work. I was able to develop the full program and implement a range of strategies, particularly those from university for example the course on thinking skills which gave me that opportunity to develop and try out new strategies and to develop flexibility in teaching, to implement a range of different evaluation techniques and also reflect on my own teaching and it’s effectiveness, and be responsive in my teaching. I’ve always kept a journal and reflected every day and so I was able to develop as a teacher and also reflect on what the students learned and make sure that the students were actually learning and I could monitor their learning and their outcomes over a longer period of time. I’ve put a lot of the theory into practice which I’m doing every day as I constantly reflect on my actions and develop strategies from this.

Our study found similar long term benefits experienced by past graduates of the internship program and that 1995 graduates were still engaged in the act of daily reflection upon their teaching as depicted in Veronica’s critical reflection:

Through reflection, I have found myself growing as a teacher and reflective practitioner. I now look at things in a variety of ways…. which has developed my thinking, ... I’ve found I think more at a higher order thinking level… with assessing and evaluating techniques too. ... Originally the internship gave me the opportunity to reflect on my teaching, to re-evaluate how I did things. I still do this and I can see the links between my reflections on my teaching, the outcomes of the students, my strategies and their impact on children’s learning over several years and their holistic development.

1995 interns depicted in their reflections the development of their reflective skills over time. They were all aware that their reflections had begun with technical reflection during their internship period and since then they had engaged in practical reflection where they were examining goals, the assumptions on which these are based and the actual outcomes. As a result of this introduction to reflection during their internship, the 1995 interns commented that they now engaged in critical reflection where they were concerned with questions of equity and justice. In their interviews they were aware of the development of their reflective skills as Veronica depicts in this comment:
I’ve kept my journals and looking back you know whenever you have time to go back and read through them and you think of wow was that how I thought at that time and I was linking it back to my Uni lectures.

CONCLUSION

Reflection is a sign of the mature independent teaching practitioner. As the intern teacher moves towards full engagement with the profession, reflection is a part of the process by which they rethink and reshape future directions. In the act of writing reflectively, the associate is encouraged to take the time to sit and think about their teaching. This writing is not necessarily shared with the colleague. The associate writes for himself or herself and it is this act of writing reflectively that makes professional learning and teaching more explicit. The act of reflection involves reviewing past events and reviewing set goals in order to improve professional learning and teaching practice. Interns are asked to challenge themselves if faced with difficult situations and reconstruct their practice based on discussions with their colleague teacher. Associates and colleague teachers gain insights into the issues confronted through their reflections.

Reflections evidence the development of van Manen’s three levels of reflection. However, at this stage the majority of reflection tended to occur at the technical and practical levels of reflection with only a few interns beginning to reach the level of critical reflection. Transition between the technical and practical levels was apparent in most reflections as associates sought to modify their practice in light of their reflections and translate their technical reflections into practical strategies. The act of reflecting on practice enables the intern to interrogate their teaching. It enables them to question their professional learning and the learning of their students.

This preliminary research has shown positive outcomes with associates through the use of reflection upon their internship over a period of time. Technical, practical and critical reflection has encouraged interns to develop links between theory and practice while reflecting upon their own attitudes, beliefs and the consequences of these
actions for practice as they develop towards an independent autonomous reflective practitioner.
REFERENCES:


This paper formed one of a series of papers co-authored with Clarke, Power and Hine (2000, 2001, 2002) that investigated how reflection on practice could contribute to professional learning.

The paper investigated van Manen’s (1977) levels of reflection and further develops ways in which student teachers could enhance their reflective skills and develop their professional learning.

The research in this study was carried out in three phases:

1. Pre-test- responses to reflection questions
2. Four focus group meetings and focus group reflection questions
3. Post-test- responses to reflection questions

The internship model provided a different lens to the practicum through which to view reflective practices. The findings of this study indicated that the sustained period in a school fostered reflective practice by the associate teachers at all of van Manen’s (1977) levels of reflection. Other studies such as reported by Collier (1999) found that pre-service teachers typically showed qualities of reflection at van Manen’s first level of reflection.
INTERNERSHIP LEARNING CONNECTS THE DOTS: THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF REFLECTION

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ABSTRACT

In a series of papers Clarke, Power and Hine (2000, 2001, 2002) have investigated how reflection on practice can contribute to professional learning. The University of Western Sydney Bachelor of Education Primary fourth year Internship Program has been the focus of these studies.

This paper continues this journey and investigates how van Manen’s (1977) levels of reflection can be developed by student teachers to support their attempts of reflection and assist them in their professional learning. Additional focus group meetings with colleague teachers (classroom teachers) and associate teachers (student teachers) and the introduction of a reflective journal will be added to the repertoire of strategies used in the internship program to support the development and sustaining value of reflection on teaching practice. This study will report on these innovations and review their effectiveness in supporting reflective practice.
INTRODUCTION

Associate teachers on internship have different experiences from the short practicums which characterise the early stages of teacher education. The power of the internship or extended practicum according to Walker and Halse (1995) is that workplace learning occurs over a sustained period of time. The associates report developing a familiarity with school routines and having the time to complete work and investigative experiences they have commenced. This paper reports on research conducted in 2002 examining the reflection of pre-service teachers according to van Manen’s levels of reflection as a tool to assist the associates in their professional learning.

The journey on which the associates embark has several identifiable early aspects. It is of primary importance to “have everything work as smoothly as possible” (Melinda, 2002 intern). That involves the day-to-day basics: being fully prepared with plans and resources; knowing the children’s learning styles, behaviour issues and individual needs; and being involved with two-way communication with the colleague teachers. Taking time out to reflect on, and make sense of, experiences and goals can seem to the associates like a luxury that they are loathe to try to “fit in” to their busy preparation time. The internship program has moved to emphasise with the associates the importance of reflection, allowing time for learning to crystallise and to express feelings that had not previously surfaced.

Literature on reflection

Reflective practice has been the subject of attention by teacher educators for some years. Essential to the development of reflective practice is the opportunity for beginner teachers to communicate with colleagues and discuss experiences as the basis for their reflections (Yost; Sentner; Forlenza-Bailey; 2000, p. 41). Research suggests that repeated exposure to reflection, however, does not guarantee that beginner teachers will go on to develop critical or higher levels of reflective thinking (Bean & Stevens, 2002, p. 207). There is growing evidence that beginner teachers are still struggling to make the psychological shift required when moving into their roles...
as teachers. In their preoccupation with the process of teaching the process of learning is frequently overlooked (Collier, 1993, p. 173).

There are a number of models of reflective practice (Collier, 1999, p. 173). Schon (1983, 1990) and Surbecket, Han, & Moyer (1991) cited in Collier 1999 describe reflection as developing in a cumulative way. Schon (1983) argues there are initially two types of reflection with the first two levels of reflective practice being reactive: *reflection on action* and *reflection in action*. The third level, *reflection for action* is a looked-for outcome of the previous two types of reflection and is proactive in nature. Surbecket et al. chart reflection as having three “process categories” including reaction, elaboration and contemplation (Collier, 1999, p. 174).

Dewey (1933) identified the three characteristics or attitudes of people who are reflective as open-mindedness, responsibility and wholeheartedness. Open-mindedness is defined as an interest to listen to more than one point of view on an issue, together with a questioning attitude. Responsibility involves a search for the truth along with the application of information gleaned to the situation/problem in question. Wholeheartedness is interpreted as a willingness to overcome personal fears demonstrating a sincere and generous attitude in order to bring about change.

According to Dewey (1933) there are five phases or sequences in the development of reflection: suggestions; problem; hypothesis, reasoning and testing. For Dewey these five phases are the “indispensable traits of reflective thinking” (Loughran, 1996, p. 64). The sequences in which these phases occur vary according to each situation but are indicative that “genuine thinking is educative” (Loughran, 1996, p. 72).

A model of reflection proposed by van Manen (1977) includes three stages of reflection. The first stage, Technical Rationality, includes focusing upon what works in classroom practice; analysis at this level is on the success or failure of strategies used in the classroom. The experience is personal and unproblematic. The second stage of reflection, Reflection as Practical Action, focuses upon the learning experience of the student. At this level the consequences of educational practices are considered and there is a demonstrable commitment to learning theory. The learning situation is seen as problematic. The third level, Critical Reflection, focuses on what knowledge is of value and to whom. This kind of reflection considers the moral and
social implications of classroom practice (Furlong, & Maynard, 1995). At this level of reflection, teachers ask questions as to what supports or influences their student’s learning experience (Collier, 1999, p. 174). Van Manen’s model has also been adapted by a number of researchers including Liston and Zeichner (1987), Pultorak (1993) and Collier (1999) in her study of students in an 8-week field placement. Wellington (1996) follows van Manen’s model in a way that emphasises values; and he argues that people are understood as thinking and writing about what is practical in ways that they recognise and according to their values about education (Wellington, 1996, p. 307).

Reflective journals are considered by educators to connect theory and practice, these narratives assist through the articulation of thoughts emerging in the minds of the student teachers, encouraging a self awareness of attitudes and beliefs over time (Collier, 1999, p. 174). Focus group meetings provide an alternative form of dialogue where ideas and observations can be shared in a non-threatening environment. This provides an opportunity for the beginner teacher to expand their worldview through the sharing of observations, experiences, successes and failures (Collier, 1999, p. 175).

Student teachers and reflection have become the subjects of research. Collier’s study of four student teachers found that reflective practice was typically at van Manens’ first level, with only one student demonstrating an ability to reflect at the third and critical level of reflection. In a study exploring the use of “scaffolded reflection” with student teachers reflection was also found to remain at a superficial level (Bean & Stevens, 2002, p. 215). Student teachers they found, by and large, remained heavily reliant upon “deficit theories, stereotypical thinking, and technical-reductionist problem solving” (Bean & Stevens, 2002, p. 216). Furthermore, societal discourse was drawn on by student teachers to reproduce existing dogma rather than to challenge it. As Bean and Stevens (2002) stated:

*In terms of larger critical discourse issues related to societal expectations, power structures, and where schools fit within these larger layers of ideology (Fairclough, 1989) these teachers rarely departed from local discourse related to their individual classrooms. Institutional and societal discourse was an anomaly in their reflective comments.* (p. 215)
There are significant implications for researching the reflective practice of beginner teachers. Do they, too, remain stuck at the first level in the technical process of teaching? Teachers construct a reality about teaching during their experience in the classroom but how this construction manifests will depend upon their individual orientations. These orientations emerge from their “personal ways of knowing” or “personal biographies” (Collier, 1993, p.174). Defining one’s orientation is another way for individuals to identify their “action-world”, asking such questions as, what it is “to be true, to be valuable, and to be real” (Parsons, 1949 cited in van Manen, 1977, p. 211). Beginner teachers need to be encouraged, supported and challenged to grow their personal worldview of teaching and learning.

**Internship Model at the University of Western Sydney:**

Since 1995, the internship at the University of Western Sydney has operated as a collaborative venture involving the Department of Education and Training, the University's Schools of Education, students and local schools. In 2002, there were 13 associates and 13 colleague teachers involved in the program. The internship occupies the third term of the school year. The colleague teachers (qualified teachers in a school) are freed from teaching for three days per week to take part in negotiated educational projects in their school. Associate teachers (current students undertaking the Internship) experience a supported introduction to teaching while they engage in reflection on the characteristics of teaching via action research and undertake a trial of an integrated curriculum. During the remaining days the associate teacher engages in action research at the school and at the University.

**Method**

The research participants were 13 associate teachers in the 2002 internship cohort. The research was carried out in three phases:

**Phase 1**

Phase 1. At the beginning of the year before the internship commenced (pre-test), the participating associates made a written response to the Reflection Questions (RQ) and
sent their responses to the researchers. These questions were revisited at one of the later focus group meetings.

**Phase 2**

Phase 2. There were four focus groups meetings held (two meetings with each half of the cohort of associates and their colleagues) chaired by the researchers. The meetings addressed the ongoing reflective practice of the students and provided a forum for sharing ideas. At the last of these meetings both the associates and the colleague teachers were asked to individually write a definition of reflection. In groups of three the colleagues and associate teachers synthesised their ideas into a combined definition of reflection. Each small group then shared their definition of reflection with the larger group and discussed the main ideas in their definition. At the completion of this task the associates formed one group and responded to Focus-group Reflection Questions, posed by the researchers. (FRQ) Summary sheets of the associates group ideas were prepared by the associates and these were later transcribed to provide further data.

**Phase 3**

In Phase 3 after the internship practice in schools (post-test), a meeting was held with the interns to discuss their reflective journals. At this meeting a further set of Reflective Questions (RQ) were distributed to students based on van Manen’s levels (VMRQ). Data was collected from the written responses to the reflection questions and also excerpts from the associates’ journals reflecting on teaching practice. Transcripts were produced of each written response to the questions to facilitate data analysis. Participants had the opportunity to check the transcripts, to correct them if necessary, or to explain what was meant if it had been misunderstood. Content analysis of the responses and journals formed the basis of analysis. A summary of the issues raised in the responses and journals was collated and circulated to participants for reviewing and checking for accuracy. All sources of data were then categorised according to the levels of reflection put forward by van Manen.
FINDINGS

Before the internship, the associates answered the RQ. Analysis of these responses is shown as follows:

RQ: What is reflection?

In answering this question, four of the associates took a specific approach in which they considered both the evaluation of some teaching practice and a consequent action to improve that practice next time. This group are called 'specific a + b'. Their thinking about their teaching is designed to lead to more informed decision-making in specific areas. Another group of five associates defined reflection more broadly. Their responses included productively and beneficially critiquing some concern relating to professional development. No targeted action accompanied this critique. The group are called “broader a”.

A third group of four associates took this broader approach and teamed it with action to improve. They spoke about such things as the process of an individual thinking about previous actions or thoughts and evaluating whether they were successful or unsuccessful in order to meet a predicted goal. This group is called “broader a+b”.

Each of the responses is shown in tables 1 and 2 below.

How can you reflect?

The associates then turned their attention to how they can reflect. Journalling was certainly uppermost in their minds. It was useful to see the associates acknowledging that their reflections would be framed by shared observations with colleagues as well as observing students learning.
### Table 1
**How can you reflect?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range of responses</th>
<th>No of student responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keeping a personal journal</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking to colleagues</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observing students’ learning</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking a work samples</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking questions of students</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording self on tape</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading over materials of past practice</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking of situations and own reactions/feelings</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**On what can you reflect?**

Finally, the associates considered what their reflections might be about, and there were a range of responses here. Successful teaching was the highest ranked. Assessment and management strategies, and personal growth are also significant in the list.
Table 2
On what can you reflect?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range of responses</th>
<th>No of student responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Successful teaching/learning + why</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment strategies</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management strategies</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal achievement + growth</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewing past action</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worries or concerns</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationship with staff/parents</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationship with students</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catering for individual students</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effectiveness of resources chosen</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
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<td>Achievement of outcomes</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Future goals</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thoughts and feelings</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VMRQ

In their journals and at the focus group meetings, the associate teachers considered situations which did not particularly call for reflection with insight. Such things included providing excursion forms. Each of the associates reflected at this technical level at some time during their internship. However, at one of the focus group meetings one of the associates, Ray, reflected in the following way:

*I did have an example of this to do with the management practice of applying consequences of poor behaviour. I thought “I’ll have to begin this and change my teaching practice”. And I never actually changed. I’d fall back into what was protective. I didn’t want to seem like “Miss Hardbitch”. So for the first five weeks I didn’t apply consequences for inappropriate behaviour. I did other things like rewarding good behaviour. When I started to do it, it was too*
late. But all through the five weeks I thought about applying consequences. And it didn’t happen.

This is a situation to which the other associates could relate. Beginner teachers find it difficult negotiating the shifts between friendly facilitating and managing the dynamics of the class group. The associates could also see that Ray was still able to learn from a missed opportunity.

Several of the associates were able to recognise the assumptions underlying their teaching practice in their reflections. Vicki is passionate about maths and discussed her practice accordingly:

*I believe the students need to do a lot of concrete materials in maths. It made a difference to me as a teacher—to teach it the way I think is right. Manipulating materials is a positive experience for them and their learning is better. I believe teaching maths should be about removing frustrations.*

Another associate, Jude, was involved in Action Research project on questioning technique and said:

*It was good to find that the children were finally grasping the idea of using evidence to support their answer—a new skill which I had introduced to them. My main objective in using questioning skills was to promote higher order thinking. Confirmation of this through student work samples made me feel like I had succeeded in engaging and encouraging students to apply their knowledge in other learning areas. This was a pivotal observation, which reflected the theories I had learned through the implementation of my Action Research in a real classroom situation. It helped me recognise theories in practice, which will in turn, allow me to use them more successfully in my future classroom to benefit both my students and myself.*

Both these associates were operating here at van Manen’s practical level of reflection. In this level, there is a personal ownership and commitment to the practice that has been used. The reflection is a consolidation of the experience. In another situation Jude reflected:

*One student at the beginning drove me absolutely crazy... I sat down and thought about what I was doing wrong. It finally came to me that I was not catching him doing the right thing and therefore ticks on my positive*
behaviour ‘tick chart’ were few and far between. I needed to make a conscious effort to try to give him more ticks. This worked like a charm. There was a noticeable improvement in his behaviour... He was finally trying to be good so he could be rewarded. I can honestly say that this adventure has helped me grow as a beginning teacher.

The practical level of reflection is an achievement for teachers in the early stage of their career. Three of the associates reflected on the benefits for slower learners of one-to-one teaching. One reflected on the advantages of experimenting with mixed ability groups, noting the peer teaching which took place and the responses to learning challenges. Another reflected on the things they learned from taking risks with hands-on lessons. One associate, Regan, touched on the critical reflection level when she reflected on her multi-level class and said:

Working with students of all abilities has allowed me to reach the conclusion that all children can be motivated to learn if the teaching is relevant to the students’ interest. I aim to transfer my own love of learning to my students so they find it exciting... I strongly believe in children valuing co-operating with each other, developing skills to function in society. The democratic nature of my classroom and a lot of group work and role play caters for this part of children’s education.

An essential element of effective teaching is being able to cater for the wide variety of individual needs. My class consisted of three grades with a vast learning ability range. I found it difficult to aim the learning tasks to suit all children. In maths sessions, I had some gifted Year 3 children, while others were working on stage 1 outcomes. I had two Year 4 children working on Year 5 work and a normal variety of Year 4 children. I also had Year 6. I feel I need to find more extension work that is relevant and ability-appropriate without additional teaching required. But I have learned that my consideration of individual needs leads to increased self esteem in my students. The students came to know that I expected a different goal for each of them and that, while they had to attempt and persevere with the task, it was achievable for them as an individual.

**DISCUSSION**

Bean and Stevens (2002) found that ongoing opportunities using a variety of formats are needed for reflection to develop. Our research confirms this. On the other hand, promoting reflective practice with associate teachers has produced different qualities
of reflection than Collier’s (1999) project with pre-service teachers, where she found that reflective practice was typically at van Manen’s (1977) first level. It is clear that there are several factors at work in the internship. The extended professional experience is one of them. It provides the associates with time to act professionally and time to act professionally. The researchers also place value in the staged prompts to reflection that were used in the process. In the first stage, the associates were simply asked to consider what reflection is, how it can be effected and on what teachers might reflect. During the internship, the focus group meetings were stimulated by the presence of the colleague teachers and their reflections. After the internship, the associates considered reflective experiences in the light of what they knew of van Manen’s levels of reflection.

The great outcome of this research was observing the associates’ awareness of their own change in their reflection. The associates were able to identify times during their internship when they had reflected in particular ways. They referred to their journals and talked about the ways in which they now felt they acted and thought as a teacher. They discussed their 'big learning experiences' and the ideas and values which they would take into their classrooms in the future.
REFERENCES


Having already examined reflective responses using van Manen’s levels, it was decided that examination of internship reflection using a different framework would be useful when determining how to move student reflection to a deeper level.

This paper reported on the processes undertaken to assist internship students in the B.Ed Primary internship program at the University of Western Sydney to understand the reflection process and their responses to reflective questions. The responses were analysed in relation to the internship students’ professional learning using a framework described by Dietz (1998). The purpose of the study was to examine the evidence provided by the internship reflective journals, of the student teachers’ learning and how this learning matched the categories of learning Dietz described as the Professional Learning Cycle. This cycle, along with other models, was discussed and the student teachers’ learning was analysed in relation to the four levels of development categorised by Dietz. The discussion is followed by a description of the methodology used in the study and an analysis and findings of the project.

This paper has provided academic interest in a number of arenas. After its presentation at the Australian Association for Research in Education Conference in Auckland in 2003 the editor of the Australian Journal of Teacher Education approached me to submit the paper for review. The paper was subsequently published in this journal. Two contacts have been made from academics from Ontario, Canada and Wakaito, New Zealand to incorporate the paper into their teaching and professional practice courses (Appendices 1 & 2).
The Australian Journal of Teacher Education is peer reviewed and published twice a year by the School of Education, Edith Cowan University.

**Purpose**

The purpose of the Australian Journal of Teacher Education is to enhance the quality of teacher education in Australia through the publication of research reports, learned points of view and commentaries. Contributions may address proposals for, or descriptions of, development in the purpose, structure and methodology of teacher education; curriculum issues; change in schools; or general social, ideological or political issues relating to teacher education.

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REFLECTION: JOURNALS AND REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS: 
A STRATEGY FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Maggie Clarke
University of Western Sydney

ABSTRACT
Reflective journals have been used widely in teacher education programs to promote reflective thinking (Freidus, 1998; Carter & Francis, 2000; Yost, Senter & Forlenco-Bailey, 2000). Smyth (1992) advocated that posing a series of questions to be answered in written journals could enhance reflective thinking. It was for this reason that reflective responses to directed questions were introduced in 2002 and subsequently in 2003 in the Bachelor of Education 4th year primary internship program at the University of Western Sydney, Australia. The internship program provided a sustained ten-week period of time in a school that afforded student teachers the opportunity to examine their practice in an authentic setting of teaching. This paper reports on the process undertaken to assist internship students to understand the reflection process and their responses to reflective questions. These responses are analysed in relation to the internship students' professional learning using a framework described by Dietz (1998).

Introduction
The purpose of the study was to examine the evidence, provided by the internship reflective journals, of the student teacher's learning and how this evidence matched the categories of learning Dietz (1998) described as the Professional Learning Cycle. This cycle, along with other models, is discussed and the student teacher's learning is analysed and discussed in relation to the four levels of development categorised by Dietz.

In the Internship in the Bachelor of Education at the University of Western Sydney the student teachers were given the title of associate teachers to distinguish them from students undertaking a practicum. This title acknowledges the change in the role of the student teacher that they were unsupervised in the classroom and took on the full responsibility of a teacher. The supervising teacher in the internship was called the colleague teacher, which acknowledged their changed role, as they became a mentor to the internship student.

Scribner, (1998) revealed that beginning teachers "need to be autonomous learners with a deep commitment to continued professional growth and development" (p.4). The internship is a strategy that allowed the associate teacher to become autonomous learners as it provided opportunities for these learners to take on the full role of a teacher without immediate supervision. How then do these inexperienced teachers become aware of and continue their professional learning and what factors can contribute to and enhance this learning? This study aimed to investigate professional learning with a particular focus on the practice of reflection as a powerful and effective means to promote student teacher professional learning.

This article will discuss through the literature the various learning cycles, reflection and journals and internships. It will also outline the internship at the University of Western Sydney and the processes put in place to encourage
reflective practice. This discussion will be followed by a description of the methodology used and the analysis and findings of the project.

**Identifying a Professional Learning Cycle**

Kolb, 1984; Boud, 1993 and Dietz, 1998 all identified learning as a cyclic model where learning occurred through experience and through reflection. My understanding of professional learning is grounded in Dewey’s philosophy (1938, 1966) that we learn from experience and reflection on that experience. Dewey (1966) has described the act of learning as “one of continual reorganising, reconstructing [and] transforming experience” (p.50). This paper relates professional learning to a person’s experiences and the sense that is made of that experience for future action.

Although each of these models identified reflection as a significant part of the learning cycle Dietz’s levels of learning were seen as a useful analysis tool to validate the associate teacher’s professional learning.

**The Dietz Model**

Dietz explained the professional learning cycle as consisting of four levels with key characteristics indicative of each of these levels. In the first level of exploration, identified by Dietz, the key characteristics were learning the territory, inquiring about a specific focus in the learner’s teaching, assessing information, observing students and listening to others. The next level, organisation, was where the learner starts to make sense of things in the workplace such as practising routines, putting procedures in place, recognising pedagogy and learning theories in their day-to-day practice of teaching. It was at this level that the teacher-learner begins to place things in sequence and starts to make sense of the teaching environment. In the third level learners began to make the connections between one teaching situation and another. In this level the learner began to move out of the constraints of a plan and modified and altered plans to accommodate student needs. Reflection was the fourth level where the learner made informed decisions based on the ability to reflect on their practice and responded to issues emerging from this reflection. Teaching responses were made based on these reflections.

**Reflection and Journals**

To examine if professional learning could be identified through the internship reflective journal a review of the literature pertaining to reflection, in general, and specifically to reflective journals was undertaken.

Journals have been widely used in teacher education as a strategy to promote reflection (Freidus, 1998; Carter & Francis, 2000 & Yost, Semmer & Forlenza-Bailey, 2000). Friedus (1998) in her research on reflection states that “…students learn to look for patterns and connections within and among the educational experiences they have found meaningful for themselves and their students” (p.56). In a study undertaken at the University of Western Sydney, Macarthur in 1995, 35 students responded to a questionnaire on the impact of reflective journal writing. Sinclair & Woodward, (1997) stated in their findings from this study that 40 percent of the “students answering the questionnaire reported that journal writing affected their own learning most commonly by encouraging reflection upon that learning and their experiences and developing their ability to think more critically” (p.53). This study also found that students reported “an increased awareness… of their own learning or of their own strengths and weaknesses” (p.53). Sinclair and Woodward concluded, from this study, that reflective journals promoted professional development of student teachers, enabled them to make links between theory and
practice and encouraged them to evaluate their teaching performance.

**The Internship in Teacher Education**

For some years but particularly over the last five years the practicum and internship have received specific attention from researchers. This attention, informed by educational theories, was an attempt to understand the learning conditions in which students and beginning teachers gain the maximum benefit of professional learning. Ryan, Toobey & Hughes (1996) identified as crucial to the optimum learning condition for student and beginning teachers was the opportunity to reflect on or to examine their experiences. Grossman and Williston (2001) also were interested in investigating how undergraduate students are prepared to use reflection to guide their current and future understanding of their teaching and learning. They believed that reflection enabled students to develop a deeper understanding about children, teaching and themselves and this reflection, in effect, contributed to professional learning.

The internship is a model of transition from professional education to full-time work and is found in a number of professions, including teaching, law and medicine. Internships have been introduced worldwide into teacher education programs to prepare “beginning teachers to the realities of the school and classroom” (Johnson, Ratsoy, Holdaway & Friesen, 1993, p.297). The internship is seen as the bridge between university training and admission into qualified and paid employment.

Hatton and Smith (1995) have provided a comprehensive account of internship models worldwide. In Australia and the United Kingdom the internship has been aligned to practicum or field experience in initial teacher education. A changed role of the teacher and associate teacher is usually acknowledged in these programs, particularly emphasising the assistance and support provided by the teacher. In many Australian institutions, including the University of Western Sydney, the internship was developed to enable students to upgrade from a three-year Bachelor of Teaching degree to a four year Bachelor of Education degree.

Hatton and Smith (1995) described the key features of an internship program as an extended placement in the workplace prior to full-time teaching. Internship programs provide a variety of teaching skills such as program planning and implementation, classroom management, professional learning and curriculum development. Associate teachers are nurtured through a close mentoring association with a more experienced teacher. Associate teachers (student teachers) are afforded the responsibility of undertaking teaching without the presence of another teacher in the classroom while at the same time being supported in their transition into full-time teaching by the close association they have with their colleague teacher. Reflective practice is an important component of the associate teacher’s learning as they take on the full role of the teacher without the constant supervision and feedback provided by a supervising teacher.

**The Internship and Reflective Practice at the University of Western Sydney**

The internship at the University of Western Sydney is conducted in the fourth year of the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) program. The in-school component of the internship occupies the third term of the four-term school year. The colleague teacher is relieved from teaching, by the associate teacher, for three days per week to take part in negotiated educational projects within their school. Associate teachers’ experience an assisted introduction to teaching designed around reflection on the characteristics of teaching through action research, reflective questions and reflections on teaching practices.
The Reflective Process in the B.Ed Primary Internship at the University of Western Sydney

In this program reflection is seen as a critical catalyst for the development of professional learning.

There are four stages in the process. Stages one and two are undertaken at the University and stages three and four are undertaken at the school site.

- **Stage 1 Semester 1** Preliminary meetings of associate teachers prior to placement in schools.
- **Stage 2 Semester 1** Week 3 meeting with Associate and Colleague Teachers
  - Specific reflective questions posed to associate teachers
- **Stage 3 Term 3** Week 3 of the internship period in school
  - Revisiting the focus questions and reflective dialogue with the associate and colleague teacher
- **Stage 4 Term 3**
  - Week 8 of the Internship period in schools
  - Reflective group discussion in a collegial environment

Methodology

A qualitative paradigm was used in this study, which extended over a twelve-month period. Specifically, within the qualitative paradigm, an interpretive methodology was used. "Interpretivists see the goal of theorising as providing understanding of direct lived experience... The interpretivist attempts to capture the core of these meanings" (Glesne & Pothier, 1994, p.19). This study aimed to provide understanding of the lived experience of the associate teachers in their internship. The meaning of the associate teachers lived experiences were interpreted in two ways in this research. Responses to focus questions elicited from associate teachers were interpreted in relation to Dietz' levels of learning. The author also interpreted the group discussion of the colleague and associate teachers to identify general themes that emerged from the discussion. These interpretations of meaning of the associate teachers lived experience of their internship is reported later in the analysis and discussion of the data.

Participants

Ten of the thirteen associate teachers who were in their fourth year of the 2002 B. Ed Primary internship gave their consent for their reflective journal and verbal responses to be part of this study. There were nine females and one male participant with ages ranging from twenty two to thirty five years.

Data Collection

The core of this study was to examine associate teachers' reflections through reflective question responses. The data for the research were drawn from three sources; responses to focus questions, specific reflective questions for journal responses and shared group reflective discussion. The focus questions and specific reflective question responses were matched with Dietz levels of learning.

Responses to focus questions

At a first meeting with the associate teachers' three focus questions were posed to which they were asked to respond in writing. The focus questions were introduced as a strategy to engage associate teachers in thinking critically about their expected achievements for the completion of their internship. The questions were:

a) What are your expectations of the internship program?

b) What do you hope to achieve from the internship?

c) How will you know if you have attained your outcomes?

These focus questions were chosen to assist the associate teachers to reflect on...
their teaching, in order for them to understand their feelings and reasons for undertaking the internship. The focus questions were also used to promote reflection at a later stage in the internship program to gauge any changes in thinking about the internship. The responses from the associate teachers were included as part of the overall reflective journal at the conclusion of the internship. The focus questions provided a critical tool for what could be described as a preconception of the internship and later the realities of the "real classroom environment".

Specific questions for journal responses

The specific reflective questions posed by Dietz (1998) as she developed her model, were posed to the associate teachers at a meeting held with their colleague teachers. These questions were selected for associate teachers to respond to in their journals as they provided the scaffolding for the analysis of the associate teachers' responses in terms of Dietz's professional learning cycle. The associate teachers were asked to respond to the reflective questions at any time during the internship. There was no compulsion to respond to the questions at a specific time. As the associate teachers felt that they had something to say in response to a question they wrote in their journals. As their thoughts, knowledge and understandings crystallised through their internship experience they responded to the questions. The reflective responses to the questions were a compulsory component of the internship program but were not assessed because of the personal feelings, emotions, beliefs and values the questions elicited.

The specific reflective questions were:

1. What are you currently observing in your teaching that is related to your interests as an educator?
2. What would you like to know more about or be able to do differently in your professional practice?
3. What are your theories about what the purpose of education will be in the twenty first century?
4. From my perspective the primary indicators of student learning are…?
5. My personal theory on how students learn is…
6. At our school I am most proud of…
7. What new questions have emerged for you in regard to your teaching?
8. What have you learned about yourself as a learner?

It was during this phase that discussions were held between the colleague teacher and the associate teacher. During the discussions the associate teachers were asked to engage in professional dialogue with their colleague teacher about their progress and their ongoing professional learning. At this stage the associate teachers, as they became more reflective, were supported by the guidance and assistance of their colleague teacher. Suggested areas for discussion at this meeting were recommended and included:

1. The setting of specific goals by the associate teacher and target dates for their achievement;
2. Discussion of what had gone well to date in the internship and
3. Discussion of areas that needed development and suggestions for how these could be achieved.

These discussions provided the opportunity for associate teachers to engage in conversations with their colleague teachers to inform their practice through critical reflection. The associate teachers were asked to challenge themselves when faced with difficult situations and reconstruct their practice based on discussions with their colleague teacher. Associate teachers and colleague teachers gained insights into the issues confronted through these reflections. As a result of these meetings the associate teachers were able to modify their practice in light of their reflections. Schon (1987) described this process as reflection-on-action, reflection-in-action...
and reflection-for-action. Data for this study was not collected from the one-on-one discussions with the associate teacher and colleague teacher. These discussions were private and provided opportunities for the associate teacher and colleague teacher to discuss in confidence areas for development and to more ably respond to the reflective questions.

Shared group reflective discussion
The shared group discussion was used as a strategy in schools to foster reflection in a collegial and safe environment where the associate teachers shared their experiences and confirmed their practices with each other. The meetings were held twice during the internship period in two different schools with all colleague and associate teachers present. There were no specific questions asked at these meetings but rather the associate teachers and colleague teachers asked questions of each other. Questions were raised such as:
a) What have you learned from the internship?
b) What challenges have you met in the internship?
c) How have you reflected on your teaching practice during the internship?
d) What will you do differently when you begin teaching?

In this collegial environment, shared group reflection was fostered. Overlapping experiences, confirmation of practices, reinforcement and gains in confidence were typical outcomes of these meetings. Formal data was not collected during the shared group discussion. It was felt that formalising the process by utilising a tape recorder or note taking would inhibit the free flow of ideas which were exchanged during the discussion. However, the author recorded general themes that emerged from the group discussion after the meetings.

Analysis and discussion of the data
The data was analysed using the following three strategies:

1. Coding Dietz’ Framework to describe each of the four levels of learning.
2. Alignment of data from the focus questions and specific reflective questions to Dietz’ levels of learning.
3. Identification of themes that emerged from the shared group discussion.

Dietz Framework
The Dietz model is one of continuous learning as teachers strengthen their understandings of their teaching. Within each level Dietz identified words that described each level. The coding of these words and phrases are depicted in Table 1
### Table 1
Coding of Dietz’ levels of learning descriptors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dietz’s Levels of Learning</th>
<th>Coding of descriptors</th>
<th>Words that describe each level of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exploration</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E1</td>
<td>Exploring ideas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E2</td>
<td>Inquiring about a specific focus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E3</td>
<td>“Learning the territory”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E4</td>
<td>Assessing information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E5</td>
<td>Observing students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E6</td>
<td>Listening to others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organisation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O1</td>
<td>Practising routines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O2</td>
<td>Putting in place procedures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O3</td>
<td>Recognising pedagogy and links to practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O4</td>
<td>Placing events in sequence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connection</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>Making connections between one teaching situation and another</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>Interpreting, modifying, and altering plans to accommodate students needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reflection</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1</td>
<td>Making informed decisions based on reflection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>Teaching responses are based on reflection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Responses to the focus questions**
Each participant’s focus question responses were read and key phrases and words in the responses were recorded for each of the questions. The analysis of the associate teachers’ responses revealed that they could be grouped into themes for each of the questions. The responses from the associate teachers were collated and coded with the number of similar responses identified and tallied.
Initial attempts to locate particular words as identified by Dietz in the text of the associate teachers' journal responses were unsatisfactory. What did prove successful, however, was the identification of statements in the responses that illustrated the meaning more fully than the singular word/s identified by Dietz.

The focus questions revealed that the levels of professional learning by the associate teachers at the early stage of their internship were centred on exploration and organisation. Within the Level of Exploration forty percent of the associate teachers were inquiring about a specific focus such as learning about managing their classrooms. In their responses to the first focus question on their expectations of the internship sixty percent of the associate teachers indicated that they wanted to learn about school organisation, routines and administration. These areas of learning related to Dietz' level of organisation. Improved classroom confidence (50%), teaching skills and strategies (50%) were commented on by the associate teachers as the areas they hoped they would achieve during their internship. The associate teachers indicated that they would know they had attained their outcomes through reflection (in the form of reflective journal and personal reflection (50%), through talking with their colleague teacher (50%) and through the responses they received from their students (40%).

From an analysis of the focus questions it became evident that there were some responses from the associate teachers that could not be analysed in terms of the Dietz framework. These responses were typically concerned with developing 'self' such as develop personally, comparing self to other teachers, observing feelings of self esteem, personal satisfaction and balancing personal and teaching life.

**Associate teacher journals**
Journal responses from each of the associate teachers were analysed by creating a general list of statements. These were collated and revealed the aspects of professional learning that occurred during the internship. They indicated eagerness in their journal writing to learn more about these areas.

The associate teachers' level of learning related to organisation was also frequently written about in their journals. Their journal responses indicated that sixty per cent of them wanted to practise both the routines of the classroom and the wider school community. The associate teachers typically discussed learning routines related to teaching, daily planning, school organisation and functioning of the school. They were also putting into place procedures for the management of their classrooms (50%). So, not only were they exploring how these organisational matters were structured but also they wanted to learn how to implement these practices and procedures while at the same time remaining flexible (50%) in order to accommodate unplanned events. The
journal responses (60%) also indicated awareness that the organisation of lessons needed to provide motivating activities for students to engage them in their learning and understanding of the curriculum.

The associate teachers also discussed the level of connection in the specific reflective questions. All associate teachers indicated in their journal statements that they were aware of individual needs of students and they showed understandings through their reflections of the need to adapt their teaching practices to the needs of their students. The level of learning defined by Dietz as ‘connection’ saw the associate teachers move from the routinised aspect of learning to teach to their focus of making connections with the way they taught. They discussed in their journals the impact their teaching had on student learning and the outcomes achieved through their teaching. Journal responses also explained that the associate teachers were becoming more adept during their internship at catering for individual student differences by identifying appropriate teaching strategies for these students and modifying their teaching practices to best suit the needs of their students. An impressive progression was seen in this level of learning as associate teachers moved beyond the routinised procedures they had previously been focused on such as managing their classrooms to interpreting, modifying and altering plans to accommodate their individual student’s learning needs.

The level of reflection was clearly evident in the associate teachers’ journal responses. All of the associate teachers provided in depth responses to the questions they were asked to reflect upon during all stages of the internship. Their writings in their journal responses to the questions revealed their values about education and learning. In particular, the associate teachers wrote about their own learning and the learning of their students. The responses were open and honest and revealed much about their inner feelings and thoughts and the beliefs they held about their teaching. Fifty percent of the associate teachers reflected upon teaching events and examined ways to improve on their teaching to better meet student needs.

Shared group discussion

To provide informal data the author reflected on the group discussion after the meetings and identified general themes that had emerged from the questions that had been raised by both the colleague and associate teachers.

General themes that emerged from the shared group discussion included:

1. the collegial nature of teaching including the support provided by a mentor such as a colleague teacher;
2. the recognition that teaching is hard work and teachers must be organised to perform their daily tasks;
3. the associate teachers discussed a variety of ways they had reflected on their teaching practice during their internship. Their discussions confirmed that practices put in place as part of the internship such as discussion centres on their lesson evaluations with their colleague teacher, goal setting, reflection on their achievements and identification of areas for development were useful strategies that provided both a process and structure for their reflections and their learning and
4. the associate teachers indicated that they were now more familiar with school and classroom routines. They felt that this acquired knowledge would improve their self-confidence and hence would lead to greater confidence in the classroom. Many of the associate teachers indicated that they were more greatly aware of classroom and behaviour management strategies and they would implement these strategies from the beginning of their teaching with their class. They also expressed
that they would feel more comfortable with developing their teaching programs and indicated that they felt they contributed to the team writing of teaching documents more effectively as a result of the experiences they had in the internship.

Alignment of Data from the focus questions and specific reflective questions to Dietz' levels of learning.

Data from Associate Teachers were combined in order to provide a summary of the number of responses from both the focus questions and the specific reflective questions in each of Dietz' levels of learning. Tallying each descriptor of learning in each of Dietz' four levels of learning provided a total summary of responses for each level of learning.

Table 2
Total responses according to level of learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Number of associate teacher focus question responses</th>
<th>Number of associate teacher responses to specific reflective questions</th>
<th>Combined responses from associate teachers</th>
<th>Total number of responses according to level of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exploration</td>
<td>E1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Exploration (68 responses)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>O1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Organisation (40 responses)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection</td>
<td>C1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Connection (21 responses)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>R1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Reflection (20 responses)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Table 2 confirms the individual findings from each of the data sources. That is, overall the associate teachers were concerned with learning primarily in the level of exploration (68 responses). The level of organisation was also clearly an area of learning that was evident during the internship (40 responses). The associate teachers focused on the levels of connection (21 responses) and reflection (20 responses) after the initial learning of exploration and organisation had been acquired.

Summary of the Findings

This study has revealed that reflection implemented through a variety of strategies can provide evidence of professional learning. A synthesis of each of the strategies used, that is, focus questions, specific reflective questions and journal responses and shared group discussion revealed that the associate teachers followed to some extent a pattern of learning during their internship.

Dietz’s four levels of learning provided a useful scaffold for analysing the learning that was evident by the associate teachers during their internship. During the early stages of the internship the associate teachers’ learning was focused on the levels Dietz described as exploration and organisation. Initially, the associate teachers were concerned about learning how to manage their classrooms. One of the greatest areas of concern for the associate teachers was to learn how to manage their classroom on their own without the presence of their colleague teacher. For many of the associate teachers managing a classroom and improving their classroom confidence was one of their greatest challenges. They were also keen to learn about school and classroom routines and procedures.

Once the routinised aspects such as administration, procedures and developing classroom management skills were developed and learnt by the associate teachers their reflections revealed that their learning became more focused on their teaching and their students. The associate teachers became more adaptable in the ways they responded to interpreting and modifying their teaching plans and lessons to accommodate individual student needs. From the associate teachers reflections it was shown that they started to make connections between what and how they taught. More importantly, they began to see how their teaching impacted on their students’ learning.

Reflection was seen as pivotal to the associate teachers’ learning. Reflection was viewed as a strategy to assist them in raising their awareness of their learning. They felt that by talking to their colleague teacher and working collaboratively with them they would come to a fuller understanding of their learning, their students’ learning and their teaching. By being able to identify and cater for individual student learning needs the associate teachers revealed in their journals that throughout the internship they were continually reflecting on their teaching practice and modifying their practice to achieve improved student outcomes.

There were descriptors identified by the associate teachers that did not align with the Dietz framework of learning. These descriptors as previously discussed were concerned with the associate teachers developing a sense of themselves as teachers. The associate teachers were concerned about their own feelings of personal satisfaction and self-esteem. This area of learning, identified by the associate teacher’s, needs to be evident in any framework that describes professional learning.

Conclusion

The reflective process makes learning more explicit by enabling associate teachers to take time to think about their experiences and their subsequent action based on these
experiences. This research has shown that associate teacher learning clearly benefits and is strengthened through reflection on practice. Associate teacher reflective skills in this internship were achieved through the implementation of a variety of reflective practices. Reflection enabled them to confront issues, look for solutions and solve problems and in doing so the associate teacher's knowledge and professional learning were enhanced. A deeper understanding of teaching practice was evident as a result of the associate teacher developing their reflective skills.

Specifically, this study has highlighted the need for teacher education programs to focus on student teacher learning in the field in specific areas such as concentrating on routinised procedures in the initial stages of teaching practice, management of classrooms and behaviour management techniques and at a later stage developing skills that cater for individual student needs.

The study has also highlighted the need to monitor student progress and learning in relation to the sequence that learning occurs, that is, from the routinised procedures to the more complex tasks and skills associated with teaching. For the internship program at the University of Western Sydney this study has emphasised the need to articulate and increase the associate teachers' and colleague teachers' awareness that learning is achieved in stages, as outlined in this paper.

As this and other research has shown, with appropriate support and the development of reflective practice beginning teachers can expand their understanding of critical reflection. The internship is one example of a different approach taken in teacher education to provide the additional support necessary for teachers as they make their transition from pre-service teacher to beginning teacher and that reflective journals and questions are indeed a strategy for professional learning.

References


MENTORING

PAPERS WITH A PRINCIPAL FOCUS ON MENTORING


Clarke, M. (2000, December). *Mentoring Skills: Implications for Portfolio Development and Professional Learning*. The paper was presented as a component of three papers as part of a symposium at the Australian Association for Research in Education Conference, Sydney, New South Wales.

The overall symposia was titled *Mentoring for Educational Futures* and was presented by Hine, A., Clarke, M., & Power, A.

The three papers were held together through the theme of mentoring. The symposium abstract and introduction is included in this portfolio to indicate the focus of the symposia papers and the methodology used.

This paper *Mentoring Skills: Implications for Portfolio Development and Professional Learning* explored how mentoring could assist in the development of a portfolio and the benefits that could be derived by providing a supportive work environment. The portfolio development model was discussed in relation to the role that a mentor played in assisting a protégé with their professional learning and their portfolio development.

This paper defined the research problem and the questions that were to be considered as part of the study. A brief literature review was conducted and an analysis of the literature was undertaken to assess what research to date suggested mentoring could contribute to the development of a portfolio. The participants for the study were 11 Bachelor of Education (B. Ed) third year students involved in the “Student Mentoring” program. The mentors were interviewed and their responses were discussed in the paper. Semi-structured interviews were conducted on an individual basis with the researcher. The purpose of the interviews was to ascertain the
perceptions of the B. Ed third year students (mentors) about their role in assisting B. Ed second year students with the development of their portfolios. The researcher used a database to categorise emerging themes identified in the interviews and these themes were examined and discussed in relation to the literature. The literature reviewed was revisited in light of the research findings.
MENTORING FOR EFFECTIVE EDUCATIONAL FUTURES

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AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION FOR RESEARCH IN EDUCATION CONFERENCE

4-7th December, 2000
The University of Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

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MENTORING FOR EFFECTIVE EDUCATIONAL FUTURES

ABSTRACT

Mentoring as a learning strategy has its roots firmly in the history of humanity. As early humans bonded together for survival, the knowledge and skills of one generation were passed onto the next, as those with special talents and experience shared the wealth of their knowledge with those future generations who were to carry on the flame of human wisdom, knowledge and culture.

In today’s organisations there is increasing recognition that facilitation and support of a mentoring process is an effective strategy that can significantly benefit individuals by affording them an opportunity to grow, develop and share their professional and personal skills and experiences (Karpin, 1995; NSW Department of Education and Training, 2000). Mentoring is based upon encouragement, openness, mutual trust, respect and a willingness to learn and share.

This symposium explores the theme of mentoring through a subject currently being delivered to second and third year pre-service educators at the University of Western Sydney. Papers in this symposium will focus upon the role of mentoring in the development of a teacher portfolio; the psycho-social functions of mentoring through the use of music in the enhancement of interpersonal skills and the role and strategies of mentoring in nurturing self-reflection and meta-cognitive skills.
The current state of Australian higher educational systems requires innovative programs that truly address current student needs. Syrjalá (1996) explains that in the context of educational reform, which encompasses the ‘decentralisation of power’ (p. 263), educational practices require changes and new approaches, both in research and in teacher education. Mentoring programs appear to be both appropriate and applicable to the “needs of students within the current educational environment” (Bond, 1999, p. v).

The fallout from the current “deregulation of education” includes declining budgets and reduced student services to support ever increasing student populations, with even greater proportions of “disadvantaged” students requiring such support (Bond, 1999). Bond (1999) further describes an environment of mass delivery systems, independent learning programs, greater competition for diminishing resources, and increased tuition fees, all contributing to high rates of student attrition. “Research on student attrition in Australia highlights the negative effect the changing face of education has had on today’s students” (Bond, 1999, p. 7).

As a solution to the negativity that exists in Australian educational institutions, Bond (1999) recommends the introduction of a mentoring framework, to “…enhance students’ performance outcomes and reduce attrition” (Bond, 1999, p. v). Reglin (1998) asserts that mentoring is “underutilized as an alternative education strategy…” even though “…it empowers students to succeed in life” (p. 30). Mentoring programs serve a duel purpose; they are client-centred and thus can target ‘at risk’ students, as well as promote individually challenging and relevant curricula (Bond, 1999). Bond (1999) affirms that there is “a growing body of evidence...that links mentoring activity with positive student outcomes” (p. 5).

*The benefits of mentoring to the educational system are extensive. Mentoring promotes a collaborative rather than a competitive environment (Bond, 1999). Mentoring programs are cost-effective, available to all, increase talent identification and nurturing, enhance the development of learning strategies and study skills, foster intrinsic motivation and open communication, as well*
Mentoring is not a new conception. The term was expressed as early as 800BC, in Ancient Greek mythology, in Homer’s *Odyssey* (Debolt, 1992; Carruthers, 1993; Reglin, 1998; Sipe, 1998; Bond, 1999; Schwiebert, 2000). Debolt (1992) states that “the original Mentor, a combination of the goddess Athena and man, was entrusted with the care and guidance of Odysseus’ son, Telemachus...Mentor served as a role model, guide, facilitator, and supportive protector for Telemachus” (p. 36). Mentoring as a practice, however, appears to have had its beginnings even earlier. Carruthers (1993) refers to the mentoring relationships in the Hebrew bible between Moses and Joshua, as well as Elijah and Elisha, claiming that “it is the source of the term ‘mentor’ which lies in Homeric times, not the relationship” (p. 10).

Kerka (1998) tells of a narrowed concept of mentoring during the Industrial Age, between a master and an apprentice, focusing on career advancement only. The Information Age has seen an expansion of the mentoring concept to include career and psychosocial aspects, more attune to the role of the original Mentor (Schwiebert, 2000). The contemporary concept of a mentor is of “...a non-parental, competent, and trustworthy figure who consciously accepts personal responsibility for the significant developmental growth of another individual” (Cohen, 1995, p. 1).

The adaptations of the conception of mentoring over time have led to a “plethora of definitions” which have a “core of agreement but peripheral difference” (Carruthers, 1993, p. 10). Schwiebert (2000) insists upon the refining of a definition, one which clarifies its difference from such behaviours as “...coaching, networking, and counselling” (p. 27). Phillips-Jones (1982) defines modern mentors as “influential people who significantly help you reach your major life goals” (p. 21). She expands this to include the “development of an emotional bond” (p. 21). Jeruchim and Shapiro (1992) present a more comprehensive definition....
Reglin (1998) reaffirms that “...mentoring is an old idea that works. The word comes from Greek, meaning steadfast and enduring” (p. 30). The terms ‘mentee’ and ‘protégé’, appear synonymous throughout the literature. Carruthers (1993) reveals that the “...protective aspect of the role of mentor has given rise to the use of the word ‘protégé’ from the French verb, protégér, to protect the one who is the recipient of mentor interest” (p. 9). It is the protection and development of the protégé, which is central to what mentoring is all about (Carruthers, 1993). The word protégé, has recently been replaced by the word mentee in most mentoring relationships.

Kerka (1998) declares that “organisational trends such as downsizing, restructuring, teamwork, increased diversity, and individual responsibility for career development are contributing to the resurgent interest in mentoring in the 1990’s” (p. 3). Cohen (1995) affirms that mentoring programs are increasingly being recognised by institutions as an important source of learning for those “whose personal, educational, and career development can benefit from meaningful relationships with experienced professionals” (p. vii). Many Australian organisations are recognising that facilitation and support of a mentoring process is an effective strategy that can significantly benefit individuals by affording them an opportunity to grow, develop and share their professional and personal skills and experiences (Karpin, 1995; NSW Department of Education and Training, 2000).

Early this year the NSW Department of Education and Training undertook an innovative pilot program in partnership with universities to develop a Certificate in Mentoring. This program aims to develop a state-wide team of teachers who will be better equipped to mentor and develop early career teachers through practicum, internship and induction. Cohen, (1995, p. vii) would support this training initiative as he warns, that “the professional staff who serve as mentors often have inadequate conceptual and empirical preparation for the realities of the mentoring relationship. ...”. Cohen insists that it is possible for institutions to develop, plan and implement successful, beneficial and nurturing mentor-mentee relationships (1995). This certificate in mentoring affirms the NSW Government’s commitment to supporting beginning teachers in a mentoring relationship thereby ensuring that they are prepared to teach competently and confidently in the school system.
As part of the University of Western Sydney, Nepean’s Core Program, a student mentoring program was initiated last year. UWS, Nepean as part of the desired characteristics of its graduates, aims for all its students not only to learn but also to participate in facilitating the learning of others. The experiences of both mentoring and being mentored are also seen as excellent preparation for the demands of professional life of university graduates. Student mentoring aims to facilitate learning and improve success and retention rates of university students through providing peer modelling, guidance and support in the transmission of knowledge. The goal of the Student Mentoring Program is to assist in the acculturation process of students experiencing their initial years at university through a mentoring process of experienced students facilitating the social and academic acculturation of small groups of students or individuals.

Linked to this student mentoring program, a year long undergraduate mentoring subject was accredited and introduced in the School of Teaching and Educational Studies. This subject was designed to introduce students to the theory, research and principles of mentoring, particularly mentoring professional colleagues, and to develop initial levels of competence in the practice of mentoring. It provides third year Education students with knowledge, skills and experience in working as mentors to first and second year Education students, assisting them to develop the ability to reach and sustain high academic and professional performance while maintaining a balanced and satisfying life. By providing a supportive professional environment, this subject provides a way for students to learn how to manage the pressures of their university studies and approach their future confidently and positively. The experience will enhance the abilities of mentors and mentees in communication, classroom teaching and management, and will improve their capacity to relate creatively with the world of education and management today.

This symposium explores the theme of mentoring through a subject \textit{Student Mentoring} currently being delivered to third year pre-service educators at the University of Western Sydney. There were eighteen students, six males and twelve females, who chose the subject, \textit{Student Mentoring}. The majority of students came from the Bachelor of Education (Primary) degree, one was from the Bachelor of
Education (Early Childhood) and one from the Bachelor of Commerce/Bachelor of Laws degree.

In the training of the education students as mentors, the input sessions preparing the student mentors occurred in the first semester and the student mentors’ practical experience of mentoring came in the second semester. By contrast to the one-to-one relationship, the student mentors’ practice mostly involved a peer support approach. The groups of mentees with whom they met varied in size, with the average being four mentees. Some mentors did work with one student mentee.

Methodology for this project consisted of:

- interviews with both mentors and mentees,
- taping and transcription of feedback and debriefing mentoring meetings where the mentors reflected upon their mentoring experiences
- monitoring of group reflective discussions
- the use of student reflective journals where students record their perceptions and practices regarding the development and enhancement of their own mentoring skills as well as that of their mentees.

Papers in this symposium will focus upon:

- the role of mentoring in the development of a teacher portfolio
- the psycho-social functions of mentoring through the use of music in the enhancement of interpersonal skills
- the role and strategies of mentoring in nurturing self-reflection and meta-cognitive skills.
REFERENCES


MENTORING SKILLS: IMPLICATIONS FOR PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to explore how mentoring can assist in the development of a teacher portfolio and the benefits that can be derived by providing a supportive work environment. The literature relating to teacher portfolios (Bartell, Kaye, Morin, 1998; Friedus, 1996; and Shulman, 1998) advocates that mentoring is an integral component of the portfolio process. A model developed by Clarke (1997) will be discussed. This model incorporates a mentor into a process that encourages dialogue, conversations and reflections about teaching. In 1998 at the University of Western Sydney, Nepean a portfolio process was introduced into the Bachelor of Education first year undergraduate program in a subject, *Introduction to Children and Teaching*. An initial paper reported on the developmental stages of this process. It is the intention of this paper to review the role of the mentor in the portfolio development process.

During Semester One, 2000, a group of Bachelor of Education third year students will complete a subject, *Student Mentoring*. In Semester Two, 2000, these students will put the mentoring knowledge and skills gained in Semester One into practice with Bachelor of Education first and second year students. This paper will examine issues related to the ways in which mentoring can assist teachers in the development of a teacher portfolio and how this process can strengthen teacher quality and professional development.
INTRODUCTION

This paper examines the contribution that mentoring can make to professional learning and the development of a teacher portfolio. An introduction and background to the research is explained to provide a conceptual framework for the discussion. The paper defines the research problem and the questions that are considered. The literature is discussed briefly and an analysis of the literature is made to assess what research to date suggests mentoring can contribute to the development of a teacher portfolio. A plan of the research is discussed and findings are reported. Conclusions are drawn in light of the research questions.

BACKGROUND TO THIS STUDY

- The study commenced with content analyses of research of teachers’ work being conducted in the different states of Australia. Documents describing teachers’ work were examined.

- A synthesis of common themes was completed from the content analyses.

- A schema was developed from the common themes to describe teachers’ work.

A model has been developed (Clarke, 1997) utilising the domains identified in the content analysis on teachers’ work to assist with explanations about the process of teacher portfolio development, including, particularly the role of mentoring.

Essential within the model is the role of the mentor in assisting and supporting the person developing their portfolio. It is the major intention of the study to examine the mentoring skills and the role of the mentor in assisting the pre-service teacher in the development of a teacher portfolio.

In 1998 at the University of Western Sydney, Nepean a portfolio process was introduced into the Bachelor of Education first year undergraduate program, in a subject ‘Children and Teaching’. An initial paper reported on the developmental stages of this process. It is the intention of this paper to review the skills of the
mentor in the portfolio development process related to the ways in which mentoring can assist teachers in the development of a teacher portfolio and how this process can strengthen teacher quality and professional learning.

**What the literature shows**

The mentoring process has been born from the world of business. Its growth has been seen in many professions, none the least, teaching. Mentoring programs have been popular in the United States (Klug and Salzman, 1991) and Europe and the United Kingdom. Mentoring in Australian education fields is evident in pre-service, induction programs and in professional development programs for teachers at all stages of their development.

The review did not detect any clear consensus as to an agreed or accurate definition of mentoring. Anderson and Shannon (cited in Kerry and Shelton Mayes, 1995) believe that most definitions of mentoring are vague, broad and do not give enough direction to the mentor. Their view that “a) mentoring is fundamentally a nurturing process, b) that the mentor must serve as a role model to the protégé and c) that the mentor must exhibit certain dispositions that help define the process” (p. 29) brings together many of the views expressed in the literature.

Cohen (1995), highlights identified mentor skills in adult learners. His list is an example of the kinds of skills necessary for a positive mentoring relationship. These include:

- Practice responsive listening
- Ask open-ended questions related to expressed immediate concerns about actual situations
- Provide descriptive feedback based on observations rather than inferences of motives
- Use perception checks to ensure comprehension of feelings.
- Offer non-judgmental sensitive responses to assist in clarification of emotional states and reactions” (p. 29).
Some of these skills were explored in the interviews conducted with student teachers as part of the research procedure in this study.

At the commencement of this study Maynard and Furlong in a major, substantial publication, argue however, that mentors require a repertoire of skills dependent on the stage of development of the student teacher. Their argument is based on the notion that professional learning is a developmental process and changes over time. Their belief is that student teachers pass through different stages of learning to teach. They have identified a mentor’s role and skills required of a mentor in the different stages of student teacher development (p. 18). They assert that mentors require “special skills in order to help students in [the] systematic enquiry. It is only through such enquiry that students can establish themselves a rational basis for their professional action” (Furlong & Maynard, 1995, p. 179).

Assessment of the literature

The view by Clarke (1999) that mentoring can assist portfolio development is supported by a number of other writers. Wolf (1996) emphasises the need to develop a portfolio in collaboration with a mentor. He indicates “ideally your mentor will have experience both in teaching and in portfolio construction” (p. 34). Wolf (1994) identifies that mentoring and collaboration and feedback associated with the portfolio contributes to a teacher’s learning. Zeichner and Wray (2000) in an authoritative, recent paper state “that it has been argued that the value of teaching portfolios is greatly enhanced when teachers are given the opportunities to interact with others on a regular basis in their construction (p. 10)”. Mentoring is of course, a significant aspect of interaction.

Furlong and Maynard (1995) attempting to characterise the nature of teaching have cited the work of Schon (1987). Schon’s view of how students should be supported by learning is through a coach involving reflection on action. In this role the mentor takes on the role of coach assisting the pre-service teacher to reflect on teaching practice. This reflection on action attempts to describe the processes involved in the action of teaching. The model developed by Clarke (1997) strongly advocates reflection as a key component of the teacher portfolio process.
Riggs, Sandlin, Scott, Mitchell, Childress, Post and Edge (1997) in an action research study have documented ‘The Inland Empire (California) Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Project’ illustrating the way a mentor relationship has been linked to the portfolio development process. The project involves three assessment strategies for beginning teachers, one of which is the development of a teacher portfolio. The portfolio provides a vehicle for dialogue between the mentor and the beginning teacher. In this program a mentor and a beginning teacher meet to collaboratively develop a ‘Professional Growth Plan’ based around a portfolio. The portfolio serves to facilitate dialogue about teaching practice and provides a basis for self-reflection on teaching.

To gain background knowledge of the facets of the mentoring process for this research, the role of the mentor and protégé and the skills that mentors require involved a literature review to be completed. The review provides a framework for assisting in an understanding of the mentoring process and its capacity to be utilised in developing a teacher portfolio. The literature review was conducted in two phases. In the first phase, secondary sources were reviewed to gain a general understanding of the topic. General texts were reviewed providing a sound overall knowledge of the subject. These general texts assisted with the isolation of specific issues. They provided the background necessary for the researcher to isolate a tentative research problem. Once specific issues were highlighted, primary sources such as journal articles were reviewed. The primary sources guided and informed the identified study. This part of the review was more thorough and extensive in order to obtain a detailed knowledge of the specific topic. Undertaking both these stages enabled the researcher to define and limit the problem and develop a concise plan of action.

**Research problem**

This research is an investigation of one particular attempt to develop and use mentoring strategies in support of professionally salient teacher portfolios.
The formulation of my central research question was to test the hypothesis that mentoring strategies and skills can make a significant contribution to the development of a mentee's teacher portfolio and subsequently their professional learning.

**Research questions**

Arising directly from the research problem a set of questions was developed, that is,

- What impact does mentoring have in assisting with the development of a teacher portfolio?
- What skills should mentors have to enable them to mentor effectively, in general terms, and specifically related to the field of teaching?
- What generalisations can be made in regard to mentoring and its role in workplace learning in relation to the development of a teacher portfolio?

**PLAN OF RESEARCH**

*Review of Literature* (see earlier explanation)

**Participants**

The participants were 11 Bachelor of Education third year students involved in the “Student Mentoring” program at the University of Western Sydney in New South Wales, Australia. The mentors were interviewed and their responses are discussed in this paper.

The students were asked to volunteer to be part of the study.
Methodology

Student Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted on an individual basis with the researcher. Interviews were approximately 30 minutes duration and were framed around broad, key questions. Semi-structured interviews were chosen as a means to collect data, as they enabled the researcher to probe responses and solicit further details from the participants.

Making reference to the skills identified by Cohen, a set of semi-structured interview questions was developed. This enabled student interview responses to be framed around the identified skills.

The purpose of the interviews were to ascertain the perceptions of the B. Ed third year students (mentors) about their role in assisting B. Ed second year students with the development of their teacher portfolio.

Data Analysis

The researcher utilised a database to categorise emerging themes identified in the interviews and these themes are examined and discussed in relation to the literature. The literature reviewed is revisited in the light of research findings. The review also assisted in providing a context for the analysis of the responses to the semi-structured interviews.

FINDINGS

The mentors were asked six questions. Three questions were of a general nature relating to the mentoring experience. Specifically, the mentors were asked to respond to how useful the experience was, the skills developed on a personal level as a result of the mentoring program and the identification of skills the mentors believed they had developed which assisted their mentees with their studies. The other three
questions asked specifically about the mentoring program and how it may have assisted mentees with the development of their teacher portfolio. These three questions asked the mentors to reflect on any experiences in the mentoring subject they felt directly related to assisting the mentees with their portfolio, to identify any specific issues the mentors raised with their mentees in relation to their portfolio and the identification of specific skills the mentor had which assisted the mentees portfolio.

**Question 1.**

*What skills do you feel you developed as a result of your experiences in the “Student Mentoring” Program?*

All of the eleven students interviewed found the student mentoring experience useful. Themes (Figure 1) emerged in response to this question in the following areas:

**Organisation**

The mentors reported some practical, organisational problems, which created problems for them.

- Of the eleven students interviewed two reported finding some of the information in the course as not being useful.

- One student recommended that the meetings commence earlier towards the end of the first semester creating more opportunity to meet together.

- One student reported difficulty in maintaining contact with their mentees as a result of incompatible university schedules.

**Interpersonal Skills**

- Five students interviewed referred to experiencing a greater level of confidence as a result of their participation in the student mentoring program.

- Six students interviewed referred to developing better communication skills. Through the process of assisting others in their learning, students reported gaining better insight into how others learn (identifying different types of “learners”) as well as greater insight into their own knowledge about
themselves as “learners”. Understanding how relationships and group dynamics work was part of the student mentoring experience. One student specifically referred to the journal as providing the opportunity to reflect and gain insight into herself.

- Strategies for developing rapport with others through “sensory perception” such as mirroring body image and eye contact assisted the students in developing better interpersonal and communication skills. Group games/activities learnt were seen as being able to be transferred to the classroom teaching situation.

- Two students interviewed referred to the personal benefit gained from the support network. Feedback from peers and the opportunity to bounce ideas off people was reported to be of great value.

Workplace Learning

- Six students directly referred to the benefit the student mentoring experience will bring them in relation to their own teaching practice

Other

- One student reported gaining time-management skills

- One student interviewed, who mentored “Early Childhood” students who were completing their first practicum in a primary school, reported the benefits gained by her mentees in having a mentor who had primary school knowledge and experience.
Figure 1
Themes that emerged in response to question 1

Q1. Student mentoring was useful because?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>greater level of confidence</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>better communication skills</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self-knowledge &amp; knowledge of how others learn</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>benefit to future teaching practice</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>personal support from network</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 2

Were there any experiences in the mentoring subject, which you feel directly, related to assisting your mentee with their portfolio?

There was some correlation of the mentor’s responses to the mentor skills identified by Cohen (1995). Three of the skills identified by Cohen were also identified by some of the mentors. These were, asking open-ended questions, practising responsive listening and providing descriptive feedback.

- Four students reported they increased their skills in asking ‘open-ended’ questions that resulted in stimulating group discussion.

- Developing better responsive listening skills was described by six of the students interviewed. Another aspect of being responsive to their mentees was the recognition that different people have different levels of skill and that you are teaching to a wide range of perspectives.
• One student described being able to provide feedback, both positive and negative as an important skill that was learnt from their experiences.

• A significant number of students (nine) also described learning how to build up a rapport with other people that they believed would be useful in their ongoing teaching practice. Better communication skills, interpersonal skills and intra-personal skills were described as part of this experience and those better communication skills led to more co-operative working situations. One student described how they learnt to initiate and develop friendships quickly instead of taking months building up such relationships. Communication skills were seen as transferable to all areas of teaching and living.

• One student reported that in building up more rapport with people he had started to think about his own life and thinking.

• One student described this as planning for multi-possibilities according to the students’ needs.

• Two students referred to being flexible in their approach to achieving their goals/outcomes. Identifying goals and flexibility in achieving those goals/outcomes was understood as being achieved through an ongoing communication with the mentees.

• One student stated that the official buddying system had not worked well however, an alternative buddying system was working well with people whom rapport had been established.

• One student referred to developing more confidence.

• Two students referred to developing better time management and organisational skills and being able to assist their mentees with the same.

Bond (1999) also affirms these findings. He advocates that mentors gain increased confidence, personal satisfaction, deeper understanding of self and others, management skills, deeper learning, stronger sense of leadership, and improved interpersonal skills from the mentoring experience.
Question 3.

Were there any specific issues you raised with your mentee regarding their teacher portfolio?

A significant number of students interviewed referred to their ‘past experience’ in creating a portfolio as assisting their mentees. Past experience is cited in the literature as providing knowledge and skills necessary to assist a mentee. Kerka (1998) states that mentors provide “practical know-how and wisdom (craft knowledge) that can be acquired only experientially (p. 3). This view was also supported in the interviews by a number of students.

I’ve done a portfolio before. I know what’s involved…help them with the content, the presentation, the reflections that are involved.

I feel I’ll be able to put obviously my experience of putting a portfolio together, couple that with the experiences of the workshops in mentoring to help put the portfolio together.

The mentors referred to assisting their mentees in the following ways with their portfolios:

a) Organisation/presentation (set-up)

b) Content (types of information to include/not include)

c) Time management

d) Identifying the criteria markers are assessing

e) Reflections

f) Understanding reasoning/philosophy behind portfolio

g) Goal setting, professional development goals, self-assessment/directed learning

h) Visualisation
Two students shared their portfolios with their mentees to demonstrate how to go about its design.

One student did not believe his own experience of putting together a portfolio had assisted him to any ‘great extent’ with his mentees. For this student, mentoring was more about networking and being able to depend on people although he did acknowledge that ‘we can draw on our own past experiences’.

Friedus (1998) supports the view that mentoring can assist in the development of a portfolio. She views the construction of a portfolio as being developed by an individual, but supported by the scaffold of the collaboration of a mentor.

**Question 4.**

**What skills do you believe you have which assisted your mentee with their studies?**

Issues raised regarding teacher portfolio focussed around the following (nine of the eleven students had specific issues raised with them). These were:

a) Organisation

b) Content (what to include/not include, what’s involved, artifacts/what kind, how many

c) Reflective writing

d) Philosophies/reasoning behind portfolio, relation to future teaching practice/learning

e) Portfolio assessment, personal value and teacher criteria

f) Time Management

Mentors assisted their mentees by:

a) showing examples of own portfolios (identifying different types of artifacts)
Well, for what they need to put in I actually showed them mine. I said I’ve got my certificate, my child protection certificate, resuscitation certificate and things like that and also work samples that I also thought were important to have to back up my reflections.

...they weren’t sure, because this is an academic institution, whether they could put a lot of personal things into it and what type of language construction, whether it was more colloquial or formal...

b) Discussing philosophy, reasoning & nature of portfolio

c) Sharing experience of reflective writing, e.g. what type of language to use (formal/academic or personal), use of work samples, open ended questioning to encourage thinking about reflective writing

d) Asking open ended questions to encourage deeper thinking about reflective writing

e) Discussing time management strategies

One student had not yet met with his mentee and another had not yet discussed the portfolio with the mentee.

**Question 5.**

*What skills do you believe you have which specifically assisted your mentee with their teacher portfolio?*

Of the eleven mentors interviewed, seven students identified their past experience as assisting their mentees with their studies in the following ways:

a) Subject knowledge

b) Teaching skills gained through practicum

c) Understanding of reasoning behind subject matter

d) Guidance on study areas of importance

e) Identifying marking criteria (what’s wanted/expected)
f) Researching and library skills

g) Professional development goals

- Seven of the mentors named the following skills related to organisation as important:

  a) Time management
  b) Development of a study timetable
  c) General organisation
  d) Goal setting

- Communication and developing rapport with their mentees were additional skills recorded as important by the mentors. These included:

  a) Providing feedback
  b) Support through listening about problems
  c) Assisting with social adjustment to university life
  d) Sharing resources and general discussions
  e) Self-evaluation skills
  f) Thinking and discussion skills
  g) Encouragement and motivation
  h) Leadership
  i) Learning to ask for help & clarification when needed

Kerka (1998) affirms that “the essence of mentoring is the establishment of beneficial interpersonal relationships based upon effective communication”. Bond (1999) identifies management skills and agrees that improved interpersonal skills as some of the benefits obtained from the mentoring process by the mentees.
Question 6

What skills do you believe you have which could have specifically assisted your mentee with their teacher portfolio?

- The ability to assist their mentees with developing their reflective writing skills was identified by six of the eleven students interviewed. For many this was born out of a struggle with their own personal development with respect to reflective writing:

  a) Using reflective writing to ask questions
  b) Developing terminology/phrases
  c) The portfolio as a reflection of ‘self’
  d) Portfolio reflective writing was seen as a means of:
    e) developing self-awareness
    f) awareness of social & economic issues
    g) awareness of personal value systems
    h) how all the above impacts on teaching practice
  i) Five mentors interviewed also reported being able to assist their mentees with regard to organisation of their portfolio. They gave examples such as: presentation, organisation, writing, construction and domains.

- Also identified by three of the mentors interviewed and connected to the organisation of the portfolio was: time management, goal setting and identification of professional development goals

- More generally the mentors (nine students) interviewed described skills gained through their own experience with their portfolios as assisting their mentees with their portfolio.
These included:

a) Sharing past experience, ideas and comparisons in creating a portfolio

b) Providing insight, understanding, reasoning and the purpose of the portfolio

c) Using the portfolio as a way of tracking one’s personal development

d) Using the portfolio as a resource e.g. job applications and interviews

e) Providing general guidance and feedback

f) Sharing experience gained from teaching practicum, e.g. classroom management

Figure 2
Skills identified that assist with portfolio development.
(Numbers indicate number of student responses)

Q6. "Skills specifically assisting mentee with teacher portfolio"
CONCLUSION

The conclusions drawn from the findings of the mentor responses can be evaluated in relation to the three research questions.

Firstly, the mentors saw the impact of mentoring in assisting with the development of a teacher portfolio as significant. Past experience developing a portfolio contributed greatly to the ability of the mentor to assist their mentees with their own portfolio.

The mentors identified a large range of skills, which they felt they had developed during their mentoring studies. They strongly advocated that these skills had impacted on the way they were able to assist their mentees with their portfolios. Friedus (1998); Branch, Graefelman and Hurelbrink (1998); and Davis & Honan (1998) strongly support the view that the mentoring process can assist with portfolio development. This view was corroborated in the findings of the mentor interviews.

Secondly, the mentors identified skills required generally of a mentor and related specifically to the field of teaching. There was some correlation of the skills identified by Cohen (1995) and the mentor responses. It seems that the mentors were most astute in the identification of skills, which they believe assisted their mentees generally. Most mentors were able to articulate these skills quite well.

Thirdly, generalisations can be made in regard to mentoring and its role in workplace learning in relation to the development of a teacher portfolio. The findings strongly suggest that the supportive environment provided by a mentor can assist in learning. This learning is the result of the existing skills and skills developed by mentors as part of their process of learning to be a mentor. General skills of mentoring were identified as beneficial in assisting mentees and this included building rapport with other people. The mentors believed this rapport building would be beneficial in their teaching practice in the workplace, as it would enable them to develop effective
communication skills leading to a more co-operative work situation. Skills such as increased responsive listening, providing feedback, increased confidence, organization and improved time management skills were identified as general skills, which the mentors indicated, assisted their mentees.

Specific skills identified by mentors in assisting a mentee with their portfolio included the practical know-how of constructing a portfolio gained from previous experience, the knowledge of how to construct a portfolio, organization and presentation of the portfolio, the content including the types of information to be included, assistance with reflective writing and the ways reflective writing could be incorporated into the portfolio, developing an understanding and philosophy of the portfolio and assisting with the development of professional development goals.

While assistance has been provided to the mentees it is also important to note that there was mutual benefit and learning evolving through the mentoring process. This acknowledgment of mutual benefit is seen as critical to the mentoring relationship by a number of writers including Jeruchim and Shapiro (1999); Bond (1999) and Kerka (1998). With this acknowledgement of mutual benefit being so widely agreed upon by a number of researchers mentoring should be viewed as a tool that can assist with the professional learning of both mentors and mentees.
REFERENCES


This paper grew out of our continuing research into mentoring as an opportunity to develop as professional learners. The model of mentoring that was presented in this paper accommodated different contexts and, while the journey of the one being mentored may be different in that the mentees here commenced from very different positions, the phases of the journey had similarities. There are the conversations, which are the important initial phase, which lead to reflection on practice. In conceptualising the three context model of mentoring we sought to clarify our ideas and link them to the literature on mentoring experiences. Our findings were that the conversations and reflection that are integral components of mentoring are also parts of the way in which teachers and teacher educators are able to tell the story of their experiences.
MENTORING CONVERSATIONS AND NARRATIVES
FROM THE TERTIARY EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT

Mentoring conversations are an effective strategy that can significantly benefit both mentors and mentees by affording them an opportunity to grow, develop and share their professional and personal skills and experiences. Conversations which aim to mentor are based upon encouragement, openness, mutual trust, respect and willingness to learn and share. Mentoring conversations can take many forms: namely a traditional paired model or buddy system; a support network; an opportunity to collaborate on research in a collegial supportive environment and scaffolding of a less experienced colleague by a more experienced peer or colleague.

Narratives are used as a research strategy to trace and explore the mentoring experiences of undergraduate students, experienced teachers in a mentoring program and academics in the achievement of higher degrees. Within these narratives, models of mentoring are examined. Analysis of mentoring conversations using narratives addresses whether participants were effectively assisted in achieving their goals, how these mentoring experiences achieved successful outcomes for the participants and the extent to which these mentoring conversations contributed to professional learning.

Keywords: Mentoring, narratives, professional learning
INTRODUCTION

As individuals, we are constantly involved in the process of reshaping our narrative traditions by creating and listening to other people’s conversations and narratives. Narratives and conversations enable us to relive our experience once again and accommodate it in a broader, more meaningful context of life. Conversations and narratives are crucial for our communication with others as they furnish us with information on the personality and identity of the individual, their life characters and events. The process of mentoring affords an excellent vehicle through which to utilise and develop both narratives and conversations.

Conversations in mentoring often take the form of informal dialogue whereby the mentor and mentee are engaged in the processes of establishing rapport, clarifying ideas, articulating issues, organising the mentoring experience, and establishing a supportive, collaborative and collegial environment which clearly affirms roles and responsibilities. Narratives serve as an overall strategy at a higher level of mentoring where the mentee and mentor are actively engaged in goal setting, exploring strategies, problem posing and solving, reflecting critically on and evaluating strategies.

Mentoring conversations are an effective strategy that can significantly benefit both mentors and mentees by affording them an opportunity to grow, develop and share their professional and personal skills and experiences. Posner (1998) states that the role of mentoring is to relate, assess, coach and guide the mentoring process. Through relating, mentors build an environment and relationship of mutual trust, respect, and professionalism through conversations which are based upon encouragement, openness, respect and willingness to learn and share. Through the strategy of narratives, mentors assess behaviours and situations to ensure that mentoring decisions are based on thoughtful reflections of information, and that mentees’ needs and goals are being fulfilled. Coaching through the use of narratives permits the mentor to serve as a role model, to share strategies, experiences, and to open new vistas of endeavour. Through coaching, the mentee is encouraged to act and reflect upon their practice and development.
of skills. Finally, guiding through narratives empowers the mentee to reflect on decisions and actions themselves while self-regulating their own informed teaching and learning practice through supportive conversations and narratives with the mentor. Inherent in the strategies of mentoring conversations and narratives is the belief that meaningful learning occurs best when individuals are creating, listening and exploring together.

Polkinghorne (1988) defines a narrative as ‘the fundamental scheme for linking individual human actions and events into interrelated aspects of an understandable composite’ (p. 13). As he explains, ‘we create narrative descriptions for ourselves and for others about our own past actions and we develop storied accounts that give sense to the behaviour of others’ (p. 14). Applying this to narrative research, Polkinghorne states that it has the purpose of producing an accurate description of narrative accounts that individuals use to uncover some of the meaning of their lives. He adds that such research does not construct a new narrative but ‘reports already existing ones’ (p. 162). Narratives of teachers and educators as forms of knowledge and reporting offer a ‘holistic way of thinking about teaching and teachers’ learning (McAninch, 1995, p. 8). They have ‘the potential to bring new meaning to the experiences of change, growth and professional development in a teachers’ life’ (Beattie, 1995, p. 8).

Beattie (1995) and Elbaz, (1991) value the personal narrative as a research tool. The voices of colleague and associate teachers, of teachers preparing to be mentors of early career teachers, and of teacher educators pursuing higher degrees attempt the same goal, namely to reflect on their practice and make connections ‘between the practice of teaching and the virtues and knowledge that are proper to it’ (Elbaz, 1991, p. 3).

Narratives and mentoring conversations are used as research strategies to trace and explore the mentoring experiences of undergraduate students, experienced teachers in a mentoring program and teacher educators in the achievement of higher degrees. Within these narratives, models of mentoring are examined. Mentoring conversations entail engaging with the mentee on an intellectual journey of understanding. Extending the mentees' understanding through narratives may be achieved through questioning, provision of appropriate reading material, discussion whereby mentees' are encouraged to
develop their personal thinking through synthesising knowledge acquired, reflected upon and tested against practice. Linked to this is the idea that the mentor too is a learner. Reflection through narrative and conversation is a continual re-examination and re-appraising of one's knowledge and understanding. In order to develop the necessary skills and strategies of mentoring, mentors must engage in critical reflection themselves in terms of their ability to listen and mentor effectively. This reflection needs to take place within a collaborative and supportive framework, such as narratives and conversations.

The use of narratives and conversations in mentoring has been found to ‘capture the idea of experience in a way that allows us to talk about teachers as knowledgeable and knowing persons’ (Clandinin & Connelly, 1988, p. 10). Elliott and Calderhead in McIntyre, Hagger and Wilkin (1994) found in their research that mentors reported a wide range of mentoring strategies as they searched for knowledge and meaning with their mentors. In this research one of the most frequently reported approaches that mentors used was that of “active listening”. This approach encouraged mentees to knowledgeably think of creative solutions to problems as well as encouraging a level of independent problem solving. Mentors in the Elliott and Calderhead research, articulated that during conversation sessions they encouraged mentees to discuss their views about issues. They stated that reflection on practice and beliefs usually occurred "when things went wrong". Analysis of these mentoring conversations using narratives addresses whether mentees' were effectively assisted in achieving their goals, how these mentoring experiences achieved successful outcomes for the mentees' and the extent to which these mentoring conversations contributed to professional learning and development on the part of both the mentee and mentor.

Mentoring conversations can take many forms, namely a traditional paired model or buddy system between mentors or between a colleague teacher and an associate teacher; a support network through small group mentoring; or an opportunity to collaborate on research in a collegial supportive environment whereby a less experienced colleague is supported and scaffolded by a more experienced peer or colleague.
The traditional paired model or buddy system between mentors or between a colleague teacher and an associate teacher views the role of a “buddy” as a supportive relationship outside of the mentoring subject, where issues and problems could be aired, discussed and solved, so that each mentor had a “contact person” at any time.

A mentoring relationship is established between a colleague teacher and an associate teacher through an extended placement in the workplace prior to full time teaching. This relationship is fostered through an internship program whereby an associate teacher is nurtured by a close association with a more experienced teacher while undergoing an apprenticeship in the school and classroom prior to full time teaching.

Support networks through small group mentoring enabled mentors to practise the skills of mentoring in a supportive environment. These networks encouraged mentors to self reflect, check their reflections with others and offer constructive feedback on each other’s skill attainment.

A model of mentoring where a less experienced colleague is supported by a more experienced colleague provides opportunities for the professional development of the mentee through conversations with a mentor sharing their expertise and knowledge. This model affords opportunities for the mentee to learn in a safe, collegial and supportive environment. This environment of support engenders confidence in the mentee to participate in professional conversations related to collaborative research. The benefit of this model of mentoring is that professional learning takes place in an environment that fosters mutual trust and respect for each other.
MENTORING CONVERSATIONS AND NARRATIVES: A MODEL

The model shown in figure 1 represents the three contexts of mentoring narrative addressed in this paper. The model shown is adapted from Langellier and Peterson’s three-order model (in Mumby, 1993, p. 65). In our model, the direction of the successful mentoring experience goes from the top to the bottom of the model. The contexts within the mentoring environment are those of undergraduate mentors, experienced teachers mentoring early career teachers, and higher degree early career researchers. In the model, the narrative is the all-embracing strategy. It nests the conversations between mentor and mentee which constitute the content ordering which involves the establishing of rapport. Subsequently, the task-ordering phase is one of reflection on establishing goals with the help of the mentor(s). The group-ordering phase is one of growing independence of the mentoring relationship.
FIGURE 1
STRATEGIC MODEL OF MENTORING

Mentoring Environment

General Environment
- Paired model or buddy system
- Support network through small group mentoring
- Collegial environment

Undergraduates | Early Career Teachers | Higher Degree

Particular Context
- Student Mentoring
- Internship
- Ed. D.

Narrative

Overall Strategy
- Trust, confidence, respect, re-examination, reappraisal of knowledge and understanding

Establishing Rapport between
Mentor & Mentee: Conversations

Content Ordering
- Goal setting, problem posing, problem solving

Assisting Mentee to set Goals: Reflection

Task Ordering
- Release from the mentor

Continuing Support Leads to
Independence of Mentee

Group Ordering Activity
Aims of the study:

The aim of this exploratory qualitative study was to:

1. examine through a proposed model the journey of mentoring in a variety of tertiary situations
2. examine how narratives can record mentoring experiences of mentees.

Method:

Student teachers and staff at the University of Western Sydney were undertaking a number of mentoring experiences and programs. The purpose of this study was to examine the similarities and differences synthesising the conversations of these experiences and reporting on them utilising a strategic model of mentoring and utilising narrative as a strategy to reflect on these professional learning experiences.

MENTORING CONVERSATIONS AND NARRATIVES FROM THE TERTIARY EXPERIENCE: AN INVESTIGATION OF STRATEGIES

At the University of Western Sydney, an undergraduate mentoring subject was accredited and introduced in the School of Teaching and Educational Studies. This subject was designed to introduce students to the theory, research and principles of mentoring, particularly mentoring professional colleagues, and to develop initial levels of competence in the practice of mentoring. It provides third year Education students with knowledge, skills and experience in working as mentors to first year Education students, and to accelerated school students undertaking University subjects. In a supportive professional environment, this subject provides a way for students to learn how to manage the pressures of their university studies and approach their future confidently and positively. The experience enhances the abilities of mentors and mentees in communication, classroom teaching and management, and improves their capacity to
relate creatively with the world of education and management today. In this experience mentoring conversations and narratives utilised the following strategies:

- **A traditional paired model or buddy system between mentors**

At the beginning of the mentoring subject, mentors chose a “buddy” from within the group. These were randomly chosen by the students (and could be anyone in the group except a friend as mentors had already an established relationship with a friend outside of the mentoring environment which may not be a relationship which fostered critical feedback). Buddies exchanged phone numbers, addresses and emails as it was recognised that communication, in the form of conversations and narratives plays a significant role in effective mentoring. Carruthers (1993) alleges that partnerships that are freely chosen are the most effective. Buddies interacted with each other at mutually convenient times in a conversational mode, reflecting on issues, clarifying goals, providing one to one feedback on situations and activities in a personal, verbal transaction that focussed on analysis and synthesis of understandings through the use of narratives. Schwiebert (2000) emphasizes the importance, even in informal relationships, of clarifying expectations and establishing goals for the relationship. This will assist in preventing future misunderstandings and assist in time management. Schwiebert (2000) states that it is critical that mentors listen to and provide constructive feedback in “private, and in a setting that is as non-threatening as possible” (p. 103). Narratives were used as a monitoring strategy to foster self regulatory and developmental learning, provide feedback to peers, monitor progress, and reflectively mediate each other’s mentoring behaviour and actions. Mentors practiced the skills of mentoring through peer mentoring with their buddy and engaged in the cognitive coaching of each other. Through the conversational process of putting ideas into words and engaging in narratives with a supportive ‘buddy’, mentors internalised concepts at a deeper level, monitoring their thinking, ideas and mentoring skill development. Susan depicts the role of conversations in the buddy to buddy system when she states:

_I found forming a goal difficult to start with. I immediately had a goal in mind, to improve my interpersonal skills, and communication skills, specifically with my buddy… in talking I will have to revise it as I think it is a long term goal…_
buddy and I decided to communicate by email... as we don’t have much opportunity to meet at Uni. Another plus for me with this contact is that I would feel uncomfortable ringing Ruth up, not knowing each other and not having a lot to say to each other. This way we were building a relationship more comfortably, and getting to know each other. There’s no awkwardness with email, as there would be with telephone contact... through this contact I have formulated my goal and by the next mentoring meeting I will have developed a good level of rapport with my buddy. My goal is going really well and Ruth and I are keeping in regular contact, and we are getting to know each other.

• **a colleague teacher and an associate teacher**

The internship, a mentoring relationship between an associate teacher (student teacher) and a colleague teacher, was introduced as an innovation in the Faculty of Education at the University of Western Sydney in 1995. The colleague teachers in this program are freed from teaching for three days per week for ten weeks and the associate teacher teaches their class. Associate teacher’s experience a modified introduction to teaching designed around the support given by a mentor (colleague teacher) in a supportive and protected environment. A study conducted by Power, Clarke & Hine (2001) reported outcomes of increases in the nurturing of teaching skills as a result of participation in an internship program and this was directly related to the relationship of having a mentor to guide and support the novice teacher. In our study, two focus group meetings with colleague teachers, associate teachers and university staff identified the following characteristics of the relationship between the colleague and associate teacher. They were empowerment, colleague support, mutual respect, professional progress, rapport, shared learning and team relationships. Through the experience offered by the extended time in schools and classrooms experienced by the associates in the internship, professional learning is made visible through the reflective writing in which the associates engage while on-site in schools being mentored by a colleague teacher (Clarke, Power & Hine, 2001). Professional learning occurs when there is acknowledgement by the associates that classroom practice leads to improved learning outcomes for students. The associate as a professional reflects on teaching roles and responsibilities and can reflect on the links
between actions and outcomes. One of the experienced teachers who participated in this program said:

*It was my task to mentor a young teacher and I did this in a way that capitalised on his strengths in ICT. I mentored his taking on the role of ICT support in the Primary School where I work. It helped him clarify that he had something special to offer to the staff who were more experienced in years of teaching than he was. And it helped him set goals for where he was going in teaching and what he wanted to feel as a teacher.*

- **a support network through small group mentoring**

Students were randomly assigned or chose their own small group frequently for activities during the course of this subject. Small group work provided a model for future mentor-mentee relationships where students practised the skills of mentoring in a supportive environment. This enabled students to self reflect, check their reflections with others and offer constructive feedback on each other’s skill attainment. In small groups students were responsible for their own learning and also the learning of the group. People often respond more comfortably when in small situations rather than large groups, as one student, Nick commented:

*It helped with our teaching, I found the building rapport aspect of it, the people skills, the communication skills will come in handy with teaching, and also in general life experiences and stuff, just meeting people, getting along with them and stuff like that and the actual support network which is the actual mentoring, what mentoring is, I found really good, you can bounce stuff off people, just being able to actually put an idea forward, get feedback on it, from your peers, from someone that’s in your situation, I found stuff like that really helpful.*

- **an opportunity to collaborate on research in a collegial supportive environment whereby a less experienced colleague is supported and scaffolded by a more experienced peer or colleague.**

This is a narrative of one of the authors (Clarke) being mentored by the other two authors (Power and Hine). A review of the literature (Martinez, 1992; Danielson, 1999;
Hargreaves and Fullan, 2000; Short, Yarrow and Millwater, 2001; Swales and Cooper, 2001) revealed that an area needing further research and investigation is the mentoring of early career researchers in Universities. This is my narrative (Clarke) on mentoring and my experiences as an early career researcher, university academic in Education and a doctoral student studying part time at the University of Western Sydney, Australia. My experiences as an early career researcher has served to highlight the significant impact that mentoring by two of my colleagues has had on my professional learning.

Strong evidence in the literature indicates that informal mentoring relationships yield strong career satisfaction (Fagenson-Eland, Marks & Amendola, 1997), career commitment (Colarelli and Bishop, 1990) and career mobility (Scandura, 1998). More positive job attitudes have been reported by (Dreher and Ash, 1990; Koberg, Boss, Chappell and Ringer, 1994; Scandura, 1997) with academics who have been involved in informal mentoring relationships compared with non-mentored individuals. There has been however, little attention given in the literature to the relation between formal and informal mentoring (Ragins, Cotton and Miller, 2000).

My mentor relationship with my colleagues has been undertaken in an informal way. The mentoring relationship was not contrived or structured in any way through the University. The mentoring relationship grew over a number of years as we have developed a collegial and satisfying working relationship in other work areas. The relationship began with two colleagues sharing with me their practical knowledge and wisdom of the University system.

My background was as a secondary teacher for twenty years. My involvement with University work was two pronged. I undertook my Master of Education degree at the University of Western Sydney and from this evolved tutoring work on a part time basis during the evenings. I subsequently enrolled in a Doctorate of Education and continued to work on this while working full-time. For the last six years I have been a full-time Academic at the University.
Beattie (2000) in her work explains that the mentoring relationship is based on trust. “a trust that the mentor has earned and not been endowed with by virtue of his title (p. 8). As one can imagine a new researcher opens themselves to a mentor with their concerns and a high level of trust needs to be established with the mentor for this openness to occur in their professional dialogue and mentoring relationship. My mentoring colleagues shared their wisdom in areas such as writing research grants, what conferences to attend, how to get research published etc. They “taught me the ropes”, as there was not a formal mentoring system operating for staff within the Schools of Education at the University of Western Sydney.

Once our collegial relationship was established we began to work on common research interests. Two of these have been in the area of mentoring and the internship. This common interest fostered joint papers being written and presented as symposiums and papers at conferences. These shared experiences gave me the confidence to then present individually at conferences. Their mentoring role provided the support, encouragement and guidance to begin my own research path. Their influence has enabled me to increase my research output and link my research to my practice of teaching at the University. Over the last two years we have co-authored papers on the Bachelor of Education Primary Internship Program at the University of Western Sydney. We have examined the influence of the of the colleague teacher (the mentor) to the student teacher (the intern) (Power, Clarke, Hine, 2001).

A mutual identification of similar personality traits between mentors and mentees has been reported in the literature. Kram, 1985 suggests that informal relationships develop by mutual identification. Certainly in my mentoring relationship with my two colleagues I was professionally attracted to them because of the role model they portrayed in their strong work ethic and their involvement in the wider university community.

These role models illustrated a strong professional relationship that would guide me in my career and assist me in my early career needs for guidance, support and affirmation of the work and research I was involved in. I have felt that my mentoring relationship has been
one of quiet “shepherding” into areas of skill and professional learning that would eventually assist me with my long-term career goals.

The mentoring experience that I have had with my two colleagues has been invaluable in that it has encouraged professional conversations in a range of professional and educational issues to take place. These conversations very often then lead us to investigate other areas of common interests. This has led to a community of learners developing within the Schools of Education at the University. It has long been my vision that elements of my experiences in the mentoring relationship that I have had with my colleagues could be developed into a professional learning program for early career researchers and that the Schools of Education would have a strong commitment to developing a mentoring program for this group of Academics. The mentoring that I have received from my colleagues has been a critical element in my professional learning and academic development.

CONCLUSION

This paper has grown out of continuing research into mentoring as an opportunity to grow as professional learners. The model of mentoring that has been presented here accommodates different contexts and, while the journey of the one being mentored may be different in that the mentees here commence from very different positions, the phases of the journey have similarities. There are the conversations, which are the important initial phase, which lead to reflection on practice. In conceptualising the three context model of mentoring we have sought to clarify our ideas and link them to the literature on mentoring experiences. Our findings are that the conversations and reflection that are integral components of mentoring are also parts of the way in which teachers and teacher educators are able to tell the story of their experiences, that is, their narrative.
REFERENCES


This paper was funded by the PEPE Inc. Scholarship Scheme.

This paper continued the journey of examining innovative mentoring strategies that will enhance professional learning. The Mentoring in Initial Teacher Education Grants Project (MITE) was established to promote and recognise excellence in educators engaging in mentoring student teachers in educational settings such as early childhood centres and schools. The purpose of the MITE project was to encourage teachers to showcase best practice in mentoring and demonstrate how mentoring leads to professional learning. The project was introduced to provide resources in the form of funding and teacher release to enable educational settings to plan and implement a mentoring project for UWS student teachers during their professional experiences. The mentoring project was also to be seen as part of an ongoing strategy for experienced teachers, new teachers and student teachers to engage in critical conversations regarding professional practice across the career span. In this way, the project would reflect, as highlighted in the recent *Ramsey Review of Teacher Education in New South Wales* (2000), that professional learning occurs across a continuum from initial teacher education, beginning teaching and throughout a teacher’s career.
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P.E.P.E. Membership – Notes for contributors.
Editorial

During the 2004 PEPE Inc.'s Sixth International Conference our members again presented valuable insights from their diverse contexts of practice about ways in which practical experiences in professional education engage academics and students to develop further their professional knowledge, skills and affective qualities within institutions and the partnership professions. This Conference thus sustained and contributed to PEPE Inc.'s basic charter.

Importantly, it also provided a forum for connecting the many contemporary challenges for research, particularly with those of a long-term, transformative and critically informed nature. Many of our members have chosen to contribute their papers to this Journal after reflecting and learning from the responses of the "community of learners" that the conference sought to foster. The last three papers were also the products of the research scholarship grants awarded to groups of member-researchers from regional centres.

What issues do we need to understand as professional educators? The ever-crowded curriculum needs to extend or adjust its boundaries to implement resources that cater for erabound problems that effect our learners and teachers. Our first contributors, Noeline Weatherby-Fell and Brian Keen, review the initiative of implementing a mental health and well-being resource in a teacher education course for all beginning teachers. The findings indicate the value of extending training beyond a narrow curriculum focus for all teachers to develop an understanding of mental health issues and problems, particularly in rural and remote locations.

While practice is the mainstay of our interests and investigations, it is arguably the case that the agenda broadens to include and partner its wider ranging concerns with respect to teaching and learning, rurality and the inescapable drive of technology-enabled work. The second paper by Marilyn Campbell demonstrates how technology can be one possible way of overcoming boys' reluctance to seek help and addresses the opportunity for a more anonymous form of counselling such as cybercounselling in a school setting. The possibilities and perils of school-based webcounselling are discussed in terms of ethical, legal and therapeutic issues.

Jackie Walkington's paper exposes dilemmas related to assessment involved in the viesionship between university and professional partners – dilemmas related to the nature of the partnership, models of evaluation and assessment, the 'ownership' of the decision-making, and in particular, the often lack of adequate resources to confidently meet outcomes. Her paper reveals that these notions are central to professional experience, especially the one of "what does one assess", and are lessons we can relate to our own perspective.

Internship has focused the question of how do we tailor changes to the education of teachers so that the products of Initial Teacher Education programs become more effective teachers who have potential to become professional practitioners. Rob Cameron explores the problem through action research and its effects on the environment of learning for all within the internship.

The next three papers were funded by the PEPE Inc. Scholarship scheme. Firstly, Catherine Sinclair, Maggie Clarke, Catherine Harris and Ray Livemore write about an innovative and exciting strategy designed to enhance the professional learning of aspiring and qualified teachers. The Mentoring in Initial Teacher Education Grants Project (MITE) has
been established to promote and recognize excellence in educators engaging in mentoring student teachers in educational settings. This is a report of the work done so far in a field that paves the way to real partnership in teacher education.

Secondly, Helen Huntly, Cathie Clancy and Rob Thompson do the short-lived trip - Around the [teachers'] world in 80 days - that shows that the 80 day Board of Teacher Registration requirement for a teacher who follows a carefully, developed path to become a beginning teacher - is about right. The paper documents and illustrates how school experiences should be varied and offer student teachers diverse contexts in which they "learn to work with a range of learners...of both genders and of varied ages, abilities, special needs, social and geographical circumstances and cultures".

This experience within one institution contrasts with the comparative approach used by Brenda Bartlett, Karen Heycox, Carolyn Noble, and Justine O'Sullivan, in their surveying schools of Social Work/Social Welfare in Australia, New Zealand and in partnership with Schools of Social Work in Canada to explore the advantages and disadvantages of work based practica as a legitimate site of learning for the integration of theory and practice in professional education. The benefits of this cross-fertilisation becomes accessible through their data.

In conclusion, Allan Yarrow (Inaugural, immediate Past President of PEPE Inc. and Life Member) gives some after thoughts on the tensions of practicum and placement, in an era where more students seems to mean - fewer places. These were gleaned from his long career as a practitioner (a teacher, Curriculum Adviser and School Principal), academic (university teacher and researcher: a Lecturer then Senior Lecturer) and the Director of the Professional Experience Unit. The projections of his short treatise stem from his experiences as a leading force within practicum for 30 years at Queensland University of Technology, retiring in 2002, and having overseen more than 20 000 students placed in schools during that time.

Jan Millwater
Mentoring in Initial Teacher Education: A Pilot Project
at the University of Western Sydney

Catherine Sinclair, Maggie Clarke, Catherine Harris and Ray Livermore
University of Western Sydney

Abstract
An innovative and exciting strategy designed to enhance the professional learning of aspiring and qualified teachers has been introduced in the School of Education and Early Childhood Studies at the University of Western Sydney (UWS). The Mentoring in Initial Teacher Education Grants Project (MITE) has been established to promote and recognise excellence in educators engaging in mentoring student teachers in educational settings such as early childhood centres and schools. The project provides resources in the form of funding and teacher release to enable educators in settings to plan and develop pioneering and stimulating strategies through a mentoring project for UWS initial teacher education students during their professional experiences (practicums). To be accepted for the MITE project, educators’ settings must also demonstrate that the proposed project is part of an ongoing strategy that has benefits for all teachers in that setting. This paper will report on the processes undertaken to initiate, develop, implement and evaluate the pilot project for 2003.

Mentoring for Professional Learning

A mentor can be defined as:
an experienced, successful and knowledgeable professional who willingly accepts the responsibility of facilitating professional growth and support of a colleague through a mutually beneficial relationship. (Hutto, Holden & Hayes, 1991)

A mentor should therefore, have outstanding knowledge, skills and expertise in a particular area and have high status or power in an organisation to promote the welfare, training, learning and careers of those they mentor (often called mentees, protégés or in this paper, student teachers). Mentors should be committed to the mentoring role and believe in the potential of the student teacher. Mentors are expected to be supportive and challenging, have a willingness to share, and have good interpersonal and communication skills (Daloz, 1999; Hawkey, 1998; Stanulis & Russell, 2000). Mentors should also be able to provide information and assistance, model appropriate practice and provide positive, sensitive, constructive feedback regarding student teacher development and progress (Clarke, Hine & Power, 2000; Daloz, 1999; Elliott & Calderhead, 1994; Fairbanks, Freedman & Kain, 2000; Murray, 1991; Stanulis & Russell, 2000).

Mentoring, as a nurturing process, is generally carried out within the context of an ongoing, caring relationship between the mentor and student teacher (Anderson, 1987 cited in Kerry & Mayes, 1995, p. 29). It has been reported as beneficial in helping and socializing new teachers and student teachers (Fairbanks et al, 2000; Tauer, 1998; Zeichner & Gore 1990 as cited in Hawkey 1998), as well as enhancing the professional development and practice of new and experienced teachers (Fairbanks et al, 2000; Tauer, 1998).
However, in the Australian context, the teachers who undertake the mentoring of student teachers during their professional experiences are often volunteers\(^1\) and despite acknowledgement in the literature of their importance to student teachers' professional development (for example, Reck & Krsonik, 2000; Ganser, 2007; Laughlin & Northfield, 1996; Murray-Harvey, 2001; Shantz & Brown, 1999; Weasner & Woods, 2003), it can be difficult to attract sufficient, suitably qualified teachers to undertake this role (Sinclair & Thistleton-Martin, 1999). Thus to encourage, support and recognise excellence in the mentoring undertaken by these teachers and enhance the professional learning of aspiring and qualified teachers, an innovative and exciting strategy has been designed and piloted by the School of Education and Early Childhood Studies at the University of Western Sydney (UWS) this year. This project is called the Mentoring in Initial Teacher Education Grants Project (MITE) and has been established for teachers mentoring student teachers in educational settings such as early childhood centres and schools.

The purpose of the MITE project is to encourage teachers to showcase best practice in mentoring and demonstrate how mentoring teams can improve participant learning. The project was introduced to provide resources in the form of funding and teacher release to enable educational settings to plan and implement a mentoring project for UWS student teachers during their professional experiences. The mentoring project was also to be seen as part of an ongoing strategy for experienced teachers, new teachers and student teachers to engage in critical conversations regarding professional practice across the career span. In this way, the project would reflect, as highlighted in the recent Ramsey Review of Teacher Education in New South Wales (2000), that professional learning occurs across a continuum from initial teacher education, beginning teaching and throughout a teacher’s career.

**Creating MITE**

**Initiating The Process**

The original concept arose from interviews conducted with UWS personnel who held leadership roles in professional experience (i.e. Heads of the Early Childhood, Primary, Secondary and Special Education Programs, Academic Coordinators of Professional Experience for each program and the Administration Coordinators of Professional Experience). A working party was then formed from members of the UWS Professional Experience Reference Group (PERG), whose members represent all UWS and external stakeholders involved in the Professional Experience Programs at UWS.

Initial meetings involved vigorous discussion and debate about the proposed initiative. Initial concerns were raised about the processes of identifying and verifying good student teacher mentoring practices in schools. As a result, the focus of MITE shifted from rewarding individuals to rewarding groups of teachers in schools and early childhood settings: emphasising the collegial nature of schools and settings, and how this collegiality could enhance effective mentoring practices. By taking this position, the emphasis of the award, later to become a grant, became one of collegial learning and sharing. Further, the discussions and the rationale for the grants was expanded from solely enabling schools and settings to demonstrate their commitment to initial teacher education (professional experience) to

\(^1\) Although volunteering for the role of mentor, these teachers are paid for working with student teachers
providing an opportunity to have a dialogue about the transition from initial teacher education to beginning teaching.

It was decided that 2003 would be a pilot year where the partnership between UWS, DET and the Catholic Education Office (CEO) would be local to the settings accessed by UWS. Six grants would be awarded: two grants for Primary schools (due to the large size of the primary teacher education programs), one for Secondary, one for Early Childhood, one for a Special Education setting and one for a cluster of schools. It was also believed that this initiative would provide a model that could be more widely developed within the new Institute of Teachers.

While the emphasis of the grants was upon initial teacher education, settings were also asked as part of their application to provide evidence of their commitment to mentoring teacher professional learning more broadly. Hence, one grant was set aside for a proposal that could be interagency or cross-sectoral or a collective of middle management personnel. The grants provided $2,000 for each school or early childhood setting plus some teacher release agreed to by the DET and CEO. The grants were to be provided for resources for professional development and were to be aligned to the school or setting’s professional development plans.

The Application Process and Professional Experience Forum

All schools and settings affiliated with the UWS teacher education programs were contacted and invited to a Professional Experience Forum and to be part of the Grants Scheme. The Professional Experience Forum was designed to widely publicise and launch MITE. Schools and settings were then asked to apply directly to UWS for a MITE grant.

The application form asked schools and settings to provide the following information to assist the selection panel, drawn from the Working Party, in awarding the grants:
  o The aims and expected outcomes of the project
  o The benefits of the project to the setting itself, UWS students and teacher education more generally
  o A project summary that sets out the intended strategies designed to achieve the project’s aims
  o A timeline that incorporated the appropriate professional experience during the second half of 2003
  o A Budget
  o Strategies for evaluating the effectiveness of the project.

Characteristics of successful applications

Successful grantees were able to indicate succinctly and clearly that they recognised the need to enhance mentoring of student teachers within the professional experience program. The applications indicated that they could best do this as an overall part of the site’s policies with respect to staff development. They demonstrated that they saw professional learning
proceeding along a continuum rather than ceasing at the end of the initial teacher education period.

The successful grantees set achievable goals within the time framework that was available to them. They also indicated that mentoring had reciprocal characteristics in that they had much to learn from the student teachers as well as being in a position to support their professional growth. They saw the MITE project as an opportunity to engage in sustained and meaningful professional dialogue.

From the six successful grant applications, this paper will now present three representative case studies (one from the primary school level and two from the secondary school level). All schools are referred to by pseudonyms.

Kosciusko Primary School

School Context and Project Aim.

Kosciusko Park is a government primary school in Sydney’s South West. The school caters for approximately 500 children (Kindergarten to Year 6) from a variety of cultural backgrounds and has a staff of 40. The school has a long association with UWS as a professional experience school and the school coordinator of student teachers has completed a postgraduate course on mentoring. The school submitted a proposal for a MITE grant to “ease the transition from ‘students of teaching’ to ‘teacher of students’ (Kosciusko Primary School application, 2003) aiming to work with the final semester primary BEd students during their school-based teacher education subject In-school Semester. This subject is the only subject that the student teachers take in their final semester and is conducted primarily in schools.

Project outcomes for student teachers and mentors.

The expected outcomes of the project for the student teachers were:

- Increased confidence in classroom practices and the management of student learning
- Increased development in classroom pedagogy
- Increased knowledge of policies and mandatory procedures within the school context
- Working with a mentor in the development of effective teaching and learning practices
- An understanding of the procedures for probation teachers and beginning to take steps in preparation for their ongoing career; and,
- Engaging in reflection about teaching learning practices in collaboration with a mentor.

The outcomes for the mentors were considered to be:

- The opportunity for professional development, through providing support and guidance for the student teacher during their final professional experiences,
- The opportunity to analyse and critically reflect on their own pedagogy
- The opportunity to establish strong, positive and professional relationships between themselves and colleagues.

Proposed project.

The school proposed a project in two phases: pre-student teacher arrival at the school; and during the students’ nine-week professional experience program in Term 4, 2003. The first
phase included matching supervising teachers and student teachers, training for the supervising teachers as mentors and the production of a resource in the form of a message board for issues arising in the professional experiences, and newsletter for student teachers with information about resources, news, lesson plans and suggestions. Phase Two would consist of a series of meetings and seminars for student teachers on topics such as orientation to the school, what is special about Kosciusko Primary School, issues arising from the professional experiences, KLA syllabi, classroom management, the learning and teaching cycle, assessment and reporting, professionalism and the legal responsibilities of teachers, probationary teacher assessment, communicating with parents and caregivers, other agents in schools and teachers (eg unions, teachers’ health, credit union and professional organisations etc), teacher salary and promotion. Co-observation sessions would also be scheduled so that student teachers could observe other classes and other student teachers. The project was to conclude with a celebratory dinner and evaluation of the MITE project.

Progress so far and future directions.

To date there has been one initial visit to the school to discuss the proposed project and a training seminar on Mentors and Mentoring, provided by a UWS academic, for mentors and student teachers at this and another local MITE school. Student teachers are currently undertaking their nine week, school-based teacher education professional experiences in the school. Kosciusko primary school will complete their proposed project, although they already acknowledge how they “would do things differently” next time (eg organise the seminar to be held at the beginning of the professional experience rather than part way through the program). They will also hold their celebratory dinner and evaluate their project.

Daintree Boys’ High School

School Context and Project Aims.

Daintree Boys’ High School (DBHS) is a government technology high school that caters for boys Years 7-12. Approximately 700 students attend the school, 20% of who come from non-English speaking backgrounds [NESB]. There is a teaching staff of over 40 full-time teachers and each year approximately 2-3 beginning teachers arrive at the school, many of whom are themselves from NESB. The school is located in Sydney’s South West, an area known for its ethnic diversity and socio-economic variance. Whilst many students attending DBHS are socio-economically disadvantaged, the majority of students are from lower middle class families.

The current school principal has over 30 years of experience teaching within Western Sydney Schools and since his arrival at DBHS in 2001, he has been working to improve the ways in which DBHS mentors and inducts beginning teachers (newly appointed teachers). Specifically, the principal is concerned with what he sees as the falling teacher education standards and he is distressed by the number of beginning teachers he has to place on ‘improvement plans’ because they are not competent. His particular concern centres on the area of communication competence as he feels that many of the beginning teachers he receives at DBHS are not proficient English speakers and those that are, don’t seem to understand the communicative role of teachers. To address this situation, the DBHS Principal approached UWS in a bid to work with the University to better prepare and induct student
teachers in the hope that this would positively impact on their experiences as beginning teachers.

The DBHS-UWS MITE project has two aims:
1. To provide quality teaching and learning experiences for UWS student teachers, and DBHS teachers and students during professional experience.
2. To develop a culture of mentorship within the DBHS school community that has benefits for UWS student teachers, teachers and students.

Project outcomes for student teachers and mentors

The DBHS-UWS MITE project will support the delivery of a quality teaching and learning experience for student teachers. Professional experience is a critical time for student teachers. Their experiences on professional experience support the development of their self-as-teacher identity. This project will ensure that student teachers are supported throughout this process not only by their supervising teacher but also by the school community. Student teachers will also have a clearer understanding of the school’s expectation of them and of the available pathways for support within the school community.

The project will provide DBHS teachers (mentors) and the school community with a forum to discuss the process of mentoring student teachers. Staff will have the opportunity to evaluate their experiences of coordinating and supporting student teachers through professional experiences and teachers will be given opportunities for professional development in this area. This project will clarify the roles and expectations of key stakeholders in this process including the role of SEECS, the school (supervising teachers, school coordinator and other staff members), student teachers and students. The development of a resource document to support this process will be of direct benefit to staff and student teachers.

Proposed project.

The project will be an action research project. A UWS academic will act as a voluntary research facilitator at the discretion of the principal. There are three anticipated stages of the project:

PHASE 1:

- Open forum with staff to present evaluation findings of the past professional experiences of UWS student teachers, overview UWS policies and discuss future directions – call for working party members.
- Identification of Professional Experience 1 (PE1) supervising teachers for 2004 – establish discussion group – fund time-release for discussion group to meet.
- Convene working party and develop a plan to address areas for improvement. Establish communication lines. For example, working party to liaise with discussion group, discussion group to liaise with school community?
- Evaluation of Phase 1 and preparation for Phase 2. Convey findings to staff and University.
PHASE 2:

Implement action research plan. We currently envisage this to include:
  - Whole staff professional development day – mentoring student teachers and beginning teachers.
  - Supervising teachers’ discussion group continues to meet and invites new members (those teachers who will be supervising teachers for PE1, 2004).
  - Working party continues to meet and move through a design-implement-evaluate action research cycle.
  - Evaluation of resource document and modification.
  - Evaluation of Phase 2 and preparation for Phase 3 – convey findings to staff and University.

PHASE 3:

Implement second cycle of action research plan.

Progress so far and future directions.

The project funds ($2500) have recently been released to the school so the school is now in a position to commence Phase 1 of the project. The UWS Academic adviser has recently met with the Principal and the School Professional Experience Coordinator to discuss holding a staff meeting about the project before the end of the school year. We aim to implement Phases 1-3 over the next 15 months. We also aim to evaluate and adapt our research foci and methods as the Project progresses.

Namadgi High School

School context and project aims.

Namadgi High School is a government, co-educational high in South West Sydney. It has 720 students and a staff of 65 teachers. There are 13 newly appointed teachers working in the school this year. There is a Head Teacher Mentoring who assists these teachers and will help UWS student teachers and other teachers. The school is relatively new and offers a comprehensive curriculum to the students.

The aim of the MITE project at Namadgi High School is to link the wealth of experience in the school to the wealth of theoretical and research knowledge available at UWS. In this way, opportunities are provided for both institutions to share initiatives and best practice for further teacher improvement.

Project outcomes for student teachers and mentors.

The projected outcomes of the project for UWS student teachers were:
  - To promote excellence in mentoring through professional development of staff at Namadgi High School and UWS.
  - To engage student teachers in the mentoring process with newly appointed teachers who are in the first few years of their teaching careers.
To provide newly appointed teachers with the opportunity to mentor student teachers.
To enhance the professional practice of student teachers and qualified teachers
To enrich a professional development school model for schools and the University through mentoring, life long learning and refinement of the project.

The major outcome for the mentors was:
- An opportunity for professional development through co operative reflection with the student teacher on classroom practice, the school-based induction project, classroom visitation and team teaching.

Proposed project

Newly appointed teachers and UWS student teachers have been provided with pro-forma sheets to guide and record their professional learning as part of the school’s mentoring project for new teachers. These sheets cover such areas as: classroom visitation, an individual mentoring plan, purposeful classroom observations and reflective teaching (an action research approach which outlines the teacher’s professional situation and the action research steps of reflection, revision, observation, creation and engagement they will take to facilitate their professional learning during the MITE project). The development of UWS student teachers’ priority needs is negotiated between the Teacher Mentor and student teacher (mentee) in conjunction with the supervising teacher. Performance appraisal is carried out on the lesson analysis sheet.

Three groups of newly appointed teachers have been formed based on the needs analysis: generic issues, behaviour and classroom management, and sharing a challenging class. UWS student teachers have elected to join the behaviour and classroom management group. DET and school executive staff has provided input into these groups. Additionally, UWS teacher education academics have been invited to provide further input into the project. This school-university partnership is considered to be a major potential benefit of the project. The input provided will enhance the individual Mentor Plans that each newly appointed teacher and UWS student teacher has in place. Formal interaction between experienced and new teachers with UWS academics will help to develop a climate of mutual learning, academic input and a life long learning continuum. A two-way flow of resources, expertise, research and outcome improvement approaches will be of value to all if managed effectively. In addition, it is planned to share the results of the MITE project with other schools where appropriate.

Progress so far and future directions.

Two meetings have taken place between the Head Teacher Mentoring and a UWS academic/partner. Three student teachers are currently undertaking their professional experiences in the school in the faculties of Mathematics, English as a Second Language (ESL) and Human Society and its Environment (HSIE). The first meeting was to establish some protocols for the operation of the project. The second meeting introduced the student teachers to the possibilities and benefits of some engagement with the mentoring aspects of their professional experience.
A third meeting after school was held to understand the priorities of Namadgi HS and UWS. The principal, head teachers, newly appointed teachers and student teachers were involved. The student teachers discussed the content of their Bachelor of Teaching (Secondary) studies and the relevance to these subjects to their professional experience. A priority issue was classroom management. Constructive discussions occurred between the student teachers and the newly appointed teachers on ways of implementing classroom management strategies. The student teachers also completed a PMA (plus, minus, interesting) activity commenting on first nine days of teaching in the school. This meeting started at 4.00 p.m. and went to 6.00 p.m. followed by a joint dinner.

A follow up meeting is being organised towards the end of term to bring into perspective issues identified during the professional experience and provide guidance for both Namadgi HS and the UWS support for the project.

**What we've learnt and implications for future MITE projects**

Like all new projects, time, experience and reflection are needed for real improvements to be realised. To date, some of the positive outcomes of the project have been:

- A development of mentoring skills by teachers
- The beginning of a positive transition from being a student teacher to becoming a beginning teacher
- A mutually beneficial process to school, teacher, student teachers and the University.

Some of the issues that have been raised so far include:

- Schools need more advanced notice of the success of their application for a MITE Grant, particularly in regard with the timing of the professional experiences. Some professional experiences had begun before schools knew they had been successful, or successful schools received too few student teachers to implement their project in 2003. Indeed one primary school will implement their project in 2004 as a result. Early identification of MITE schools would have helped with identification of the student teachers who would be involved and their preparation for the project.

- Aligning the timing of the project and the professional experience meant that funds did not become available to schools at the beginning of the project and some schools had to rely on their own funding sources. In the secondary school context, by the time that the funds were released, the Higher School Certificate Examinations (HSC) had just started and an attention was drawn away from the MITE project to the needs and requirements of HSC students.

- Equity issues for student teachers. The MITE project could result in some student teachers receiving greater support for and input into their school-based professional learning than their peers. However, to date, some of the student teachers involved in a MITE school do not regard the project as additional support, a benefit or advantage that they have over their peers. Rather they perceive the project as additional work for them. Clear guidelines will be needed in the future so as not to overwork the student teachers who, it is acknowledged, already have a heavy demand on their time to successfully complete their professional experiences.

- Additional work for UWS academics has also been evident as MITE schools have drawn on the expertise of UWS staff to generate their applications or participate in the project (even when the staff are not attached to the school as university advisors).
future it is vital that the professional experience University Advisor attached to a
MITE school is an active participant in the project.

The need to train the mentors has also become evident and some schools have needed
to use part of the funding to seek outside expertise to provide such training for the
mentors.

A changing focus for the MITE project as a result of particular school-based
circumstances. For example, at one MITE school, a UWS student teacher received an
unsatisfactory grade for Professional Experience. This situation has pushed the focus
of the MITE project towards supporting ‘failing student teachers’ (rather than all
student teachers) and providing effective advice and support so that they may have a
successful professional experiences placement in the future. This experience has also
highlighted the emotional nature of professional experiences for all involved (student
teacher, supervising teacher’s, school coordinator and university advisor). All involved
believed that the process of evaluating students and potentiality finding them
unsatisfactory needs to be more emotionally supportive and this will be one of the foci
of the UWS-WS MITE project.

The process of developing and implementing the MITE projects has highlighted the
need to support NNSH student teachers and new teachers, and the education settings in
which they work, in terms of their cultural understanding of NSW education settings
and the continued development of their communication skills.

Conclusion

The MITE project has provided the foundations for true partnerships to begin to be developed
between schools and universities linking and supporting initial teacher education, beginning
teaching and ongoing professional learning for experienced teachers. It has enabled
opportunities for professional conversations to occur about mentoring, professional learning
and professional performance. The focus of the project not only has stimulated dialogue about
teaching but the value of continued professional learning is beginning to be realised through
the development and implementation of the mentoring programs. While there are challenges
to be addressed, as outlined in the previous section, we look forward to seeing positive
outcomes for teachers, new teachers and student teachers as a result of the project. Projects
such as MITE, particularly if adopted more widely by organisations such as the Institute of
Teachers, can bridge the gap and ease the transition from “student of teaching” to “teachers of
students” (Ganser, 2002).

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Traditionally, student teachers have acquired their professional learning to become teachers through the acquisition of theoretical understandings at university and professional experience in a school setting. At the University of Western Sydney (UWS), Australia, over recent years the number of placements offered by secondary schools for student teacher professional experience has decreased. Diminished placements have been problematic as enrolment numbers have significantly increased in the secondary program and forecasts for future enrolments strongly project that this trend will continue.

This study by Clarke (2002) was targeted at the Bachelor of Teaching (Secondary) Program at the University of Western Sydney. The study aimed to establish a number of key issues related to professional experience. This paper reported on the findings of responses elicited from questionnaires completed by the professional experience co-ordinators in schools where placements had been offered over a number of years. Future actions for increased placements were extrapolated from the findings to suggest strategies to increase professional experience placements in the secondary program.
Making spaces: Regenerating the profession
Proceedings of the 2004 Australian Teacher Education National Conference

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Editorial

The 2004 annual conference of the Australian Teacher Education Association Making spaces: Regenerating the profession was held in Bathurst from 7-10 July. The 50 papers in these proceedings are representative of the many outstanding presentations at that conference.

The papers published here were subjected to a thorough and anonymous peer review process. The names of the reviewers appear on page xiii of these proceedings. Using stringent criteria, two reviewers independently commented on each paper. Provisionally accepted papers were then returned to the author(s) for revision before inclusion into the conference proceedings. Of the 59 papers originally submitted for peer review, 50 were finally accepted for publication.

I would like to thank the contributors, reviewers, conference organizing committee and particularly Associate Professor Jo-Anne Reid, Tony Loughland, Wendy Hastings and Fiona Reedy whose support enabled the prompt publication of the proceedings. I am pleased to bring you these proceedings which I believe make stimulating reading and will further challenge us in our education of teachers.

Sharynne McLeod, PhD
Editor of the 2004 Australian Teacher Education Association Conference Proceedings

School of Teacher Education
Charles Sturt University
BATHURST NSW 2795
June 22, 2004
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Teacher engagement in professional experience: 
Sustaining learning for student teachers

Maggie Clarke 
School of Education and Early Childhood Studies, University of Western Sydney

Traditionally, student teachers have acquired the necessary knowledge and skills to become teachers through the acquisition of theoretical understandings at university and professional experience in a school setting. At the University of Western Sydney (UWS), Australia, over recent years the number of placements offered by secondary schools for student teacher professional experience has decreased. Simultaneously placements have been problematic as enrolment numbers have significantly increased in the secondary program and forecasts for future enrolments strongly suggest that this trend will continue. A study by Clarke (2002) was targeted at the Bachelor of Teaching (Secondary) Program at the University of Western Sydney. The study aimed to establish a number of key issues related to professional experience. This paper reports on the findings of responses elicited from questionnaires completed by the professional experience co-ordinators in schools where placements had been offered over a number of years. Future actions for increased placements are extrapolated from the findings to suggest strategies to increase professional experience placements in the secondary program.

Professional experience in schools has been used to provide on-site professional learning for student teachers. Opportunities in schools for student teachers to learn their craft in an authentic setting are provided through these experiences. Sinclair, Thuillemot-Marin and Woodward (2000) have however, identified in their research a number of increasing pressures and tensions that have resulted in teachers choosing not to participate in professional experience in primary programs.

A similar study by Clarke (2002) was particularly targeted at the Bachelor of Teaching (Secondary) Program at the University of Western Sydney. The study aimed to establish a number of key issues related to professional experience including identifying:

- ways professional experience was promoted in secondary schools;
- how teachers indicated their interest at the school level to be part of the UWS secondary professional experience program;
- strategies used in schools to determine the suitability of teachers to perform the duties of a supervising teacher;
- factors that inhibited teachers from participating in professional experience;
- affiliation strategies used in schools to recognise the work of supervising teachers with student teachers and
- reasons why some schools and teachers were not involving themselves in the secondary professional experience program.
As schools and universities endeavour to increase their partnerships it is timely to question how these partnerships can be strengthened in order to sustain opportunities for both student teachers and teachers to continue to be involved in the professional learning of each other. There seems to be an incongruence between whose role it is to educate student/trainee teachers. Supervising teachers in schools play an invaluable role in influencing student teacher learning in the field. Careful consideration needs to be given to teacher selection and placement of student teachers with them. Blocker and Swetman, (1993); Veal and Rickard, (1998); Phillips, Haggett and McMinn, (2000); Kahan, (2002) have identified in their research selection criteria for supervising teachers. These criteria may be a useful starting point for further discussion with key stakeholders participating in the UWS secondary professional experience program.

Methodology

A total of 131 surveys were distributed to schools that had participated in the secondary professional experience programs conducted by the University of Western Sydney. Traditionally these schools had provided a large number of placements for student teachers in past years. Schools comprised NSW Department of Education, Catholic and Independent schools. The questionnaires were anonymous in that schools and participants were not asked to identify themselves. Fifty-eight (58) school professional experience co-ordinators participated in the study. A questionnaire that included six questions was posted to the School Professional Experience Co-ordinators. In order to maximise the return rate the questionnaire predominantly used multiple choice answers in order to minimise the time required for completion (Appendix 1). A descriptive approach was undertaken in analysing the statistics with frequency distributions and percentages of responses presented in six tables.

Analysis of data

Question 1: How do you promote professional experience to the teachers in your school?

In response to question 1 teachers indicated that professional experience was promoted to them through discussion at staff meetings, at faculty meetings and 18% of the respondents indicated "other" methods of promotion.

‘Other’ methods of promotion included the executive committee (faculty head teachers) nominating the teachers, the School Professional Experience Co-ordinator identified suitable teachers to supervise student teachers, announcements were made at staff development days, advertising of placement opportunities were placed on noticeboards, informal discussions were held in the common room during recess, lunch and after school and through the professional experience information letter sent to schools by the university.

The school development days were not frequently used to promote the professional experience of student teachers. It would seem that whole school discussion about professional experience could be initiated at school development days. Issues such as
participation in the program, the value of the program to both student teachers, teachers and schools, training of teachers as supervising teachers and developing mentoring skills would seem to be a starting point for dialogue to occur about professional experience. Utilising school development days as a discussion forum for professional experience would emphasise the value of professional experience as a pathway for student teachers/teachers development.

Table 1. How do you promote professional experience to the teachers in your school?

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<th>Response</th>
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<td>Discussed at staff meeting</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>32.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussed at faculty meeting</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>34.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussed at school development days</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 2: How do teachers indicate their interest to be involved in the professional experience program?

Approximately fifty five per cent of the teachers who responded to the questionnaire indicated that they showed their interest to act as a supervising teacher through discussions at faculty meetings. Nearly one quarter (24.1%) of the respondents chose the "other" category to explain how their interest was sought to act as a supervising teacher. Six (6) respondents nominated the school professional experience co-ordinator as personally identifying potential supervisors, five (5) respondents identified head teachers as the person who offered student teacher placements and three (3) respondents indicated a process where staff gained permission to express interest through the Principal, Deputy Principal to act as a supervising teacher.

Table 2. How do teachers indicate their interest to be involved in the professional experience program?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussed at staff meeting</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty discussion</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>53.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proforma sent to staff room</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proforma posted in general area such as common room</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 3: Who decides the suitability of a teacher to perform the duties of a supervising teacher?

The suitability of a teacher to act as a supervising teacher was largely determined by the Head Teacher (47 responses). Other staff such as the School Professional Experience Co-ordinator; teachers and Principals less often made the decision of suitability.
Table 3. Who decides the suitability of a teacher to perform the duties of a supervising teacher?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head Teacher decides suitability</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>81.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Experience Co-ordinator decides suitability</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher decides they are suitable role models</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal decides suitability</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is a heavy reliance on the Head Teacher, in determining the suitability of a teacher. The selection criteria for supervising teacher suitability needs to be firstly defined and this could be an area for further discussion with all stakeholders to determine appropriate selection criteria.

Question 4: Does your school have any processes to determine the suitability of teachers to act as supervising teachers?

Twenty point seven percent (20.7%) of respondents listed length of teaching experience as a determining factor in ascertaining teacher suitability and six point nine percent (6.9%) nominated the Head Teacher as supporting the teacher’s application as another aspect of school process.

Approximately one quarter of the respondents indicated “other” processes used to determine teacher suitability to act in the role of supervising teacher. These included respondents indicating that there was not a process to determine suitability; Principals, Deputy Principals and Head Teachers were identified as making the decision and the School Professional Experience Co-ordinator assessed a teacher’s suitability for the role based on their own knowledge of the teacher.

Table 4. Does your school have any processes to determine the suitability of teachers to act as supervising teachers?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Length of teaching experience</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teacher supports teacher application</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teacher makes judgement</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>48.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 5: Are there factors in your school that inhibit teachers participating in the University of Western Sydney’s secondary professional experience program?

There were two major factors identified in the analysis of these results that inhibit teachers participating in the UWS secondary professional experience program. Insufficient available time to actively support and nurture student teachers was identified as an inhibiting factor in decisions about student teacher placements. As well, too many universities requested student teacher placements. Thirteen point eight percent (13.8%) of respondents nominated teachers as not being interested in
supervising a student teacher and not enough experienced teachers in the school was also seen as an inhibiting factor. A small percentage (3.4%) of respondents stated that there was a lack of school and/or faculty culture supporting student teachers. Only one respondent nominated inadequate payment factors as influencing teachers to participate in the UWS secondary professional experience program.

Teachers felt that too much was being asked of them with not nearly enough time to complete their core work of teaching children. The pressure of not enough time is impacting on teachers’ choices to contribute to the professional experience program of student teachers. Student teachers need face-to-face time with their supervising teacher. The extra tasks of increased administrative work were cited by teachers as increasing their workload and consequently they felt that they could not make a full commitment to the professional experience program for student teachers.

Schools also indicated that they have more demands being made by competing tertiary institutions, all of whom sought student placements with them. With increased placements required from many universities and with fewer teachers supporting the professional experience program, it must be questioned how the professional experience programs can be made sustainable.

A combination of “other” factors that inhibited teachers participating in the UWS secondary professional experience program were identified in the responses including teachers being overloaded with work, Head Teachers having inexperienced staff, not enough time to work with student teachers, lack of support from the university and previous negative experiences, timing in the school calendar as a problem which caused clashes with school examinations and assessments, some teachers and/or faculties were supportive and others were oppositional and lack of physical space to accommodate student teachers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not enough time</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>32.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too many universities asking for placements</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher not interested</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers think they should be paid more for supporting student teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is not a school/faculty culture of supporting student teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough experienced teachers in school</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 6: How does your school affirm and recognize the work of supervising teachers?

Schools affirmed and recognised the work of supervising teachers in predominantly two ways. The Principal and the Head Teacher were identified as the two key people
in the school who recognised and applauded the positive contribution made by supervising teachers. Only one (1) respondent nominated the Principal as recognising and applauding the contribution of the supervising teachers at Parents and Citizens meetings.

There were a large number of respondents who nominated the “other” category in this question. Fourteen (14) respondents indicated, there was no formal recognition of supervising teachers. A number of these respondents noted they would put strategies into place to do this as a result of participating in this survey. A total of nine (9) respondents stated that contributions made by supervising teachers were recognised by the School Professional Experience Co-ordinator and also at meetings of the Executive. Letters of thanks from the university were also forwarded to the supervising teachers. One (1) respondent nominated that they approached the Head of Department themselves while another respondent (1) referred to “a mention” being made at a morning tea with all staff present. The analysis of the data indicates that there is a significant amount of work carried out by supervising teachers that goes unrecognised at the school level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal recognises and applauds the positive</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contribution made by cooperating teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal recognises and applauds the positive</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contribution made by supervising teachers at</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents and Citizens meetings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teacher recognises and applauds the positive</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contribution made by supervising teachers at faculty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meetings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>43.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Implications

Teacher suitability to perform the role of a supervising teacher needs further discussion at a number of levels including regional discussions with School Education Directors, Principals, Head teachers and with academics at the UWS. UWS needs to work with schools to determine criteria that will assist head teachers to make informed judgements about teacher suitability for the supervising teacher role of student teachers during professional experience.

Secondary teachers indicated that time was an inhibiting factor when considering whether to supervise a student teacher. The University of Western Sydney needs to work with schools to promote a culture of adding value to a school through student teacher placements. Discussions need to take place with schools to examine ways in which professional experience does not impinge on already overworked teachers.

The issue of too many universities approaching schools for student teacher placements is of growing concern to both schools and UWS. Although a New South Wales
Department of Education and Training (DET) priority system is policy, many universities do not operationalise the policy but approach schools outside their priority placement. This particular issue is problematic for the UWS secondary program as enrolment numbers are increasing each year and placements offered by schools are decreasing.

The data suggests that more could be done by both the principals of secondary schools and head teachers to affirm and recognise the significant and valuable work of supervising teachers. It would seem that the affirmation of supervising teachers work and contribution could be considerably strengthened through a variety of avenues, including whole staff meetings, faculty meetings and Parent and Citizen meetings. Affirmation by leaders in the school would acknowledge the value and critical role that teachers play in supervising students during their professional experience.

Conclusion

UWS and schools need to investigate strategies that will lessen workloads of teachers who contribute to the professional learning of our future teachers. A number of issues have been identified in this study that need to be addressed. These issues include time made available for teachers to support student teachers in their learning, affirmation and valuing by the school of the work that is contributed by supervising teachers to the learning of student teachers as well as reducing the numbers of universities approaching the same schools for placements.

The results of this questionnaire have articulated the need for a better connection with all stakeholders in the professional experience process. The issues highlighted demonstrate that there is a need to continue to have dialogue with all stakeholders to improve the professional partnerships that UWS has with its secondary schools. School placement availability will continue to be difficult if the issues highlighted in this paper are not addressed. At all levels of the education sector, but particularly in schools, it is imperative that teachers believe and act on their professional responsibilities to contribute to the professional learning of student teachers offering placements and providing quality supervision.

References


Appendix 1

QUESTIONNAIRE

SCHOOL PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE CO-ORDINATORS

Please circle (X) the most correct response

Question 1.
How do you promote professional experience to the teachers in your school?
   [a] Discussion at staff meeting [1]
   [b] Faculty discussion [2]
   [c] Proforma sent to staff rooms [3]
   [d] Proforma posted in general area such as a common room [4]
   [e] Other (please specify) [5]

Question 2
How do teachers indicate their interest to be involved in the professional experience program?
   [a] Discussion at staff meeting [1]
   [b] Faculty discussion [2]
   [c] Proforma sent to staffrooms [3]
   [d] Proforma posted in general area such as a common room [4]
   [e] Other (please specify) [5]

Question 3
Who decides the suitability of a teacher to perform the duties of a supervising teacher?
   [a] Head Teacher decides suitability [1]
   [b] Professional experience co-ordinator decides suitability [2]
   [c] Teacher decides they are suitable role models [3]
   [d] Principal decides suitability [4]
   [e] Other (please specify) [5]

Question 4
Does your school have processes to determine the suitability of teachers to act as a supervising teacher?
Please describe the process

Question 5
Are there factors in your school that inhibit teachers participating in the University of Western Sydney secondary professional experience program?
   [a] Not enough time [1]
   [b] Too many universities asking for placements [2]
   [c] Teacher not interested [3]
   [d] Teachers think they should be paid more for supporting a student teacher [4]
   [e] There is not a school/faculty culture of supporting student teachers [5]
   [f] Not enough experienced teachers in the school [6]
   [g] Other (please specify) [7]

Question 6
How does your school affirm and recognise the work of supervising teachers?
   [a] Principal recognises and applauds the positive contribution made by supervising teachers at whole school staff meetings [1]
   [b] Principal recognises and applauds the positive contribution made by supervising teachers at Parents and Citizens meetings [2]
   [c] Head Teacher recognises and applauds the positive contribution made by supervising teachers at Faculty meetings [3]
   [d] Other (please specify) [4]

Any other comments you would like to add?
PAPER 14: (PUBLISHED PAPER)


The literature on co-mentoring provided the catalyst for the development of ideas in this paper. The resulting paper is the concluding paper on mentoring presented as part of this doctorate. The outcomes from the presentation of this paper have been many including the incorporation of the layered model of mentoring developed by the author into the University of Western Sydney “Green Wired Safe” (GWS) research concentration. The layered model of mentoring in GWS will be documented throughout 2005 and case studies of co-mentoring relationships within the research concentration will be examined in light of the mentoring model.
Issues in Educational Research

Journal of the Institutes for Educational Research in NSW, Northern Territory, South Australia and Western Australia

Volume 14 Number 2

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Reconceptualising mentoring: Reflections by an early career researcher

Maggie Clarke
University of Western Sydney

This paper focuses on the experiences of an early career researcher involved in a mentoring relationship at the University of Western Sydney (UWS), Australia. A discussion of the research literature is reported to highlight the attributes of mentoring relationships and the different forms of mentoring. The mentoring relationship that the author is involved in at her workplace with two colleagues is explained using a layered relationship-mentoring model. This mentoring model has been based on the reflections of two mentors and a protégé, (in this case the author) and analysis of their email communication. The model consists of three layers and within each layer the characteristics of the mentoring relationship are identified. The mentoring relationship is examined in respect of the implications such relationships have on professional learning for academics in their early career stages. The model provides a conceptual framework for educational and other organisations to provide opportunities for similar mentoring relationships to be formed in their particular organisation for early career employees.

Introduction

This paper presents an overview of the history of mentoring and a number of definitions of mentoring from the literature. Mentoring is discussed in terms of the types of relationships that are formed in the mentoring process. Within the relationships different communication pathways, which form the basis of the discussion of the types of mentoring, are reported.

Mentoring is not a new concept. The term was used as early as 800DC, in Ancient Greek mythology, in Homer’s Odyssey (Debolt, 1992; Reglin, 1998; Bond, 1999; Schwebert, 2000). The original Mentor was given the care and guidance of Odysseus’ son, Telemachus. The Mentor in this instance served as a role model, guide, facilitator, and protector. Kerka (1998) tells of a narrowed concept of mentoring during the Industrial Age, between a master and an apprentice, focussing on career advancement only. The Information Age has seen an expansion of the concept of mentoring to include career and psychosocial aspects.

There was a resurgent interest in mentoring occurring in the 1990s as indicated by Zey, (1991); Carruthers, (1993) and Kerka (1998). Kerka
There was a resurgent interest in mentoring occurring in the 1990s as indicated by Zey, (1991); Carruthers, (1993) and Kerka (1998). Kerka (1998) explained that this interest was due to organisational trends such as downsizing, restructuring, and teamwork. Increasingly, managers in organisations were seeing mentoring as an important source of learning for less experienced employees. Cohen (1995) affirms that mentoring programs are increasingly being recognised by institutions as an important source of learning for those “whose personal, educational and career development can benefit from meaningful relationships with experienced professionals” (p. vii). Many Australian organisations are recognising that facilitation and support of a mentoring process is an effective strategy that can significantly benefit individuals by affording them an opportunity to grow, develop and share their professional and personal skills and experiences.

Over time there has been a plethora of definitions on mentoring. In general, modern mentors are viewed as influential and more experienced people who can assist in the attainment of work and career goals of a less experienced person in the organisation. Mentors have been defined as guides (Bey & Holmes, 1992), counsellors or coaches and role models (Crow & Mathews, 1998). These definitions viewed mentoring as one-way relationships. Jeruchim and Shapiro (1992), however, presented a different view of mentoring encompassing a mutual and beneficial relationship between the mentor and protégé.

They define mentoring as

... at its best, a close, intense, mutually beneficial relationship between someone who is older, wiser, more experienced, and more powerful with someone younger or less experienced. It is a complementary relationship, within an organisational or professional context, built on both the mentor's and the protégé's needs (p. 23).

Attributes and discussion of different forms of mentoring

By defining different forms of mentoring and the attributes of each form communication pathways and types of relationships established can be identified. Mentoring can be recognized by the type of relationship that is evident in each mentoring process. It can be a formal or an informal relationship and within these boundaries the relationship can be reciprocal or non-reciprocal. A reciprocated communication pathway for each of the participants in the relationship and an equal role status of the mentor and protégé constitute the mentoring relationship that is referred to here as "co-mentoring," and is the ultimate focus of this study.
Formal mentoring

Formal mentoring relationships are generally designed for a predetermined length of time and are usually of short duration. Many managers implement formal mentoring programs as a strategy to induct new employees into their organisation (Douglas & McCauley, 1997). Within these programs the protégé is allocated to a mentor by the management of the organisation and usually, there is little or no involvement of staff in the selection process of matching the mentor and protégé by either party. These programs are purposefully developed, monitored and evaluated by the management in terms of expectations and goal attainment. There is an inequality of status in this relationship with communication usually being one-way. The mentor directs and drives the communication down to the protégé with little opportunity for the protégé to have input or respond to the communication from the mentor. The one-way communication in formal mentoring can result in the protégé being unable to 'connect' with the mentor. (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Formal mentoring communication pathway

Douglas and McCauley (1997) reported that senior management in organisations in the United States, which did not already have a formal mentoring program in place were planning on developing one within the following three years. As organisational competitiveness increases so does the role of the management of the organisation extend to capitalise on the intellectual capital of its employees.

Phillips-Jones (1982), Kram (1991) and Murray (1991) have argued that management personnel in organisations do not fully understand the challenges inherent within formal mentoring programs. Ragins and
Cotton (1999) put this lack of understanding down to the scarcity of empirical research related to mentoring programs. Indeed, practice has exceeded the pace of empirical research. In formal mentoring programs mentors do not have a previous personal connection with their protégé but participate in the mentoring programs for the 'good of the organisation'. As an outcome of this lack of connection, both mentors and protégé may not always be committed to each other or to the program. The consequences of this diminished commitment can result in an underdeveloped mentoring relationship.

**Informal mentoring**

The essence of informal mentoring is the establishment of beneficial interpersonal relationships based upon effective communication (Kerka, 1998). Mentors in informal mentoring relationships provide direction, support and insights and they essentially provide "...their protégés with a sense of what they are becoming" (Debolt, 1992, p.30). Opportunities for recognition, encouragement, feedback, advice on balancing responsibilities and knowledge of the informal rules of the organisation have been cited in the literature as some of the benefits of informal mentoring (Kerka, 1998; Schwiebert, 2000).

Informal mentoring relationships are spontaneously formed through people getting to know each other in the work environment. The relationship is usually voluntary and is often based on mutual professional identity and respect. The relationship is of a more personal nature and communication flows usually from the mentor to the protégé but it takes place in a more informal manner (Figure 2). This informality is derived from the fact that the management of the organisation does not initiate the relationship but rather the relationship often forms through social contexts such as meetings over coffee. The communication in this relationship is more relaxed and has little structure. The mentor's communication is usually in the form of support, guidance and advice. Within this type of informal mentoring relationship there is still a hierarchical status with communication between the mentor to the protégé. The difference in the status of the relationship between formal and informal mentoring relationships is that the communication in informal relationships is less formal as the name denotes.

Ragins and Cotton (1999), in a comprehensive study in the United States, compared formal and informal mentoring. They found that informal mentoring relationships were much more beneficial to protégés than formal relationships as the strategies used in the informal process were of a more personal nature such as coaching, counselling, role modelling and providing friendship.
There is still a hierarchy of status in this relationship but the communication is less formal

**Mentor**


**Protégé**

**Figure 2: Informal mentoring communication pathway**

Perna, Lenner & Yurs (1995) concluded from their research that the effectiveness between formal and informal mentoring could be due to the differences in the structure of the relationships. The pairing in an informal mentoring relationship is often the result of both the mentor and the protégé selecting personal qualities that mirror the qualities they would like to emulate. The informal mentoring relationship offers both the mentor and the protégé the opportunity to select each other, an aspect not usually present in formal mentoring programs. Ragins and Cotton (1999) also indicated that formal mentoring programs often last less than a year. On the other hand, informal mentoring relationships can last for many years allowing for a personal connection between the mentor and protégé to develop.

Evidence from the literature indicated that there are fewer limitations in informal mentoring than formal mentoring. Ragins and Cotton (1999) found in their research that the benefits of informal mentoring were many. The two major areas of difference between informal and informal mentoring were in the levels of career guidance and psychosocial support. Informal mentors provided a higher level of coaching and increased the protégés visibility in the organisation. They also provided counselling, social interaction, role modelling and friendship.

**Co-mentoring**

The co-mentoring relationship has been a recent development reported in the literature (Jipson & Paley, 2000; Mullen, 2000; Kochan & Trimble, 2000). Co-mentoring recognises the contribution that each person brings to the relationship and is based on reciprocal benefit. In this relationship the status of each person is equal and the communication pathway is
one of reciprocity with each person mutually benefiting from the relationship (Figure 3).

In this relationship the status of each person is equal and the communication pathway is one of reciprocity.

![Figure 3: Co-mentoring communication pathway](image)

Mullen (2000) defined the co-mentoring relationship as synergistic. She viewed it as providing opportunities to be involved in each other’s learning by sharing purpose and commitment in common projects. A number of other writers including Jipson and Paley (2000) and Kochan and Trimble (2000) documented their personal co-mentoring experiences. In their stories they discussed how these experiences were mutually beneficial. Their discussions were based on collaboration and shared decision-making. The ability to collaborate and share was seen as providing opportunities to strengthen personal and professional skills.

Rymer (2002) discussed two essential components necessary for a successful co-mentoring relationship. The relationship should be a friendship of peers rather than a hierarchical relationship and that communication was dialogue rather than the transmission of organisational information. The co-mentoring relationship serves the individual needs of each person involved in the relationship. Within the relationship the individuals act as partners often complementing each other’s knowledge and skills. The co-mentors may be different ages and have different expertise, skills and knowledge. What is important in this type of mentoring relationship is that the relationship is of mutual benefit.

Table 1 provides examples of characteristics of each type of mentoring. Examples of characteristics of design, allocation, selection and monitoring processes, communication, status, type of relationship, commitment and connection of mentors and protégés are drawn together in this table to illustrate the differences and similarities of each of the types of mentoring.

This study examined the communication pathway and mentoring relationship of three academics at UWS. The study considered how this relationship developed into a layered mentoring program and used collection and analysis of data from a variety of sources.
Table 1: Exemplars of characteristics of types of mentoring relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Formal mentoring</th>
<th>Informal mentoring</th>
<th>Co-mentoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Design structure</strong></td>
<td>Pre-determined</td>
<td>Often relationships last for an extended period of time</td>
<td>Relationships last for an extended period of time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>length of time in the relationship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Allocation of protégé to the mentor</strong></td>
<td>Allocated by the management of the organisation</td>
<td>Usually spontaneously formed</td>
<td>Based on each other’s complementary knowledge and skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selection process</strong></td>
<td>Little or no involvement of staff in the selection of mentor to protégé</td>
<td>Voluntary, often based on mutual professional identity and respect</td>
<td>Friendship of peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monitoring procedures</strong></td>
<td>Monitored in terms of expectations and goal attainment</td>
<td>No formal monitoring</td>
<td>No formal monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
<td>One-way communication from mentor to protégé</td>
<td>Communication takes place in an informal manner</td>
<td>Dialogue occurs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Status of each person in the relationship</strong></td>
<td>Inequality of status</td>
<td>Still a hierarchical status but communication less formal</td>
<td>Equal status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of relationship</strong></td>
<td>Non-reciprocal</td>
<td>Reciprocal benefit</td>
<td>Reciprocal benefit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mentor connection with protégé</strong></td>
<td>Sometimes lack of connection occurs</td>
<td>More personal connection of protégé to mentor through coaching, counselling and role modelling strategies</td>
<td>Individuals act as partners complementing each other’s knowledge and skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commitment to the mentoring program</strong></td>
<td>May not always be committed to each other or to the program</td>
<td>Self selection based on personal and professional qualities</td>
<td>Mutual benefit gained from the relationship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Methodology

A qualitative methodology was used in the evolution of this study, over a period of ten months. Specifically within the qualitative paradigm a phenomenographic methodology was core to this study. Marton, (1986, cited in Richardson, 1999, p.53) described phenomenography as an "empirically based approach that aims to identify the qualitatively different ways in which different people experience, conceptualise, perceive and understand various kinds of phenomena". The aim of this phenomenographic research was to determine a structure from various descriptions of a concept. The structure enabled the concepts to be identified or "fitted into" characteristics (categories).

Collection of data

The data for this research has been drawn from three sources; the literature on mentoring, reflections by the two mentors and the protégé (the author), and relevant emails communicated between the mentors and the protégé. Specifically,

1. the research literature was used to assist in an understanding of the variety of relationships that can be formed during mentoring and to give form and shape to the data and the analysis of that data.

2. reflections on this mentoring relationship by my mentors and me as protégé, were collected over the same ten-month period as the email conversations. My mentors reflected and wrote on our mentoring experience and I reflected and wrote on the processes I encountered as this relationship developed. Again, the phenomenographic process was used to identify the categories that were discussed in these reflections. The mentors' reflections were analysed in terms of the input, processes and outcomes that were evident in our mentoring relationship. My reflections were analysed in terms of the characteristics that were evident in each phase of the mentoring relationship. Outcomes of each of the phases of the relationship were also identified from my reflections.

3. emails, collected over the ten months, between my mentors and myself were analysed to discover the mentoring characteristics that had been identified as typical of each type of mentoring. An independent person was then given a clear copy of the email contents and asked to identify the email contents in relation to the characteristics that had been identified. The independent person’s identification of characteristics in the contents of the emails was compared to mine. Phenomenographic methodology was used to
identify and validate the characteristics of the email conversations. Marton (1988) dealt with the issue of external and internal validity by arguing that finding categories was a form of discovery and as such the characteristics do not have to be replicated in further studies.

Analysis and findings of data

Literature

The literature indicated that mentoring is not confined to one type or form of mentoring relationship. An analysis of the literature revealed that in each mentoring process some form of relationship was evident. It also gave form to the fact that mentoring relationships could be formal or informal and that the relationship could be reciprocal or non-reciprocal. Also evident from the literature were the communication pathways that were part of each type of mentoring relationship. This basis of the types of mentoring relationships assisted me in developing the conceptual framework of the layered model of mentoring.

The mentors’ reflections

Both of my mentors reflected on the relationship as having benefits in a two-way flow. They discussed characteristics of the relationship as having shared interaction through communication. Both of the mentors discussed the skills they brought to the mentoring relationship such as qualitative data analysis and literature review skills.

The mentors’ reflections were useful to identify what kinds of support they provided the protégé (input), how they provided this support (processes) and what were the results (outcomes) that were evident from their support. It became apparent from the mentors reflections that both mentors had contributed to the mentoring relationship but that they had contributed in different ways. They used a range of strategies to assist the protégé and they provided a supportive relationship where collaboration occurred to assist in the protégé's professional learning and development.

Further analysis showed that the mentors’ reflections revealed a number of supportive strategies used in the mentoring relationship. These strategies included such processes as assisting in the development of a professional identity of the protégé, nurturing and collaboration, development of research skills such as writing literature reviews and analysis of qualitative data.
These reflective statements identified the outcomes of the mentoring relationship and described the results of this relationship as providing trust and a critical friend to the protégé that enhanced the protégé's professional identity. The relationship enabled the protégé to learn new research skills in writing proposals. Both of the mentors also identified, as a further outcome, the opportunity it gave them to explore their own research interests.

These reflections were analysed under the categories of mentor input, processes developed and outcomes achieved as indicated in Table 2.

**Table 2: Analysis of the mentors' reflections**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Input</th>
<th>Processes</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Mentor Code</th>
<th>Category Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Range of strategies used</td>
<td>Collaborative relationship</td>
<td>Critical friend</td>
<td>Mentor 2</td>
<td>MR2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of strategies used</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Protégé learnt skills in writing proposals</td>
<td>Mentor 2</td>
<td>MR6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovering a range of strategies to</td>
<td>Developing a professional identity of the protégé</td>
<td>Led to further development of professional identity of mentor</td>
<td>Mentor 2</td>
<td>MR1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assist colleague (protégé)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive relationship</td>
<td>Nurturing role</td>
<td>Trust developed</td>
<td>Mentor 1 and 2</td>
<td>MR4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>Writing literature reviews and papers, analysis of qualitative data, presentation of papers</td>
<td>Enabled mentor 1 and 2 to explore own research interests</td>
<td>Mentor 1 and 2</td>
<td>MR6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both mentors believed that they provided a supportive environment, which enabled trust to develop between us.

The role has been a nurturing one where through a trusting and supportive relationship... (mentor 2)

Through the collaborative process of jointly writing and presenting papers each of the mentors felt that their skills of qualitative data collection and analysis and literature reviews skills enabled them to further explore their own research interests but also assisted me in the development of these skills.

I've been able to bring the skills of writing ethics proposals, literature reviews, analysing qualitative data and presenting papers at conferences to the mentoring relationship.... I've gained from it in that
writing collaborative papers...has provided me with a broader framework in which to contextualise my primary research focus (mentor 1).

I've been able to bring skills in literature review and qualitative data analysis to the mentoring relationship....This has afforded me the opportunity to become aware of my own skills and further explore and frame my own research (mentor2).

Mentor 2, particularly, discussed in some detail the ways in which she discovered a range of strategies that she felt assisted me in my development. The processes of support and collaboration are cited as two strategies that assisted me. Mentor 2 acted as a critical friend in the review of papers written by me and I also learnt skills in writing proposals and abstracts.

I have something to offer professionally to another colleague [and this was achieved] through a range of strategies (mentor 2).

It can be concluded, from these findings, that a pattern emerged in relation to the roles that participants played in the mentoring relationship indicating reciprocity, support and growth of understanding for all three members.

**Personal reflections**

In my early days working full-time at the university I formed a friendship with two of my colleagues. As this friendship developed into a collegial friendship it led me to reflect on the experiences that contributed to the mentoring in which I have been involved.

**Phase 1**

In the first instance, the collegial friendship was the initial phase in my mentoring relationship. In this phase, interpersonal interaction developed in a social environment in the workplace. Two colleagues and I met socially over coffee with conversations centred on our families, our work, our research and our teaching. My mentoring relationship with these colleagues developed because we were friends first in our work situation. Our mentoring relationship, which was un-orchestrated, came together in a natural and unconstrained way. These characteristics and outcomes are noted below and constitute the first phase of this mentoring relationship.

**Collegial friendship mentoring**

The characteristics of collegial friendship mentoring included

1. Interpersonal relationship in the workplace
2. Social meetings
3. conversations regarding research
4. knowledge of the informal rules of the organisation

The outcomes included:

1. network of friends developed
2. common research interests discussed.

Once our collegial friendship was established we began to work on common research interests. Two of these were in the area of mentoring and the internship program for final year Teacher Education students. This common interest fostered joint papers being written and presented at symposiums and conferences. These shared experiences gave me the confidence to present subsequent papers. My colleagues' mentoring role provided the support, encouragement and guidance to begin my own research path. Their influence enabled me to increase my research output and link my research to my teaching at the University. Over the last two years we have co-authored a total of five papers on the Bachelor of Education Primary Internship Program at the University of Western Sydney.

The second phase of my mentoring experience was demonstrated in my personal reflections, when my two colleagues became my informal mentors. During this stage, I was guided, supported and encouraged as my two colleagues affirmed my work. Jipson and Paley (2000) described their own early relationship as “a shelter or safe space within which we can encourage, support and critique each other in the trying out of ideas, feelings and actions” (p.2). Reflecting on Jipson and Paley’s experience made me aware that my mentors had also provided a ‘safe haven’ for me to explore ideas and discuss feelings about my work. Viewing my relationship as a ‘safe haven’ allowed me to understand that our relationship was based on trust and support through which I felt nurtured and more able to realise my potential as an academic.

It is through the writings of others that I have come to understand my relationship with my two colleagues. My informal mentors supported me in acquiring my own professional identity, as they are both well-known academics in their field of expertise. They provided me with opportunities that I might otherwise not have had. They took me outside my own comfort zone but in doing so they were always there supporting me within a ‘safe haven’.

Zey (1991) believes that mentoring “appears to create a fundamental transformation in the way mentees perceive themselves, their careers and their relationship to and value within the organization” (p.2). This transformation was evident in my informal mentoring experience. My
mentors often would confirm the work I was writing or presenting on their behalf at conferences.

Phase 2
A mutual identification of similar personality traits between mentors and protégés was reported in the literature. Kram (1991) suggests that informal relationships develop by mutual identification: mentors choose protégés whom they view as versions of themselves and protégés select mentors whom they view as role models. Certainly in my mentoring relationship with my two colleagues I was professionally attracted to them because of the role models they portrayed in their strong work ethic and their involvement in the wider university community. These role models illustrated a strong professional relationship that would guide me in my career and assist me in my early career needs for guidance, support and affirmation of my work and research. I have felt that my mentoring relationship has been one of quiet "shepherding" into areas of skill and professional learning that would eventually assist me with my long-term career goals. The characteristics and outcomes of this second phase are noted below.

Informal mentoring
The characteristics of informal mentoring included

1. safe haven
2. guidance and support
3. professional dialogue
4. affirmation of work
5. encouragement
6. confidence building
7. progressing work
8. trust developed

The outcomes included

1. linking own research to practice of teaching
2. common research interests
3. exposure to new professional opportunities
4. papers written and presented jointly

Phase 3
As my experiences continued, my mentoring relationship with my two colleagues developed a third phase. I would describe this phase as co-mentoring. The relationship in this phase changed dramatically. The relationship became more equal with each of us offering support and assistance to each other.
By encouraging me to present our joint work and represent them at conferences my mentors made me feel that they had confidence and trust in my ability. At this point in time both my mentors treated me as an equal. Our relationship is such that I am now able to identify research and funding opportunities and potential conference forums for our research dissemination. The characteristics and outcomes of the third phase are noted below.

Co-mentoring
The characteristics of co-mentoring included

1. mutual guidance, support and encouragement
2. equal partnership developed
3. identification of research opportunities
4. involvement in common research projects

The outcomes included

1. own professional identity developed
2. mentor role being phased out
3. protégé moving towards becoming a mentor
4. collegial friendship forming with the protégé and another early career researcher

Discussion of personal reflections

My personal reflections provided a new way of thinking about mentoring as a layered process with identifiable characteristics and outcomes evident in each layer. The literature discussed mentoring as a fairly linear process but my experiences did not support this. My personal reflections clearly supported the view that a mentoring relationship can be layered and that the layers are not separate, but in fact overlapping.

The literature also discussed the deliberate pairing of mentors and protégé with mentors and protégé’s being carefully matched. My experiences and personal reflections do not support this formal matching of mentor and protégé. Indeed, it was the coming together through collegial friendship that supported the further mentoring layers of the relationship to develop with the mentors and protégé.

Emails

Data was gathered from the contents of email conversations between the protégé and the mentors over the 10-month period. Initially, ten characteristics were identified which described the types of input in the
email conversations. These are tabulated and coded in Table 3. The emails were analysed in terms of the characteristics that had been identified above by the mentors and through my reflections.

**Table 3: Initial ten characteristics identified in the email conversations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social meetings</td>
<td>C1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversations regarding research</td>
<td>C2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of informal rules</td>
<td>C3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressing work</td>
<td>C4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmation of work</td>
<td>C5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement</td>
<td>C6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification of research opportunities</td>
<td>C7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement in common research opportunities</td>
<td>C8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal partnership developed</td>
<td>C9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking guidance and support</td>
<td>C10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The characteristics of each of the categories identified by the independent person were compared to the characteristics I had identified. A tally was made of the characteristics that were identified in the same category as mine. This tally was then calculated as a percentage and eighty per cent of the independent identification of the characteristics agreed with the characteristics that I had identified.

The conversations were further examined in terms of the involvement of each of the mentors and the protégé. The email conversations clearly indicated that mentor 1 was the most active of the two mentors in the mentoring relationship. Even so the mutual relationship between the three of us showed development over time and supported the mentoring framework.

In the early phases of the relationship typical conversations included characteristics identified as social meetings (C1) and conversations regarding research (C2).

> When can we have coffee and catch up? (C1)
> Here's what we started talking about at lunch (referring to ideas for an abstract). (C2)

Conversations which occurred later in the relationship typically showed characteristics of involvement in research opportunities (C8), Equal partnership developing (C9) and seeking guidance and support (C10) indicated that the protégé's own professional identity was being developed and that the mentor's role was being phased out.
This is my attempt at the abstract. Could I have your comments by tomorrow? (C8).
Couldn't find the journal but found the web page Response: You're brilliant (C9).
I would like some advice on how you would like the round table discussion to go at the conference (C10).

From the analysis of the email conversations and the characteristics identified to depict the conversations it was concluded that within mentoring relationships individuals contribute to the relationship in an individual way and that the skills of each of the participants complements and enhances the skills of others in the relationship.

A tally of the instances that each category occurred in the email communication is indicated in Table 4. This tally indicates that the conversations in the emails regarding the progression (10) and affirmation of work (5) were discussed most frequently. While guidance and support (1) lasted less well, social meetings (4), positive feelings and research (3), while seen as important, did not feature as often as did progressing work and affirmation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4: Email characteristics tally</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Characteristic name</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking guidance and support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification of and involvement in research opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive feeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmation of work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressing work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following the analysis of both the email conversations and the personal reflections of the author and the mentors it was found that some of the characteristics could be reduced from the original ten. Several of the characteristics could be combined into one category with six characteristics resulting. Table 5 shows the new combined categories, coded as (CC).

The mentor reflection characteristics (MR Table 2) were identified from the mentors inputs, processes and outcomes evident in their reflections. These characteristics were compared with the six synthesised characteristics identified in the email analysis. A common set became evident through this analysis. This common set of characteristics is depicted in Table 6.
Table 5: Combined characteristics of email and personal reflections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original ten characteristics</th>
<th>Combined characteristic from the original ten characteristics</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement (C6), Equal partnership developed (C9)</td>
<td>Positive feeling</td>
<td>CC1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressing work (C4)</td>
<td>Progressing work</td>
<td>CC2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmation of work (C5)</td>
<td>Affirmation of work</td>
<td>CC3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversations regarding research (C2), Identification of research opportunities (C7), Involvement in common research opportunities (C8)</td>
<td>Identification of and involvement in, research opportunities</td>
<td>CC4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social meetings (C1) Seeking guidance and support (C10), Knowledge of informal rules of the organisation (C3)</td>
<td>Social meetings Seeking guidance and support</td>
<td>CC5 CC6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Through a supportive relationship with my mentors I was able to develop my research skills and opportunities. The outcome of this support and skill development was the significant enhancement of my personal professional growth and learning.

Table 6: Common set of characteristics identified through analysis of emails, personal and mentors' reflections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Email and personal reflections characteristics</th>
<th>Mentor reflection characteristics</th>
<th>Common set of characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CC3: Affirmation of work</td>
<td>MR1: Developing professional identity MR2: Critical friend</td>
<td>CS1: Professional development of protégé CS2: Development of professional career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC2: Progression of work</td>
<td>MR3: Nurturing role</td>
<td>CS3: Supportive relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC1: Positive feeling</td>
<td>MR4: Collaborative relationship MR5: Support</td>
<td>CS4: Trust developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC5: Social meetings</td>
<td></td>
<td>CS5: Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC6: Seeking guidance and support</td>
<td>MR6: Writing of literature reviews and papers, analysis of qualitative data and presentation of papers</td>
<td>CS6: Research skills and opportunities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Developing the layered relationship-mentoring model

Analysis of the research, in particular my personal reflections, revealed that my mentoring experiences involved three phases. They were

- collegial friendship
- informal mentoring and
- co-mentoring.

The synthesis of the findings, of this study, have meant that re-evaluation of my thinking and experiences saw mentoring not as phases but rather as a series of overlapping experiences. These experiences can be schematically described as a set of layers (Figure 4). The data has shown that there were not distinct phases but rather the mentoring relationship and its characteristics moved between the layers and also that the layers overlapped as indicated in Figure 4. There was not a distinct break between each layer but rather the process merged one layer into the other. From the three sources of data collected and the results of this research I was able to formulate a new way of thinking about mentoring, which has led to the development of the "Layered Relationship-Mentoring Model".

![Layered relationship mentoring model](image)

**Figure 4: Layered relationship mentoring model for early career development**

The focus of this layer of the mentoring relationship was on the development of an interpersonal relationship with the mentors and the protégé. The characteristics of layer 1 now being
• identification of and involvement in research opportunities (cc4)
• social meetings (cc5)
• seeking guidance and support (CC6)

Layer 2, the Informal Mentoring layer became apparent when my two colleagues became my mentors. The focus in this layer of the relationship was on the protégé’s professional learning and development. The characteristics of layer 2 were

• positive feeling (cc1)
• progressing work (cc2)
• affirmation of work (cc3)
• seeking guidance and support (CC6)

Layer 3, the Co-mentoring layer, developed because of the interpersonal dynamics of the relationship. The relationship became equal with support and guidance being offered by each of the participants in the relationship. The focus in this layer of the relationship was on an equal partnership and equal status of each of the participants. The characteristic of layer 3 were

• positive feeling (cc1)
• identification of and involvement in research opportunities (cc4)
• seeking guidance and support (from each other) (cc6)

The mentors conversations in the emails and their reflections of the mentoring relationship provided evidence of the roles that each participant played in the mentoring relationship. The roles of the mentors were examined in relation to each of the layers of the mentoring model developed.

**Implications for professional learning and future development**

This research showed that collegial friendships could lead to professional learning by colleagues through the ‘Layered Relationship-Mentoring Model’. The challenge for managers of organisations is to determine how collegial friendships can be fostered in the work environment. Senior management need to identify the steps that can be taken within their organisational climate to encourage and support these relationships. Within organisations, planning decisions need to be determined to identify and develop strategies that can capitalise on mentoring opportunities. Care needs to be taken that these opportunities do not become forced.
The findings from this research also indicated that there is reciprocity in mentoring relationships. The findings suggest that each participant brings knowledge and skills to the relationship and that these skills and knowledge can be complementary to each other. Not only do the participants contribute certain knowledge and skills but also because of these skills the roles they play in the mentoring relationship can vary from one participant to another. In other words, the success of the mentoring relationship depends on the extent to which vital roles are available from the individual repertoires of the participants.

The “Layered Relationship-Mentoring Model for Early Career Development” described in this paper is a strategy that can be utilised in the higher education setting. Although not used in this study discussions with colleagues have suggested collegial opportunities for promotion of the development of mentoring relationships could include staff colloquia, social functions, internal faculty conferences for the presentation of joint papers, faculty grants established for joint research work and writing and training availability for mentoring. The model also could be established as a process of mentoring for early career researchers. Given the limitations as discussed in the literature of a formal mentoring program being established, an early career mentoring program based on this model could be initiated where time and opportunities for collegial friendships to be established could be encouraged and indeed nurtured at the Faculty level. In higher education organisations the status of the mentor need not be hierarchical but rather friendships may be based on identified research interests, needs or areas of expertise. For this reason alone, formal mentoring programs which are usually based on a more senior person mentoring a less senior person is not an effective mentoring system to develop in higher education. The “Layered Relationship-Mentoring Model for Early Career Researchers” is useful as it is not engineered but is spontaneous in its creation and development and should be recognised as such with appropriate time allowances built into the work profile.

**Further research**

This study has indicated the tensions and dichotomies that exist in exploring the structural and organisational approaches to developing mentoring relationships. In particular, there are challenges for organisations when considering mentoring, specifically informal mentoring relationships, as the relationships are formed spontaneously and sometimes serendipitously.
To further explore this layered model more research needs to be done both within and outside the higher education environment. Further questions that should be asked are

- how can managers in organisations assist in the development of mentoring relationships?
- how best can the layered relationship-mentoring model be implemented into organisations to capture the complementary skills of each participant in the mentoring relationship?

It has been my vision that elements of my experiences in the mentoring relationship that I have had with my colleagues could be developed into a professional learning program for early career researchers and that Faculties of Education would have a strong commitment to developing a mentoring program for this group of academics by encouraging conversations and collegial friendships to occur. The mentoring that has been developed with my colleagues has been a critical element in my professional learning and academic development. My professional learning increased because of the 'wise counsel' I have received from my two mentors through the development of a layered relationship: A true mentoring experience.

References


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Maggie is the Academic Co-ordinator of Professional Experience (Secondary Program) at the University of Western Sydney. She is in the final stage of her Ed. D completion. Her research for her doctoral studies focussed on professional learning and the strategies that can enhance this learning including, mentoring practices, reflective journals and learning portfolios. Maggie has presented her research at a number of international and national conferences including AARE, ATEA, PEPE and HERDSA and papers can be found on their websites. **Email:** m.clarke@uws.edu.au
APPENDIX 1

Request for a copy of a paper from Dr. Anne Rodrique

From: Anne Rodrigue [arodrigue@etfo.org]
Sent: Monday, 26 July 2004 12:50 AM
To: m.clarke@uws.edu.au
Subject: Request to Copy

Dear Dr. Clarke,

My name is Dr. Anne Rodrigue and I am a recent graduate of the University of South Australia. My dissertation examined the discourses of professionalism of Canadian teacher unions. In short I researched how Canadian teacher unions conceptualized and delivered their professional mandate.

I have read your article entitled, *Reflection: Journals and reflective questions- A strategy for professional learning* with great interest. I really appreciated how you used Dietz's “Levels of Learning" as the conceptual frame for reflection with associate teachers. I believe that this framework can be also adapted for use in the present work that I am doing.

I am writing you in my capacity as a staff developer with the Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario. This year I am conceptualizing and piloting an 8 day institute
for ETFO women members entitled “Reflections on Practice- A Women's Leadership Institute”. During the course of this school year, I will explore with these 45 teachers issues of reflective practice, professional learning communities, and action research. For your information I have attached the original information flyer that was distributed to teachers.

I would request permission to reproduce, for the Institute, 45 copies of your article. I believe that it aligns well with the purposes of the Institute and it provides for teachers first-hand research on the subject from an international source.

I hope that you can grant me the permission to photocopy. I would be prepared to share with you the reactions of the teachers to your article and provide you with an update of the progress of the Institute.

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

Dr. Anne Rodrigue
Executive Staff - Professional Services
Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario 480 University Avenue, Toronto, ON M5G 1V2
T: 416-962-3836 X 2261 / 1-888-838-3836 (Toll-free)
E: arodrigue@etfo.ca

<<FLYER -Reflections on Practice.doc>>
APPENDIX 2
Request for a copy of a paper from Carol Nicholson

From: Carol Nicholson [caroln@waikato.ac.nz]
Sent: Friday, 30 July 2004 12:38 PM
To: m.clarke@uws.edu.au
Subject: paper

Kia ora Maggie,

I am interested in obtaining a copy of a paper that you presented at the NZARE/AARE Conference in Auckland last year. "Reflection: Journals and Reflective Questions. A Strategy for Professional Learning".
I would appreciate a copy emailed if possible as it sits very well with our professional practice courses.

Kind Regards,

Carol
APPENDIX 3

Invitation to write a paper

From: Karen Corneille [mailto:kcorn@unimelb.edu.au]
Sent: Wednesday, 8 December 2004 10:34 AM
To: Recipient list suppressed
Subject: Invitation for a paper

Dear Colleague,
I am writing to you on behalf of Professor Peter Cuttance. We have been examining the collection of papers presented at the 2003 NZARE/ AARE joint conference and thought that the findings from your research would be of interest to teachers in Australian schools. We would be most grateful if you could write a short paper based upon your research, suitable for a teacher audience, to be disseminated through the National Quality Schooling Framework website www.nqsf.edu.au (a DEST funded initiative). The NQSF website is accessible by all schools in Australia, for which there are currently around 6500 teachers registered.

Guidelines are as follows:
You are invited to share your expertise and knowledge of a specific area of research with teachers. We are interested in all fields of research that can provide teachers with enhanced knowledge that can inform the improvement of teaching practices and improve learning environments.

The purpose of the paper is to provide teams of teachers, who are working on improvements in practice through the National Quality Schooling Framework (NQSF) website, with access to the evidence base of knowledge that has a strong basis in research that supports the improvement of professional learning and/or student learning. Further information on the NQSF is available at www.nqsf.edu.au

Papers must be based on a thesis that has been examined and passed, or research that has been published in refereed journals, books or major government (or similar) reports.

The maximum length of reviews is 5 pages (1500 words) with 4 sections:

• Provide a 300–600 synoptic review of the literature in the relevant field.
• Key Points - List up to 10 bullet points that encapsulate the key lessons from the literature review.
• Implications for Practice and for School Learning Environments - Provide a 300–500 word statement of the lessons from the literature review for teachers involved in developing more effective practices and school learning environments.
• References - Please present references as endnotes list only those referenced in the body of the text.

If you are interested, could you please let me know?

Regards, Karen Corneille
NQSF team
Ph: 8344 1245 (Tue, Wed, Fri)
Centre for Applied Educational Research
Faculty of Education
The University of Melbourne
(alternative contact Tim Jones 8344 1243)
APPENDIX 4
Letter from Professor Michael Singh

Green, Wired, Safe Australia
An Educational Research, Leadership and Policy Action Forum

National/Global Complexities and Contradictions:
THINKING beyond conventional educational politics, policies and pedagogies

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

28th October, 2004

Maggie Clarke is a member of the research concentration Green, Wired, Safe Australia. She is presently undertaking a meta-research project involving the participants of this concentration to trial and evaluate the current theory and methodology of her proposed “Layered Model of Mentoring.”

Maggie is undertaking the role of participant researcher whilst at the same time modeling the process of effective and supportive co-mentoring. Her active involvement in Green, Wired Safe Australia is having a very positive influence on its operational dynamics.

Maggie’s input into this research concentration has consisted of a number of activities over the past four months with additional research planned over the next two months.
and into 2005. To date her meta-research project within Green, Wired Safe Australia has included:

- Presentation of a theoretical overview “Co-mentoring” – 2\textsuperscript{nd} July, 2004
- A workshop on “Co-Mentoring”–“Collegial Friendship Mentoring (Layer 1) –22\textsuperscript{nd} October, 2004
- The development of guiding questions to inform the research project of participants’ ideas, comments, advice and suggestions with regards to the Layer 1 activities. “Co-Mentoring: Listening to your Voices.”

Maggie will be working with Green, Wired Safe Australia Research Assistant (Lin Brown) in the collation of the responses received from the “Listening to your Voices” data collection sheet. The plan for the meta-research project is to document the “Layered Model of Mentoring” as it is put into practice. The opportunity for this research is vital to this research concentration and also to further Maggie’s understanding of the Model itself.

Green, Wire Safe Australia is a Research Concentration in the early stages of formation beginning to form its identity, building its coherence and realizing its significance within the research community at the University of Western Sydney. All members are keen to be part of the meta-research Maggie is conducting in parallel with their own projects and the development of the Research Concentration as an entity.

Michael Singh
Professor of Education
Convenor – Green, Wired, Safe Australia
University of Western Sydney
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APPENDIX 5

Email from Pearson Publishers re proposed textbook

From: Green, Alison [mailto:Alison.Green@PearsonEd.com.au]
Sent: Tuesday, 5 October 2004 10:51 AM
To: 'm.clarke@uws.edu.au'
Cc: Harbaugh, Hannah
Subject: Proposal - Mentoring, Reflection, and Portfolio Development

Dear Maggie

Further to the voicemail message I left on your phone I thought I would send you an email as this may be more convenient and also give you my contact details.

My name is Alison Green and I am the acquisitions editor at Pearson Education responsible for local publishing in our Education list.

Hannah Harbaugh has suggested that I contact you regarding your proposal for a book on Mentoring, Reflection, and Portfolio Development.

I would like to discuss with you your ideas for this book, what courses it would suit, etc.

If you could give me a ring on the number below when convenient, it would be very much appreciated.

Kind regards

Alison Green
Senior Acquisitions Editor and Development Manager

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